



## Council

Distr.: General  
11 July 2022

Original: English

---

### Twenty-seventh session

Council session, part II

Kingston, 18–29 July 2022

Agenda item 14

**Report of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission on  
the work of the Commission at its twenty-seventh session**

### **Report on the relinquishment of one third of the area allocated to the China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association (COMRA) under the contract for exploration for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts between COMRA and the International Seabed Authority**

#### **Note by the secretariat**

1. The contract for exploration for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts between the China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association (COMRA, the contractor) and the International Seabed Authority was signed on 29 April 2014. The area under the contract covers 3,000 km<sup>2</sup>.
2. Pursuant to the schedule for fulfilling relinquishment obligations, as set out in regulation 27 (1) of the regulations on prospecting and exploration for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts in the Area ([ISBA/18/A/11](#), annex), by the end of the eighth year from the date of the contract, the contractor must have relinquished at least one third of the original area allocated to it.
3. Accordingly, COMRA was required to relinquish at least one third of its allocated area by 29 April 2022. On 8 May 2022, COMRA submitted to the Secretary-General of the Authority cartographic material that included shapefiles of relinquished and remaining cells and an overview map of the remaining exploration areas.
4. During the second part of its twenty-seventh session, held from 4 to 15 July 2022, on the basis of the technical review carried out by the secretariat, the Legal and Technical Commission noted that the contractor had complied with its relinquishment obligations pursuant to the applicable regulations and the recommendations for the guidance of contractors on the relinquishment of areas under exploration contracts for polymetallic sulphides or cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts ([ISBA/25/LTC/8](#)).
5. The total original area, the maps of which are available at <https://bit.ly/3P3TODY>, consists of 150 blocks, with each block consisting of 16 cells and each cell measuring



approximately 1.12 km x 1.12 km. The number of relinquished cells per cluster varies from 45 to 368. A total of 803 cells, comprising an area of 1,000 km<sup>2</sup>, were relinquished from 150 blocks within four clusters. The remaining area under exploration covers 2,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

6. The relinquished area has reverted to the Area.
  7. The Council is invited to take note of the present note.
-