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Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) Initiative: Designed to Modernise and Enhance India's Global Presence in the Fisheries Sector

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Introduction

Agriculture sector covers a wide range, crops, fruits and vegetables, flowers, sericulture, honey, medicinal herbs and plants, livestock and poultry, fisheries, seaweeds and others.

Initiatives by the Union and State governments, private sector, not-for-profit sector, and individual citizens are poised to usher in wide ranging transformation of India's agricultural sector in the next decade. The focus of agriculture policies has shifted from mitigating hunger to mitigating malnutrition, while enhancing profitability and incomes of those engaged in agriculture and related activities; and to making India a major agriculture power globally.

Overarching premises behind these initiatives are expanding economic freedom of the farmers and others involved in the agriculture sector; introducing new technologies in all aspects of agriculture activities, including technology of the Third Industrial Revolution, based on Internet of Things ¹ and harnessing traditional knowledge of India about crop diversity and nutrition; and accelerating hitherto neglected public investments in necessary infrastructure to make India a major agriculture power globally.

Fish and fish products are appropriately regarded contributing to healthy and nutritious balanced diet. Fisheries sector, if properly managed, is also less harmful to environment than production of red meat such as beef. Fish provides around 3.3 billion persons globally about one-fifth of daily animal Protein ².

This column provides a brief exposure to the recently launched PMMSY (Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana) Initiative. 21 states are participating in the initiative. The initiative aims to modernise the fisheries sector and enhance India's global presence in the sector.

A report by Omnivore, entitled, "The future of Indian Agriculture and Food Systems: vision 2030", argues that there will be eight trends that will disrupt the status quo of the Indian agricultural system by 2030, while meeting the objectives of climate-smart agriculture ³. Among the eight, two specifically apply to the fisheries sector.

- Rising animal protein and dairy consumption will push technology adoption across the animal and fisheries value-chain, increasing diversity of diets, driving up efficiency and lowering costs in a safe and conscious manner.
- Food science will pursue consumer-centricity, yielding affordable processed products that address malnourishment, lifestyle diseases, and ecological concerns

The same report estimates than in 2018, value added in agriculture sector was \$150 Billion in crops; \$70 Billion in livestock and poultry, and \$16 Billion in Fisheries.

Before outlining the PMMSY initiative, it may be useful to provide an overview of trend in global fisheries and aquaculture sector and India's current role.

India in the Global Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector

The Report divides fisheries sector into two components, they are "*capture*", involving both marine and inland production; and aquaculture. Aquaculture is the breeding, rearing, and harvesting of fish, shellfish, algae, and other organisms in all types of water environments. Pisciculture involves only the culture and rearing of fish

This section relies on the 2020 Report by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) titled "The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture". The data in the Report are for 2018 ⁴.

Key Global trends:

- In 2018, total fish and aquaculture production was 178.5 million tonnes (live weight). Capture of fish, both marine and inland contributed 96.4 million tonnes (54 percent) to the total production, while aquaculture contributed 82.1 million tonnes (46 percent).

- The report projects that India's total fish production is expected to increase from 12.4 million tonnes in 2018 (6.9% of the global total), to 15.6 million tonnes in 2030. This represents 26% increase as compared to projected 42% increase in aquaculture production.
- Between 1990 and 2018, globally, growth in "capture" production was only 14%, but in aquaculture was 524%, suggesting the later to be driving total production.
- 88% of production was used for human consumption.
- Globally, per capita fish consumption has increased from 13.4 Kilogram during the 1985-1995 period to 20.5 kilogram in 2018.

The report estimates that India's fish consumption is between 5 and 10 Kilograms per year; and India's fish protein intake per person per day is less than two grams.

- Globally, 38% of fish production was exported, with a total value of USD 164 Billion. This represents a large export sector.

India accounts for 4% of global exports, third largest after China (14%) and Vietnam (5%).

The report however projects that between 2018 and 2030, India's exports are expected to decrease by 3%, and imports increase by 96%.

US (14%), and Japan and China (9% each) are the largest global importers.

- World employment in fisheries sector was 59.5 million, with Asia accounting for four-fifths of the total. Thus, substantial human skills in this sector are in Asia.
- The report suggests that a large proportion of fish production is wasted.
- The report estimates that only two thirds of global fish stock is within biologically sustainable levels, sharply down from 90% in 1990.

