

1 THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY AT A GLANCE





At a glance

ISA provides an international and transparent forum to regulate and manage all mineral resources related activities and ensure protection of the marine environment in the “Area”, the deep seabed and subsoil beyond national jurisdiction, for the benefit of all humanity.



The research undertaken as part of exploration contracts in the Area is critical to realizing all aspects of the Blue Economy, including knowledge of marine biodiversity and ecological processes.



168 members
167 States and the European Union

92 observers



Budget 2019–2020
US\$18,235,850

- + **Voluntary trust funds** for members of the Council, the LTC and the FC to ensure participation from developing States, and for the Special Representative for the Enterprise
- + **Endowment Fund** for Marine Scientific Research in the Area

ISA was established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the subsequent 1994 Agreement.

ISA MANDATE

The mission of ISA is to organize and control activities in the deep seabed beyond national jurisdiction to ensure the safe and rational management of its mineral resources in line with UNCLOS and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This means ensuring that commercial deep-seabed mining follows the highest environmental standards and that the economic benefits are equitably shared among all States.

ISA & the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

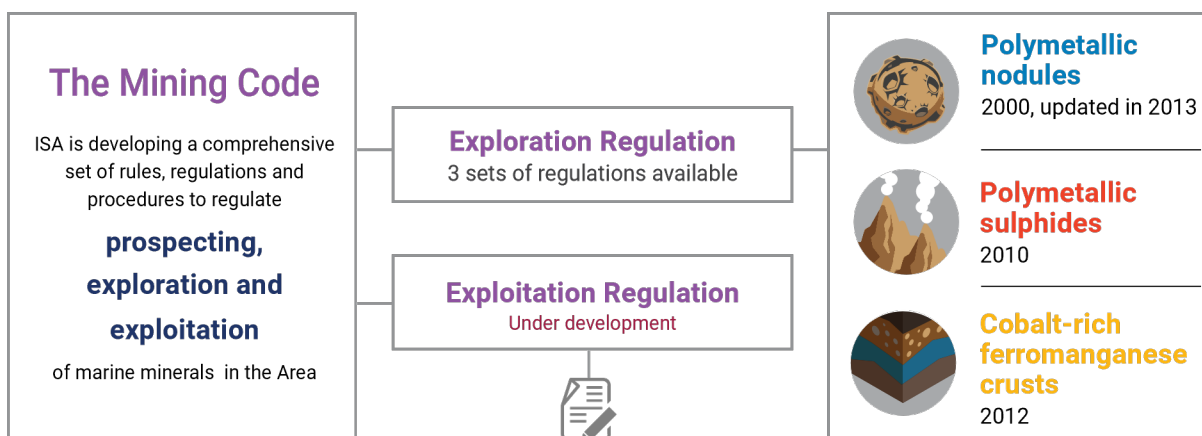


ISA has registered 7 voluntary commitments to support the implementation of SDG 14

- 1 Enhancing the role of women in marine scientific research
#OceanAction15467
- 2 SG's Award for Excellence in Deep-Sea Research
#OceanAction15796
- 3 Deep-sea long-term observatories
#OceanAction17746
- 4 Deep-sea taxonomic atlases
#OceanAction17776
- 5 Abyssal Initiative for Blue Growth
#OceanAction16538
- 6 Supporting Africa's Blue Economy
#OceanAction16374
- 7 Mapping Africa's deep-sea resources
#OceanAction16494

