

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2128
ANSWERED ON 07/08/2025

DEEP OCEAN MISSION

2128 # SHRI TEJVEER SINGH:

Will the Minister of **Earth Sciences** be pleased to state:

- (a) names of the regional oceans in which mineral exploration or biodiversity study has been carried out under the Deep Ocean Mission;
- (b) whether any continuous evaluation framework has developed for conservation of marine ecosystem under this mission;
- (c) whether any scheme has been implemented for participation of private sector/academic institutions in ocean research; and
- (d) whether Government has created any open access portal for sharing the data obtained from the mission with the public/research institutions?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
AND EARTH SCIENCES
(DR JITENDRA SINGH)

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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.
- (c) Yes. As part of the Deep Ocean Mission, collaborative research projects are undertaken and funded to various government and private laboratories, universities and institutions.
- (d) Yes. 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.
