



## Assembly

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### Twenty-fifth session

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**Consideration of requests for observer status in accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly**

### **Request for observer status in accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly on behalf of the Ocean Society of India**

#### **Note by the secretariat**

1. On 10 June 2019, the Ocean Society of India submitted a letter to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, requesting observer status in the Assembly of the Authority. The text of the letter and additional information provided by the applicant are contained in the annex to the present note.
2. In accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, non-governmental organizations with which the Secretary-General has entered into arrangements in accordance with article 169, paragraph 1, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and other non-governmental organizations invited by the Assembly that have demonstrated their interest in matters under consideration by the Assembly, may participate as observers in the Assembly.
3. Paragraphs 5 and 6 of the same rule further provide that observers referred to in paragraph 1 (e) of that rule may sit at public meetings of the Assembly and, upon the invitation of the President and subject to approval by the Assembly, may make oral statements on questions within the scope of their activities, and that written statements submitted by observers referred to in paragraph 1 (e) of that rule within the scope of their activities that are relevant to the work of the Assembly should be made available by the secretariat in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements are submitted.

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\* ISBA/25/A/L.1/Rev.1.



**Annex****Letter dated 10 June 2019 from the President of the Ocean Society of India addressed to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority**

On behalf of the Governing Council of Ocean Society of India, it is respectfully requested that the Ocean Society of India, a non-profitable professional society, be considered and duly recognized by the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority as an observer to the Authority, under the provisions of rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

The Ocean Society of India is a professional society (non-profit, registered under the Travancore-Kochi Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act 12 of 1955 of India), whose members share a common interest in ocean-related disciplines, including a careful understanding of living and non-living resources, their conservation and sustainable use and their likely exploitation on the anvil. Founded in 2006, the society consists of a pool of knowledgeable, vastly experienced and accomplished individuals enrolled as life members from academia, industry, government agencies, non-governmental agencies, the legal sector and management.

The primary objectives of the Society are:

- To provide a forum for sharing the knowledge and experience of individuals, scientific institutions and industrial organizations for promoting science, technology, engineering and allied fields related to oceans
- To act as a link among academic and research and development institutions, national policymaking bodies, operational organizations and ocean industries by organizing programmes such as short-term courses and training, lectures, conferences, workshops, symposiums and topical reviews
- To act as an exchange bureau for the dissemination of scientific and technical information by way of periodic and special publications, stakeholder interactions, advisories and specific training imparted to the target groups
- To establish linkages with similar national and international organizations

The Society engages with research and development institutions in the following thrust areas:

- Survey and mapping of the bathymetry of the sea floor
- Water column studies related to biogeochemical processes
- Study of abiotic and biotic components of the oceans
- Physical oceanographic processes linking to the understanding of ecosystems
- Marine taxonomy and bioinventory
- Air-sea interaction, ocean modelling and assessing the impacts of climate change scenarios
- Seabed mineral resource mapping and understanding the genesis of deposits
- Geology, tectonics and the origin of ocean basins, with a particular interest in the Indian Ocean and seas adjoining India
- Developing techniques for the sampling, survey, exploration and exploitation of ocean resources with minimum impact

- Assessing the environmental impacts of various research and development activities and other industrial-oriented activities
- Conducting biennial conferences related to ocean activities, known as “OSICON” followed by the last two digits of the year when they are held.

The Society has a strong interest in the work of International Seabed Authority and is interested in becoming an observer for the mutual benefit of both parties in relation to ocean floor mining of all known seabed resources in the Area and its environmental impact assessment, marine biodiversity and taxonomy of the deep seabed, ecosystem services and their modelling. The expertise of the society can also be made available on voluntary basis to the Authority as and when required for the benefit mankind.

The Society believes that it can contribute a unique and valuable perspective to the management of resources and the organization and control of activities within the Area and, accordingly, requests the support of the Assembly in granting observer status.

Please refer to the enclosure for further brief background information. The Society would be pleased to provide any other information as may be required by the secretariat of the Authority or as deemed fit by the Assembly to consider the present application for observer status of the Ocean Society of India.