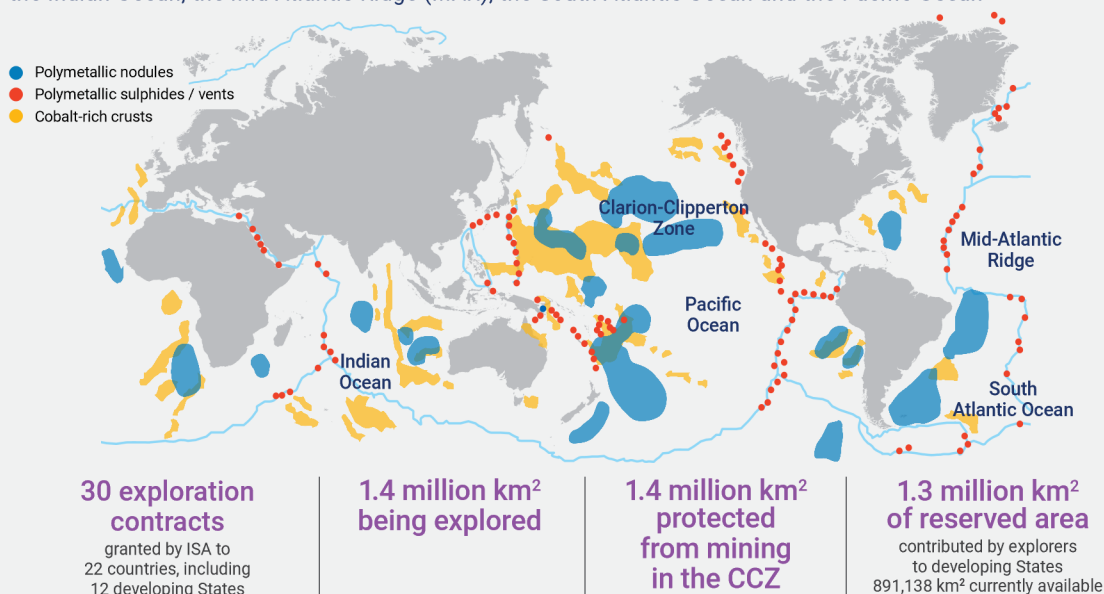


ISA contributes toward the implementation of 9 of the 17 SDGs



Global distribution of seafloor mineral resources

Areas being explored under contract to the ISA are located in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone (CCZ), the Indian Ocean, the Mid Atlantic Ridge (MAR), the South Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean



All data and information related to the deep seabed and the associated water column collected during exploration activities is systematically made available in ISA **DeepData** database.

Strategic Plan 2019-2023

To realize its mandate, ISA has produced a Strategic Plan for the period 2019-2023 built around 9 strategic directions

1. Realize the role of ISA in a global context
2. Strengthen the regulatory framework for activities in the Area
3. Protect the marine environment
4. Promote and encourage marine scientific research in the Area
5. Build capacity for developing States
6. Ensure fully integrated participation by developing States
7. Ensure equitable sharing of financial and other economic benefits
8. Improve the organizational performance of ISA
9. Commit to transparency

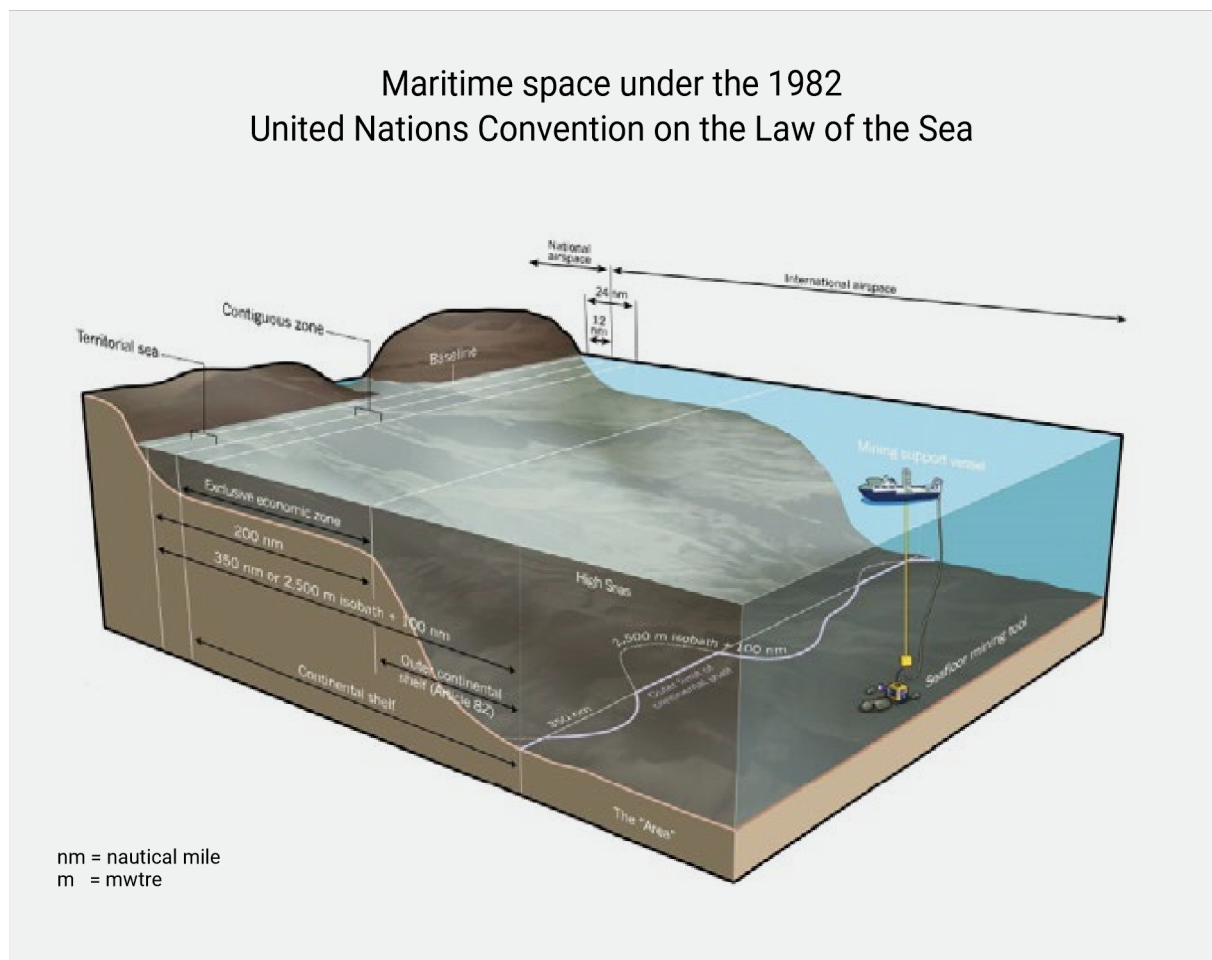
The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1994 Agreement

