

## Brief on the National Framework on Traceability in Fisheries and Aquaculture 2025

The document outlines the **National Framework on Traceability in Fisheries and Aquaculture 2025**, developed under the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY)** by the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Government of India. It aims to establish a **national digital traceability system** for fisheries and aquaculture to ensure compliance with domestic and international regulations, promote food safety, enhance sustainability, and improve market access. The framework is a transformative initiative to modernize India's fisheries and aquaculture sector, ensuring sustainability, food safety, and global competitiveness.

### Key Highlights:

1. **Context and Rationale:** India is a leading global fish producer and exporter, but its traceability practices are fragmented and inconsistent. The framework addresses regulatory gaps, crisis response, consumer confidence, market access, and inclusivity for small-scale stakeholders.
2. **Objectives:**
  - Develop a unified digital traceability system.
  - Ensure compliance with regulations.
  - Promote food safety, sustainability, and consumer confidence.
  - Empower small-scale fishers and farmers to access domestic and international markets.
3. **Challenges:** Infrastructure and technology gaps, inclusivity for small-scale fisheries, regional disparities, and the complexity of implementing traceability across diverse value chains.
4. **Policy Support:** The framework aligns with national initiatives like **PMMSY**, **Digital India**, **Blue Economy Policy**, and global seafood trade standards. It integrates existing systems like **SHAPHARI Certification**, **ReALCRaft**, **Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)**, and **Blockchain-based protocols**.
5. **Implementation Strategy:** A phased approach includes mapping value chains, addressing market requirements, designing a traceability system, and integrating existing systems.
6. **Traceability System Design:** The system will use **Critical Tracking Events (CTEs)** and **Key Data Elements (KDEs)** to ensure end-to-end tracking of fish and aquaculture products. It will employ technologies like **blockchain**, **IoT**, **QR codes**, **GPS**, and **cloud-based infrastructure**.
7. **Institutional Framework:** A multi-tiered governance structure includes a **National Level Governance Committee**, **Adoption Committee**, **State/UT Fisheries Departments**, and field-level institutions for implementation, monitoring, and stakeholder engagement.
8. **Data Governance:** The system ensures data ownership, role-based access control, cybersecurity, and data validation measures to maintain transparency, security, and trust.
9. **Capacity Building and Outreach:** Training programs, awareness campaigns, and field support will empower stakeholders to adopt and benefit from the traceability system.
10. **Phased Rollout:** The framework will be implemented in six phases, starting with policy formulation, IT system development, pilot projects, integration of existing systems, national scale-up, and continuous improvement.
11. **Monitoring and Compliance:** Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), regular monitoring, feedback mechanisms, and policy reviews will ensure effective implementation and alignment with global standards.

**Observation of World bank:** The World Bank appreciated the document, noting that it comprehensively addresses all aspects of traceability. They recommended that a centralized traceability system be integrated into the NFDP, particularly if the framework is to be incorporated under the PMMSY. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of providing a robust legal foundation to support the implementation of the framework.