



Endowment Fund Launched to Increase Deep-Seabed Research Contributions, Partnerships and Participants Encouraged

18 February 2008

KINGSTON, JAMAICA – The International Seabed Authority today launched a campaign to identify partners and participants in its Endowment Fund to Support Collaborative Marine Scientific Research on the International Seabed Area.

“The importance of marine scientific research in the deep-seabed area cannot be underestimated,” said Mr. Satya Nandan, Secretary-General of the Authority. “We are just beginning to learn how this vast marine area can contribute to international scientific knowledge of the marine environment, biodiversity, geology, taxonomy, and so many other fields of research.”

“The International Seabed Authority’s Endowment Fund will ensure that research in deep-sea areas continues to build this knowledge base amongst scientists in both developing and developed countries for the benefit of all mankind.”

The Endowment Fund was established in 2006 to encourage collaborative marine scientific research on the ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. The Fund aims to fulfill this mandate in two ways: by supporting the participation of qualified scientists and technical personnel from developing countries in research programmes and activities; and by providing these scientists with opportunities to participate in collaborative research initiatives.

The International Seabed Authority Secretariat in Jamaica is now seeking partners in international seabed research to form a network of co-operating institutions interested in offering training courses, technical assistance, or any other scientific research opportunities within the parameters of the Fund. The Authority has already engaged previous partners in international seabed area research and participants in its annual workshops to begin creating a list of current and future collaborative marine scientific research opportunities.

The Secretariat is also inviting scientists and technical personnel from developing countries to apply for assistance through the Fund. Opportunities for deep-seabed research and the application of such research into marine resource management may be limited in developing countries. To be eligible for assistance, scientists, researchers and technicians must have three to four (or more) years of experience in a relevant field for marine science research. Application forms may be found at the ISA website at www.isa.org.jm/en/efund.

Finally, the Secretariat is looking to the international donor community for contributions to the Fund to increase the number of participants in, and opportunities for, international seabed science. While the Fund was set up with an initial capital of US\$3 million, for the time being, only the interest generated from this investment may be used to support its initiatives.

“I encourage members of the Authority, international and philanthropic organizations, corporations, and academic, scientific and technical institutions to consider contribution to this Fund,” said Mr. Nandan. “Through partnerships and contributions, we can continue to provide the international scientific community with collaborative opportunities to better understand this global heritage.”

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