

ACT NO. OF 1994

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGULATION OF FISHING BY
FISHING VESSELS IN THE TERRITORIAL WATERS IN THE
SEA ALONG THE COAST LINE OF THE STATE OF ANDHRA
PRADESH AND FOR MATTERS CONNECTED THEREWITH.

Be it enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the State
of Andhra Pradesh in the Forty Fifth year of the Republic
of India as follows:-

CHAPTER - 1

PRELIMINARY

1. (1) This Act may be called the Andhra Pradesh Marine Short title, extent
Fishing (Regulation) Act, 1994. and commencement.
- (2) It extends to the whole of the State of Andhra
Pradesh.

(3) It shall come into force on such date as the State Government may, by notification appoint.

Definitions

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,-

- (a) 'adjudicating officer' means any officer of the Fisheries Department, not below the rank of an Assistant Director of Fisheries, authorised by the Government by notification to exercise the powers conferred on or to perform the functions entrusted to and discharge the duties imposed upon, adjudicating officer by or under this Act for such area as may be specified in the notification;
- (b) 'Appellate Board' means an Appellate Board constituted under Section 18;
- (c) 'Authorised Officer' means an Officer authorised under Section 3;
- (d) 'fishing vessel' means a ship or boat fitted with mechanical means of propulsion, which is engaged in sea-fishing for profit and includes,-
 - (i) a catamaran;
 - (ii) a country craft, and
 - (iii) a canoe, engaged in sea-fishing;
- (e) 'Government' means the State Government;
- (f) 'Licence' means a licence issued or renewed under Section 6;
- (g) 'notification' means a notification published in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, and the word 'Notified' shall be construed accordingly;
- (h) 'owner' in relation to any fishing vessel means the owner or master, or any agent of such owner, and includes a mortgage, lessee or other person in actual possession of the fishing vessel;
- (i) 'prescribed' means prescribed by rules made by Government under this Act.

(j) 'port' means the space within such limits as may from time to time be defined by the Government, by notification for the purpose of this Act;

(k) 'registered fishing vessel' means,—

(i) a fishing vessel registered under section 11 of the Marine Products Export Development Authority Act, 1972; or

(ii) a fishing vessel registered under section 9; Central Act 13 of 1972.

(l) 'specified area' means such area within the such limits in the sea along the entire coast line of the State, but not beyond territorial waters or exclusive economic zone as may be specified by notification by the Government.

(m) 'State' means the State of Andhra Pradesh and includes the territorial waters along the entire coast line of that State.

3. The Government may, by notification authorise,—

(a) any officer of the Government, not being an officer below the rank of a Gazetted Officer; or

Authorisation of officer for the purposes of any provisions of this Act.

(b) any officer of the Central Government, not being an officer below the rank of a Gazetted Officer or a commissioned officer in the Armed Forces of the Union with the consent of that Government, to exercise the powers conferred on, and discharge the duties imposed upon the authorised officer under this Act in such area as may be specified in the notification.

CHAPTER - II

REGULATION OF FISHING

(1) The Government may, having regard to the matters referred to in sub-section (2), by order notified in the Gazette, regulate, restrict or prohibit,—

Power to regulate, restrict or prohibit certain matters within specified area.

- (a) the fishing in any specified area by such class or classes of fishing vessels as may be prescribed; or
- (b) the number of fishing vessels which may be used for fishing in any specified area; or
- (c) the catching in any specified area of such species of fish and for such period as may be specified in the notification; or
- (d) the use of such fishing gear in any specified area as may be prescribed.

(2) In making an order under sub-section (1), the Government shall have regard to the following matters, namely:-

- (a) the need to protect the interests of different sections of persons engaged in fishing, particularly those engaged in fishing using traditional fishing craft such as catamaran, country craft or canoe;
- (b) the need to conserve fish and to regulate fishing on a scientific basis;
- (c) the need to maintain law and order in the sea; and
- (d) any other matter that may be prescribed.

Prohibition of use of fishing vessel in contravention of any order made under section 4.

5. No owner or master of a fishing vessel shall use, or cause or allow to be used, such fishing vessel for fishing in any manner which contravenes an order made under section 4:

Provided that nothing in such order shall be construed as preventing the passage of any fishing vessel through any specified area and shall not in any manner cause any damage to any fishing nets or tackles belonging to any person who engages in fishing in the specified area by using any traditional fishing craft such as catamaran, country craft, or canoe.

Licensing of fishing vessels.

6. (1) The owner of a registered fishing vessel may make an application to the authorised officer for the grant of a licence for using such fishing vessel for fishing in any specified area.

(2) Every application under sub-section (1) shall be in such form, contain such particulars, and be accompanied by such fees, as may be prescribed.

