

**TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSION OF TEXTUAL PROPOSALS DURING THE 27TH SESSION:
COUNCIL - PART I**

Informal Working Group - Environment

Please fill out one form for each textual proposal which your delegation(s) wish(es) to amend, add or delete.

1. Name(s) of Delegation(s) making the proposal:

China

2. Please indicate the relevant provision to which the textual proposal refers.

Draft guidelines for the establishment of baseline environmental data
(ISBA/27/C/11)

Para.22 (a) and (b), A. Spatial and temporal variability, III. Sampling and data acquisition

E. Measured variable: benthic communities, VII. Biological communities

3. Kindly provide the proposed amendments to the regulation or standard or guideline in the text box below, using the “track changes” function in Microsoft Word. Please only reproduce the parts of the text that are being amended or deleted.

III. Sampling and data acquisition

A. Spatial and temporal variability

22 (a) For water column sampling (including physical measurements, unless indicated otherwise in sect. IV.B), a higher resolution should be used for sampling in the 200 m below the surface (~~three or four samples at depths determined on the basis of local variability e.g. at 0 m, 25 m, 50 m, 75 m, 100 m, 125 m, 150 m and 200 m~~) and in the 500 m above the seabed (e.g. at ~~5 m, 10 m, 25 m, 50 m, 75 m, 100 m, 150 m, and 200 m and 500 m~~ above the seabed), keeping in mind that surface weather conditions and localized topography may affect the resolution that is possible very close to the seabed;

22 (b) …Where deeper measurements are required, samples should be taken every 5 cm between a depth of 20 cm and a depth of 50 cm, ~~and every 20 cm in deeper layers over a sediment column of up to 5 m~~…

VII. Biological communities

E. Measured variable: benthic communities

None

4. Please indicate the rationale for the proposal. [150 word limit]

On Para.22 (a), A. Spatial and temporal variability, III. Sampling and data acquisition, from the long-term deep-sea practice, China found that the environmental parameters in the 200 m below the surface vary greatly, three or four samples at depths are not enough to describe the vertical variability, it is suggested that more samples at depths should be taken. While the environmental parameters in the 500 m above the seabed are stable, there is no need for such intensive sampling, however, the above layers can be used during the impact monitoring period.

On Para.22 (b), A. Spatial and temporal variability, III. Sampling and data acquisition, according to China's long-term deep-sea practice, it seems unnecessary to take samples every 20 cm in deeper layers over a sediment column of up to 5 m for analyzing pore water chemical parameters of sediments, as deep-sea mining does not affect such deep sediments.

On E. Measured variable: benthic communities, VII. Biological communities, China notes that some terms and definitions in the guidelines are inconsistent with the environmental guidelines previously issued by the ISA, and lack continuity. For example, in the Recommendations for the guidance of contractors for the assessment of the possible environmental impacts arising from exploration for marine minerals in the Area (ISBA/25/LTC/6/Rev.1), Macrofauna means "animals retained on a 250- or 300- μ m mesh, typically sorted and identified with a microscope, that include taxa such as polychaetes, bivalves, isopods and tanaids". Whereas, in the Draft guidelines, Macrofauna is defined as "usually annelids, amphipod, tanaid and isopod crustaceans, molluscs, smaller echinoderms, usually retained on a mesh size of 250–300 μ m". It is suggested that the LTC should pay attention to this problem and adopt a uniform definition of Macrofauna.