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) is an autonomous international organization that was established in 1994 under UNCLOS and the subsequent 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of UNCLOS (1994 Agreement).

It is the organization through which States parties to UNCLOS organize and control activities in the "Area".

ISA thus has the exclusive mandate to manage deep-sea mineral resources for the benefit of humankind.

ISA has a number of other obligations, including to take necessary measures with respect to activities in the Area to ensure effective protection of the marine environment from harmful effects which may arise from such activities,¹ to distribute to States parties payments or in-kind contributions derived from exploitation of non-living resources of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles,² and to promote and encourage marine scientific research concerning the Area and its resources as well as co-ordinate and disseminate the results of research and analysis when available.³



The Area is defined as the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

¹ UNCLOS, art.145.

² UNCLOS, art.82 (4).

³ UNCLOS, art.143 (2).

Strategic Plan and High-Level Action Plan 2019-2023

The ISA Strategic Plan⁴ and corresponding High-Level Action Plan⁵ provide an overview of the key priorities and high-level actions needed to achieve the strategic objectives of the organization for the period 2019 to 2023.

The plan includes nine strategic directions that will guide ISA work in the context of global challenges and the SDGs. An update on the implementation of the Strategic Plan is presented on pages 22-46.

Membership

All parties to UNCLOS are automatically members of ISA.⁶ As of June 2020, there were 168 parties to UNCLOS (167 States and the European Union) and thus 168 members of ISA.

On the same date, there were 150 parties to the 1994 Agreement (149 States and the European Union). There are therefore still 18 members of ISA (see table p.15) that became parties to UNCLOS before the adoption of the 1994 Agreement and that have yet to become parties to it.

Since Part XI of UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement are to be interpreted and applied together as a single instrument, the provisions of the 1994 Agreement shall prevail in the event of any inconsistency between the two. Although members of ISA that are not parties to the 1994 Agreement necessarily participate in the work of ISA, becoming a party to the 1994 Agreement would remove any potential conflict and they are strongly encouraged to become parties at the earliest opportunity.

Permanent missions

As of June 2020, 27 States and the European Union maintained permanent missions to ISA (see table p.15). The Secretary-General holds regular briefing sessions for the permanent missions on the progress of ISA work.

Protocol on Privileges and Immunities

The Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of ISA was adopted by the Assembly on 27 March 1998 and entered into force on 31 March 2003.

As of June 2020, 47 members are parties to the Protocol while a further 11 States have signed but not yet ratified it (see table p.15).



Photo: Franz Dejon/IISD

⁴ ISBA/24/A/10.

