



THE ISA-CHINA JOINT TRAINING  
AND RESEARCH CENTRE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Developing the capacity to advance  
and share human knowledge of the  
deep ocean and its environment



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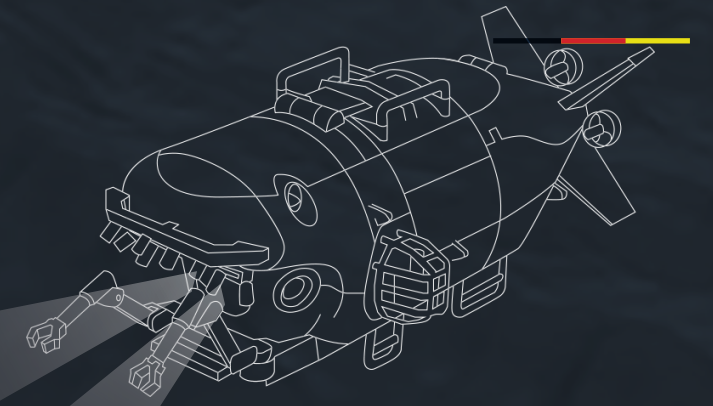
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For additional information or feedback on this annual report, please write to us at [jtrc@isa.org.jm](mailto:jtrc@isa.org.jm)

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## ACRONYMS

CDOAA	China Deep Ocean Affairs Administration
CODF	China Oceanic Development Foundation
COMRA	China Ocean Mineral Resources Research And Development Association
ISA	International Seabed Authority
JTRC	Joint Training and Research Centre
LDC	least developed country
LLDC	landlocked developing country
MNR	Ministry of Natural Resources of China
MSR	marine scientific research
NDSC	National Deep Sea Center of China
SIDS	small island developing State



## FOREWORD

Launched on 9 November 2020, the ISA-China Joint Training and Research Centre (JTRC) was established in close collaboration with the Government of China in support of the dedicated capacity development mandate of ISA, which calls for the development of specific programmes aimed at strengthening the capacities of developing States and technologically less developed States and designing programmes to promote the effective participation of developing States in activities in the Area.

We worked hard in 2021 to establish the JTRC as a new and effective platform for capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology to developing countries. I see the JTRC as an important pillar of the capacity development strategy of ISA, effectively supporting exchanges of expertise between countries within and between regions, taking into account the needs identified by developing States members of ISA, and as a vehicle for advancing and sharing human knowledge of the deep ocean and its environment.

It makes me proud to see the JTRC become fully operational, supported by world-renowned experts and champions of ocean science and preparing to offer its first training workshops in 2022.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources (the State Oceanic Administration) of China on diverse capacity development initiatives in the coming years. I am confident that by working together hand in hand, we will make sure that the JTRC's capacity development initiatives are meaningful, tangible, efficient, effective and targeted at the needs of developing States as identified by them.

**Mr. Michael W. Lodge**

Secretary-General  
International Seabed Authority





## FOREWORD

We believe the ISA-China Joint Training and Research Centre will provide a new platform for the international community, especially developing countries Members, to conduct activities in the international seabed area, further promote capacity building and exchanges in marine science and technology between China and other developing States, and advance and disseminate humanity's knowledge and understanding of the world under water.

### **Mr. Liu Feng**

Chair of the ISA-China JTRC Steering committee and Secretary General,  
China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association

## THE JTRC AT A GLANCE

Following the approval by the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) during its 25th session,<sup>1</sup> the Ministry of Natural Resources of China (MNR) and ISA signed the memorandum of understanding on the establishment of the ISA-China Joint Training and Research Centre (JTRC) on 18 October 2019. The JTRC was officially launched on 9 November 2020 during a virtual ceremony presided by the Secretary-General of ISA, Mr. Michael W. Lodge, and the Honourable Vice Minister of Natural Resources of China, Mr. Wang Hong.

The JTRC has been established to conduct collaborative research programmes related to the latest developments concerning activities in the deep seabed, the organization of conferences and workshops and, where appropriate, the publication of scientific research.

The JTRC provides developing countries a new platform for the promotion of capacity development and the transfer of marine technology in support of the mandate of ISA on advancing and sharing human knowledge of the deep ocean and its environment and enhancing the deep-sea research and technical and scientific capacities of developing States.

The JTRC will start offering training programmes in marine science and technology, and marine scientific research techniques from 2022. These training programmes are designed to facilitate the full participation of developing States in activities in the international seabed area according to the priorities identified by the ISA Member States.

