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YOJANA MAGAZINE ANALYSIS

(April 2024)

(Part 3/3)

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

PART 1/3

- OUR ECOSYSTEM
- WESTERN GHATS

PART 2/3

- SOIL ECOSYSTEM
- SACRED GROVES

PART 3/3

- BLUE ECONOMY
- RAMSAR CONVENTION



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BLUE ECONOMY

According to the **World Bank**, the **Blue Economy** is defined as the sustainable development of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.

It emphasizes the integration of the development of the ocean economy with social inclusion and environmental sustainability, combined with innovative business models.

IMPORTANCE OF OCEANS

- Around 3-5% of global GDP derived from oceans and it has great potential for boosting economic growth by providing opportunities for income generation, jobs, etc.
- Over 80% of international goods being transported by sea
- The UN has declared the period 2021-2030 as the 'UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development'.

INDIA'S SCENARIO

- India has a **coastline** of more than **7500 km** and an **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** of more than **2.2 million sq km**.

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- **9 of India's states** have access to the **coastline**.
- India has 12 are major ports that handled 541.76 million tonnes in FY21, the highest being Mormugao Port, located in Goa.
- India is the **second-largest fish-producing nation** in the world and has a fleet of 2,50,000 fishing boats.
- India's **blue economy** accounts for roughly **4% of the GDP** and is estimated to increase over the period of time.

ACTIVITIES IN BLUE ECONOMY

The blue economy encompasses a diverse range of activities that are critical for sustainable development. Some are listed below:

- **Renewable Energy:** Sustainable marine energy such as offshore wind and wave energy promotes sustainable developing and helps in reducing reliance on nonrenewable energy sources.
- **Fisheries:** Sustainable fisheries management ensures more revenue, a continuous supply of fish, and contributing to the restoration of fish stocks, thus supporting both economic and environmental goals.

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- **Maritime Transport:** It is a cornerstone of the global economy, connecting nations and facilitating trade.
- **Tourism:** Ocean and coastal tourism offer recreational opportunities, contribute to job creation and economic growth, making it a key component of the blue economy.
- **Climate Change:** Oceans act as crucial carbon sinks, absorbing and storing carbon dioxide, a phenomenon known as 'blue carbon'.
- **Waste Management:** Proper waste disposal practices prevent pollution, marine debris, and environmental degradation, fostering ocean recovery.

IMPORTANCE OF BLUE ECONOMY FOR INDIA

- **Ocean and Resources**

The ocean and its EEZ offer great economic opportunities, having both living and non-living resources.

- **Fisheries:**

- Fisheries can be categorized as **marine fisheries and inland fisheries**.
- Fisheries have contributed **Rs. 46,663 crores to the economy** through exports in 2019-20.

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- In **1950-51**, fish production amounted to **0.75 MMT** (million metric tonnes), and in **2019- 20**, it was **14.2 MMT**.

○ Minerals

- The continental margins of India has an extensive variety of **terrigenous, biogenous, and homogenous** mineral deposits.
- Heavy minerals like **ilmenite, magnetite, monazite, zircon, and rutile** were reported from the beaches of Indian coastal states.

○ Hydrocarbons

- The sea beds are the **major source of hydrocarbons**. India has 26 sedimentary basins, spread across a total area of 3.4 million square kilometers.
- India has about **34 MMT of oil and 33 BCM of gas production**.
- The current **annual oil and natural gas consumption** is about 1.3 billion barrels and 65 billion cubic meters, which is **not met with internal resources**, raising dependence on imports.

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SOURCES OF EMPLOYMENT IN BLUE ECONOMY

- **Fishing and Aquaculture:** Traditional sectors like fishing, aquaculture, and fish processing have been significant sources of employment in the blue economy for many decades.
- **Marine Tourism:** activities like cruise travel, boating, scuba diving, and more, contributes to employment and economic growth in coastal regions.
- **Shipping and Ports:** The growth in the logistics sector, driven by industrial demand, emphasizes the increasing role of ports in future employment.
- **Shipbuilding:** It holds significant potential and employs individuals with diverse skills.
- **Offshore Wind and Marine Biology:** Emerging sectors like offshore wind and marine biology provide new employment opportunities.
- **Skill Development Initiatives:** The blue economy has the potential to engage a large workforce and has been doing so for the past many decades.

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RAMSAR WETLANDS

WHAT IS WETLAND?

Ramsar convention defines wetlands as:

“**areas of marsh, peat land or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six meters.**”

RAMSAR CONVENTION:

The Ramsar Convention, signed in **1971 in Ramsar, Iran**, is the only global treaty that focuses specifically on wetlands.

It is an **intergovernmental treaty** for the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Objective: To halt the worldwide loss of wetlands and to conserve, through wise use and management, those that remain.

Members: 170 countries

Once designated, these sites are added to the Convention's List of Wetlands of International Importance and become known as Ramsar sites. In designating a wetland as a Ramsar site, countries agree to establish and oversee a management framework aimed at conserving the wetland and ensuring its wise use.

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CRITERIA TO BE INCLUDED IN THE RAMSAR SITES

There are 9 criterias to be included in the Ramsar Wetlands list:

Criterion 1: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it contains a representative, rare, or unique example of a natural or near-natural wetland type found within the appropriate biogeographic region.

Criterion 2: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities.

Criterion 3: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports populations of plant and/or animal species important for maintaining the biological diversity of a particular biogeographic region.

Criterion 4: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports plant and/or animal species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions.

Criterion 5: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds.

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Criterion 6: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird.

Criterion 7: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports a significant proportion of indigenous fish subspecies, species or families, life-history stages, species interactions and/or populations that are representative of wetland benefits and/or values and thereby contributes to global biological diversity.

Criterion 8: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it is an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks, either within the wetland or elsewhere, depend.

Criterion 9: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of wetland-dependent nonavian animal species.

LIST OF RAMSAR SITES IN INDIA

At present, there are 80 Ramsar sites in India. The list can be viewed on the below link:

[https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?language=en&f\[0\]=regionCountry_en_ss%3AIndia&pagetab=0](https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?language=en&f[0]=regionCountry_en_ss%3AIndia&pagetab=0)

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