(3) The authorised officer may after making such enquiry as he deems fit and having regard to the matters referred to in sub-section (4), either grant or refuse to grant, to the owner of the fishing vessel, a licence for using such fishing vessel for fishing in the specified area or specified areas mentioned in such licence.

(4) In granting or refusing to grant licence under sub-section (2), the authorised officer shall have regard to the following, namely:-

- (a) whether the fishing vessel is a registered fishing vessel;
- (b) the condition of the fishing vessel including the accessories and fishing gear with which it is fitted;
- (c) any order that may be made under Section 4;
- (d) such other matter that may be prescribed.

(5) A licence granted under this section shall be in such form and subject to such conditions, including conditions as to payment of such fees and furnishing such security for the due performance of the conditions, as may be prescribed:

Provided that different fees, and different amounts by way of security, may be prescribed in respect of licences for different classes of fishing vessels.

(6) A licence granted under this section shall be valid for the period specified therein or for such extended period as the authorised officer may think fit to allow in any case.

7. No person shall, after the commencement of this Act, carry on fishing in any specified area using a fishing vessel which is not licensed under Section 6:

Prohibition of fishing using fishing vessels which are not licensed.

Provided that nothing in this section shall apply to any fishing vessel, which was being used for fishing immediately before the commencement of this Act, for such period as may be specified by the Government by notification.

Cancellation, suspension and amendment of licences.

8. (1) If the authorised officer is satisfied either on a reference made to him in this behalf or otherwise, that-

(a) a licence granted under Section 6 has been obtained by fraud or mis-representation as to an essential fact; or

(b) the licensee has, without reasonable cause, failed to comply with the conditions subject to which the licence has been granted or has contravened any of the provisions of this Act or any order or rule made thereunder, then without prejudice to any other penalty to which the licensee may be liable under this Act, the authorised officer may, after giving the holder of the licence a reasonable opportunity of showing cause, cancel or suspend the licence or forfeit the whole or any part of security, if any, furnished for the due performance of the conditions subject to which the licence has been granted.

(2) Subject to any rules that may be made in this behalf, the authorised officer may also vary or amend a licence granted under Section 6.

Registration of vessels.
Central Act 13 of 1972.

9. (1) The owner of every vessel not being a fishing vessel registered under section 11 of the Marine Products Export Development Authority Act, 1972, shall register such vessel under this Act.

(2) Every application for registration of such vessel shall be made by the owner thereof to the authorised officer in such form, and shall be accompanied by such fees, as may be prescribed,-

(a) before the expiration of one month from the date on which he first became the owner of such vessel; or

(b) before the expiration of three months from the commencement of this Act, whichever is later;

Provided that the authorised officer may, for sufficient reason to be recorded in writing extend the time limit for registration for such period as he thinks fit.

(3) The authorised officer shall issue to the owner of the vessel registered by him a certificate of registration in the prescribed form and shall enter the particulars of such certificate, in a register to be kept by him, in such form as may be prescribed.

(4) Registration once made shall be in force until it is cancelled by the authorised officer.

(5) Every vessel registered under this section shall carry a registration mark, assigned to it by the authorised officer, displayed in the prescribed manner.

(6) No vessel, other than a registered fishing vessel, shall be entitled to a licence under Section 6.

10. Where a registered fishing vessel moves from the area of one port to the area of another port, the owner of such fishing vessel shall give information to that effect, in the prescribed manner, to the authorised officer by whom such fishing vessel was registered and also to the port officer having jurisdiction over the area whereto such fishing vessel has been moved.

Information to be given to authorised officer about movement of fishing vessels.

11. (1) Every owner of a registered fishing vessel shall furnish to the authorised officer at the prescribed time and in the prescribed manner such returns as may be prescribed.

Returns to be made by owners of registered fishing vessels.

(2) The authorised officer may inspect any registered fishing vessel at any time to verify the accuracy of any return made under this section.

12. Every decision of the authorised officer under section 6, section 8 or section 9, granting or refusing to grant licence for a fishing vessel or cancelling, suspending, varying or amending such licence or registering, or cancelling the registration of vessel shall, subject to any right of appeal under section 13 be final.

Finality of orders under Section 6, 8 and 9.

13. (1) Any person aggrieved by an order of the authorised officer refusing to grant licence for a fishing vessel or cancelling, suspending or varying or amending such licence or refusing to register a vessel or cancelling the

Appeals against orders refusing grant of licence

registration of such vessel may, within thirty days from the date on which the order is communicated to him, prefer an appeal to such authority as may be prescribed (hereafter in this section referred to as the appellate authority):

Provided that the appellate authority may entertain the appeal after the expiry of the said period of thirty days if it is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause from filing the appeal in time.

(2) On receipt of an appeal under sub-section (1) the appellate authority shall, after giving the appellant a reasonable opportunity of being heard, pass such orders thereon as it deems fit as expeditiously as possible.

