

UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
LIMITED

A/AC.138/SC.III/L.2

22 March 1971

Original: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF THE
SEA-BED AND THE OCEAN FLOOR BEYOND THE
LIMITS OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION

Sub-Committee III

Note by the Chairman

1. The terms of reference of Sub-Committee III as embodied in the agreement on the organization of work read out by the Chairman of the Committee at the 45th meeting on 12 March, are as follows:

"To deal with the preservation of the marine environment (including, inter alia, the prevention of pollution) and scientific research and to prepare draft treaty articles thereon."

2. The work of the Committee therefore divides itself into two distinct though inter-locking parts:

(a) Matters relating to the preservation of the marine environment, including the prevention of pollution; and

(b) Matters relating to scientific research.

3. It is clear that a number of United Nations organs and agencies are already at work in these fields, and the Sub-Committee may wish to give some consideration to defining more specifically its own particular sphere of interest, so that it may more easily undertake its assigned task of drafting treaty articles on these matters for the 1973 Conference on the Law of the Sea.

4. In this connexion, the following points are of relevance: the last preambular paragraph of resolution 2750 C(XXV) refers to using fully the opportunity provided by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, to be held in 1972, to further the work of preparation for the Law of the Sea Conference. In paragraph 13 of resolution 2750 C(XXV), the General Assembly specifically invited the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the Food and

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Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and its Committee on Fisheries, the World Health Organization, the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization, the World Meteorological Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency to co-operate with the Sea-Bed Committee "in particular by preparing such scientific and technical documentation as the Committee may request". The Sub-Committee may wish to call particularly upon the expertise of these agencies or some of them, or "other intergovernmental bodies and specialized agencies concerned", as provided in the Assembly resolution, to make available the relevant background documentation to the Sub-Committee. In calling on these bodies, the Sub-Committee may wish to give them an indication of the lines along which it is seeking information. It might consider holding a general discussion so as to clarify these lines.

5. In regard to the preservation of the marine environment, the Sub-Committee will wish in particular to be regularly informed of the preparatory work for the Conference on Human Environment to be held in Stockholm in 1972.

6. I am informed that a new comprehensive report on pollution to be submitted to the next session of the Economic and Social Council and to the Preparatory Committee of the Conference on Human Environment is now being drafted and should be available to members of the Sub-Committee in May or June. This will bring up-to-date and expand the report prepared by the Secretary-General in co-operation with the specialized agencies and submitted to the Assembly at its twenty-fifth session in document A/7924.

7. In addition, the Secretary-General will present to the Economic and Social Council's fifty-first session a progress report prepared by the IOC of UNESCO in co-operation with all the agencies and organizations concerned on the implementation of the Long Term and Expanded Programme of Oceanic Research. This report might also be presented to our Sub-Committee.