

Thank you, Madame President. IUCN wishes to join this body in welcoming Ms. Jihyun Lee. as the new Director of the Office of Environmental Management and Mineral Resources and to wish Dr. Sandor Muslow well in his future endeavors.

IUCN would like to thank Germany, Belgium and Algeria on behalf of the Africa Group for their very thoughtful proposals and encourages this body to give all elements serious consideration. We also hope that the contributions from Pew, DSCC and DOSI may be further considered.

IUCN observes that the LTC is under great pressure already, in terms of workload and time is limited in resources, expertise and, so far openness. This can only get a lot worse - under the current structure, once the regulations are in place.

A Scientific Committee would help immeasurably in transparently applying the best available science worldwide, expertise and assessments of environmental documents, in order to assist and advise the LTC and the Council.

We believe that it is a historical artefact that ISA does not have an independent scientific committee. Best practice with respect to obtaining and applying the best available scientific input has evolved considerably since 1982. Most other international agreements and sectoral bodies have access to an expert scientific body for advice, one in which the deliberations are open to observers, and where detailed reports outlining the scientific basis for recommendations are required outputs. Further study on this front as suggested by Pew could be quite rewarding.

Madame President, Council, as we are all learning, the deep sea is a special place and may require a special type of expertise that is not immediately available to existing scientific bodies or on an ad hoc basis. The ability to cultivate its own internal body of scientific expertise could become a very valuable asset as it could bring together the multiple types of scientific and environmental management expertise required in this highly specialized and as yet unprecedented venture into the deep sea.

Thank you Madame President.