

Republic of Korea and ISA Sign Contract for Exploration

The Republic of Korea and the Authority have signed a 15-year contract for exploration for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts.

The contract, signed by Secretary General Michael Lodge and Mr. Young-Choon Kim, Minister of Oceans and Fisheries, on behalf of the Republic of Korea on the 27 March 2018 in Seoul, covers an exploration area of 3,000 km² and consists of 150 blocks, each with an area of 20 km² located east of the Northern Mariana Islands in the Western Pacific Ocean.

In his statement at the signing ceremony, Secretary-General Lodge highlighted the wealth of experience and knowledge acquired by the Republic of Korea in exploration activities over the years as being of great value to the Authority and, in particular, promoting better cooperation with developing States.

The Republic of Korea also holds a contract for the exploration for polymetallic sulphides in the Central Indian Ridge since 2014 and a contract for the exploration for polymetallic nodules in the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone since 2001. A five year extension for the latter was signed in 2017.

With this signature, the Authority has entered into 29 exploration contracts. Seventeen of these are for exploration for polymetallic nodules in the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone (16) and Central Indian Ocean Basin (1); seven contracts for exploration for polymetallic sulphides in the South West Indian Ridge, Central



Indian Ridge and the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and five contracts for exploration for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts in the Western Pacific Ocean.

Inside this Issue

- ▶ Part 1 Council Meetings [2](#)
- ▶ ISA Strategic Plan [3](#)
- ▶ Legal & Technical Commission [4](#)
- ▶ Council Meetings (continued) [5](#)

- ▶ UN-OHRLLS & ISA Side Event [6](#)
- ▶ Workshops [7](#)
- ▶ Endowment Fund [8](#)
- ▶ Secretariat Updates [9](#)

Council Completes First Part of 24th Annual Session

Due to the increased workload of the Authority, the 24th session of the Council is being convened in two parts with the purpose of providing guidance to the Legal & Technical Commission (LTC) in its further deliberations on the draft exploitation regulations. The first part of the 24th session of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) was convened at the headquarters of the Authority from 5-9 March 2018 with the meeting of the Council followed by the meeting of the LTC from 12-23 March 2018.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

HE Mr. Olav **Myklebust** of Norway was elected President of Council for the 24th Session. Representatives of Côte d'Ivoire (African Group), India (Asia-Pacific Group), Poland (Eastern European Group) and Brazil (Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries) were elected Vice-Presidents.

The Council considered the following items on the agenda:

- Report of the Secretary-General on the credentials of members of the Council;
- Election to fill a vacancy on the LTC;
- Status of contracts for exploration granted by the Authority;
- Implementation of last year's decision of the Council in 2017 relating to the summary report of the Chair of the LTC, including a preliminary strategy for the development of regional environmental management plans and issues of compliance by contractors; and
- Approval of a memorandum of understanding between the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) and ISA.

Discussions, however, focused on the draft exploitation regulations for mineral resources in the Area following the last round of submissions by member States and stakeholders and which took into account the outcome of a previous workshop hosted by the Royal Society and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office on key policy, legal and institutional issues, together with the engagement of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to develop an



Council in session



HE Mr. Olav Myklebust



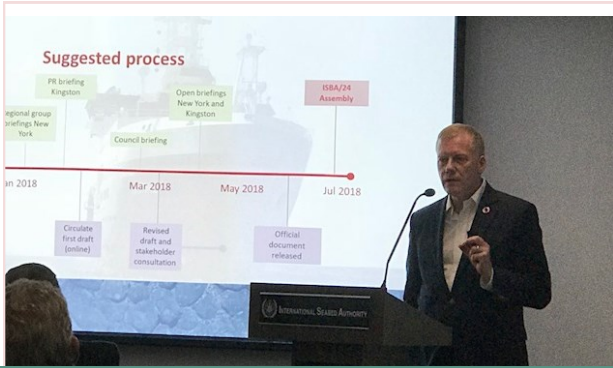
Informal discussions

[Continued on Page 5](#)



L-R: Alfonso Ascencio-Herrera, Michael Lodge, Christine Griffiths (back), HE Olav Myklebust, Gwenaëlle Le Gurun

ISA Secretary-General Launches Authority's New Strategic Plan



Secretary-General Lodge

On Monday 26 February 2018, the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority presented its Draft Strategic Plan for the period 2019-2023 to the Kingston-based Permanent Mission members.

