



Nansen
Scientific
Society

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MESSAGE

Nansen Centre in Cochin has turned 25 years on 16 November 2024. Congratulations!

Norway has long tradition in fishery and the famous oceanographer **Harald Ulrik Sverdrup** was the Chair of NORAD delegation to Cochin in 1952, which had the aim of improving and modernising the coastal fisheries in Kerala.

My first visit to Cochin was in 1976, as a member of NORAD, to analyse an extensive oceanographic data set in the coastal waters off Kerala collected by the UNDP/FAO Pelagic Fishery Project during 1971-1975. The results published in the project progress report No. 16, 1976 showed the repetitive seasonal variation in physical oceanography with strong upwelling along the coast during the monsoon season, every year. I was fascinated by the coastal city of Cochin, and even more by the Indian Ocean, whose oceanography I explored more when an Indian student joined me for PhD at Nansen Centre, Bergen. In late 90's I started working in close cooperation with Indian partners, especially, the late Prof. (Dr.) N. R. Menon of CUSAT to establish a Nansen Centre in Cochin.

The Nansen Environmental Research Centre India (NERCI) was established in 1999 as a non profit company jointly by the Nansen Centre, Bergen and the Norinco company (now Varya Tech Pvt.Ltd), Mumbai, with George and Thomas Matthew as partners, with the vision «to improve our understand of climate change, its impact on monsoon and Indian Ocean ecosystems and their influence on the coastal zone and the resulting social problems. We also aim to disseminate the scientific information gathered for the benefit of society and for the conservation of ecosystems.» Dr. K. Ajiith Joseph joined NERCI in 2000 and has been the Executive Director for more than two decades. Under his able leadership, NERCI has conducted many important national and international projects, leading to peer reviewed scientific publications. Many students have obtained their Masters and PhD degrees through NERCI, many young researchers have benefitted from the international workshops and summer schools conducted by NERCI alone and in collaboration with INCOIS in Hyderabad with Dr. S. S. C Shenoi and Dr. Shailesh Nayak and NCPOR in Goa with Dr. M. Ravichandran.

Happy to see that Dr. Ajiith Joseph and his team are doing a 'very good job' and taking NERCI to heights.

We, Bente and I and the Nansen Scientific Society, which is an associate partner of NERCI supporting Nansen Fellowship students at NERCI, wish you all the best of luck in future and the celebration of 25 years.

4 November, 2024

Prof.Ola M.Johannessen