

# Marine Spatial Planning in Lakshadweep and Puducherry

March 6, 2021

## In news

India and Norway have agreed to jointly work in the area of marine spatial planning in the oceanic space for the next five years

## Background

The five-year programme, Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), is one of many initiatives planned between the two countries. Last year, the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) had inked an MoU with their Norwegian counterparts for the Indo-Norway Integrated Ocean Initiative.

India has initiated the process to improve its usage of ocean and marine resources through its proposed Blue Economy Policy 2020 to be developed by the MoES.

## About Coastal mapping/Marine Spatial Planning(MSP)

- MSP is globally identified as a tool for sustainable and integrated ocean management. It is a noted area for work in India's (draft) Blue Economic Policy being developed by MoES.
- This is a part of the Indo-Norway Integrated Ocean Initiative under the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two countries in 2019.
- **Cost:** INR 8-10 crores per annum
- Lakshadweep and Puducherry have been identified as pilot sites for the project.
- These sites have been chosen for the pilot project in view of their setups with unique opportunities for multiple sectors (such as industries,

fisheries, and tourism) to flourish.

- In the future, marine spatial planning framework of these two environmentally critical areas can be replicated to other coastal regions of the country.
- The two countries have decided to extend support for sustainable ocean resources utilisation to advance economic and social development in coastal areas
- **Implementation:** It will be implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) through National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) for India and Norwegian Environment Agency through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway.
- Earlier, **NCCR had developed coastal management plans for Chennai, Goa, and Gulf of Kachchh** which proved very successful.
- **Other stakeholders:** In addition to MoES, the first project steering committee meeting was attended by representatives from several stakeholder ministries namely Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of External Affairs; Ministry of Shipping; Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries; Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying; Ministry of Tourism; and state governments of Tamil Nadu and Lakshadweep.
- **International aid:** Notably, the World Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have expressed interest in supporting MoES in conducting MSP, a societal-beneficial initiative for India's coastal regions.
- The Government of **India's vision of New India by 2030 highlights blue economy as one of the ten core dimensions of growth**

## Significance:

- It will help to assess the scope of developing sustainable activities supporting industry, fisheries, tourism and similar ocean-centric activities.