



Abyssal Initiative for Blue Growth

INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY SEVEN VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDG14 #OCEANACTION16538



P-SIDS REGIONAL TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP

“Deep seabed environmental management and monitoring”

Cook Islands

26 to 29 July 2021, *Remote workshop*

[26 to 29 July 2021: 8:30 am to 12 pm - Rarotonga time]

[26 to 29 July 2021: 1:30 pm to 5pm - Kingston time]

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) officially announced at the UN Ocean Conference held in New York in June 2017, the launch of their voluntary commitment to strengthen the capacity of Pacific Small Island States (P-SIDS) to sustainably access and benefit from their blue economy.

In January 2019, this commitment was formalized through the development of a dedicated project (the Abyssal Initiative for Blue Growth project) implemented in partnership by both organizations with a view to support P-SIDS to strengthen their capacity to develop and implement appropriate enabling legal, institutional and policy framework for the sound and sustainable management of marine mineral resources in the Area. Since then, the Abyssal Initiative project received the support of the Government of Norway through the participation of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD).

The Abyssal Initiative specifically aims at enabling the four P-SIDS sponsoring States namely, the Cook Islands, Nauru, Kiribati and Tonga, to benefit from the blue economy through the sustainable development of deep-seabed resources. This project has two main objectives: first, ensuring that the targeted countries are in a position to comply with their national and international obligations as seabed activities progress; second, that the necessary governance structures and mechanisms required are in place in order to achieve these objectives in an effective manner.

In February 2019, the Pacific Regional Training and Capacity-Building workshop was held in Nuku'alofa, Kingdom of Tonga. Organized by ISA and UNDESA with the support of the Kingdom of Tonga, this workshop enabled participants to deliberate and agree on how participation of P-SIDS could be increased in activities undertaken in the Area. Further, the workshop created the enabling conditions to clearly identify the main capacity-building needs of P-SIDS Sponsoring States (Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga) that are necessary if they want to take full benefit of their participation in activities in the Area with a view to achieving their blue economy objectives.

Amongst the priority capacity needs identified by P-SIDS sponsoring States were a series of elements pertaining to environmental management and monitoring of deep-seabed related activities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The **Regional Training and Capacity Building Workshop** on “Environmental management and monitoring” sponsored by the Cook Islands and scheduled to be held remotely aims at bringing up to 5 representatives of each P-SIDS sponsoring State together with international research experts, representatives of contractors and relevant international and regional organizations as well as representatives of regional non-governmental organizations.

It is anticipated that this workshop will enable participants to gain better understanding of the pre-requisite conditions to be met to ensure a sound and stringent environmental management and monitoring of deep-seabed related activities. Additionally, it is expected that the workshop would provide the opportunity to discuss further the critical capacity development needs of Sponsoring States in relation to their environmental management and monitoring obligations.

TENTATIVE AGENDA

DAY 1	Monday 26 July 2021
8:30 am - 9:00 am 1:30 pm - 2:00 pm	Opening addresses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Honourable Mark Brown, Prime Minister, Cook Islands</i> • <i>H.E Mr Michael W. Lodge, Secretary-General, International Seabed Authority</i> • <i>Mr Liu Zhenmin, USG, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs</i> • <i>Mr Jens Frølich Holte, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</i> • <i>Mr Henry Puna, Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum</i> • <i>Mr Stuart Minchin, Director General, Pacific Community</i>
Session I	Environmental management of DSM resources
	Facilitator: <i>Mr Sai Navoti, Chief, SIDS Unit, UNDESA</i>
9:00 am - 9:05 am 2:00 pm - 2:05 pm	<i>ISA Video: Abyssal Initiative for Blue Growth</i>
9:05 am - 9:25 am 2:05 pm - 2:25 pm	Legal obligations to protect the marine environment and the precautionary approach <i>Dr Marie Bourrel-McKinnon, Senior Policy Officer, ISA</i>
9:25 am - 9:35 am 2:25 pm - 2:35 pm	Environmental obligations in DSM context: perspective of a Sponsoring State <i>Ms Alex Herman, Seabed Minerals Commissioner, Cook Islands Seabed Minerals Authority</i>
9:35 am - 9:55am 2:35 pm - 2:55 pm	Potential risks of DSM activities to the environment <i>Dr Gordon Paterson, Legal & Technical Commission, ISA</i>
9:55 am -10:20 am 2:55 pm - 3:20 pm	Environmental risk assessment and impact assessment in the context of DSM <i>Dr Malcolm Clark, Legal & Technical Commission, ISA</i>
10:20 am - 10:50 am 3:20 pm - 3:50 pm	Discussion – Coffee break

Session II	Environmental studies during exploration activities and the application of the precautionary approach
10:50 am -10:55 am 3:50 pm - 3:55 pm	Facilitator: <i>Dr Marie Bourrel-McKinnon, Senior Policy Officer, ISA</i>
10:55 am -11:15 am 3:50 pm - 4:15 pm	Key operations and activities under exploration phase <i>Dr Harald Brekke, Chair of the Legal & Technical Commission, ISA</i>
11:15 am -11:25 am 4:15 pm - 4:25 pm	Wrap up & End of Day 2

