



Rules and Regulations Governing Fisheries in Different States along the Indian Coast



Fisheries management for the first 12 nautical miles off the coastline fall under the purview of the respective state fisheries departments. Each state has its own Marine Fisheries Regulation Acts (MFRAs) to manage fisheries in this region, but what immediately stands out is how diverse these rules are amongst states, complicating matters. Each state has a closed area where trawl vessels are not allowed, and seasons in which they are not allowed to fish. However, the enforcement of these closed areas (less so for closed seasons) remains questionable. Each act originally prescribed a certain closed season when trawlers are not allowed to fish, but over the years based on pressure from various stakeholder groups this number has constantly changed, and in many instances even reduced.

The tables below summarize the existing rules to prevent trawls from operating in certain regions and times of the year. The monsoon ban was primarily imposed to allow fish to reproduce and reduce pressure on them, but the uniformity of the timing and the fact that fishers from other coasts/states continue to fish in other coasts/states during the closures causes conflict. Closed areas, though introduced primarily with the intention of reducing conflicts between traditional and trawl boats, provides some respite for marine resources. However, poor enforcement often undermines these efforts.



Table 1: A summary of areas specified for traditional vessels under each states Marine Fisheries Regulation Act (MFRAs) (Adapted from *icsf.net*)

State	Coast	Year Effective	Specified Area for Traditional Vessels	Mechanized fishing vessels operating areas (to a distance of 12nm)
Tamil Nadu	East	2017	5nm	Beyond 5nm
Andhra Pradesh	East	1994	8km	- Mechanized boats < 15m overall length (OAL)- beyond 8km - Mechanized boats > 15m or 25 gross registered tons (GRT)- beyond 23km
Orissa	East	1982	2.6nm	- Upto 15meters- beyond 2.6nm - > 15 meters- beyond 5.39nm
West Bengal	East	1993	- Non-mechanized upto 9 meters- till 4.3nm - Non-mechanized above 9 meters- upto 10.7nm but not below 4.3nm	- Mechanized up to 15m- up to 26.99nm but not less than 10.7nm - Mechanized above 15m- beyond 26.99nm
Andaman and Nicobar	Islands off the East Coast	2004	Fishing Zone A: upto 6nm. Vessels fitted with 30 Horse Power (HP) engines including traditional and non-mechanized boats. Gear to be used- i. Gill net not below 25mm mesh (knot to knot diagonally) ii. Hook and Line iii. Shore seine/drag net of mesh size not below 25mm iv. Fish Traps	Fishing Zone- B (Territorial waters beyond 6nm from appropriate base line). Vessels fitted with engines of more than 30 Horse Power (HP). i. Gill net now below 25mm mesh. ii. Trawl net of standard mesh size fitted with a Turtle Excluder Device (TED) suitable to the trawl net. iii. Long line, purse seine, squid Jigger iv. Hook and Line
Puducherry	East Coast	2008	3 nautical miles	Beyond 3 nautical miles



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Gujarat	West Coast	2003	5 nautical miles, using hook and line fishing, gill netting	Beyond 5 nautical miles
Maharashtra	West Coast	1981	5 fathoms (Thane, Raigad, Mumbai) 10 fathoms (Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri)	Beyond 5 fathoms (Thane, Raigad, Mumbai) Beyond 10 fathoms (Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri)
Goa, Daman and Diu	West Coast	1980	2.6nm	Beyond 2.6nm
Karnataka	West Coast	1986	6km (or beyond 4 fathoms)	Purse seine operations beyond 10km Deep sea vessels beyond 20km
Kerala	West Coast	1980	Southern sector (1- Kollengode to Paravoor Pozhikkara)- upto 25 fathoms Southern Sector (2- Pozhikkara to Kovilthottam): upto 18 fathoms Northern Sector (Pozhikkara to Kovilthotttam): upto 12 fathoms	Motorized fishing vessels Southern Sector: area upto 20 fathoms Northern Sector: area upto 10 fathoms Mechanized fishing vessels less than 25GRT Southern Sector: upto 35 fathom line Northern Sector: upto 20 fathom line
Lakshadweep	Islands off the West Coast	2000		Prohibits the use of purse-seine, pelagic trawl, midwater trawl, and bottom trawl fishing gears, and ring seine of mesh size 20 mm and below, shore seine of mesh size 20mm and below in specified areas (coral reefs around the islands, and the lagoons and the area in the seas around the inhabited, uninhabited islands and submerged reefs and islets)



Table 2: Closed seasons and the type of fishing banned during this time (Adapted from icsf.net)

State	Year Effective	Coast	Current Closed Season	Days	Types of Fishing Banned	Types of fishing Permitted
Tamil Nadu	2001	East	April 15 th to June 15 th	60	Mechanized fishing/trawlers	All non-motorized and motorized craft with less than 25hp engine
Andhra Pradesh	2000	East	April 15 th to May 31 st	47	Trawlers and motorized craft with >25hp engine	Traditional and motorized craft < 25hp engine
Orissa	2000	East	April 15 th to June 15 th	60	Trawlers and motorized craft with >25hp engine	Traditional and motorized craft < 25hp engine
West Bengal	1995	East	April 15 th to May 31 st	47	Trawlers, gillnetters, behundi nets, bir net	
Puducherry	2001	East	April 15 th to May 31 st	47	Mechanized fishing/trawlers	All non-motorized and motorized craft with less than 25hp engine
Gujarat	1998-99	West	April 15 th to August 15 th	61	All craft	None
Maharashtra	1990	West	April 15 th to August 15 th	61	All craft	None
Daman and Diu	1990	West	June 15 th to August 15 th	61	Trawlers, gillnetters and dol netters	Motorized and traditional craft
Goa	1999	West	June 1 st to 31 st July	61	All craft	None
Karnataka	1989	West	June 15 th to August 10 th	57 days	All except motorized Outboard and Inboard Motor vessels upto 25hp engine	Motorized upto 25hp engine
- Dakshina Kannada and Udipi Districts			June 15 th to July 29 th	45 days		
- Uttara Kannada						
Kerala	1988	West	June 15 th to July 31 st	47 days	Mechanized vessels/motorized craft >10hp	All traditional and motorized craft of Outboard Motor/Inboard Motor upto 10hp engine