

WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

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Recently, India has deposited its Instrument of Acceptance of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS) and became a Party to the Agreement.

About WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

- It was adopted by consensus at the **12th WTO Ministerial Conference in Geneva in June 2022**.
- It is the first multilateral WTO agreement with an **environmental sustainability objective**.
- It prohibits government **support to illegal fishing activities** and overexploitation of stocks, contributing to the **protection of marine life**.
- The Agreement **entered into force on 15 September 2025** after acceptance by two-thirds of WTO Members.
- **India is the 123rd Member** of the WTO to deposit its Instrument of Acceptance.

Key Features of WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

- The Agreement **focuses on subsidies related to marine wild capture fishing** and fishing-related activities at sea.
 - Aquaculture and inland fisheries remain outside the scope of this Agreement.
- It protects the livelihoods of traditional and small-scale fishers by promoting sustainable fisheries.
- It **prohibits subsidies linked to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing** and fishing of overfished stocks,
- It also creates a **more equitable global fisheries regime** by disciplining harmful subsidies that support large, heavily subsidised industrial fishing fleets operated by distant water fishing nations.

Source: PIB

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