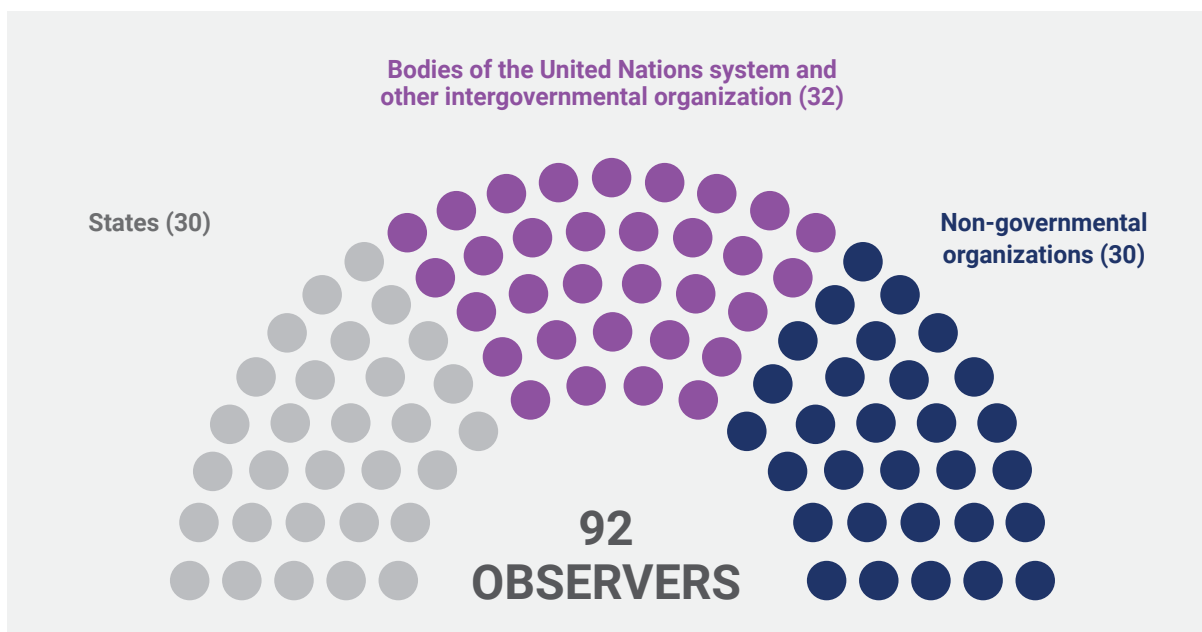
⁵ ISBA/25/A/15.

⁶ UNCLOS, art.156 (2).

Observers

ISA collaborates with key stakeholders from governments and the private sector, international and regional organization, civil society and academia. As of June 2020, ISA has granted observer status to 30 States that are not party to UNCLOS. In addition, 32 bodies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental

organization as well as 30 non-governmental organizations also have observer status, enabling them to participate in meetings of the Council and the Assembly. During the 25th session, in 2019, the Assembly approved the guidelines for applications for observer status for non-governmental organizations.⁷



