

National Report on Deep-Sea and Distant-Water Fishery Resources of the Indian EEZ

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Why in News?

The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) released the "National Report on Deep-Sea and Distant-Water Fishery Resources of the Indian EEZ,".

- **Data Synthesis-** Consolidates nearly 4 decades of oceanographic research and over 400 scientific cruises conducted across India's 2.37 million square kilometer Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- Data collected under the Marine Living Resources Programme (MLRP).
- **Surveying Vehicle** - Utilized the research vessel ***FORV Sagar Sampada*** to map species distributions and assess stock potential from the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal to the Andaman Sea and Southern Ocean.

Key Assessments

- **Mesopelagic Resources** - Highlights the vast biomass of lanternfishes (Myctophids).
- Their nightly vertical migrations drive the ocean's "biological carbon pump," transferring carbon from surface waters to the deep ocean to help regulate global climate.
- **Deep-Sea Demersal Stocks** - Identifies underexploited stocks along continental slopes beyond 200 meters depth, including deep-sea shrimps, perches, scombroids, flatfishes, and eels.
- **Protected Hotspots** - Maps vulnerable marine ecosystems requiring conservation, specifically highlighting Kollam Bank, Angria Bank, the off-Mangalore deep-sea slope, the terrace off Trivandrum, Lakshadweep, and the Andaman-Nicobar Islands.

Technological Framework

- **Advanced Methodology** - Integrates fisheries acoustics, environmental DNA (eDNA), autonomous observation platforms, satellite sensing, AI, and ecosystem modeling to support marine spatial planning.
- **National & Global Goals** - Serves as a foundational scientific roadmap for India's **Vision 2047** Blue Economy pillar, while reinforcing commitments to **UN SDG 14 (Life Below Water)** and the UN Decade of Ocean Science.



Reference

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