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WEBINAR ON SAFE OCEANS FOR A SAFE EARTH

Admiral RK Dhowan, PVSM, AVSM, YSM (Retd) Chairperson Society for Aerospace Maritime and Defence Studies (SAMDeS) India Former Chief of the Naval Staff Indian Navy and Chairman National Maritime Foundation.

1. On World Ocean's Day 8th June 2024, the Society for Aerospace Maritime and Defence Studies (SAMDeS) reiterates its resolve to draft the Global Maritime Accord (GMA). The Global Maritime Accord is a novel initiative to conjoin forces, from all the stake holders, in an organised manner for conservation, preservation and sustainable use of the oceans, particularly in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, in alignment with SDG 14. The GMA envisages sustainable development in the maritime domain by minimizing the environmental impact and maximizing the economic potential of harnessing the Blue Economy. The aim is to draft a comprehensive action plan to counter the detrimental impacts of global warming and climate change by leveraging the Oceans.
2. Oceans are essential to life on Earth. They are the suppliers of Oxygen and provide 50% of our oxygen needs. They are also absorbers of Carbon Dioxide and approximately 30% of the Green House Gas are silently absorbed by the oceans. The oceans are rich in oil, gas and mineral resources and provide humanity with seafood and salt. Oceans are a virtual heat sink which keeps our blue planet Earth cool, they are a great repository of renewable energy and have emerged as global economic highways for transit of over 80% of world trade
3. Today the oceans are literally in 'hot waters' as the sea surface temperatures across the world are soaring, leading to coral bleaching and threatening of marine ecosystems and the vast biodiversity in the oceans. The sea levels are rising due to global warming, resulting in the erosion of coastal areas and sinking of low-level islands. The shipping industry continues to spew over a billion tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions to pollute the environment. Deep seabed mining and acidification of the oceans are resulting in contamination of natural marine habitat and depletion of biodiversity. Humankind continues to overfish illegally and dump over 13 million tonnes of plastic and garbage into the oceans of the world every year.
4. The oceans play a crucial role in regulating climate but are today facing severe challenges due to indiscriminate pollution of the seas and contamination of natural marine habitat, resulting in disruption of weather patterns and adverse impact of climate change on the oceans.

5. In order to halt further degradation of the oceans, we need to focus on the following elements of the Action-Plan to restore the health of the oceans, and we have to take action NOW!

- Close the tap to prevent over 13 million tonnes of plastic and garbage from entering the seas and oceans of the world every year.
- Launch a global drive to clean the oceans of plastic garbage which has accumulated as gyres or large islands of garbage, in every ocean and leverage technology to sweep the oceans of the plastic waste.
- Restrict the global shipping industry from spewing over a billion tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions and polluting the environment. Ships need to stop dumping ballast water and polluting the oceans. Ships of the future need to be designed in accordance with energy efficiency design index promulgated by IMO, and propelled on environment friendly fuel, to achieve the vision of sustainable shipping.
- Stop illegal and overfishing which has resulted in severe depletion of fish stocks. Monitor fishing activities in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction and implement measures to ensure sustainable fishing and conservation and protection of biodiversity in ABNJ.
- Avoid dangers of deep-seabed mining and carry out research towards analysing the detrimental impact of deep-seabed mining on biodiversity and environment.
- Prevent development of ocean slums by carrying out marine spatial planning, within Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction and designate Marine Protected Areas for sustained protection and conservation of the ocean biodiversity as envisaged in the High Seas Treaty, adopted by members of the United Nations.

The Global Maritime Accord Academy (GMAA) is intended as a platform for awareness, learning and research. The GMA Academy enables researchers, maritime experts and environmental specialists across geography, gender and geo-politics to come together to develop solutions to the problems relating to threats to the oceans and provide crowd sourced inputs and material substance for drafting the Global Maritime Accord.

The GMA Academy has organized a series of webinars in the past. On the occasion of World Oceans' Day the GMA Academy steered by cooperating organizations such as SAMDES, LISD, Liechtenstein, IMCCS, Netherlands, The Trebuchet USA, Commonwealth Security Group, UK, SAI University, India, and Frank Farenski Film, Germany, will be conducting a webinar with participation environment specialists, maritime experts, academia and researchers from different parts of the world.

The presentation and deliberations will assist in charting an Action-Plan for the Global Maritime Accord, as a petition from the oceans to humankind, with the overall vision to Save the Oceans for a Safe Earth.

Registration is free for World Oceans Day webinar on 8th of June 2024.

Please email GlobalMaritimeAccordAcademy@GMA@eurisd.org for registration and obtaining the link.



SAMDES

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<https://www.samdesindia.in>