

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 94
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.07.2025

Phasing Out of Fossil Fuel based Boats

94. SHRI DULU MAHATO:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that boats run by petrol-diesel leads to water and noise pollution and have adverse impact on the birds and aqua ecology and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether any assessment have been made regarding environmental impact of such boats and if so, major outcomes of the same;
- (c) whether there are any rules or restrictions on using these boats in bird sanctuaries and ecologically sensitive areas and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government is considering to promote phasing out of fossil fuel based boats with solar boats in phased manner and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the details of the list of the recognised boat parking places in the country including the number and type (manual or machine) boats being used in each of such places along with the type of fuel being used in such boats, State/UT-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a)to (e)

The Government of India is aware that boats powered by petrol and diesel contribute to water and noise pollution, adversely affecting birds and aquatic ecosystems. Petrol and diesel boats, release unburnt fuel, oil, and exhaust emissions, including hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen oxides, into waterbodies. These pollutants can harm aquatic life by reducing water quality, forming toxic sheens, and accumulating in sediments, which affects fish, plankton, and other organisms. Additionally, noise pollution from these engines, especially in sensitive areas like bird sanctuaries may disrupt avian behavior, including breeding, foraging, and navigation, particularly for species reliant on acoustic cues. Noise from boat engines can also impair fish communication and predator avoidance, further affecting aquatic ecosystems. In India, aquatic ecosystems, which are critical habitats for birds and other obligate aquatic species, are particularly vulnerable to such disturbances.

The Inland Vessels (Prevention and Containment of Pollution) Rules, 2022 framed under the Inland Vessels Act, 2021 (read with Section 111 of the Act) mandates that all Inland vessels passing through ecologically sensitive areas must comply with the applicable norms and

standards, as prescribed by the Central Government under Environment Protection Act, 1986 (29 of 1986), the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (53 of 1972) and any other law for the time being in force. The Government of India is actively promoting the transition from fossil fuel-based boats to solar-electric boats, particularly in eco-sensitive areas, as part of its broader sustainability and renewable energy goals.

The Ministry of Shipping, in August 2023, amended its shipbuilding subsidy policy granting a 20% subsidy to solar electric boats measuring 12 metres or more in length. Additionally, boats utilizing green fuels like as methanol, ammonia, and hydrogen would receive a 30% subsidy. Further, the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is actively working towards a phased transition from fossil fuel-based vessels to cleaner alternatives including electric, solar-powered and hybrid propulsion boats. The Harit Nauka Guidelines have been launched by Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways in January, 2024 with a vision for 100 % transition of Inland Vessels to Green Vessels by 2047 by providing technical standards and incentives for eco-friendly boat design, green retrofitting and use of alternate fuels and phasing out of fossil fuel based vessels.
