

## PRESS RELEASE

### OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA

New Delhi

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### **CAG Report on Activities of Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services presented in Parliament**

Report no. 8 of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on Activities of Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services: Union Government, Ministry of Earth Sciences was presented in Parliament here today. This Report contains the observations of Compliance Audit of the Activities of Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) for the period 2017-2022. The Report also contains those instances which came to notice in earlier years but could not be reported in previous Audit Reports. Matters relating to the period subsequent to 2021-22 have also been included, wherever necessary.

#### ***Key Audit findings***

##### **Project Management**

Project approvals from MoES were delayed, with mid-course changes and no revision of deliverables despite reduced budgets and timelines, leading to poor monitoring, underfunding, and reliance on contractual staff that hindered knowledge transfer and consolidation.

##### **Procurement and deployment of Ocean Observation Platforms**

Plans for buying or setting up Ocean Observation Platforms deployed to collect data to meet operational and research needs were deficient; INCOIS could not deploy, maintain or expand the Wave Rider Buoy network and lack of coordination with industry led to import dependence for operational needs, INCOIS did not procure new Automatic Weather Stations as targeted due to fund constraints.

##### **Data Management**

INCOIS lacked a Data Quality Management System, Data Management Plan, strategic IT Plan and proper disaster recovery measures, and despite security breaches, had no IT Security Policy or strict physical access controls in place.

##### **Execution of Research and Development projects**

The Ocean-Modelling, Data Assimilation and Process Specific Observations (O-MASCOT) and Monsoon Mission projects faced delays due to constraints of manpower and high

performance computing facility. Under the Monsoon Mission project, INCOIS faced delays due to slow procurement of observation platforms, leading to unmet objectives.

### **Advisory Services**

INCOIS provided Potential Fishing Zone advisories but could not do so on cloudy days due to lack of data. It could not operationalise a Forecasting System for deep-sea fishing, provide species-specific advisories for Hilsa and Oil Sardine and deficiencies in lacked data linkages were noticed. The Small Vessel Advisory Service, developed in 2018-19 could be operationalised only in February 2023. INCOIS could not maintain the optimal tsunami buoy network due to vandalism, ship-time shortages, and communication issues.

### **Sustainable Development and Climate Change**

MoES, as the nodal Ministry for SDG 14 had mapped INCOIS for certain targets of this goal, but INCOIS did not carry out the Ocean Acidification programme as directed. Only two villages were certified as Tsunami-Ready in Odisha. INCOIS created Multi-hazard Vulnerability maps for the mainland and Andaman and Nicobar Islands, but some information in the Atlas had become outdated. Though Multi-hazard Vulnerability maps were generated, INCOIS could not identify highly vulnerable coasts. Highly vulnerable coasts for the west coast or Lakshadweep Islands were also not identified.