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India sets USD 12 billion seafood export target for 2025

 **Cliff White** published in [Supply & Trade](#)



Fish being brought ashore in Digha, West Bengal, India | Photo courtesy of SouravPaxalates/Shutterstock

India is looking to grow its seafood exports by USD 4 billion (EUR 3.7 billion), setting a goal of USD 12 billion (EUR 11.1 billion) in annual export value by 2025.

In its April 2022-March 2023 fiscal year, India achieved USD 8 billion (EUR 7.4 billion) in seafood exports, with frozen shrimp accounting for USD 5.6 billion (EUR 5.2 billion), including USD 2.6 billion (EUR 2.4 billion) shipped to the United States.

"The government intends to focus on value addition and supply to high-end markets while creating awareness about good labor and environment practices among exporters," two Indian Commerce Ministry officials [told Reuters](#) on condition of anonymity, ahead of a general election beginning later in April.

The officials said the growth strategy will be built around a focus on high-end markets including the United States and Europe. China, Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Middle East countries are secondary targets for exports of shrimp, octopus, and cuttlefish, according to the officials.

The growth target has been set for the 2025 fiscal year, with the officials acknowledging global seafood demand will likely remain weak for the remainder of the current year.

Indian seafood sales will likely be boosted by [a free trade agreement it signed 10 March 2024 with the European Free Trade Association \(EFTA\)](#), which includes Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland. The FTA, signed after 16 years of negotiations and contingent on ratification by each country's government, will eliminate tariffs on most products traded between Indian and EFTA countries, including most seafood. India is EFTA's fifth-largest trading partner after the E.U., the United States, the U.K., and China, with total two-way trade estimated at around USD 25 billion (EUR 23.1 billion) in 2023.

India's shrimp industry is currently facing international scrutiny after reports from the Corporate Accountability Lab, the Associated Press, and the Outlaw Ocean Project [published on 20 March](#) presented [evidence of forced labor](#) and [environmental problems](#) in the sector.

The two Indian government officials interviewed by Reuters called the reports baseless, and speculated they were possibly instigated by industry rivals in the U.S. and other major shrimp-producing nations.


Separately, Seafood Exporters Association of India President Pawan Kumar [criticized the AP](#) for alleged weaknesses in its investigatory work and Choice Canning Vice President of Sales and Procurement Jacob Jose pilloried the Outlaw Ocean Project's reporting [in a SeafoodSource interview](#). And the Federation of Indian Export Organisation (FIEO) has said all Indian shrimp exporters are in compliance with food safety and quality norms of both India and exporting nations, including the United States.

Nonetheless, the two government officials said representatives of India's Commerce Ministry are planning to meet the country's shrimp exporters and state government representatives "to ensure all export houses meet the expectations of buyers and overseas consumers." The government is also considering underwriting an independent study of the industry, they said.

Separately, The Center for Responsible Seafood will be hosting its second annual Shrimp Summit in Chennai, India, from 27 to 29 June 2024, during which it will host a special session to address the alleged labor abuses in Indian processing plants.

"The session will provide a forum that will enable the full range of stakeholders to be heard, including major retailers, media, standards organizations, auditors, and seafood processors," TCRS President George Chamberlain said [in a press release](#). "The objective of the session is to discuss the facts, identify any loopholes or gaps that might enable violations, and seek solutions to restore confidence in India's shrimp exports, certification and auditing systems, and farmed shrimp around the world."





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
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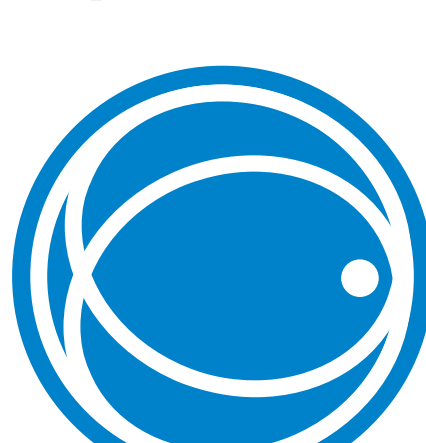
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