

Report: IOI Ocean Academy Programme in INDIA

In March 2022, TERRE Policy Centre partnered with International Ocean Institute (IOI) and IOI Ocean Academy- India with the aim to conduct Online Ocean Academy Courses in India. IOI Ocean Academy Courses conceptualizes to upgrade the ocean knowledge of the target amateur-enthusiastic audience by providing an understanding of regionally and locally relevant ocean information at an appropriate level. IOI Ocean Academy Programme under the title **Ocean Literacy: *Know Your Planet Beyond the Land***, is a ten-day course, commenced on Wednesday 25th October 2023 and concluded on Tuesday 07th November 2023 (weekdays).

Name of the course: Ocean Literacy: *Know Your Planet Beyond the Land*

Dates: 25th October 2023 – 07th November 2023 (weekdays)

Time: 03:00 pm – 05:00 pm IST

Language of course: English

Course participants: College students-/ diverse professionals

Platform: Zoom Meeting

Preparation:

The course was designed and advertised to be taught to amateur enthusiasts from a wide spectrum. Targeting audiences with genuine interest, regardless of any formal education or academic degree, but keen on gaining knowledge on ocean and its related topics. For a good spread of applicants, the course details were advertised largely on the social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and the same were circulated through a range of mailing lists. To increase the outreach, TERRE published news in print media as well as on online news portal. The language of advertisement was English and Marathi. For registration an online application form was created on Google Drive where prospective participants were able to fill the form. A total of 91 applications were received. For ease of communication and conveying the course relevant information, a WhatsApp group of the participants was created. Among the applicants, there was a varied composition with respect to educational levels, profession, and age. While most were between 20s-40s; some were above that, while a few were in school around 16 years old. The composition included males and females representing, teaching faculty, environmentalists, research scholars and even students.

Course Outline: Ocean Literacy: *Know Your Planet Beyond the Land* (20 Hours, 10 Days)

The course was divided into four parts.

Part 1: One Ocean- a place of wonder, beauty & danger and of critical importance to life on Earth.

- Session 1: The Ocean in Simple Terms
- Session 2: Concepts of Sustainability
- Session 3: Goods and Services provided by the Ocean.

Part 2: Governing Our Ocean- a delicate balancing act: meeting our needs sustainably and for the benefit of all, today & in the future.

- Session 4: Ocean Governance & Law of the Sea
- Session 5: Governing Global Commons
- Session 6: Threats to the National Security arising from the Sea.
- Session 7: Strategic Importance of the Ocean

Part 3: Local or Audience Relevant Topics

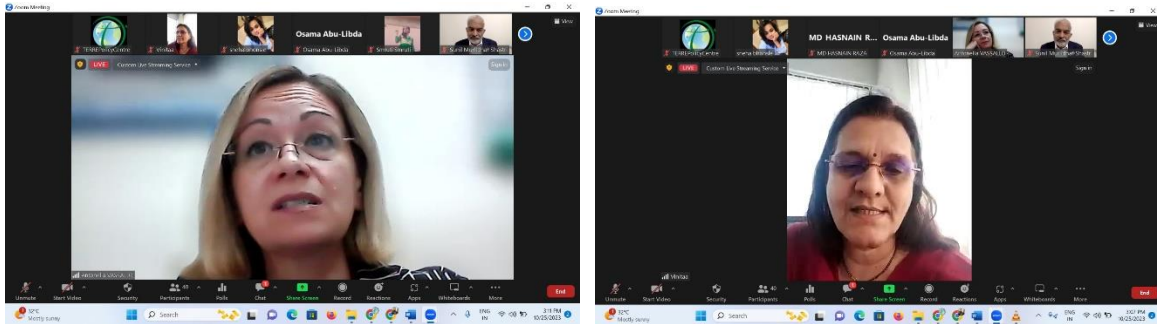
- Session 8: Conservation Issues in Coastal Habitats
- Session 9: Living with the Ocean
- Session 10: Improving Coastal Protection

Part 4: What next on this matter? Conclusion and the Way Forward

- Knowledge Assessment Test

Initiation the Course:

The 04th batch of the course conducted by TERRE in partnership with International Ocean Institute (IOI) commenced on 25th October 2023. The opening session was addressed by Ms. Antonella Vassallo, Managing Director, IOI Headquarters, Malta. Addressing the participants, she conveyed the aim of IOI and the purpose of conducting such courses. She appreciated TERRE and the participants for being part of this initiative. One of the course contributors, Mr Sunil Murlidhar Shastri, Consultant, Educator and Speaker in Ocean and Environment Governance, congratulated and encouraged the participants for joining the course. Speaking about his work and experience, he also mentioned about his association with Elisabeth Mann Borgese and her enduring legacy.