On Wednesday 7 March 2018, the Authority hosted a side event during the first part of the 24th Session meetings to present the draft plan to its Council members and Observers.

The Strategic Plan ([English](#) | [French](#)) is the Authority's highest-level management roadmap that will guide its direction for the next five years and follows the request made by its member States at the last session of the Assembly, in August 2017 ([ISBA/23/A/13](#)) as a result of the Article 154 Review process.

The Draft Strategic Plan reviews the context and challenges faced by the Organisation, and sets out the strategic directions for the period 2019-2023 and, significantly, the expected results and priority outputs. The strategy will be considered by the full membership of the Authority at the meetings of the Assembly in July. It constitutes a key instrument for the transparent and accountable governance and leadership of the Authority.

To facilitate comments, the Secretary-General of the ISA has prepared as a guide, a [list of general and specific questions](#) which is also available on the Authority's website (<http://bit.ly/2p8WyWx>).

As part of this consultation effort, the Authority will engage with all stakeholders to seek further comments, views and contributions.

The Secretary-General will also hold additional meetings with representatives of member States in Kingston, as well as Permanent Missions of the members of the Authority, in New York.

The deadline for submissions is **13 April 2018**. Responses should be sent to: strategicplan@isa.org.jm.

The Authority is fully committed to an extensive and comprehensive consultation process to ensure the final Plan will embody the views, priorities and ownership of all its members.



Kingston-based Mission Members



Presentation to Council Members



Council Hear Strategy Plan Updates

Legal & Technical Commission Meets in Kingston



Legal & Technical Commission

The Legal and Technical Commission held its first meeting in Kingston from 12-23 March 2018. Ms. Michelle **Walker** of Jamaica was elected Chair and Mr. Harald **Brekke** of Norway was elected Vice-Chair for the 24th Session.

The 30-member Commission's two-week meetings discussed the status of the contracts for exploration; the status of the implementation of contractor training programmes; the allocation of training opportunities; and additional measures to improve efficiency in the current process for reviewing annual reports of contractors. The Commission also discussed a report on the legal and policy aspects of the possible alignment of the Authority's regulations on prospecting and exploration concerning the offer of an equity interest in a joint venture arrangement ([ISBA/24/LTC/4](#)) and, in light of its workload and the differences of legal and policy views expressed, deferred consideration of this matter to its next meeting in July.

Following a request by Council, the Commission's suggestions and comments will be incorporated into the revised draft regulations and circulated as a working paper in advance of the Council's meetings in July. The working paper, together with a briefing note identifying issues requiring further investigation and with any matters for the Council's guidance, will form the basis of the Council's discussions in its meetings which will convene after the Commission meetings in July.

The Commission expressed its concern over the reported shortage of funds in the Voluntary Trust Fund established to defray the costs of participation in the meetings of the Commission and of the Finance Committee and urged the Secretary-General to make

every effort to solicit contributions to the Fund and to raise this matter with the Council at its next meeting in July, especially during the development phase of the exploitation regulations on exploitation as the financial situation could lead to the question of quorum for the meetings of the Commission in July.

Much discussion, however, focused on the draft Regulations on exploitation of mineral resources in the Area and the action-oriented guidance provided by the Council.

Following Council deliberations on the common themes arising across the stakeholder responses to the draft exploitation regulations, nine discussion notes were prepared for the Commission as briefing papers to help focus discussions. They provided the background to each issue, points for further consideration and guided questions where applicable. These were:

- Structure of the draft regulations key definitions: Good Industry Practice, Best Environmental Practice
- Serious Harm and Best Available Technology: Confidentiality
- Use of exploitation contract as security
- Protection of developing countries from adverse effects
- Performance guarantee
- Contract Area and Mining Area
- Interested persons and public comment

The Commission also heard presentations by the Secretariat and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in connection with models developed by MIT to evaluate the payment mechanism for the Authority.

Council ...

[From Page 2](#)

independent financial model and payment mechanisms for future consideration by the Commission and Council.

