

Chennai City may get marine coastal observatory

The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) will be setting up six marine coastal observatories across the country, one of which is likely to come up in Chennai.



Senior officials during the inauguration of NCCR in Chennai on Friday
Chennai:

On the sidelines of the unveiling of the National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) here, M Rajeevan, Secretary, MoES said, “Out of the six observatories, three will come up in the West coast and three in the East coast.”

SSC Sheno, Director, Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), said that the centres will be in Digha (West Bengal), Vishakapatnam, Chennai, Kochi, near Mumbai in Maharashtra and in Gujarat. “The one in Tamil Nadu will be in Chennai or south of the city. We will aim to set up two observatories by December this year, one in Vishakapatnam and other mostly in Kochi,” he said.

The observatories will be buoys, with sensors to monitor water quality and all ocean parameters. The idea is to monitor the data in real time and develop forecasting models. The ultimate plan is to develop models to forecast water quality in advance, said the scientist.

Elaborating on the sensors, Sheno added, “The floating buoy will have sensors that will read not only the physical parameters of atmosphere and upper ocean such as temperature and salinity but also deep ocean data such as carbon dioxide and ocean PCO₂.” On Friday, Clean Coast, an app to track water quality of beaches in the city and country with a five-day forecast, was launched by Rajeevan, who added that NCCR can play a pivotal role in monitoring the climate change, by participating in the ministry’s program.

Pertaining to the Central government’s Rs 10,000 crore deep ocean mission for exploration of polymetallic nodules in the Central Indian Ocean basin, the secretary said that the first draft of the detailed project report will be finalised by June, following which a formal proposal will be sent for cabinet approval,” said Rajeevan.