Conduct of the course:

Summary:

The course was divided into four parts, the first two-parts comprising of seven sessions was conducted by Mr. Shastri, Dr Ram Boojh and Dr Captain K.K Agnihotri. Considering the composition of the participants, Sunil addressed the complex concepts in simple terms. Making the audience familiar with the ocean-related terms, he conveyed our dependency on the ocean by mentioning the goods and services that are provided by the ocean. Considering our changing lifestyle, he taught us how-to live-in harmony with the ocean as well as highlighted the ocean threats. He mentioned about some of the coastal defences, risk management strategies, hard vs soft defence as well as maritime piracy and Blue Economy. Sunil also focused on governing global commons, elaborating the arising conflicts, the opportunities, United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, its history, and tenets for sustainable development. Dr Ram Boojh explained the relationship between economy, environment, and society is complex and often interdependent. He also focused on achieving sustainable development that requires collaboration across sectors and stakeholders, including governments, businesses, and communities, to ensure that economic development is both inclusive and environmentally responsible. Dr K.K Agnihotri explained about the difficulties to recognize the potential causes of national insecurity, including organized criminal groups and the effects of natural disasters. He emphasized on the need for strengthening law enforcement and disaster response capabilities, improving critical infrastructure resilience, and addressing underlying socioeconomic vulnerabilities.

The second part which was conveyed by Mr Sunil Murlidhar Shastri, and Dr Ram Boojh. Their courses delve into the complex concept of balancing our needs. They focused on the topics based on the concepts of National Maritime zones explaining about the rights and duties within the area of jurisdiction and also the importance of the Ocean.

It highlights the importance of acknowledging and fulfilling our own needs, while also being considerate of others' needs. The course emphasizes that meeting our needs should not come at the cost of others' wellbeing or happiness. The balancing act requires self-awareness, empathy, and communication skills to navigate different situations effectively. By mastering this delicate balance, we can foster healthy relationships, build trust, and create a more harmonious and fulfilling life for ourselves and those around us.

The third part of the course focused on Conservational issues in the coastal habitats, which was addressed by Dr Reshma Pitale, Research Scientist, Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai, India. In her session she made the participants familiar with the coastal ecosystems, importance, and the associations. Special emphasis was also given on mangroves, rocky shores, and their significance. While giving a positive depiction of natural ecosystems, she highlighted the challenges such as the unregulated aggregate mining, coastal pollution, and increased marine traffic. With a positive note, she also guided the participants on how to minimise our deleterious impacts and to contribute towards conservation.

This course is intended to transform the way society perceives the oceans by reorienting education, highlighting the gaps in knowledge, values, and behaviours that are needed to achieve sustainability.

Session 1: The Ocean in Simple Terms

On 25th October the course started, and Mr Sunil Murlidhar Shastri conducted the course with the simple topic: Description of the World Ocean in simple terms, where he explained plate tectonic theory, introduced the pacific ring of fire and various other terms making the participants familiar with the diverse topics.

Session 2: Concepts of Sustainability

On the second day of session (26th October), Dr Ram Boojh conversed about our future and how the focus as to be on Sustainability. He introduced the ABCD of challenges to achieve better synergies. Besides, he informed about Indian Ocean Rim Association and SDGs-related concepts. In addition, he spoke on creating value capital that may be a combination of - human capital, intellectual capital, networking capital, brand capital, globalisation capital.

Session 3: Goods and Services provided by the Ocean.

On the third day of the course (27th October), Mr Sunil introduced the goods and services provided by the ocean. He spoke about different countries and its coastline. He explained the

continental shelves in detail as well as mentioned about Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Under this session he also dealt with ports and harbours, resources of the ocean, energy resources of the sea and the services provided by the large marine ecosystem.

