



**INFORMATION NOTE ON MATTERS BEFORE THE TWENTY-THIRD SESSION
OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY**

31 July – 18 August 2017, Kingston, Jamaica

I. General

1. This information note has been prepared to inform members and observers of the International Seabed Authority of the work of the Authority at its forthcoming twenty-third session scheduled to be held in Kingston, Jamaica, from 31 July to 18 August 2017.
2. The first week of meetings, from 31 July to 4 August 2017, will be devoted to meetings of the Legal and Technical Commission and the Finance Committee. The Commission may continue their work in the first half of the following week from 7 to 9 August, to ensure that all recommendations made by the Commission are ready for consideration by the Council thereafter during the session. The Assembly will formally convene its opening meeting on Tuesday 8 August 2017, to be followed by the opening meeting of the Council. The Assembly will resume its meetings, scheduled on 15 August 2017, following the completion of all agenda items of the Council on 14 August 2017.
3. Members of the Authority are reminded that for the twenty-third session, it is the turn of the African States Group to nominate a candidate for the Presidency of the Assembly, and the turn of the Latin American and Caribbean States Group to nominate a candidate for the presidency of the Council. Each of the other regional groups will be entitled to nominate a Vice-President of the Assembly and a Vice-President of the Council. There is also a Credentials Committee to be appointed by the Assembly. In this connection, it would be very helpful to the Secretariat, and also so as to facilitate the smooth running of the session, if regional groups could coordinate on the candidate nominations for these positions in advance of the session.
4. This note outlines the main items for consideration by the Assembly, the Council, the Legal and Technical Commission and the Finance Committee. As required by the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the Convention, a number of substantive matters have to be sequentially considered by different organs of the Authority before a final decision on them can be taken. The provisional agendas for the various organs, and the indicative programme of work, which are attached to this note, have been designed with this consideration in mind.

II. Finance Committee

5. The Finance Committee is scheduled to meet from 2 to 4 August 2017 and commence its session with the adoption of the agenda followed by the election of the Chair and the Vice-Chair. The Committee is to review the implementation of the budget for the financial period 2015-2016. The Committee will consider an audit report on the accounts of the Authority for 2016 prepared by KPMG and appoint an

independent auditor for 2017 and 2018. The Committee is also required to review the status of the Endowment Fund, of the Voluntary Trust Fund, and of the Working Capital Fund, as well as the status of implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. Additionally, the Committee will consider reports respectively on the implementation of the budget presentation and format and related further proposals, on the status of overhead charges for the administration and supervision of contracts for exploration and their reflection of costs actually and reasonably incurred, on the implementation of the rules governing the management and administration of the Voluntary Trust Fund and related matters, as well as on the comprehensive review of the United Nations common system compensation package.

III. Legal and Technical Commission

6. The Legal and Technical Commission is scheduled to meet twice in 2017. The first meeting was held from 21 February to 3 March 2017, whilst the second meeting will be held before and during the twenty-third session of the Authority, from 31 July to 9 August as scheduled. At its meeting in February/March 2017, the Commission adopted its agenda¹ and elected its Chair (Mr. Christian Reichert, Germany) and Vice-Chair (Ms. Michelle Walker, Jamaica). The Commission took note of the status of the contracts for exploration. Then it focused on the priority items, including an application for extension of an approved plan of work for exploration and the draft regulations for exploitation. The Commission established four dedicated working groups to deal with the following agenda items respectively: the review of the implementation of the Environmental Management Plan for the Clarion-Clipperton-Zone and the development of environmental management plans in other international seabed area zones; review of the recommendations for the guidance of contractors for the assessment of the possible environmental impacts arising from exploration for marine minerals in the Area; the implementation of the data management strategy developed for the Authority; and selection of candidates for the Contractors' training programmes.

7. At the July/August meeting, the Commission will continue its deliberations on the above agenda items and commence the review of the annual reports submitted by the Contractors and the consideration of an application for a plan of work for exploration for polymetallic sulphides.

8. Further information regarding the work of the Commission during the twenty-third session can be found at: <https://www.isa.org.jm/sessions/23rd-session-2017>.

IV. Council

9. The Council will commence its session on 8 August 2017 with the adoption of the agenda followed by the election of a President and Vice-President. A total of 18 items are currently listed on the provisional agenda of the Council.

10. Among the routine items of business for the Council are the review of the status of contracts for exploration and the consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of national legislation relating to deep seabed mining and related matters. The Council will also consider a report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the decision of the Council adopted in 2016 (ISBA/22/C/28) relating to the summary report of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission. If the Commission completes its consideration of an application for extension of a contract for exploration and

¹ See ISBA/23/LTC/1.

consideration of an application for a plan of work for exploration, and submits reports and makes recommendations for the consideration of the Council, the Council will consider the reports and recommendations and make the decisions thereon. The Council will also consider the report submitted by the Chair of the Commission on the work of the Commission during the 23rd session, which would include the progress made by the Commission with respect to the draft regulations for exploitation of mineral resources in the Area.

11. Following the resignation of three members of the Commission, and pursuant to Rule 80 paragraph 3 of the Rules of the Council, new candidates will have to be elected by the Council for the remainder of the term of three members who resigned in early 2017. Three candidates have been nominated respectively by Chile, Mexico and Poland. Furthermore, in accordance with the request from the Council made at its 22nd session relating to the election of the members of the Commission ([ISBA/22/C/29](#)), the Secretary-General will present a report on the size of the Commission and the proposed mechanism for the future elections of the members of the Commission.

12. The Council will also consider the report of the Finance Committee, and is expected to make recommendations to the Assembly on proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations of the Authority.

V. Assembly

13. The Assembly will open its meeting on 8 August 2017 with the adoption of the agenda followed by the election of a President and Vice-President. Three applications for observer status will be considered. Election will also be held to fill a vacancy on the Finance Committee for the remainder of the term of one member initially nominated by France, who resigned in May 2017. Then, the Assembly will resume its meeting following completion of all agenda items of the Council.

14. The Assembly will consider the annual report of the Secretary-General, submitted pursuant to article 166 of the Convention. It will also consider the final report of the review committee established by the Assembly in 2015 to oversee a general and systematic review of the international regime of the Area ([ISBA/23/A/3](#)), as well as the comments made by the Secretary-General on the recommendations contained in the Final Report of the review committee ([ISBA/23/A/5](#)).

15. Furthermore, the Assembly will consider the report and recommendations of the Finance Committee and, if so recommended by the Council, decide on the proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations of the Authority.

16. The Assembly may also be required to consider any other items that may be brought to its attention.