(3) Every order passed by the appellate authority under this section shall be final.

CHAPTER - III

PENALTIES

Power to enter and search fishing vessels. 14. The authorised officer may, if he has reason to believe that any fishing vessel is being, or has been, used in contravention of any of the provisions of this Act, or of any order or rule made thereunder or any of the conditions of the licence, enter and search such vessel and impound such vessel and seize any fish found in it.

Disposal of seized fish. 15. (1) The authorised officer shall keep the fishing vessel impounded under section 14, in such place and in such manner as may be prescribed.

(2) In the absence of suitable facilities for the storage of the fish seized, the authorised officer may, if he is of the opinion that the disposal of such fish is necessary, dispose of such fish and deposit the proceeds thereof in the prescribed manner in the office of the adjudicating officer.

Adjudication 16. (1) The Government shall, by notification, appoint an officer not below the rank of a gazetted officer in

the Fisheries Department as the adjudicating officer to exercise such functions and perform such duties as may be specified in the notification.

(2) The authorised officer shall send a report of the fishing vessel impounded and the fish seized therefrom under Section 14 to the adjudicating officer, in such manner as may be prescribed.

(3) The adjudicating officer shall hold an enquiry into the matters mentioned in the report, in the prescribed manner, after giving all the parties concerned a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

17. (1) The adjudicating officer shall, after making an enquiry under Section 16, decide whether any person has used, or caused to use or allowed to be used any fishing vessel in contravention of any of the provisions of this Act, or of any order or rule made thereunder or any of the conditions of the licence and impose such penalty not exceeding,-

Penalty.

(a) five thousand rupees, if the value of the fish seized is one thousand rupees or less;

(b) five times the value of the fish, if the value of the fish seized is more than one thousand rupees; or

five thousand rupees, in any other case, being a case not involving any fish, as may be adjudged by the adjudicating officer.

(2) In addition to any penalty that may be imposed under sub-section (1), the adjudicating officer may direct that, —

(a) the registration certificate of the fishing-vessel or the license, any condition of which has been contravened, shall be —

(i) cancelled or revoked, as the case may be; or

(ii) suspend for such period as the adjudicating officer deems fit; or

(b) the fishing vessel or fish that may have been impounded or seized as the case may be, under Section 14 shall be forfeited to the Government;

Provided that no fishing vessel shall be forfeited under clause (b), if the adjudicating officer after hearing the owner of such vessel or any person claiming any right thereto is satisfied that the owner or such person had exercised due care for the prevention of the commission of such offence.

Constitution of Appellate Board and appeal to Appellate Board.

18. (1) The Government may, by notification constitute one or more Appellate Board or Appellate Boards.

(2) The Appellate Board shall consist of three members of whom one shall be a person who is or has been District Judge, who shall be appointed as the Chairman of the Appellate Board.

(3) Where only one Appellate Board is constituted that Appellate Board shall have jurisdiction throughout the State, and where more than one Appellate Board is constituted by the Government, the Government may, by notification define the jurisdiction of each Appellate Board.

(4) Any person aggrieved by an order of the adjudicating officer may, within thirty days from the date on which the order is made, prefer an appeal to the Appellate Board, having jurisdiction to hear such appeal:

Provided that the Appellate Board may entertain any appeal after the expiry of the said period of thirty days, but not after the expiry of sixty days from the date aforesaid, if it is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause from filing the appeal in time.

(5) No appeal under this section shall be entertained by the Appellate Board unless the appellant has, at the time of filing the appeal, deposited the amount of penalty payable under the order appealed against:

Provided that, on an application made by the appellant in this behalf, the Appellate Board may, if it is of the opinion that the deposit to be made under this

Sub-section will cause undue hardship to the appellant,
by order in writing dispense with such deposit either
unconditionally or subject to such conditions as it may
deem fit to impose.

(6) On receipt of an appeal under sub-section (4),
the Appellate Board may, after holding such enquiry as
it deems fit, and after giving the parties concerned a
reasonable opportunity of being heard, confirm, modify
or set aside the order appealed against and the decision
of the Appellate Board shall be final; and, —

(a) if the sum deposited by way of penalty under
sub-section (5) exceeds the penalty directed to
be paid by the Appellate Board, the excess
amount, or

(b) if the Appellate Board sets aside the order
imposing penalty, the whole of the sum
deposited by way of penalty, shall be refunded
to the appellant within such period as may be
specified in the orders by the Appellate Board.

19. The Appellate Board may call for and examine the
records of any order passed by an adjudicating officer
under Section 17 and against which no appeal has been
preferred under Section 18 for the purpose of satisfying
itself as to the legality or propriety of such order or as
to the regularity of the procedure and pass such order
with respect thereto as it may think fit:

Revision by Appellate
Board.

