

ISA WORKSHOP ON THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE AREA OF THE NORTHERN MID-ATLANTIC RIDGE WITH A FOCUS ON PMS DEPOSITS

15-19 June 2020

Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation

Terms of Reference

The International Seabed Authority (ISA), in collaboration with the Atlantic Regional Environmental Management Plan (REMP) Project (funded by European Union), the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation and All-Russia Scientific Research Institute for Geology and Mineral Resources of the Ocean (VNIIOkeangeologia), will convene the Workshop on Regional Environmental Management Plan (REMP) for the Area of the Northern Mid-Atlantic Ridge with a focus on PMS deposits, at Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation from 15 to 19 June, 2020.

Background

The objective of REMPs is to provide the relevant organs of the ISA, as well as contractors and their sponsoring States, with a proactive management tool to support informed decision making that balances resource development with conservation (ISBA/24/C/3). In line with the mandate of ISA to ensure effective protection for the marine environment from harmful effects which may arise from activities undertaken in the Area, the Council took note of a preliminary strategy for the development of REMPs for the Area (ISBA/24/C/3) for key provinces where exploration activities under contracts were being carried out, identifying the Mid-Atlantic Ridge (MAR) as one of the priority areas. As highlighted in this preliminary strategy, the development and implementation of REMPs in the Area require a collaborative and transparent approach, including the compilation and analysis of available data from multiple sources, as well as a consultation with recognized experts from the international scientific community, contractors and relevant international organizations. Likewise, it is essential that such processes facilitate full participation by developing States. The Council also emphasized that the Secretariat should aim to expand the breadth and depth of its strategic partnerships with relevant organizations and researchers, including exploring opportunities for new strategic partnerships.

In this context, ISA Secretariat and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, together with VNIIOkeangeologia, are making cooperative efforts to facilitate the development of a draft REMP for the Area of the northern MAR with a focus on PMS deposits. The proposed workshop also builds on the results of the previous REMP workshops held in Szczecin, Poland in June 2018, and in Évora, Portugal in November 2019. In particular, the Évora workshop reviewed and synthesized scientific data and information for the development of a REMP in northern MAR, and identified scientific approaches for applying adaptive management and area-based management tools, as well as for addressing cumulative impacts.

Workshop Objectives

The workshop aims to: (i) describe the geographical scope and environmental goals and objectives for the draft REMP, (ii) identify possible elements to be included in the draft REMP for the Area of northern MAR with a focus on PMS deposits, (iii) identify potential management approaches and measures, with a focus on PMS deposits, that can be considered in the development of an REMP, including spatial and non-spatial measures as well as approaches for addressing cumulative impacts at the regional level, and (vi) discuss the framework for implementation, including priority actions for addressing the knowledge gaps, monitoring and review of the implementation of the REMP, collaboration and capacity building.

Expected outputs

A workshop report will be prepared by the designated co-chairs and the ISA Secretariat based on the results of the workshop discussion. The report of the workshop will then be made available as information to the Legal and Technical Commission in its future meeting.