

PARLIAMENT QUESTION: DEEP OCEAN MISSION

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As part of a contract with the International Seabed Authority, India has been allotted a 75,000 square km region in the Central Indian Ocean Basin and a 10,000 square km area in the Central Indian Ridge and Southwest Indian Ridge of the Southern Indian Ocean to conduct scientific survey and mineral exploration activities. Further, biodiversity surveys have been conducted at 19 seamount locations in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal under the Deep Ocean Mission.

The Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (Kochi), an attached office of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, has conducted biodiversity surveys across 19 seamounts in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, and ~1300 deep-sea organisms have been collected, studied and vouchered, including genomic analysis for select organisms and the discovery of nearly 23 species that are new to science. The biodiversity data is disseminated through research publications and shared with the UN [Ocean Biodiversity Information System](#).

As part of the Deep Ocean Mission, collaborative research projects are undertaken and funded to various government and private laboratories, universities and institutions.

Marine biodiversity data of organisms collected through surveys of seamounts in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal are disseminated through research publications and shared with the UN [Ocean Biodiversity Information System](#). Further, the Marine Microbial Information Portal, developed by the National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai, provides genomic sequence data of deep-sea microbes collected under the Deep Ocean Mission in the public domain.

This information was given by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, MoS Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha today.

NKR/PSM/AV

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