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News: Harit Sagar: Green Port Guidelines

- Recently, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways has launched 'Harit Sagar' Green Port Guidelines 2023 to achieve the Zero Carbon Emission Goal.

Harit Sagar: Green Port Guidelines

- Harit Sagar is a Sanskrit term that means “Green Ocean”. It reflects the vision of making India’s ports more environmentally friendly and sustainable.
- They also cover aspects of the National Green Hydrogen Mission pertaining to ports, development of green hydrogen facility, LNG bunkering, and Offshore Wind Energy among others.
- These guidelines also provide the provision for adopting the global Green Reporting Initiative (GRI) standard.

Objectives

- To promote the adoption of best practices and technologies for green port development and operations, such as renewable energy, water conservation, biodiversity protection, and climate resilience.

- To minimize waste through Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose and Recycle to attain zero waste discharge from port operations.
- To establish a rating system for assessing and benchmarking the environmental performance of ports based on various indicators and parameters.
- To incentivize and recognize the ports that achieves high standards of environmental excellence and sustainability.
- To facilitate the integration of green port principles into the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of port infrastructure and services.

Significance

- They are aligned with India's commitments under the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the national policies and initiatives such as the National Action Plan on Climate Change, and the Swachh Bharat Mission.
- They are expected to enhance India's image and reputation as a responsible maritime nation that cares for its environment and its people.
- They are expected to create new opportunities for innovation, investment, employment, and collaboration in the port sector.

Benefits

- Enhancing the competitiveness and attractiveness of ports by improving their efficiency, reliability, safety, and quality of service.
- Reducing the operational costs and increasing the revenue generation potential of ports by optimizing the use of resources and minimizing waste.
- Improving the environmental compliance.
- Mitigating the environmental impacts and risks of port activities by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, noise pollution, water pollution, and marine litter.
- Contributing to the national and global goals of sustainable development and climate action by supporting the transition to a low-carbon and circular economy.

Challenges and Barriers

- Lack of awareness and capacity among port stakeholders.
- Lack of coordination and collaboration among different agencies and sectors.
- Inadequate data and information on environmental aspects of ports.
- Weak enforcement and monitoring mechanisms for environmental compliance.