

Report on the Launch Ceremony

Ocean Centres India

Stepping Stone towards a Safe & Sustainable Ocean Economy in India

Date: 10 July 2025 (10:00 AM to 05:00 PM)

Venue: India Habitat Centre, New Delhi



Following its global launch at the 2025 UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France, UN Global Compact Network India joins the local rollout of the global Ocean Centres initiative in an official launch event held on Thursday, 10 July 2025, at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The event brought together leaders from a diverse range of organisations committed to advancing a safe and sustainable ocean economy, including businesses and industries, government agencies, regulatory bodies, financial institutions, trade unions, NGOs, academic and research institutions, as well as

community-led organisations.

The Ocean Centres is a long-term initiative hosted by the UN Global Compact and supported by the Lloyd's Register Foundation. It has been set up in seven countries – Brazil, Ghana, Kenya, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines. Each centre, strategically located to address regional safety challenges, will play a vital role in fostering collaboration between governments, industry leaders, and maritime communities. The initiative will foster locally led solutions to the challenges that are to be found in each of the regions. The Ocean Centres focus on four key action areas: shipping and ports, fishing and aquaculture, offshore renewables, and finance and investment, each addressing safety and sustainability across emerging ocean sectors. These priorities were shaped by national insights and stakeholder input to ensure local relevance and global impact. Building on this, they aim to promote responsible business practices in ocean-based economies and influence the creation of new standards and policies.

The Ocean Centres India launch event aimed to foster dialogue across key sectors, including shipping, ports, offshore renewables, fishing & aquaculture and blue finance. **Dr. M. Ravichandran**, Hon'ble Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India, unveiled Ocean Centres India in an event held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, on 10 July 2025. The launch event was also graced by **Dr. Vishwapati Trivedi**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Government of India, and **Shri H.N. Aswath**, Development Adviser, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India, among other dignitaries. The event featured two high-level panels covering the aspects of co-creating a safe and sustainable ocean economy and putting safety at the heart of sustainability.

Inaugural Panel: Official Launch of Ocean Centres India: Stepping stone towards a safe and sustainable ocean economy in India



While delivering the Welcome Address, **Mr. Ratnesh Jha**, Executive Director, UN Global Compact Network India, emphasised the importance of the Ocean Centres initiative and urged the stakeholders to actively participate in the deliberations. Through her inaugural address, **Ms Dagmara Karbowska**, Sr. Programme Manager, Lloyd Register Foundation, emphasised risk identification and the importance of safety in the maritime sector. She also highlighted several initiatives taken by the Lloyd Register Foundation towards Engineering a Safer World. While sharing the background of the

Ocean Centres, **Dr. Ravi Raj Atrey**, Country Lead, Ocean Centres India, highlighted the genesis of the Ocean Centres. He urged the stakeholders to make “Safety at the Heart of Sustainability” a movement in the Indian sustainability / ESG landscape, beginning with the Maritime sector. **Dr. Vishwapati Trivedi**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways; Former Chairman, National Shipping Board; & Former Chairman, Inland Waterways Authority, Government of India, emphasised the blue economy priorities for India in his special address. He emphasised the need to promote blue bonds, strong regulations, and capacity building of stakeholders.

Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India, during his Keynote Address, suggested a five-pronged agenda for a safe and sustainable ocean economy focusing on the food, water, energy, health and carbon sink. He said that the Government want to double the share of Blue Economy in GDP and is continuously working to reach this goal. He highlighted the need to sustainably harness offshore wind, minerals, water resources, and coastal area development. He said that we need to have a clean, healthy, resilient, productive, predictive, safe, accessible, inspiring and engaging Ocean. He said that ‘Deep Ocean Mission’ of the Government is not about going deep into the Ocean, rather it is about thinking deeply about the Ocean. He also emphasised aspects of convergence data and science-based decision-making process, mitigating Oceanic disasters, international collaborations and international security. He wished that Ocean Centres India would play a vital role as a catalyst for the Government, as well as various stakeholders and would contribute to the goals of Viksit Bharat by promoting the blue economy in India. He recommended that Ocean Centres India should come up with a policy to organise Inter-Ministerial Consultations, particularly involving Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change etc.

