



UN Global Compact Online High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Ocean Business Platform

“Mapping the Ocean”

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STATEMENT

by

Mr. Michael W. Lodge,

Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority

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Greetings from Jamaica and I am delighted to contribute to the work of the Global Compact Sustainable Business Platform. Let me also congratulate you on the Ocean Stewardship 2030 report.

Deep seabed mining is a new industry, but one that promises great benefits for the world.

It is now generally accepted that our societies need new sources of minerals to help us make the transition towards a low carbon future. The World Bank, for example, estimates that more than 3 billion tons of minerals and metals will be needed by 2050 to achieve a 2-degree scenario.

Like any new industry, there are also risks that we need to manage. Fortunately, we are in the unique position of having the opportunity to regulate the industry before it begins. Thanks to the UN Law of the Sea Convention, this can and will be done through a truly global regulatory system that applies the highest environmental and operational standards. All these rules will to be applied equally to States and private sector entities.

The Convention established ISA with the mandate of managing deep-sea mineral resources prudently and in such a way as to benefit everyone.

One of our most important assets in this effort are data. In fact, one of the major contributions of ISA in this respect has been to harness the power of the industry involved in exploration work to gather critical scientific knowledge to inform decision-making processes.

If I can put this in more concrete terms, over the past 30 years, there have been more than 800 research cruises to the Clarion-Clipperton Zone alone, totaling more than 6,000 days at sea. In financial terms this represents an investment in marine science of several hundreds of million dollars.

This of course includes seafloor mapping, at extremely fine levels of resolution, of some of the deepest and most remote parts of the seafloor, as well as collection and analysis of literally thousands of rock and sediment samples, as well as biological specimens. Most of what we have learnt about the geology of the seabed and its environmental characteristics over the past 25 years has come from the exploration projects authorized by ISA.

It is through this research, which is broadly shared with all stakeholders, that we will be able, collectively, to identify the best measures required to protect the marine environment now and into the future.

I hope that you will join us in this effort.

Thank you
