



Sustainable Ocean Management for People and Planet

FIRESIDE CHAT

Venue: Stein Auditorium

Date: 22 February 2023

Time: 7:00 pm – 7:30 pm (IST)

Suggested Citation

World Sustainable Development Summit (2023), Sustainable Ocean Management for People and Planet, Fireside Chat Summary (Rapporteur: Arpita Pandey), New Delhi: The Energy and Resources Institute.

Making Words Count @WSDS 2023

“ Ocean, being a major resource provider, its sustainability is critically intertwined with the well-being of humanity. Sustainable ocean management targets finding solutions to triad issues related to pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss.

Dr Vibha Dhawan

Director General, TERI

“ Taking care of ocean stress along with sustainable resource harnessing is the key to ensuring better ocean management. The extent of ocean management planning goes beyond the scientific and technical data inputs, rather it incorporates the dynamics of social and other local/regional factors.

Dr M Ravichandran

Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences

“ An understanding of integrated systems comprising different sectors associated with oceans will help in better planning. Improved marine management and planning can be a catalyst for the blue economy.

Dr Erik Olsen

Head of Research/Research Manager, Institute of Marine Research

“ The pathways of ocean conservation will be found in the routes of ocean resource extraction. The Indian union territories (Puducherry and Lakshadweep) have immense potential in initiating ocean-conserving activities.

H.E. Mr Hans Jacob Frydenlund

Norwegian Ambassador

Actionable Messages

Message 1: In order to enjoy the benefits of oceans, there is a need to change the behaviour of considering oceans as the largest garbage dump.

Message 2: The top-to-bottom approach which could work in some European countries might not be suitable for India. The marine management plans have to be customized depending on the situations of specific regions.

Message 3: The availability of granular data with respect to social and economic parameters will help in building more robust state-specific marine spatial plans.

Narrative

The fireside chat titled, “Sustainable Ocean Management for People and Planet” was conducted as part of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) - the annual flagship initiative of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). The aim of the session was to examine some of the innovations linked to ocean which include marine spatial planning and how it can contribute towards addressing the triple planetary crises of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. Particular focus was given to policy initiatives as a result of India-Norway collaboration, and the role it is playing to enhance integrated ocean management through marine spatial planning. The moderator for the session was **H.E. Mr. Hans Jacob Frydenlund, Norwegian Ambassador**. The session included discussions on various aspects of integrated ocean management: addressing the range of challenges faced in case of ineffective ocean management actions, assessing its potential to support blue economy, necessity of a vision in ocean governance, and how Puducherry and Lakshadweep will benefit from marine spatial planning.

The session started with the introductory address by **Dr. Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI** who highlighted the essence of oceans in achieving the global targets of net zero. In order to enjoy the social, economic, and environmental benefits of such natural resources, our actions must be carefully planned. She pointed out that the sustainable and integrated ocean management is the key towards safeguarding the oceans for future generations. She concluded with the idea on addressing the need for collaborations between countries to resolve the triple planetary crises of pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss.

Following the introductory remarks, the session steered towards a discussion moderated by **H.E. Mr. Hans Jacob Frydenlund, Norwegian Ambassador**. He remarked on the importance of oceans in the ecosystem, human settlement, and economic development. He pointed out the need to change the behaviour of considering oceans as the largest garbage dump. Additionally, to benefit the most from the oceans, it is imperative to find ways to balance competing interests from different economic activities (shipping, fisheries, aquaculture, oil production, and tourism). He highlighted the importance of oceans as a natural resource in Norway’s development – in the economic context, it is a source of oil, exports routes, fishing, and in social dimensions, it could help identify settlements. He also pointed out on the fragility of coastal areas such as Puducherry and Lakshadweep, as they have huge potential in the form of biodiversity and ecosystem, but due to climate change, they are facing dangers.

Further in the line of discussion, **Dr M Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences** discussed the stress faced by oceans. The climatic stresses are in the form of storm, marine heatwaves, cyclones, and sea-level rise. There must be a balance in the need of increasing intensity and frequency of ocean-related stress and harnessing the natural resources sustainably – integrated ocean management is the key to that balance. He shared details of the action plans that have been carried out by the Ministry of Earth Sciences in the process of developing marine spatial planning for Puducherry and Lakshadweep. He highlighted that for different states, the detailed data in the context of social status, and economic parameters will help build more robust spatial plans and ocean management strategy.

Dr Erik Olsen, Head of Research/Research Manager, Institute of Marine Research talked about the benefits of adopting integrated ocean management strategy as a tool to deal with the challenges of intersectoral conflicts. For instance, building renewable energy plants in the oceans compromise the fishing grounds. There is a need to develop an understanding of all human activities and then try to manage and plan the actions in a sustainable manner. This leads to economic and social growth – increased income, jobs, opportunities without compromising on the ecosystem. It also helps in identifying those areas which are unexplored and have huge potential/opportunities for new economic activities. Marine management can be used as a catalyst with necessary information for blue economy. He emphasized on the importance of India-

Norway collaboration in building the common knowledge base as it avoids the need of having to discuss the facts about country-wide ecosystems, and it leads to coming up with new plans and management strategies. He highlighted that in India's case, it is necessary to manoeuvre a more complicated landscape on the local level, state level, national level, and it needs to fit the system/management in a more careful manner.
