

Greenpeace International Intervention at the 27th Session of the International Seabed Authority

Kingston, 18 July 2022

Thank you Mr President. As this is the first time for us to take the floor this week we offer a special thank you to the country of Jamaica for your hospitality. The Greenpeace International delegation appreciates your graciousness, along with your beautiful landscapes and warm people.

Dear Delegates,

Greenpeace International attends this 27th Session of the ISA with great concern over the trajectory of a globally-recognized organization bestowed with the authority to safeguard the international seabed, the Common Heritage of Humankind. The choice of venue and the restrictions that coincide with that choice has once again limited not only the participation of civil society and the press, but that of state members as well. The ISA can no longer hide behind the pandemic alone as an excuse for these restrictions - it simply made a choice to restrict those with the most potential to have or to report on viewpoints other than their own. A different choice could have been made, particularly considering the urgency of the two-rule triggered by Nauru in June of last year - an act that should not have occurred and continues to rush a process that presents great risk to our global oceans, apparently to benefit the aspirations of The Metals Company.

Since we last met in March there has been a groundswell of global awareness and political reaction to the process underway at this meeting. For example, in April, at the Our Ocean Conference in Palau, the Pacific Parliamentary Alliance was launched - bringing 212 members of parliament from 47 nations (and growing) together in common cause to pursue a moratorium on deep sea mining. On 27 June, at the UN Ocean Conference held in Lisbon, a new alliance of nations supporting this moratorium was announced and continues to grow. And in the same week we heard from French President, Emmanuel Macron, who said "We have ... to create the legal framework to stop high-sea mining and to not allow new activities putting in danger these ecosystems"¹.

We remind the Council that all of this new political momentum builds on public apprehension for deep sea mining moving forward at all. 621 scientists have signed [a statement](#) warning of the loss of biodiversity on ecosystem functioning, banks such as ABN Amro and Triodos, corporations such as Patagonia, the [resolution](#) from last fall's IUCN World Conservation

1

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jul/01/stop-deep-sea-mining-says-macron-in-call-for-new-laws-to-protect-ecosystems>

Congress and even the [European Parliament](#) - all have called for a moratorium on deep-sea mining. We remind Member States that deep sea mining companies continue to tell us that seabed minerals are critical for the clean energy transition. Yet prominent leaders in the tech, EV and battery sectors do not agree. As we said in March, - BMW, Volkswagen, Rivian, Volvo Group, Scania, Google and Samsung have all [joined the call for a moratorium](#) on the practice. While giants such as Microsoft, Ford and GM² have effectively blocked the procurement of deep sea minerals from their supply chains. Meanwhile, battery technology is advancing at a lightning pace to reduce and recycle the use of conflict minerals overall. So if this new industry is supposed to fuel the clean energy transition, we ask why the sectors that will actually deliver that transition are not on board?

Yet, here we all sit, in a space too small to hold everyone interested in participating, about to negotiate rules that if completed would launch a new industry that may affect everyone on Earth. Media passes have been denied, civil society has been marginalized into an overflow room and limited to one participant per observer group, the countless Pacific frontline communities who have been challenging the emergence of this industry for a decade are nowhere to be seen, and the States themselves are missing the benefit of advisory roles that would be included in full delegations. The ISA has demonstrated once again to be not fit for purpose. And should detrimental consequences emerge from decisions made at this meeting, I'm not sure how the Secretariat can expect the broader world to take those decisions or your authority seriously.

In closing, Greenpeace is opposed to continuing to increase the human footprint on the planet by wreaking havoc in one of the most untouched ecosystems on Earth, the deep sea. [Together with over 140 civil society organizations from around the world](#) we **call on State parties to the ISA - many who have made bold public commitments for ocean protection in other fora - to act and put the brakes on this process, which is not inevitable and which is out of step with the rest of the world.**

Regarding the discussion to follow for the remainder of this Session, Greenpeace International supports the recommendations put forward by the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition.

Thank you Mr. President

² Both Ford and GM have committed to only source minerals that are certified by IRMA - the Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance. IRMA will not certify deep sea mining. <https://responsiblemining.net/>