The above overview strongly suggests that India should take initiatives, consistent with Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan (ABA) and Be Vocal for Local (BVFL) strategic ideas, to modernise India's fishing sector and enhance its role in the global fisheries sector in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Asher and Soni argue that ABA, whose literal meaning is Self-Reliant India Movement, should be in the context of India being highly globally integrated, and India pursuing further integration based on enhanced global competitiveness and competence. BVFL is designed to bring about attitudinal and behavioural change about value-addition generated to activities and products by domestic and foreign entities within India⁵.

The PMMSY Initiative

It is in the above context that the PMMSY initiative has been launched. The initiative does incorporate the three overarching premises underlying agriculture sector reform noted above.

The PMMSY initiative is expected to revolutionise the fisheries sector as it will invigorate it with the latest technology, infrastructure and ensure financial assistance, while improving sustainability.

The initiative is to be implemented during a period of five years from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25. It consists of two components namely, Central Sector Scheme (CS) and Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) at a total estimated investment of INR 201 Billion, comprising of Central share of INR 94.6 Billion, State share of INR 48.8 Billion, and Beneficiaries' share of INR 57.6 Billion.

The PMMSY initiative is expected to establish a robust fisheries management framework and check gaps in the value chain. It is hoped that initiative will also help reduce wastage of fish production.

The Government has made it clear that '**Blue Revolution**' or '**Neeli Kranti**' and has the potential to attain **the first place in the world in fish production**. It includes **MoFPI (Ministry of Food Processing Industries) schemes** such as Food Parks, Food Safety and Infrastructure.

It is estimated by the authorities that the PMMSY initiative is expected to increase fish production by 0.7 million tonnes, and increase exports to INR one trillion (USD 13.3 Billion) by 2024-25. The estimated additional livelihood generation is 0.55 million.

The government has set a fish production target of 15 million tonne by 2020 under the Blue Revolution, and raise it to about 20 million tonnes by 2022-23. These are significantly higher targets than projected by the FAO Report noted above.

The importance of fisheries in the public policy agenda is also underlined by the creation of separate Ministry for Fisheries. It will facilitate dealing with various issues concerning fisheries.

The PMMSY initiative fits well with the broader and much larger Blue Economy program of the government.

The term Blue Economy refers to utilization of a country's coast-line, inland waterways, and sea connectivity globally for more sustainable and broad-based economic development. This area to create new growth nodes, and expand exports and save on logistics costs, has been traditionally underemphasized in India. India's 7,500 km coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways and maritime sector deserves better utilization to create new growth nodes, livelihood opportunities, and global connectivity.

A key component of the Blue Economy program in India is the Sagarmala program, initiated in 2016. It aims to use port-led development as an additional growth-node and as an avenue to expand exports.

There are 12 major ports and around 200 notified non-major ports in India. The navigable waterways are 14500 KM, with a coastline of 7500 KM, involving 13 (out of 36) States and Union Territories.

It aims to change India's modal mix, increasing the share of coastal and inland waterways in India's total cargo from 6% in 2015 to 12% by 2025. Under the Sagarmala program, 577 projects, with an estimated project cost of INR 8700 Billion (USD 126 billion) have been identified for implementation between 2015 and 2035 continuing ⁶.

In NITI Aayog's 2020 Export preparedness index, among the top five states, four were coastal states. This underlines the importance of the Blue Economy program and of PMMSY.

Concluding Remarks

The PMMSY is a very timely and well-integrated initiative for the fisheries sector which has been usually neglected. The initiative however needs to be documented in much greater detail. Only broad outline is so far available.

The initiative needs strong Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) system, preferable located in NITI Aayog. Such a system in turn requires robust system of data collection, data analytics and other capacities. Moreover, the data should be accessible widely so that researcher and policy analysts get opportunities to provide empirical-evidence based inputs to policy makers, as well get academic publishing opportunities. It is not clear to what extent these have been integrated in the PMMSY scheme. If not, urgent consideration should be given to this aspect.

The initiative involves the Centre, participating states, and beneficiaries. Therefore, coordination between them is essential. The coordination mechanism needs to be more explicitly considered and made available.

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