(Signed) Maruthadu **Sudhakar**  
President  
Ocean Society of India

## Enclosure

### **Additional information on the Ocean Society of India**

**1. Name of organization**

Ocean Society of India

**2. Office and email address**

OSI Administrative Office  
c/o Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology  
Atal Bhavan  
L N G Road, Puthuvype  
Ochanthuruthu PO 682 508  
Ernakulam District, Kerala State  
India

Email: [osi.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:osi.secretary@gmail.com)

**3. Positions of the proposed primary representatives**

The following are the primary representatives

- President: Maruthadu Sudhakar, Director, Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (Ministry of Earth Sciences); [m.sudhakar@nic.in](mailto:m.sudhakar@nic.in)
- Vice-President: K. V. Jayachandran, Scientific Consultant, Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology, Kochi; [chandrankvj@gmail.com](mailto:chandrankvj@gmail.com)
- Vice-President: A. D. Rao, Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi; [adrao@cas.iitd.ac.in](mailto:adrao@cas.iitd.ac.in)
- General Secretary: C. Revichandran, Chief Scientist, National Institute of Oceanography, Kochi; [revichandran@gmail.com](mailto:revichandran@gmail.com)

**4. Aims and objectives of the Ocean Society of India in the area of marine earth science and technology**

The objectives of the Society are the advancement and dissemination of knowledge relating to science, technology, engineering and allied fields related to oceans. To achieve these objectives, the Society strives:

- To provide a forum for sharing the knowledge and experience of individuals, scientific institutions and industrial organizations so as to promote science, technology, engineering and allied fields related to oceans
- To act as a link between academic institutions and research and development institutions, national policymaking bodies, operational organizations and ocean industries by organizing programmes such as short-term courses, lectures, symposiums and topical reviews
- To act as the exchange bureau for the dissemination of scientific and technical information by way of periodic and special publications
- To establish linkages with similar national and international organizations

## 5. History

The Ocean Society of India was founded in 2006 and registered under the Travancore-Kochi Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act 12 of 1955. It is recognized as the premier organization that focuses on all disciplines of ocean sciences and technology, including deep-ocean and ocean floor research, and hence is unique.

The Society has been instrumental in bringing together representatives of academia, government agencies, industry, non-governmental organizations, the legal sector, environmentalists and entrepreneurs to discuss the latest research, technology and environmental management issues relating to various aspects of tapping resources from the deep ocean and the ocean upper layers. About 500 professionals having expertise in the above areas are active life members of the organization and its strength. About 200 of those members have specialized knowledge of and experience in dealing with living and non-living marine resources in areas within and beyond national jurisdiction. Members the Society have been the backbone of the national programme of seabed mineral resources in the Indian Ocean for nearly four decades, their efforts having resulted in India having contracts with the International Seabed Authority with regard to polymetallic nodules and polymetallic sulphides. Many members represent India in their official and personal capacities (as experts) in the work of the Authority as members of the Legal and Technical Commission, delegation leaders and members or expert members of specific groups. To date, the Society has conducted several programmes, led discussions on various aspects of ocean studies and has been invited to give presentations and keynote addresses on marine minerals and living resources, as well as on atmospheric and ocean processes. The Society has held biennial “OSICON” conferences on the following themes: “Recent developments in ocean science, engineering and technology” (2009), “Technologies for ocean exploration” (2011), “Role of oceans in Earth system” (2013), “Oceanic processes along the coast of India” (2015) and “Ocean and climate change” (2017). Furthermore, the Society has conducted outreach programmes, national seminars, and societal programmes.

The Society is a registered professional body established in 2006 with headquarters located in Kochi, India. Its membership consists of scientists, academicians, engineers and technologists who are interested in promoting research and development activities in marine-related fields. The Society is, therefore, multidisciplinary in nature and encompasses all subjects of marine sciences, engineering, technologies and other allied subjects related to the ocean. The Society’s members are spread across the length and breadth of India and Indian Ocean rim countries. In addition, the Society has established local chapters in Chennai (since 2011), Pune (since 2013) and Kochi (since 2017), and more local chapters are planned in other places in order to promote research and training among young researchers aiming to acquire new skills and expertise in marine-related subjects. More information about the Society are available at [www.oceansociety.in](http://www.oceansociety.in). The Society conducts biennial national conferences known as “OSICON”. Five such conferences have been held to date, the first at Andhra University, in Visakhapatnam, in 2009, the second at the National Institute of Ocean Technology in Chennai, in 2011, the third at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology in Pune, in 2013, the fourth at the National Institute of Oceanography, in Goa, in 2015, and the fifth at the National Centre for Earth Science Studies, in Thiruvananthapuram, in 2017. Research papers are published in the proceedings of the conference and selected papers are published in national and international journals as special issues.

