

Harnessing Ocean Resources

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Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) has taken many initiatives to harness the potential of Ocean resources.

Under the schemes “Ocean—Services, Modelling, Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)” and “Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)” of MoES, resource inventories for energy, fisheries, and minerals have been taken up. Government of India signed a 15 year contract with International Seabed Authority (ISA) for exploration of polymetallic nodules from Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) in 2002. Extensive survey and other developmental activities have been carried out in 75000 sq km area retained by India in CIOB. MoES has undertaken exploration and other developmental activities related to polymetallic sulphides under a 15 years contract signed in 2016 with International Seabed Authority (ISA) for exploration of polymetallic sulphides in the allotted area of 10,000 sq km along Central Indian Ridge (CIR) & Southwest Indian Ridge (SWIR) region of the Indian Ocean.

National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) under MoES has developed, demonstrated and operated unmanned remotely operated systems to harness ocean resources. Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE) of MoES explored the deep-sea living resources under Marine Living Resources Programme (MLRP). The programme covers the regular monitoring of the Indian ecosystems covering pelagic to deep sea realms vis-à-vis documenting the taxonomic information and development of technology for harnessing resources.

Geological Survey of India (GSI) under Ministry of Mines has delineated prospective offshore areas within Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India for marine mineral resources like lime mud, heavy mineral placers [ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite, garnet, zircon], and construction sand. Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying has taken several initiatives over the years for development of marine fisheries in sustainable manner.

This information was given by the Minister of State (I/C) for M/o Earth Sciences and M/o Science & Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh in a written reply in Rajya Sabha today.

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