During his address, **Mr. R. K. Singh**, Chief General Manager, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) shared his experiences pertaining to the blue finance landscape in India and challenges. He said that for facilitating blue finance, four things are important: Accessibility, Bankability, Cost, and Development. Guest of Honour, **Mr. H. N. Aswath**, Development Adviser, Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Government of India, highlighted Government initiatives towards a Safe and Sustainable Ocean Economy during his address. He shared about the sustainable practices of major Ports in India. He said that infrastructure should be built keeping in mind that the upcoming 10 generations could be able to use it. He emphasised harnessing the fisheries resources, including fishing harbours and fish

landing centres. Concerning the Ports and Shipping sector, he shared that the 2047 vision of the Government is to achieve a 10000 million ton capacity of Indian ports, emphasis on use of green fuels, Harit Nauka Scheme, and standardisation of designs, among many other initiatives. He wished all success to Ocean Centres India to achieve its objectives.

High-level Panel 1: Co-creating a Safe and Sustainable Ocean Economy in India



The panel was moderated by **Dr. Ravi Raj Atrey**, Country Lead, Ocean Centres India. **Mr. Arnab Mandal**, Lead, Strategy and Impact, Tata Trusts, shared information about Ocean Equity and rights to ocean resources. He emphasised the need to create a knowledge base for different sets of stakeholders, financing for community development in coastal areas. **Ms Bharti Birla**, Enterprise Development Specialist, International Labour Organisation (ILO) highlighted about ILO's Maritime Labour Convention and Work in Fishing Convention, Just

Transition Guidelines. She emphasised on elements of decent work, including the issues of safety in investment decisions and recommended developing country-specific guidelines for responsible business conduct with emphasis on safety for the maritime sector. **Prof. Vimlesh Pant**, Professor, Centre for Atmospheric Science, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi highlighted accessibility of the digital devices and tools to fishers due to lack of digital literacy and training, knowledge gap, lack of an integrated data system and sustainable investment purposes. **Ms Archana Chatterjee**, Programme Manager, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), India, shared the initiative regarding integrating marine biodiversity in the operations of Ocean related industries, particularly in Ports and Offshore Wind. **Mr. Santanu Basu**, Project Director (HCL-Harit), HCL Foundation, deliberated upon marine biodiversity and related fishing practices. He highlighted the need for more research in Coral and related areas, initiatives for recovering the floating nets from Ocean, and addressing the data gaps. **Ms Anuja Shukla**, Environment Specialist, World Bank, shared the World Bank's initiatives in blue finance instruments in India. She highlighted the need for insurance and risk management in blue finance. With respect to Data, the initiative of Ocean Accounts was shared. She said that the Draft Climate Taxonomy has no Blue vocabulary at all. She shared about the Fisheries Prosperity Project and Improving the value chain of Blue Food, providing performance grants to MSMEs, and sustainable use of Seaweed, Corals, etc. as part of the Shore programme. She suggested that Ocean Centres to centralise all Maritime sector-related data in India.

High-level Panel 2: Putting Safety at the Heart of Sustainability

Mr. N. M. Prusty, Vice Chair, Coalition for Food & Nutrition Safety (CFNS) moderated the panel. **Dr. Tarun Kumar Singh**, Asst. Commissioner, Fisheries, Dept. of Fisheries, Govt. of India shared about Govt. initiatives for development of fisheries, particularly for the marginalised communities. He said that we should enable fishers to understand the Ocean's behaviour. He shared about early warning mechanisms, rescue, climate impacts, smart harbours, challenges to the unorganised fisheries sector and the national fisheries digital platform. **Ms Mohana Priya Selvamani**, Country Head – India, Ocean Energy Pathway, stated about the work in the areas of accelerating offshore wind and how offshore wind is the fitting replacement for fossils, how it protects the Oceans in multiple ways and becomes

