

FISHERIES SECTOR

INTRODUCTION

The “Vision 2031” document for the fisheries sector of Kerala has been prepared by ensuring the active participation of experts related to the fisheries sector, fishermen, fish farmers and the general public, and by incorporating their suggestions and experiences. As part of this effort, a one-day seminar was organised on 31-10-2025 at Yes K Auditorium, Alappuzha.

Fishermen and fish farmers from marine and inland sectors, representatives of fisheries cooperatives, researchers, technical experts, elected representatives and members of the public participated in the seminar. The seminar served as a platform for discussions and deliberations on the challenges currently faced by the fisheries sector, development potential, and approaches required for sustainable growth.

The programme commenced at 9.00 a.m. with registration, followed by the inaugural session at 10.00 a.m. The Hon’ble MLA of Ambalappuzha, Shri H. Salam, delivered the welcome address, emphasising the importance of participatory dialogue in strengthening planning in the fisheries sector.

The Hon’ble Minister for Fisheries, Culture and Youth Affairs, Shri Saji Cherian, presided over the function and reiterated the State Government’s firm commitment to achieving progress in the sector through sustainable, fisher- and farmer-centric development approaches.

The seminar was inaugurated by the Hon’ble Minister for Agriculture, Shri P. Prasad, who highlighted that sustainable development of fisheries and agriculture must be rooted in environmental sustainability, climate resilience and livelihood security of primary producers. He also stressed the importance of integrated farming systems such as Pokkali cultivation, which ensures organic rice and fish production and provides farmers with stable dual income.

Following the inaugural session, technical sessions were conducted, during which senior officials and experts presented the achievements of the fisheries sector over the past decade and discussed long-term development priorities for the next ten years. The views, suggestions and experiences shared during the seminar have been incorporated into the preparation of the “Vision 2031” document, making the seminar a significant milestone in shaping a comprehensive and forward-looking action plan for the fisheries sector.

VISION & MISSION

Vision

To develop Kerala’s fisheries sector into a globally competitive, fisher- and farmer-friendly **blue economy**, founded on sustainability, climate resilience and technological innovation, while ensuring food and nutritional security, ecological balance and the overall welfare of fishermen.

Mission

To empower fishermen through scientific management of fishery resources, development of modern infrastructure, adoption of innovative technologies, value addition and social security measures, and to strengthen Kerala's blue economy by ensuring sustainability, productivity, equity and gender justice across marine fisheries, inland fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing sectors.

DEPARTMENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Major Achievements of the Fisheries Department (Last 9 Years)

Rehabilitation Scheme

The rehabilitation scheme aimed at relocating families affected by coastal erosion to safer areas has been a landmark initiative in fisher welfare. Out of the target of rehabilitating 22,174 families, 9,104 families have expressed willingness to relocate. Assistance has been provided for construction of houses to 2,625 families, while 738 families have been provided with flats. Construction of additional houses and flats is in progress.

Vidyatheera Scheme

The Vidyatheera scheme has brought transformative changes in education. Over the past decade, financial assistance and coaching support enabled 104 students to secure MBBS admissions, 104 students to enter other medical courses, and 264 students to gain admission to professional courses. Scholarships and financial assistance are provided for medical and engineering entrance coaching, as well as for post-matric education of children of fishermen.

Santhwana Theeram

Financial assistance has been provided to beneficiaries for follow-up treatment of life-threatening diseases.

Clean Sea – Beautiful Coast Programme

Implemented in three phases to make the sea and coastline plastic-free. Awareness campaigns, large-scale plastic waste removal and recycling initiatives have been undertaken with strong public participation.

Janakeeya Matsyakrishi (People's Fish Farming Programme)

A flagship programme aimed at doubling fish production through aquaculture, providing subsidies for fish feed and seed. Significant expansion of cage farming, pond farming, paddy-cum-fish farming and recirculatory aquaculture systems has been achieved, leading to a substantial increase in inland fish production.

Fish and Shrimp Hatcheries

To achieve self-sufficiency in fish seed production, 28 hatcheries and fish seed farms under the Department and its agencies are functioning.

Fisher Safety and Welfare

Distribution of FRP boats, safety equipment such as GPS, VHF radios and transponders,

marine ambulance services, and insurance schemes have significantly enhanced safety and social security of fishermen.

Deep Sea Fishing

Under PMMSY, modern deep-sea fishing vessels have been provided to traditional fishermen groups with substantial subsidy support.

Samudra Bus Service

Free transport facility for women engaged in fish marketing, implemented jointly with KSRTC.

Regional Fisheries Technical High Schools

Free residential high school education provided to children of fishermen through 10 Government Regional Fisheries Technical High Schools.

Achievements of Allied Institutions

Institutions such as Matsyafed, Fishermen Welfare Fund Board, ADAK, KAVIL, SAF, KUFOS and Harbour Engineering Department have recorded significant progress in profitability, infrastructure development, research excellence and social welfare initiatives.

POLICY DOCUMENT

Policy Orientation

The policy framework under Vision 2031 aims to achieve **sustainable, smart and inclusive development** of the fisheries sector by integrating marine and inland fisheries, aquaculture, infrastructure development and welfare measures.

The focus areas include:

- Scientific and responsible fishing practices
- Climate-resilient management of marine and inland ecosystems
- Promotion of green and smart fishing fleets
- Expansion of deep-sea fishing and tuna resource development
- Plastic-free oceans and circular blue economy initiatives
- Strengthening fisher safety, insurance and welfare systems
- Value addition, market modernisation and branding
- Institutional strengthening and participatory governance
- Research, digital transformation and climate resilience

Through these strategic interventions, the policy envisions increasing fish production, enhancing income and livelihood security of fishermen and fish farmers, conserving aquatic

ecosystems and positioning Kerala as a national leader in sustainable fisheries and blue economy development by 2031.