Council deliberations were structured around the following six themes as action-oriented guidance to the Commission in its review of the draft.

1. Understanding the pathway to exploitation and beyond,
2. The payment mechanism,
3. The role of the Sponsoring State(s),
4. The role and legal status of standards, recommendations (LTC) and guidelines,
5. Broader environmental policy and the regulations,
6. The roles of the Council, Secretary-General and the Legal and Technical Commission in implementing the regulations.

Round Up

The Council *elected* Ahmed **Farouk** (Egypt) to fill the vacancy on the Commission left by the resignation of Mahmoud Samy (Egypt) for the remainder of his term until 31 December 2021; *took note* of the 28 contracts granted by the Authority ([ISBA/24/C/5](#)), and, *took note* of the updates concerning the entry into force on of the contract for exploration for polymetallic sulphides with the Government of Poland on 12 February 2018. These include the scheduled signature of the extension agreement of the contract for exploration of polymetallic nodules with the Government of India on 15 March 2018 and the signing of the contract for exploration for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts with the Government of the Republic of Korea on 27 March 2018.

The Council approved the Memorandum of Understanding between the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) and the International Seabed Authority ([ISBA/24/C/7](#)).

The Council noted the interim update to its 2017 decision regarding the summary report by the Chair of the Commission covering the progress made in the implementation of the database management strategy, the work on the draft regulations and the activities of contractors including the fulfillment of their training obligations. The Council also noted the preliminary strategy for the development of regional environmental management plans

[Continued on Page 6](#)



[From Page 5](#)

for the Area, the proposed programme of workshops for the rest of 2018 - a priority activity of the Authority and encouraged a broad participation in the workshops and their outcomes. The Council also supported the Secretariat's expansion of its strategic partnerships and review of regional environmental management plans and noted the challenges faced by the Authority and the need for significant investment to compile available data and identify gaps.

On the issue of compliance by the contractors, the Council took note of the respective responsibilities of those involved in the monitoring of compliance in the reporting activities and the need for a more effective validation process for distinguishing non-compliance from inadequate or incomplete performances arising out of technological and site-related challenges faced by contractors.

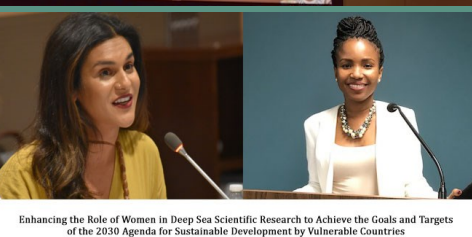
The Council took note of the respective responsibilities of the Secretary-General, the Commission and the Council and

requested that he report annually to the Council, identifying instances of alleged non-compliance and the recommended regulatory action.

Following its deliberations on the draft regulations on exploitation and the six common themes, the Council requested that the LTC discuss various reviews, clarifications and actions in its forthcoming meetings ([ISBA/24/C/8](#)) for presentation at the second part of the 24th Session in July and that a working paper on the draft regulations in the six official languages of the Authority comprising a revised and annotated set of draft exploitation regulations as well a briefing note emphasizing matters requiring further investigation together with a briefing note identifying any matters necessitating the Council's direction or guidance should be included.

All official Council documents are available on the website. Daily coverage of the meetings was provided by [ENB-IISD](#).

UN-OHRLLS & ISA Highlight Capacity Building Initiatives in MSR



The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) and the ISA co-hosted a side event on 22 March 2018 on the margins of the 62nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

The side event titled "*Enhancing the role of women in deep sea scientific research to achieve the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development by vulnerable countries*" brings to the fore ISA's firm commitment to including women in marine science activities and increasing their participation through focused capacity building initiatives.

In his opening address, Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN and Chair of the Group of LDCs, highlighted several structural challenges faced by women who wish to engage further in the field of

marine scientific research. Stressing the impact of capacity-building to support structural transformation of LDCs, H.E Bin Momen also commended the International Seabed Authority for leading by example.

Michael Lodge, Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, emphasised the critical importance of the role of women for meeting the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and how gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls strengthens capacity in technical areas of knowledge, such as deep-sea scientific research. It is in this context that the Authority officially announced its [voluntary commitments](#) to increase their active participation through targeted capacity-building initiatives at the 2017 UN Ocean Conference. Under this initiative, 214 individuals (86 of which were women) have benefited.