## 6. Structure

The Ocean Society of India is governed by its Governing Council, which is headed by the President and further consists of the Vice-Presidents, the General Secretary, the Joint Secretaries, the Treasurer and 10 members. It is governed by an approved by-law of 2006. The Governing Council meets every month to plan and review the activities of the Society. The life members are professionals with expertise in various disciplines of ocean studies, including technology, mining, fisheries, ecosystem balance, ocean safety and security. They have the competencies to suggest solutions related to research (basic research, and strategic research and development), development, operations and management (including administration). Since the members belong to various research and development institutions, the Society is an effective platform for discussing issues related to ocean studies, including activities of societal relevance.

## 7. Thrust areas of activity

- Research and development activities with local, regional and global participation
- Survey and mapping of the bathymetry of the sea floor
- Water column studies related to biogeochemical processes
- Study of abiotic and biotic components of the oceans
- Physical oceanographic processes linked to the understanding of ecosystems
- Marine taxonomy and bioinventory
- Air-sea interaction, ocean modelling and assessing the impacts of climate change scenarios
- Seabed mineral resource mapping and understanding the genesis of deposits
- Geology, tectonics and the origin of ocean basins, with a particular interest in the Indian Ocean and seas adjoining India
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## 8. Recent activities

OSI proposes several activities of relevance, such as World Ocean Day celebrations, to be held on 8 June, with awareness programmes for students and other stakeholders and beach-cleaning activities, and a lecture series on oceans, including on the exploitation of living and non-living resources. In December 2019, the Society will conduct “OSICON” as an international conference at the Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology. The 2019 national seminar on climate change and coastal ocean processes will be conducted at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi from 4 to 6 July. On 11 June, a workshop for students and research scholars on ocean modelling will be conducted at the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies.

**9. Extent to which the purposes of the Ocean Society of India relate to those of the International Seabed Authority and contributions that the Society can make to the work of the Authority**

The Ocean Society of India is unique in establishing reciprocal linkages in research and development in all areas related to oceans within the country and abroad by establishing strong bonds through its life members. Our life members regularly attend International Seabed Authority meetings, where they gather information about advances in current research that they pass on to others in the country so that they may take it on board in their strategic and basic research. This effort will continue so that a strong base is developed in the Society that will undoubtedly be transmitted to other agencies, including government agencies, in the interests of effective policy formulation with regard to challenging areas of research related to the ocean floor and the ocean upper layers. Therefore, the Society at large will benefit and, in turn, research outputs may be made available to others through the International Seabed Authority, thereby benefiting the global research community as a whole. The Society will continue to promote technology and research related to the ocean floor and other areas of the ocean with a view to tapping resources, conducting environmental impact assessments and providing information to the world. Therefore, granting observer status to the Society would be highly advantageous for both partners.

**10. Linkages**

The Ocean Society of India has established close linkages with all institutions and academia in the country active in ocean-related research, as well as with similar societies, as it is supported by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, the Department of Science and Technology and the Council of Scientific Industrial Research through their institutes, such as the National Institute of Ocean Technology, the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, the Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology, the National Centre for Earth Science Studies, the National Geophysical Research Institute, the National Institute of Oceanography and the Council of Indian Institutes of Technology, and universities involved in ocean-related research, and through their linkages to the global network of institutions, for instance, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Second Institute of Oceanography and the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Members of the Society are involved in the decision-making bodies of the Geological Society of India, the Indian Geological Congress, the Indian Society of Applied Geochemists, the Indian Geophysical Union and the Asia Oceania Geosciences Society, and share their experience to facilitate closer collaboration and the exchange of scientific knowledge.