

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3516

ANSWERED ON:19.03.2013

VESSELS OPERATING IN EEZS

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of vessels operating in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) under the Letter of Permit (LoP) scheme;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that under the scheme foreign vessels come to India and fake their registration papers, use shell companies, fish in Indian waters and export their catch by transshipping at mid-sea;
- (c) if so, whether the Government has conducted any inquiry into these irregularities;
- (d) if so, the action taken against the responsible parties and the total estimated worth of catch during the past five years;
- (e) whether the Government has taken up the issue with the WTO;
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (g) whether the Government has undertaken any efforts to address the phenomenon of illegal fishing and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (DR.CHARAN DAS MAHANT)

(a)to (d): This Department issues Letter of Permission (LOPs) to Indian entrepreneurs for acquisition and operation of resource specific Deep-Sea Fishing Vessels (DSFVs) in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in accordance with the guidelines prescribed in this regard. As on date 91 DSFVs of 27 companies/ firms are having valid LOPs. The number of DSFVs in operation varies from time to time. The Inter-Ministerial Empowered Committee on Marine Fisheries (EC) considers and scrutinizes the proposals and recommends issuing LOPs to eligible Indian entrepreneurs only. The EC, which consists of members from Ministry of Home Affairs, Directorate General of Shipping, Ministry of Shipping, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Reserve Bank of India, Ministry of Defence, Coast Guard, Marine Products Export Development Authority etc. inter-alia considers the irregularities, if any, brought to its notice and recommends appropriate measures including suspension or cancellation of LOPs. Mid sea transshipment of fish catch is permissible in accordance with the norms prescribed by the Reserve Bank of India in this regard.

(e) & (f): Does not arise.

(g): Indian Coast Guard regularly undertake Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) measure to prevent illegal fishing in EEZ. Foreign vessels if found fishing in Indian waters illegally, are apprehended by the Coast Guards and penalized under the provisions of the Maritime Zone of India (Regulation of fishing by foreign vessels) Act, of 1981.