

Draft “Sagarmala Innovation and Startup Policy”

Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

1 Background and Context

India comprises a significant size maritime sector with 12 Major and 200+ Non-Major Ports situated along its 7,500 km long coastline and a vast network of 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways. The country’s maritime sector plays a crucial role in its overall trade and growth, with 95% of the country’s trade volume and 65% of the trade value being undertaken through maritime transport.

Due to strategic location on key international maritime trade routes; India has embarked on the ambitious Sagarmala Programme to promote port-led development in the country. The vision of the Programme is to reduce logistics cost for EXIM and domestic trade with minimal infrastructure investment and this vision is being realized by port modernization, port led industrialization, enhancement of seamless port connectivity & coastal community development.

In pursuance with the above objectives, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), through Sagarmala Programme, has been working on skill development and applied research initiatives to improve skills, technology usage and practices in the Indian maritime sector. It has setup the National Technology Centre for Ports Waterways (NTCPWC) at IIT Madras, Centre of Excellence in Maritime and Shipbuilding (CEMS) at Vishakhapatnam and Mumbai and Centre for Inland and Coastal Maritime Technologies (CICMT) at IIT Kharagpur. It is also working on optimally using unused building in major ports (Jawaharlal Nehru Port, New Mangalore Port, Chennai Port, Vishakhapatnam Port etc.) to create Multi Skill Development Centres (MSDCs) that can provide skilled manpower requirement to the port and maritime sector.

MoPSW now envisages leveraging this background work to establish an innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem for the maritime sector by operationalizing the “**Sagarmala Innovation and Startup Policy**”. This entails intensive collaboration of MoPSW academic and training institutions, private sector and convergence of different Ministry schemes (Startup India, etc.) to develop an ecosystem to groom fresh ideas/ approaches to address and solve issues of the Indian port and maritime sector.

1.1 Challenges faced by Maritime startups

In the last 5 to 6 years, especially after the launch of Startup India campaign, there has been a continuous boom of startups in all industries, especially road transportation-logistics, agriculture, fashion, medical, e-commerce, etc. through Digital or Mobile App based technology as aggregation platform.

But there was a noticeable absence of startups in maritime sector, despite the presence of Incubators all over India either on private basis or under schemes like