Workshops

The Secretariat and Council member States were hosted at a workshop by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Royal Society. From 12-13 February 2018.

The *Draft regulations for the exploitation of mineral resources in the Area: policy, legal and institutional considerations* workshop focused on key policy issues that needed to be addressed in the development of mining regulations during the 2018 Council sessions.

Speaking in London at the workshop recently, the International Seabed Authority's Secretary-General, Michael Lodge, mentioned that the alternative would have been a first-come, first-served access basis to those mineral resources without international management. He added that there would be serious risk of conflict between rival claimants and that the financial and economic benefits from these riches

would end up in the pockets of the few, and with no single organization having regulatory oversight.

"Thanks to the Convention, the financial and economic benefits of this new industry have to be shared for the benefit of mankind as a whole - something that has not been achieved in any other sector."

He also added that he would be addressing the issue of regional environmental management plans, which are called for as part of the Authority's overall policy framework for environmental management at the Authority's 24th Session Council meeting next month and which include a series of multi-stakeholder workshops to develop regional environmental management plans, including the identification of areas of particular environmental interest, in areas currently subject to exploration activity.

[Download](#) the workshop report

Workshops/REMPs..

The Authority will be holding a series of workshops in 2018 relating to the development of the draft exploitation regulations which include: a workshop to review the environmental management plan of the Clarion-Clipperton Zone; a workshop on a regional environmental management plan (REMP) for polymetallic sulphides in late April and a joint workshop with MIT in November 2018. A second joint workshop will also be held at the end of October between the Authority and the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC) on matters of mutual interest.

MAY 2018: the Authority and the China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association ([COMRA](#)) will host a workshop on the Development of a Regional Environmental Management Plan (REMP) for the Cobalt-Rich Ferromanganese Crusts (CFC) in the northwest Pacific Ocean. The workshop will be held in Qingdao, Shandong Province, China from 26 to 29 May 2018.

These environmental management plans will provide the Authority, contractors and their sponsoring States with a proactive area-based management tool to support informed decision-making that balances resource

development with conservation. The plans will be a clear and consistent mechanism to identify particular areas thought to be representative of the full range of habitats, biodiversity and ecosystem structures and functions within the relevant management area, and provide these areas with appropriate levels of protection, thus helping the Authority to carry out its responsibility by managing the effects of mining activities.

Workshop objectives will include the development of a replicable and transparent procedure to share the available environmental data, and understand the national, regional and international policies and laws; find a consensus on the design of the REMP as well as the preliminary ideas for its framework; create a work plan for two-three years of scientific collaboration to collect additional data needed for the design of the REMP; discuss and sign an agreement (MOU between the contractors and the Secretary-General) on future steps for the establishment and implementation of the REMP; and discuss mechanisms for communication and coordination and to establish an organizational structure, if needed.

Further information will be uploaded to the ISA website in due course.

ISA Endowment Fund for MSR



L-R: Jun Jiang, HE Jean-Michel Despax, Dorca Auma Achapa, Dr Georgy Cherkashov, HE Janet Omoleegho Olisa and from the Secretariat: Alfonso Ascencio-Herrera, Van Nguyen, Chapi Mwangom and Annekah Mason



The ISA Endowment Fund Advisory Panel met recently in Kingston to discuss the financial status of the fund and review funding allocation awarded in 2017.

The new members of the [Advisory Panel](#) are Dr. **Georgy Cherkashov**, Deputy Director, Institute for Geology and Mineral Resources of the Ocean, Russian Federation; HE Mr. **NIU Qingbao**, Permanent Representative to the International Seabed Authority and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to Jamaica (and represented by Mr. Jun Jiang); HE Mr. **Jean-Michel Despax**, Permanent Representative to the International Seabed Authority and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of France to Jamaica; HE Mrs. **Martha Cecilia Jaber Breceda**, Permanent Representative to the International Seabed Authority and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United Mexican States to Jamaica; HE Mrs. **Janet Omoleegho Olisa**, Permanent Representative to the International Seabed Authority and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to Jamaica; Ms. **Dorca Auma Achapa**, Head of International Law Division, Office of the Attorney-General, Kenya; and Mr. **Alan Evans**, Marine Science Policy Adviser, National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, United Kingdom

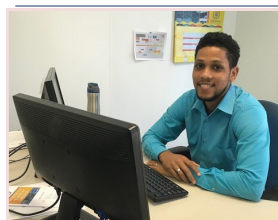
The Endowment Fund promotes and encourages the conduct of collaborative marine scientific research in the international seabed area for the benefit of humankind. For more details visit our [website](#).