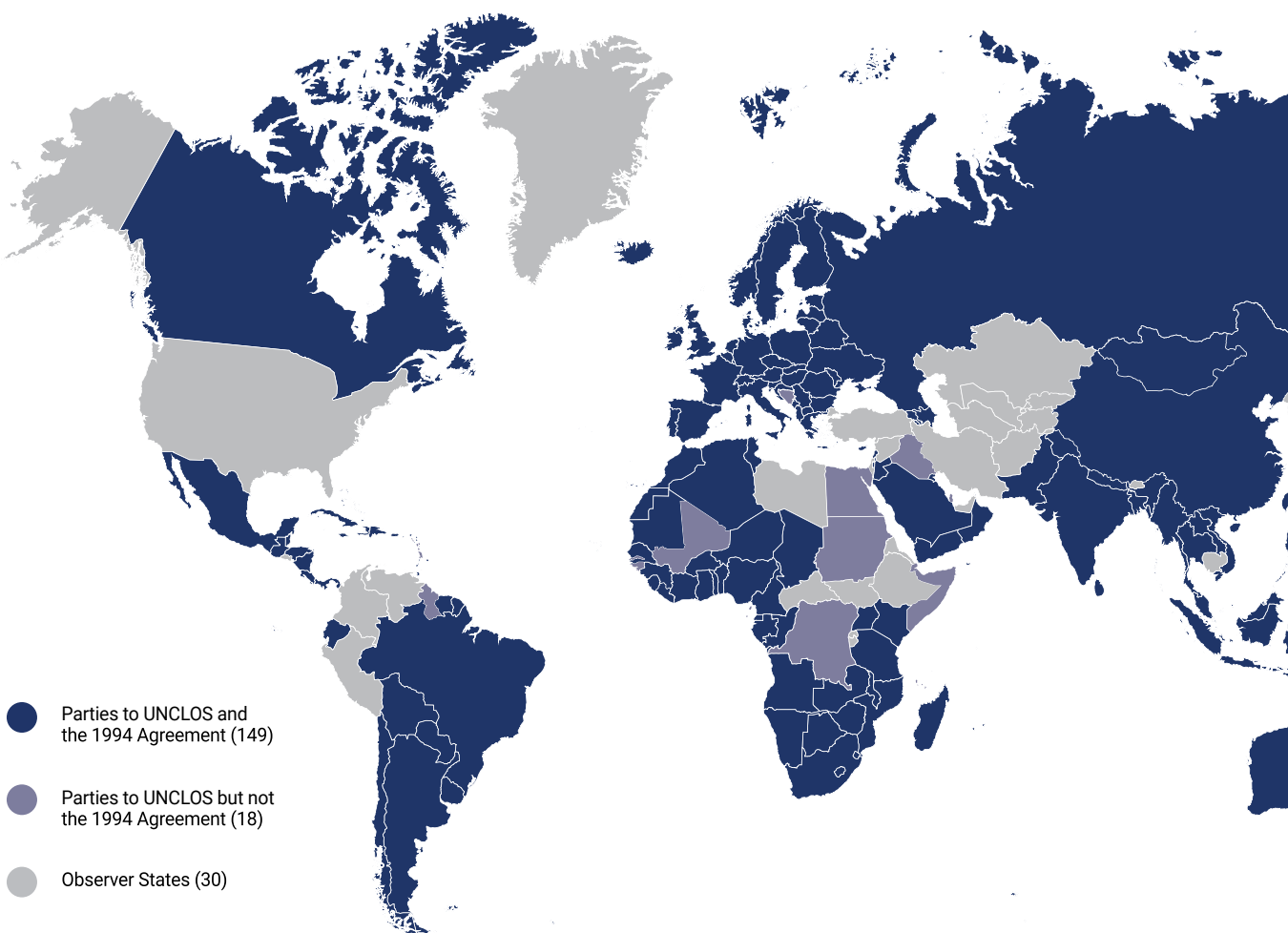
States (30) ●	Bodies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organization (32) ●	Non-governmental organizations (30) ●
Afghanistan	United Nations	Conservation International
Andorra	United Nations Environment Programme	Greenpeace International
Bhutan	United Nations Development Programme	International Association of Drilling Contractors
Burundi	International Labour Organization	International Ocean Institute
Cambodia	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	InterRidge
Central African Republic	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Law of the Sea Institute
Colombia	World Health Organization	World Wildlife Fund International
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	World Bank	International Cable Protection Committee
El Salvador	International Monetary Fund	Center for Oceans Law and Policy, University of Virginia School of Law

⁷ ISBA/25/A/16.

States (30) ●	Bodies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organization (32) ●	Non-governmental organizations (30) ●
Eritrea	International Civil Aviation Organization	Deep Sea Conservation Coalition
Ethiopia	Universal Postal Union	Committee for Mineral Reserves International Reporting Standards
Holy See	International Telecommunication Union	World Ocean Council
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	World Meteorological Organization	Sargasso Sea Commission
Israel	International Maritime Organization	Fish Reef Project
Kazakhstan	World Intellectual Property Organization	International Dialogue on Underwater Munitions
Kyrgyzstan	International Fund for Agricultural Development	Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary
Libya	United Nations Industrial Development Organization	African Minerals Development Centre
Liechtenstein	International Atomic Energy Agency	Durham University's Centre for Borders Research
Peru	Commonwealth	RESOLVE
Rwanda	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission	The Pew Charitable Trusts
San Marino	Inter-American Development Bank	Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative
South Sudan	International Hydrographic Organization	International Policy Laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Syrian Arab Republic	International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund	Center for Polar and Deep Ocean Development, Shanghai Jiao Tong University
Tajikistan	InterOceanmetal Joint Organization	International Marine Minerals Society
Turkey	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources	Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies
Turkmenistan	OSPAR Commission	Mining Standards International
United Arab Emirates	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries	Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology
United States of America	Permanent Commission for the South Pacific	Earthworks
Uzbekistan	Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity	Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea
Venezuela	The Pacific Community	Ocean Society of India
	World Trade Organization	
	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme	

Bodies that may participate as observers in the Assembly are described in rule 82, paragraph 1 of the Rules of procedure of the Assembly.