Session 4: Ocean Governance and Law of the Sea

Fourth session (30th October) was conducted by Mr Sunil, in which he explained about the ocean governance & law of the sea, wherein he mentioned the concept of national maritime zones and areas beyond national jurisdiction. He also explained various terms such as strait, archipelagic water, island, etc. and explained how the Law of the Sea has created new terminologies for a dozen or so maritime zones from the original two and described each one of them in some details.

Session 5: Governing Global Commons

In Session 5 (31st October) of the meeting Mr. Sunil spoke about governing the global commons, focusing on the rights and duties within areas of national jurisdiction and the common heritage of humankind. He emphasized the need for sustainable and equitable use of natural resources, as well as the importance of respecting the sovereignty of nations in managing their own resources. He also discussed the concept of the common heritage of humankind, which refers to resources that are considered to belong to all of humanity, such as the deep seabed and outer space, highlighting the challenges and complexities involved in governing these resources, and stressed the need for cooperation and collaboration among nations to ensure their responsible and equitable use for the benefit.

Session 6: Threats to the National Security arising from Sea.

On the 6th day of the session (01st November) Dr K.K Agnihotri explained about the difficulties to recognize the potential causes of national insecurity, including organized criminal groups and the effects of natural disasters. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that involves strengthening law enforcement and disaster response capabilities, improving critical infrastructure resilience, and addressing underlying socioeconomic vulnerabilities. By doing so, we can mitigation to the impact of these threats on national security and ensure a more stable and secure future.

Session 7: Strategic Importance of Ocean

On Seventh day (02nd November) Dr Ram Boojh was the speaker who explained the strategic importance of ocean. The Indian Ocean region is experiencing significant changes that have important strategic implications. Giving the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean, it is essential for countries in the region to work together to ensure stability and security. This includes strengthening maritime security cooperation, promoting economic development and investment, and resolving territorial disputes through peaceful means.

Session 8: Conservation Issues in the Coastal Habitats

On the Eighth day (03rd November) the session was conducted by Dr Reshma Pitale. She introduced the participants to the coastal region and highlighted our dependency as well the ecosystem services. Speaking about the diverse habitats such as mangroves, mudflats, rocky, sandy shores, coral reefs, sand dunes, and many more, each of these habitats were explained in detail. She also highlighted the diverse biological components such as seaweeds, sponges, sea anemones, barnacles, gastropods, etc. in these various habitats, and explained their interactions, importance, and significance.

Session 9: Living with the Ocean

Day ninth of session dated (06th November), which was conducted by Dr Ram Boojh covered various topics such as coastal flooding, coastal erosion, and accretion, also risk borne by coastal cities and how situation they face is dangerous to their survival. But he didn't stop at the risks but alongside, he suggested some coastal defence strategies, risk management, hard vs. soft defence, he also talked about SIDS – Small Island Developing States along with some facts regarding Small Island Developing States.

Session 10: Improving Coastal Protection

On the 10th day i.e. on (07th November), the session was conducted by Dr Ram Boojh on the topic Improving Coastal Protection. In this session he highlighted all the transitional areas between the marine and territorial zones. Talking about the nine coastal states and its coastline, he emphasized on the importance of coastal protection as the Indian Ocean comprises routes for many economies connecting different continents of the world. Speaking about the natural and artificial ways to deal with the calamities, he highlighted the coastal zone threats. He also mentioned about the institutional mechanisms involved in the conservation of coastal areas and also spoke about the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ)

Notifications. Discussing about the various issues such as coastal erosion, sea level rise, extreme weather events as well as the remedies for the issues in terms of strategies and actions. Through various case studies of Indian coast, he explained the protection measures.

Knowledge Assessment Test

On the same day of the course (07th November), the concluding session was organized in the presence of Mr Sunil Sir, Dr Ram Boojh, Dr K.K. Agnihotri and Dr Vinita Apte and all the participants. Giving a summary of all the ten sessions, an assessment test of the participants was conducted. The 4th batch of the Ocean Literacy Course was concluded with vote of thanks. The certificate of participation is awarded to all the participants and sent by mail.