DAY 2	Tuesday 27 July 2021
Session II	Environmental studies during exploration and the application of the precautionary approach (continued)
8:30 am - 9:30 am 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Facilitator: <i>Mr Sai Navoti, Chief, SIDS Unit, UNDESA</i> Overview of exploration activities undertaken by contractors in support of the assessment of potential risks to the environment and their impacts <i>Mr Eusenio Fatialofa, General Manager, Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC)</i> <i>Dr Michael Clarke, Environmental Management, Nauru Ocean Resources Inc (NORI)</i> <i>Dr Leigh Marsh, Environmental Scientist, Tonga Offshore Mining Limited (TOML)</i> <i>Dr Greg Stone, MARAWA</i>
9:30 am -10:00 am 2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Discussion – Coffee break
10:00 am -10:20 am 3:00 pm - 3:20 pm	Development and implementation of regional environmental management plans in the Area <i>Mrs Wanfei Qui, Programme Manager, Environnement, ISA</i>
10:20 am - 10:40 am 3:20 pm - 3:40 pm	Available data and role of ISA in sharing environmental information <i>Mr Sheldon Carter, Database Manager, ISA</i>
10:40 am - 11:00am 3:40 pm - 4:00 pm	Collection of data and information: development of the Information Management System for the Cook Islands SBMA – Case study <i>Ms Rima Browne, GIS Officer, Cook Islands Seabed Minerals Authority</i>
11:00 am -11:30 am 4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Wrap up & End of Day 2

DAY 3	Wednesday 28 July 2021
Session III	Environmental management of DSM activities
	Facilitator: <i>Dr Marie Bourrel-McKinnon, Senior Policy Officer, ISA</i>
8:30 am - 8:50 am 1:30 pm - 1:50 pm	Environmental management and monitoring – a legal perspective <i>Mr Christopher Brown, Legal Expert</i>
8:50 am - 9:10 am 1:50 pm - 2:10 pm	Status of available technology and way forward <i>Dr Ulrich Schwarz-Schampera, Mining Geologist, ISA</i>
9:10 am - 9:30 am 2:10 pm - 2:30 pm	Environmental management of DSM activities <i>Mr Nathan Eastwood, Legal officer, ISA</i>
9:30 am - 9:50 am 2:30 pm - 2:50 pm	Discussion – Coffee break
9:50 am - 10:10 am 2:50 pm - 3:10 pm	Testing of mining components during exploration – Legal & regulatory framework <i>Ms Emily Choo, State Counsel, International Affairs Division, Singapore</i>
10:10 am - 10:30 am 3:10 pm - 3:30 pm	Testing of mining components during exploration – Patania II: a case study <i>Dr Samantha Smith, GSR</i>
10:30 am - 10:50 am 3:30 pm - 3:50 pm	Wrap up & End of Day 3

DAY 4	Thursday 29 July 2021
Session IV	Critical capacity building/development & technical assistance needs
8:30 am – 9:30 am 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Closed Session / P-SIDS Sponsoring States Facilitator: <i>Mr Sai Navoti, Chief, SIDS Unit, UNDESA</i>
9:30 am - 9:40 am 2:30 pm - 2:40 pm	Overview of critical capacity building/development needs identified by P-SIDS <i>Dr Marie Bourrel-McKinnon, Senior Policy Officer, ISA</i>
9:40 am - 10:40 am 2:40 pm - 3:40 pm	What critical capacity building/development & technical assistance needs at the national levels? <i>Cook Islands - Ms Alex Herman, Seabed Minerals Commissioner, Cook Islands Seabed Minerals Authority</i> <i>Kiribati - Ms Mwaiango Teimwarane, Offshore Compliance Officer, Ministry of Fisheries & Marine Resource Development</i> <i>Nauru – H.E Margo Deiye, Permanent Representative of Nauru to ISA & UN</i> <i>Tonga – Mr Sebastian Patelisio, Assistant Crown Counsel, Attorney General office</i>
10:40 am - 11:10 am 3:40 pm - 4:10 pm	Discussion - Coffee break

<p>11:10 am -11:30 am 4:10 pm - 4:30 pm</p>	<p>What critical capacity building/development & technical assistance needs at the regional levels to support sustainable development of deep-sea resources? <i>Mr Akuila Tawake, Deputy Director, Georesources and Energy Programme, Pacific Community</i></p>
<p>11:30 am -11:40 am 4:30 pm - 4:40 pm</p>	<p>Wrap up <i>Dr Marie Bourrel-McKinnon, ISA & Mr Sai Navoti, UNDESA</i></p>
<p>11:40 am -11:50 am 4:40 pm - 4:50 pm</p>	<p>Closing Remarks <i>Honourable Mark Brown, Prime Minister, Cook Islands</i> <i>H.E Michael Lodge, ISA</i> Group photo</p>