Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in news?

To counter the trade ban, the fisheries sector in India eyes new markets with the global Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification.

- **MSC certification –** It is a program for ***wild-capture fisheries*** that meet an international standard for sustainable fishing.
- It is also known as an ecolabel, which is ***voluntary*** and ensures sustainability in the sector.
- **Objective –** To ensure fishery is well-managed and responsibly harvested to sustain fish stocks and the marine environment.
- Certified products carry the ***blue MSC ecolabel***, assuring consumers that the seafood is traceable and comes from a sustainable source.
- **Based on –** The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's
  - Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing; and
  - Guidelines for the Eco-labelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries.
- **Assessment –** MSC Certification assesses a fishery by an independent, third-party certifier against the ***3 principles*** – Stock health, Environmental impacts and Effective management.
- **Validity –** The certification is valid for ***5 years,*** but it is subject to ***annual surveillance audits***.
- **Development –** It is developed in consultation with a range of people and organizations around the world, including government, academics, researchers, the fishing industry and NGOs.
- At present, 20% of global fisheries are MSC certified.
- In India, the ***Ashtamudi clam*** (Paphia malabarica) was India's 1st MSC certified fishery, and now it has lapsed, looked for reapply.
- **Significance –** MSC certified products often fetch a price premium of up to 30% in international markets, boosting India's seafood export potential and helping India overcome trade barriers in global markets.

Quick Facts

Status of India's Fisheries Sector
• **Production Growth –** Total fish production reached 195 lakh tonnes in 2024–25, a 104% increase from 96 lakh tonnes in 2013–14. • **Inland Fisheries Dominance –** Inland fisheries saw a 142% expansion, contributing over 75% of the total output and transforming rural areas. • **Global Standing –** India is the world's ***2nd largest*** fish producer, with around 8% of global fish output.

References

1. The Hindu | Eco-friendly labelling of fisheries
2. PIB | India's Fisheries at a Glance

