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India-Norway Green Strategic Partnership — 12 Agreements Signed During PM Modi's Historic Oslo Visit

19 May 2026 · IR · GS2

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19 May 2026 · 6 min read ·

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WHY IN NEWS:

During PM Narendra Modi's visit to Oslo — the **first by an Indian Prime Minister in 43 years** — India and Norway elevated their bilateral relationship to a **Green Strategic Partnership** on May 18–19, 2026. The two sides signed **12 bilateral agreements** across maritime, renewable energy, Arctic research, digital public goods, and fisheries. Norwegian PM **Jonas Gahr Støre** called the partnership “a natural alliance of ocean nations.”

THE 12 AGREEMENTS — SECTOR-WISE BREAKDOWN

India and Norway formalised 12 MoUs/agreements during the visit. The key agreements by sector:

SECTOR	AGREEMENT
Maritime	Cooperation on green shipping, decarbonisation of fleets, port management; Norwegian Maritime Authority ↔ Directorate General of Shipping (India)
Offshore Wind	Technical cooperation between Equinor (Norway) and NTPC/MNRE; feasibility studies for offshore wind in Indian EEZ
Aquaculture & Fisheries	Norway ↔ MPEDA (Marine Products Export Development Authority); technology transfer for salmon-equivalent farming; cold-chain logistics
Arctic Research	Joint research at Ny-Ålesund (Svalbard); NIH (Norway) ↔ NCPOR (National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research)
Digital Public Infrastructure	Knowledge sharing on India Stack (UPI, Aadhaar); Norway’s interest in DPI-based welfare delivery models
Health	Cooperation in pandemic preparedness and One Health; ICMR ↔ Norwegian Institute of Public Health (NIPH)
Education	Student and researcher exchange; Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) ↔ IITs
Circular Economy	Waste management knowledge transfer; Norway’s deposit return scheme model for India’s EPR implementation

WHAT IS THE “GREEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP”?

India and Norway’s new designation — **Green Strategic Partnership** — mirrors the India-Denmark Green Strategic Partnership (signed 2020) and signals that the bilateral relationship is anchored around **climate, clean energy, and ocean sustainability** as core pillars.

PARAMETER	INDIA-NORWAY GREEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
Announced	May 18–19, 2026
Core pillars	Maritime decarbonisation, offshore wind, Arctic research, circular economy, digital public goods
Preceded by	India-Denmark GSP (2020), India-Sweden Strategic Partnership (2026)
Different from regular SP	Explicitly frames environment and green transition as the primary driver, not just security or trade

The “Green” qualifier is diplomatically significant — it places Norway’s relationship with India in the same tier as Denmark, which India has worked with since 2020 on energy transition and green hydrogen.

INDIA-NORWAY BILATERAL: KEY FACTS

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Diplomatic relations since	1947
Last Indian PM visit to Norway	Indira Gandhi, 1983 (43 years ago)
Bilateral trade (2024)	~USD 2.73 billion
Norwegian companies in India	Yara International (fertilisers), DNV (certification), Kongsberg (maritime/defence), Statkraft (renewables), Scatec Solar
Norwegian investment vehicle	GPFG (~USD 2.2 trillion) has significant India equity exposure
India-EFTA TEPA	In force October 2025; USD 100B investment / 15 years / 1M jobs

OFFSHORE WIND: NORWAY’S EQUINOR AND INDIA

Equinor, Norway’s state energy company (formerly Statoil), is one of the world’s leading offshore wind developers. The India–Norway offshore wind MoU:

- Targets feasibility assessment for **floating offshore wind** in India’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)
- India’s offshore wind potential: estimated **70 GW+** in near-shore areas alone (MNRE estimate)
- India’s **National Offshore Wind Energy Policy (2015)** provides the framework — but deployment has been slow due to grid connectivity and high capital costs
- Norway’s expertise in **floating offshore wind** (pioneered the world’s first commercial floating offshore wind farm — Hywind Scotland, 2017) is directly relevant to India’s deep-water EEZ

INDIA’S ARCTIC INTERESTS AND HIMADRI STATION

Norway is India’s most important partner on Arctic affairs:

INDIA'S ARCTIC ASSET	DETAIL
Himadri Research Station	India's Arctic research base at Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard, Norway — established July 1, 2008; operated by NCPOR
Arctic Council observer	India became observer in 2013 ; one of 13 observer states
India's Arctic Policy	Released 2022; six pillars: science, climate, economy, transport, governance, capacity building
NCPOR	National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research; under Ministry of Earth Sciences; Goa

Norway's Svalbard archipelago hosts Himadri and is also home to 10 other nations' research stations — making Ny-Ålesund the world's northernmost international science park. Under the 2026 agreements, India and Norway will expand joint expeditions and share climate data from Svalbard.