nature positive. Ocean Centres can help in promoting a culture of safety, leading to a mindset shift in the way we look at safety. She stated the impact of offshore wind projects on coastal community development, and the need to involve fishers in Offshore wind planning. **Ms Divya Hegde**, Board Trustee, Baeru Collective, shared about her experience of working with coastal communities. She shared the impacts of Climate change, loss of livelihoods, loss of health, migration, and disasters on vulnerable people. She shared that marine waste management,



aquaculture, blue-tourism, and agro-coastal industries are alternative livelihood options for coastal communities beyond fisheries. **Mr. Chinuu Kwatra**, Secretary, Khushiyan Foundation, shared about the Ocean cleaning initiatives and livelihood options generated for the local coastal community members. He emphasised the need for awareness building among the coastal communities. **Mr. Raj Pandey**, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, CF Coastal Project, UNDP, shared issues about marine-related data sources, data conversion, standardised tools for collection, quality assurance and the GCF programme of UNDP. **Mr. Uday Chaitanya Ganivada**, Country Manager, DNV MES India Pvt. Ltd. shared about the shipbuilding landscape globally and in India and how India should learn from Korea, China and Japan to promote shipbuilding in India. Ocean Centres should play an important role in building the competencies of this industry. He emphasised the role and importance of regulations to drive the requirements to be followed and standardise the process.



A vote of thanks was delivered by **Mr. Deep Chandra Papnoi**, Dy. Director, UN Global Compact Network India.

Key Recommendations for the Ocean Centres from the Event deliberations

Inter-Ministerial Workshops

It was recommended by multiple stakeholders that Ocean Centres India should organise a series of Inter-Ministerial Workshops with relevant Ministries like the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Department of Fisheries, Department of Public Enterprises, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Ministry of Agriculture, etc.



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Awareness Generation

It was recommended that Ocean Centres India should organise awareness generation workshops for all stakeholders, including those around the coastal regions, about the work of Ocean Centres as well as on relevant aspects of the maritime sector. Stakeholders should also be aware of the importance of safety at the heart of sustainability. It should help in promoting a culture of safety, leading to a mindset shift in the way we look at safety.

Stakeholders Engagement

Stakeholder Engagement is an important area for Ocean Centres India. Regional, State-wise, Industry-wise and sector-wise engagement of stakeholders is key to success for Ocean Centres India to achieve its objectives to promote more safer and sustainable ocean economy in India.

Identification of Issues & Challenges in the Maritime Sector

Ocean Centres India should play an important role in the identification and compilation of the issues and challenges from different stakeholders' groups through a consultative process.

Capacity-building

Apart from generating awareness, one of the key roles of Ocean Centres India should be to build the capacities of the stakeholders. From an open capacity-building programme to industry-specific customised capacity-building programmes should be initiated by Ocean Centres India.

Advocacy and Policy Recommendations

Ocean Centres should advocate for the inclusion of Blue Finance in the draft Climate Taxonomy in India. It should also advocate how the draft Blue Economy Policy in India considers safety-related aspects. It may also develop a User Responsibility Protocol (URP) for the use of the Ocean, like we have a Producer Responsibility Protocol. Ocean Centres India also has to play a crucial role in bringing out or facilitating appropriate regulations and working on improving the regulatory environment concerning the use of the Ocean.

Maritime Sector Data

As data plays an important role in decision-making processes, Ocean Centres may work to centralise all Maritime sector-related data in India available from both private and public sources.

Sectoral Focus

Apart from its present focus on Shipping and Ports, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Offshore Renewable, and Blue Finance, Ocean Centre should also focus on sectors like Coastal Tourism, Food Security, Protecting Marine Biodiversity, Ocean Cleaning, and Coastal Community Development in India.

Research

Ocean Centres India may conduct research studies on different aspects of the Ocean Economy in India.

The link to the Video Recording of the event is as under:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Vpe4WuWXbmiaR_bCoF297eWKOgOPNxRk/view?usp=drive_link

For further information, visit: <https://www.oceancentres.com/> or <https://globalcompact.in/>

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