

Shailesh NAYAK

Earth System Science Organization (ESSO) and Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)

Dr. Shailesh Nayak is the Chair, Earth System Science Organization (ESSO) and Secretary to the Government of India for Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), since August 2008. He has been providing leadership for the programs related to science of climate change, weather services, polar science, ocean science and modeling, ocean survey, resources, and technology. He chaired an expert group and conceptualized the establishment of a National GIS system in the country.

Dr. Nayak obtained Ph. D. in Geology from the M.S University of Baroda in 1980. He joined the Space Applications Centre, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in 1978 as a scientist, and was subsequently elevated to the position of Director of Marine and Water Resources. He was mainly responsible for conceptualizing, formulating and executing many national level projects related to the application of satellite data on ocean colour, integrated coastal zone management, snow and glacier studies and water resources.

Dr. Nayak was appointed as the Director, Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad, an autonomous institution under ESSO, in May 2006. At ESSO-INCOIS, he set up a state-of-the-art Early Warning System for Tsunami and Storm Surges in the Indian Ocean. He was responsible for the conceptualization and development of Marine GIS. He made outstanding contributions to improving advisory services related to potential fishing zones, ocean state forecasting, and the Indian Argo project.

Dr. Nayak is the Chairman of the Research Advisory Committee of the National Institute of Oceanography, Goa, and Defence Terrain Research Laboratory, Delhi. He has been a member of many national committees related to earth science, coastal protection, mangrove, coral reef, and coastal zone management.

He is Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences, Bengaluru, the International Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS), the Indian Society of Remote Sensing (ISRS), and the Indian Meteorological Society. He has been awarded honorary degree of Doctor of Science by Andhra University in 2011 and by Assam University in 2013. Dr. Nayak is recipient of the IGU - Hari Narain Lifetime Achievement Award in Geosciences-2013, the ISCA Vikram Sarabhai Memorial Award 2012, the Bhaskara Award for 2009, the Indian National Remote Sensing Award in 1994 by the Indian Society of Remote Sensing, Dehradun, and the National Mineral Award in 2005. He is recognized as a Ph.D. Guide by six Universities, and six students have obtained their PhDs under his supervision. He was a Member of the Editorial Board of the Indian Journal of Marine Science, Planet Earth, and Geospatial Today.

Dr. Nayak is currently the Chair, Regional Integrated Multi-hazard Early Warning System (RIMES), and the President, Indian Geophysical Union, Hyderabad. He was the Vice-Chair of the Inter-Governmental Coordinating Group on Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System (ICG-IOTWS) (2007-2011); was the President of ISRS, Dehradun, Indian Meteorological Society (IMS), New Delhi, and the Indian Society of Geomatics (ISG), Ahmedabad; was the Chairman, Indian Ocean–Global Ocean Observing System (IO-GOOS) for the term 2006-10 and the Chairman, Indian Ocean Observing System Resources Forum (IRF) (2009-2013). Dr. Nayak was the President, ISPRS Technical Commission (TC) IV on 'Geo-databases and Digital Mapping' for the term 2004-08. He has represented Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in the International Ocean Colour Coordinating Group and International Global Observation Strategy-Coastal theme.