Satya N. Nandan Library New Acquisitions

The following are some of the more significant titles recently added to the Library's collection. The collection is for reference purposes only. The Library can be contacted by email at Library@isa.org.jm for further information or to make an appointment.

- Asia-Pacific and the implementation of the law of the sea: regional legislative and policy approaches to the law of the sea / Seokwoo Lee. Brill, 2016
- Critical metals handbook / edited by Gus Gunn. Wiley, 2014
- Deep-marine systems : processes, deposits, environments, tectonics and sedimentation / by Kevin T. Pickering & Richard N. Hiscott ; with contribution from Thomas Heard. Wiley, 2016
- The Future of the Law of the Sea : Bridging Gaps Between National, Individual and Common Interests / Editors: Andreone, Gemma (Ed.). Springer, 2018
- Law of the sea: UNCLOS as a living treaty / edited by Jill Barrett and Richard Barnes. British Institute of International and Comparative Law, 2016
- Legal order in the world's oceans : UN Convention on the Law of the Sea / edited by Myron H. Nordquist, John Norton Moore, Ronan Long. Brill, 2018
- Handbook on marine environment protection : science, impacts and sustainable management / Markus Salomon, Markus Till. Springer, 2018
- Principles of international economic law / Matthias Herdegen. Oxford University Press, 2016
- Understanding joint operating agreements / edited by Eduardo G. Pereira. Intersentia, 2017

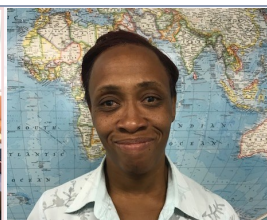
SECRETARIAT Updates



Walter Williams



Patrena Salmon



Stacy Jowhil



Marie Bourrel-McKinnon



Van Nguyen



Cintia Nunes



Maryann Powell



Delroy Bonitto



Entrance to the Secretariat office

2017 was a hectic year for the Authority - one of transition and change from its first periodic review since its establishment to the restructuring of the Secretariat to fulfil the functions of the Authority.

2018 continued the transition with an increasing complement of staff to allow for the rapid change and evolution of the workload of the Secretariat and its optimal performance.

Staff

➡ For the first quarter of 2018, we welcomed Walter, Data Entry Assistant in the Office of Environmental Management and Mineral Resources; Patrena who joins the Office of Legal Affairs as

Administrative Assistant, temporary staff Stacy, Administrative Assistant in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, Van who joins the Office of Administrative Services as Finance Officer; and Intern, Cintia Bezerra de Melo Pereira Nunes attached to the Office of Legal Affairs.

➡ We also welcomed back Marie Bourrel-McKinnon who joins the Executive Office of the Secretary-General as Senior Policy Officer and Special Assistant to the Secretary-General. The Authority is currently in the recruitment phase for a Marine Environmental Planning Analyst, an Associate Legal Officer and a Graphic Designer.

➡ We farewelled long time colleagues, Delroy Bonitto, Senior Security Officer and Office Assistant, Maryann Powell. Both have been with ISA for many years and we wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

New Look

Our offices have undergone some refurbishment! It sports a new colour scheme and features the 168-member State flags and portraits of previous Secretaries-General Satya N Nandan (1996-2008) and Nii A Odunton (2009-2016).

The digital newsletter is also available on our [website](http://www.isa.org.jm).

Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Authority. Neither does the mention of any firm or licensed process imply endorsement by the Authority.

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What's Coming Up?

APRIL 2018

16-18 Organizational Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an International Legally Binding Instrument under UNCLOS on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction; New York

MAY 2018

27-29 Cobalt-Rich Ferromanganese Crust Workshop; Qingdao, China

JUNE 2018

18-22 UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, New York



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