

ITCOocean gets nod to ink pact for capacity building

Faculty recruitment to be completed soon, and courses offered

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The upcoming International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography (ITCOocean) at the Indian National Centre For Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) here is all set to sign up with UNESCO to cater to the worldwide need to build technical and management manpower capacity in marine, coastal sustainability and response to marine natural hazards.

To be recognised as Category 2 Centre (C2C) of UNESCO, the ₹100-crore institute in Pragatinagar (Kukatpally) will be in a position to contribute to the United Nations body's Sustainable Development Goal-14 (SDG 14).

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently approved the signing of this agreement.

India had offered to set up the ITCOocean for the benefit of countries around the Indian Ocean rim (26 from Asia and Africa) after an Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of 150-odd member countries decided to go for developing capacity building following

Charting the ocean

* ITCOocean to contribute to the United Nations body's Sustainable Development Goal-14 (SDG 14)



* Countries around the Indian Ocean rim (26 from Asia and Africa) to benefit from the course

* Housing labs, classrooms and hostels are to be ready in six months

* Utilising INCOIS faculty and infrastructure, ITCOocean has trained over 681 scientists, including 576 from India and 105 from 34 other countries in operational oceanography

* ITCOocean has also tied up with Norway's Nansen Scientific Society and the Research Council to collaborate in teaching and research

the tsunami of 2004.

"We are exploring the options with our UN permanent mission for UNESCO Director-General to come here and sign the agreement or one of our representatives will go there.

"Either way, it will be done before March, and by June, the entire infrastructure will be ready for offering long-term courses for students and trainees," according to INCOIS Director

S.S.C. Shenoi.

Operational oceanography involves systematic ocean studies and providing information services to the blue economy like fishing, disaster management, shipping and ports, coastal management, environmental management, offshore industries and also for the Indian Navy and Coast Guard.

"We need expertise to interpret large data generated through research vessels on

the ocean and our observation posts in studying marine resources, monsoons and about climate change. ITCOocean aims to bridge that gap," adds B. Muralidhar Rao, Consultant, INCOIS.

While the housing labs, classrooms and hostels are to be ready in six months, ITCOocean, utilising INCOIS faculty and infrastructure, has trained over 681 scientists, including 576 from India and 105 from 34 other countries, in various aspects of operational oceanography in the last couple of years.

Soon, faculty recruitment is to be completed and plans are afoot to offer diplomas, post-graduate courses and research.

Collaboration

ITCOocean has also tied up with Norway's Nansen Scientific Society and the Research Council to collaborate in teaching and research.

Indian Ocean Global Observing System (IOGOOS) and International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE), besides tsunami warning, are to be scaled up by the Centre.