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India-Norway Marine Pact Takes Centre Stage in Monaco: Dr. Jitendra Singh Showcases India's Ocean Vision

The Health of Our Oceans Depends Not Just on Innovation, But on International Collaboration: Dr. Jitendra Singh at MSP Side Event

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Addressing the Monaco Marine Conference, Union Minister of Earth Sciences today reiterated India's commitment to a resilient Blue Economy and pointed out that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had spoken about it twice in his two consecutive Independence Day addresses.

In a symbolic show of global cooperation for ocean sustainability commemorating the "World Ocean Day" today, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh and Norway's Minister of International Development, Åsmund Grøver Aukrust, jointly hosted a high-level event on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) aboard the historic Norwegian tall ship Statsraad Lehmkuhl at the Port of Hercule in Monaco.



The event was attended by dignitaries including His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon of Norway, making it a significant diplomatic engagement spotlighting blue economy collaboration.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted India's strides in adopting Marine Spatial Planning as a key tool for sustainable ocean governance. "We believe MSP offers a science-based framework for optimising ocean resources, protecting biodiversity, and ensuring coastal livelihoods," he said, reiterating India's commitment to a resilient blue economy backed by technology and inclusive decision-making.

The India-Norway MSP collaboration, under the Indo-Norwegian Integrated Ocean and Research Initiative, has already yielded visible outcomes. Notably, pilot projects in Puducherry and Lakshadweep have demonstrated the potential of MSP to tackle coastal erosion, manage biodiversity, and engage multiple stakeholders across sectors like fisheries, tourism, and conservation.

One of India's most notable achievements, Dr. Jitendra Singh said, is the launch of the SAHAV portal - a GIS-based decision support system now recognised as a Digital Public Good, to mark the international ocean day. "This tool empowers policymakers, researchers, and communities with real-time spatial data, enabling smarter planning and stronger marine resilience," he noted.

The Minister Jitendra Singh added that India aims to scale Marine Spatial Planning across its coastline, reinforcing the nation's global leadership in sustainable ocean management. "Our science-driven, data-informed approach underscores India's vision for ocean governance that benefits both people and the planet," he said.

The presence of top-level Norwegian leadership underscored the importance both nations place on sustainable maritime cooperation. Bilateral meetings and joint initiatives like this are expected to pave the way for greater global coordination on marine issues, especially as climate change and economic pressures intensify the need for balanced ocean use.

"As India and Norway continue to chart a shared course toward a sustainable maritime future,

today's event aboard Statsraad Lehmkuhl served as a fitting reminder: the health of our oceans depends not just on innovation, but on international collaboration" concluded Dr. Jitendra Singh.

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