Community led initiatives for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

Prelims *– Current Events of National Importance*

GS III *– Environmental Pollution & Degradation | Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) | Conservation*

Why in News?

A new global initiative called 'Revive Our Ocean' was launched recently.

- **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) –** MPAs are designated areas within the ocean where ***human activities are regulated*** to protect marine life and ecosystems.
- They are similar to land-based parks, but in the ocean, these areas offer special protection for natural or historic marine resources.
- MPAs restrict human activities like fishing or mining to conserve biodiversity and other natural resources.
- They are governed in different ways. Some are managed by national governments, others by local authorities, NGOs or through co-management with communities.
- **Community management initiatives – In Spain** - Medes Island in Spain is a small no-fishing zone which is just one square kilometre in size but brings in 16 million Euro every year from diving tourism.
- It is 25 times more than what fishing earns in the same area.
- **In Scotland -** Similarly, creating a no-fishing zone on Scotland's Isle of Arran helped marine life come back.
- The number of plants and animals on the seabed has more than doubled, and nearby waters are also seeing more life.
- **In Philippines -** ***RARE's Fish Forever program*** has helped communities set up no-fishing zones. In 5 years, the amount of fish in those areas doubled.
- **Global Initiative - Coastal 500 -** It includes global network of mayors and local government leaders who share knowledge and push for better policies, like banning industrial fishing near their shores.
- **Revive Our Ocean Initiative - Aim** – To scale up effective, community-led marine protected areas (MPAs) through local action.
- It hopes to ***remove key barriers*** that prevent coastal communities from protecting and managing their ocean spaces.
- **Pillars**
  - Inspire
  - Enable and
  - Equip
- It is rooted in successful models from across the world and will initially focus on 7

countries - The ***UK, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, the Philippines, Indonesia and Mexico.***

- **30X30 Target –** It is the target of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) that aims to protect 30% of the oceans by 2030.
- **Challenges in protecting MPAs -** Though more than 16,000 MPAs have been established globally, amounting 8% of the world's oceans, only 3% are currently under full protection.
- Most of these MPAs are either poorly managed or allow damaging activities like bottom trawling.

Reference

Down to Earth | Revive Our Ocean

