

SWACHH SAGAR, SURAKSHIT SAGAR CAMPAIGN TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP DAY

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Development, and EIA

India has a rich marine history. The marine activities were first mentioned in the Rigveda and references to the interrelationships of the ocean, sea and rivers can be found in the Indian Puranas. The diverse evidence from Indian socio-spiritual traditions, literature, poetry, sculpture, painting and from archaeology attest to the great marine traditions of India.

India's coastline of more than 7,500 km reflects our vast ocean resources. Most importantly, the Indian Ocean is the only ocean named after a country, that is, India.

Human society has been continuously benefiting from the natural wealth of the sea and the ocean. However, in the recent times, the plastic litter mostly from the land based activities, tourism and fishing reach the coast and ocean through rivers and different waterways, posing a serious threat to the marine ecosystem. R&D efforts will be undertaken to collect scientific data and information on Marine Litter in various matrices, such as coastal waters, sediments, biota, and beaches.

Globally, "International Coastal Clean Up Day" is celebrated on the third Saturday of September, every year.

This year on 17th September 2022, the Government of India along with other voluntary organizations, and the local society will run a cleanliness campaign "Swachh Sagar, Surakshit Sagar" along India's entire coastline.

This campaign will include Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Indian Coast Guard, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) along with other social organizations and educational institutions.

This campaign will see massive public participation both physically and virtually, mainly to make awareness about reducing the marine litter, minimal use of plastics, segregation at source and waste management.

It will be the first-of-its-kind and longest running coastal cleanup campaign in the world with highest number of people participating in it. The participation of common man will convey the message of "Swachh Sagar, Surakshit Sagar" for the prosperity of not only coastal areas but also other parts of the country.

This year's event also coincides with the celebrations of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav in 75th year of the country's independence; The coastal cleanup drive will be carried out at 75 beaches across the country. A 75 days long campaign will be launched from 03rd July 2022 to raise awareness about "Swachh Sagar, Surakshit Sagar" culminating on "International Coastal Cleanup Day" on 17th September 2022.

A mobile app "Eco Mitram" has been launched to spread awareness about the campaign and also for the common people for voluntary registration for the beach cleaning activity on the 17th September 2022.

Through this campaign, a mass behavioural change among the masses is intended by raising awareness about how plastic usage is destroying our marine life.

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