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**India to share ocean buoy data: official
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In a significant decision, India today announced that it would share data obtained by its ocean buoys, positioned outside the country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), with others nations without any restrictions. These buoys, having sensors for lower atmosphere and sub surface observations, are located in the Indian Ocean and help forecast monsoon as well as provide cyclone warnings.

However, data from buoys within the country's EEZ would not be shared due to security reasons, a senior official said. "It was a kind of policy that we had to withhold the data from these buoys. But now we thought withholding the data may not help us. We are opening up even atmospheric data. It will be given free of cost," M Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences told reporters here today.

He was speaking on the sidelines of the second India-USA colloquium on "Earth Observations and Sciences for Society and Economy". Rajeevan said data from these buoys situated in international waters would be provided to all countries without any restriction.

"We have restrictions on giving ocean data within our Exclusive Economic Zone because of security reasons but international water data should be freely available," he said. "The data from RAMA buoy (marooned outside the EEZ) is given to students and researchers free of cost. We thought that it is a good initiative to give this data free to everybody. Anybody can download it and use it," Rajeevan said.

RAMA is an acronym for Research Moored Array for African-Asian-Australian Monsoon Analysis and Prediction.

Satheesh Shenoi, Director of the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), said that the buoys have sensors to get lower atmosphere readings and measure winds as well as radiation.

"These buoys are equipped to measure sub surface observations and the data can be used to predict monsoon and warn about cyclones," he said.

Craig McLean, Acting Chief Scientist of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), USA, welcomed the decision of the Indian government.

"The more minds working on this problem, the greater the chance of working out a solution," McLean said.