

Statement by InterRidge

M. President,

InterRidge is satisfied to observe that Scientific Research is the topic of Strategic Direction 4 of the Strategic Plan drafted by the Authority. Unlike others, we appreciate the generality of the Direction, inclusive of any types of research in the Area. Fundamental research is by nature investigating the unknown and should be given as only limits those of responsibility with respect to the environment and good professional practices. To this end, I would like to remind that InterRidge has developed a "Code of conduct for responsible research at Deep sea Vents" that has become an example in the community.

To better support Scientific Research, we suggest that the Authority compiles, on a voluntary base, information on scientific cruises and other research conducted in the area by the member and observing states and organizations, as crossing information is essential to avoid duplicating efforts and disseminate efficiently scientific results. InterRidge is doing so at a more modest scale through its "Cruise database" but it is clear that the Authority has the legitimacy and means to conduct the effort at a larger scale. Making such information widely available would be a worthwhile effort and could be a signal toward the scientific community, as we believe it is important that scientists, and not only the contractors, consider the ISA as a welcoming home. A useful consequence would be to create a large pool of scientists of different disciplines and various expertise aware of the ISA activities and needs, who could assist the Authority.

We understand that the goals of Strategic Direction 4 are essential to attain those of Strategic Direction 3, "Protect the Marine Environment". Building capacity and integrated participation of developing states as emphasized by Strategic Direction 5 and 6 are also essential. Transparency as emphasized by Strategic Direction 8 is a pre-requisite. And indeed the participation of scientists in the Authority activities cannot be limited to the few eminent specialists who participate in the LTC, and to workshops advertised with too short notice to be attended by the broad scientific community. We really need to involve a wider scientific community, and to take the appropriate actions to do so.

Thank you, M. President.