Provided that no such order shall be made except
after giving the person affected a reasonable opportunity
of being heard in the matter.

20. (1) The adjudicating officer or the Appellate Board
as the case may be shall, while holding an enquiry, have
all the powers of a civil court under the Code of Civil
Procedure, 1908 while trying a suit, in respect of the
following matters, namely:

Powers of adjudicating
officer, the Appellate
Board in relation to
holding enquiry under
this Act.
Central Act 5 of 1908

- (a) summoning and enforcing the attendance of
witnesses;
- (b) requiring the discovery and production of any
document;

- (c) requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office;
- (d) receiving evidence on affidavits;
- (e) issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses or documents.

Central Act 2 of 1974. (2) The adjudicating officer or the Appellate Board shall, while exercising any power under this Act, be deemed to be a civil court for purposes of Section 345 and 346 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

Offences by companies. 21. (1) Where an offence under this Act has been committed by a company, every person who, at the time the offence was committed, was in charge of, and was responsible, to the company for the conduct of the business of the company as well as the company, shall be deemed to be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly:

Provided that nothing contained in this sub-section shall render any such person liable to any punishment, if he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he had exercised all due diligence to prevent the commission of such offence.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), where any offence under this Act has been committed with the consent or connivance of, or is attributable to any neglect on the part of, any director, manager, secretary or other officer, such director, manager, secretary or other officer shall be deemed to be guilty of that offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

Explanation: For the purposes of this section, -

- a) 'Company' means any body corporate and includes a firm or other association of individuals; and
- b) 'director', in relation to a firm, means a partner in the firm.

CHAPTER IV

MISCELLANEOUS

Exemptions. 22. (1) Nothing contained in this Act, shall apply to survey vessels belonging to the Central Government or any State Government or any Public Undertaking.

(2) If the Government is of the opinion that, having regard to the purposes of this Act, it would not be in the public interest to apply all or any of the provisions of this Act to any class or classes of fishing vessels used for fishing in any specified area or specified areas, it may by notification exempt, subject to such conditions as it may think fit to impose such class or classes of fishing vessels used for fishing in such specified area or specified areas, as it may specify in the notification, from the operation of all or any of the provisions of this Act.

23. (1) No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against the Government or any officer or authority taken in good faith for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any order or rule made thereunder.

(2) No suit or other legal proceeding shall lie against the Government or any officer or authority for any damage caused or likely to be caused by anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any order or rule made thereunder.

24. (1) The Government may, by notification make rules for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

(2) In particular, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely:-

(a) the matters to which regard shall be had in making an order under sub-section(1) of Section 4;

(b) the form of the application for licence under sub-section (1) of Section 6, the particulars which it shall contain and the fees which shall accompany it;

(c) the matters to which regard be had in granting or refusing a licence, under clause (d) of sub-section (4) of Section 6, the fees payable for

the licence and the security for the due performance of the conditions of the licence;

- (d) the procedure to be followed in granting or refusing to grant a licence under Section 6 or cancelling, suspending, varying or amending such licence or in registering a vessel under Section 9 or cancelling such registration;
- (e) the form of the application for registration of a vessel under Section 9, the particulars which such application shall contain, and the fees which shall accompany the application; the form of the certificate of registration and the form of the register referred to in sub-section (3) of that Section, the manner in which the registration mark referred to in sub-section (5) of that section shall be displayed.
- (f) the manner in which the information referred to in Section 10 shall be given;
- (g) the time and manner in which the returns referred to in sub-section (1) of section 11 shall be furnished;
- (h) the authority to whom appeals shall be preferred under sub-section (1) of Section 13;
- (i) the place and the manner in which an impounded fishing vessel shall be kept under sub-section (1) of Section 15 and the manner in which the procedure of the disposal of the seized fish shall be deposited with the adjudicating officer under sub-section (2) of that section;
- (j) the procedure of the enquiry by the adjudicating officer under sub-section (3) of Section 16;
- (k) the qualifications of the members of the Appellate Board other than the Chairman, the fees

and allowances payable to the Chairman and other members of the Appellate Board; the procedure of the Appellate Board;

- (l) the fees payable for the supply of copies of documents or orders or for any other purpose or matter involving the rendering of any service by any officer or authority under this Act;
- (m) any other matter which is to be, or may be, provided for by rules under this Act.

(3) Every rule made under this Act, shall immediately after it is made, be laid before the Legislative Assembly of the State if it is in session and if it is not in session, in the session immediately following, for a total period of fourteen days which may be comprised in one session or in two successive sessions, and if before the expiration of the session in which it is so laid or the session immediately following the Legislative Assembly agrees in making any modification in the rule or in the annulment of the rule, shall, from the date on which the modification or annulment is notified, have effect only in such modified form or shall stand annulled as the case may be, so however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.