MARITIME COOPERATION: AN OCEAN-NATIONS ALLIANCE

India and Norway are both major maritime nations:

PARAMETER	INDIA	NORWAY
Coastline	~7,500 km	~83,000 km (including fjords and islands)
EEZ area	~2.02 million sq km	~2.04 million sq km
Merchant fleet (DWT)	4th largest owner by DWT	4th largest owner by ship count
Green shipping focus	Decarbonising 1,400+ vessel Indian fleet	Pioneer of LNG-powered ferries; hydrogen shipping

The cooperation covers:

- 1 **Port State Control** — mutual recognition of inspection regimes
- 2 **Green corridor** — India-Norway piloting a “green shipping corridor” (zero-emission vessels on select routes)
- 3 **Crew training** — Norwegian Maritime University collaboration with Indian Maritime University

AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES TECHNOLOGY

Norway is the world's **second-largest seafood exporter** (after China) and the global leader in salmon aquaculture technology. The India-Norway aquaculture MoU targets:

- Technology transfer for **shrimp and carp aquaculture** in India (Norway's salmon systems adapted to tropical species)
- **Cold-chain infrastructure** — Norway's expertise to reduce India's 30%+ post-harvest seafood losses
- **MPEDA** (Marine Products Export Development Authority, Kochi) is the nodal Indian agency
- India is the **4th largest fish producer** globally and a major seafood exporter (~USD 7 billion FY2025)

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 2 — International Relations

- India-Nordic relations: bilateral and **multilateral** (India-Nordic Summit, India-EFTA TEPA)
- **Green Strategic Partnership** framework: compare India-Denmark (2020) vs India-Norway (2026) — both ocean-nation partnerships
- Norway's GPFG as a sovereign wealth fund case study
- India-China normalisation context: Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, border trade resumption vs India-Norway cooperation — multi-vector diplomacy

GS Paper 3 — Environment/Economy

- **Offshore wind**: India's 70 GW+ potential; Norway's Equinor as technical partner; floating offshore wind technology
- **Arctic governance**: India's stake in Northern Sea Route, scientific research, climate data
- **Aquaculture**: India as 4th largest fish producer; MPEDA; cold-chain logistics; Norway's tech transfer

Mains Question (GS2): “India's elevation of ties with Norway to a Green Strategic Partnership reflects a shift in how India conceptualises bilateral relationships in the context of the energy transition. Critically evaluate.” (250 words)

Keywords: India-Norway Green Strategic Partnership, 12 agreements, Equinor, offshore wind, Himadri station, Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard, NCPOR, MPEDA, India-EFTA TEPA, GPFG, maritime decarbonisation, circular economy.

Sources: PIB, MEA, Tribune India, ANI

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

INDIA-NORWAY GREEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (2026):

Announced during PM Modi's Oslo visit, May 18–19, 2026

12 bilateral agreements signed: maritime, offshore wind, aquaculture, Arctic research, digital public infrastructure, health, education, circular economy

First Indian PM visit to Norway in 43 years (Indira Gandhi last visited in 1983)

Norwegian PM: Jonas Gahr Støre

INDIA'S ARCTIC INFRASTRUCTURE:

Himadri Research Station — India's Arctic research base; located at Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard, Norway

Established: July 1, 2008; operated by NCPOR (National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, Goa)

India became Arctic Council observer on May 15, 2013

13 observer states at Arctic Council; 8 full member states (USA, Canada, Russia, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Iceland)

EQUINOR (NORWAY):

Norway's state energy company (51% owned by Norwegian government)

Pioneer of floating offshore wind: Hywind Scotland (2017) — world's first commercial floating offshore wind farm

India MoU: feasibility studies for floating offshore wind in India's EEZ

INDIA-EFTA TEPA:

In force: October 2025

Investment commitment: USD 100 billion over 15 years; 1 million direct jobs in India

EFTA members: Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein (none are EU members)

INDIA-NORWAY BILATERAL TRADE:

~USD 2.73 billion (2024)

India's exports: pharmaceuticals, marine products, engineering goods, IT services

Norway's exports: machinery, fertilisers (Yara International), seafood, chemicals

MPEDA:

Marine Products Export Development Authority

Headquarters: Kochi, Kerala

Under: Ministry of Commerce and Industry

India's seafood exports: ~USD 7 billion (FY2025); India is 4th largest fish producer globally

GREEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (GSP) — INDIA'S NETWORK:

India-Denmark GSP: 2020 (first such designation; focus: wind energy, water, food)

India-Norway GSP: 2026 (focus: maritime decarbonisation, offshore wind, Arctic, circular economy)

Both are "ocean nation" partnerships; both involve renewable energy at core

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