168	150	47 Parties	11 Signatories	27	10	30
						
MEMBERS 167 States and the European Union	MEMBERS PARTIES TO THE 1994 AGREEMENT 149 States and the European Union	PROTOCOL ON PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES		MEMBERS WITH A PERMANENT MISSION	MEMBERS THAT HAVE MADE DEPOSITS IN LINE WITH ART.84 OF UNCLOS	OBSERVER STATES



The Secretary-General continuously encourages:

- Relevant States to become parties to the 1994 Agreement at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Relevant members to take the necessary steps to become parties to the Protocol on Privileges and Immunities.
- All coastal States to deposit their charts or lists of coordinates as soon as possible after the establishment of the outer limit lines of their continental shelf.

Member States



							
Albania							
Algeria							
Angola							
Antigua and Barbuda							
Argentina							
Armenia							
Australia							
Austria							
Azerbaijan							
Bahamas							
Bahrain							
Bangladesh							
Barbados							
Belarus							
Belgium							
Belize							
Benin							
Bolivia							
(Plurinational State of)							
Bosnia and Herzegovina							
Botswana							
Brazil							
Brunei Darussalam							
Bulgaria							
Burkina Faso							
Cabo Verde							
Cameroon							
Canada							
Chad							
Chile							
China							
Comoros							
Congo							
Cook Islands							
Costa Rica							
Côte d'Ivoire							
Croatia							
Cuba							
Cyprus							
Czech Republic							
DR Congo							
Denmark							
Djibouti							
Dominica							
Dominican Republic							
Ecuador							
Egypt							
Equatorial Guinea							
Estonia							
Eswatini							
Fiji							
Finland							
France							
Gabon							
Gambia							
Georgia							
Germany							
Ghana							
Greece							
Grenada							
Guatemala							
Guinea							
Guinea-Bissau							
Guyana							
Haiti							
Honduras							
Hungary							
Iceland							
India							
Indonesia							
Iraq							
Ireland							
Italy							
Jamaica							
Japan							
Jordan							
Kenya							
Kiribati							
Kuwait							
Lao PDR							
Latvia							
Lebanon							
Lesotho							
Liberia							
Lithuania							
Luxembourg							
Madagascar							
Malawi							
Malaysia							
Maldives							
Mali							
Malta							
Marshall Islands							
Mauritania							
Mauritius							
Mexico							
Micronesia							
Monaco							
Mongolia							
Montenegro							
Morocco							
Mozambique							
Myanmar							
Namibia							
Nauru							
Nepal							
Netherlands							
New Zealand							
Nicaragua							
Niger							
Nigeria							
Niue							
North Macedonia							
Norway							
Oman							
Pakistan							
Palau							
Panama							
Papua New Guinea							
Paraguay							
Philippines							
Poland							
Portugal							
Qatar							
Republic of Korea							
Republic of Moldova							
Romania							
Russian Federation							
Saint Kitts and Nevis							
Saint Lucia							
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines							
Samoa							
Sao Tome and Principe							
Saudi Arabia							
Senegal							
Serbia							
Seychelles							
Sierra Leone							
Singapore							
Slovakia							
Slovenia							
Solomon Islands							
Somalia							
South Africa							
Spain							
Sri Lanka							
Sudan							
Suriname							
Sweden							
Switzerland							
State of Palestine							
Thailand							
Timor-Leste							
Togo							
Tonga							
Trinidad and Tobago							
Tunisia							
Tuvalu							
Uganda							
Ukraine							
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland							
Tanzania							
Uruguay							
Vanuatu							
Viet Nam							
Yemen							
Zambia							
Zimbabwe							

* France: charts deposited with respect to Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guyana, New Caledonia and the Kerguelen Islands