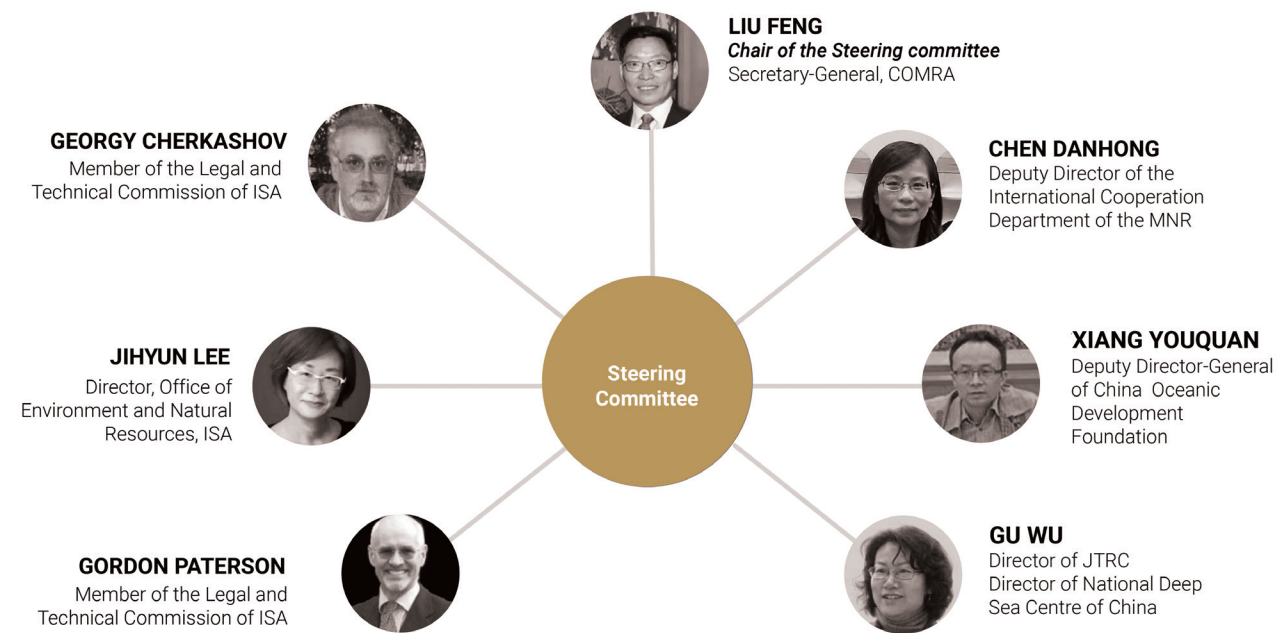
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<sup>1</sup> ISBA/25/A/4



# GOVERNING STRUCTURE

The JTRC Steering committee was established in 2020 to guide the institutional set-up of the Centre



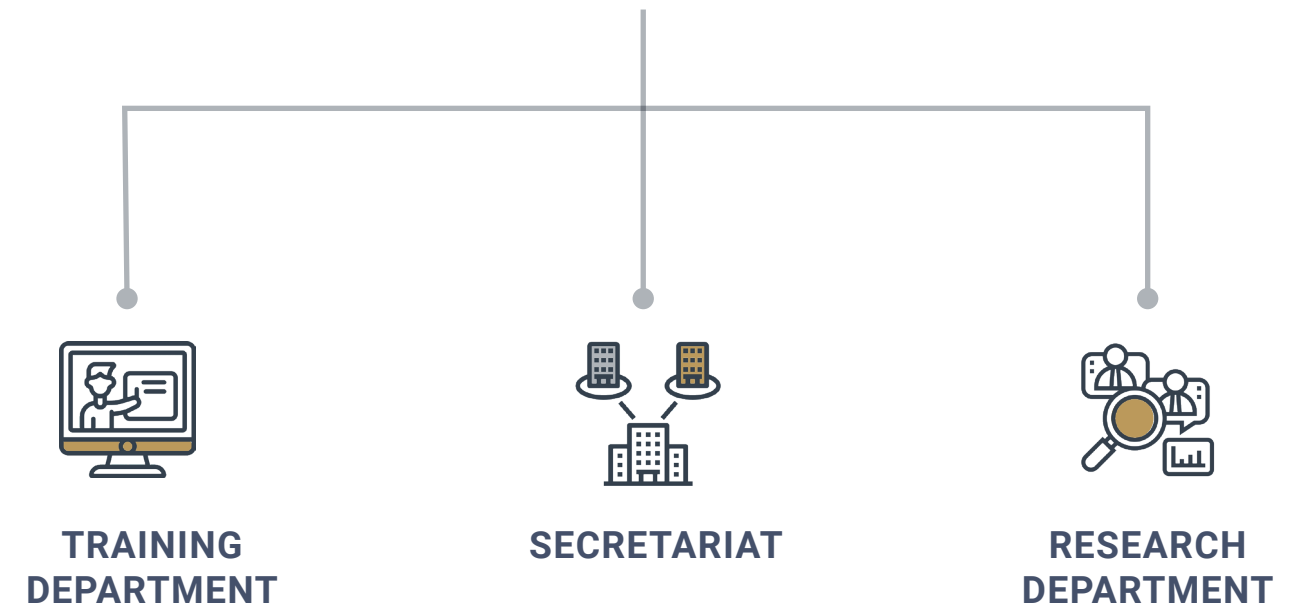
In 2020 and 2021, two Steering committee meetings were held to advance the institutional and administrative development of the JTRC and guide the work of the JTRC Secretariat to develop the draft rules of procedure and other foundational guidance documents of the JTRC.

Pursuant to the Strategic Plan,<sup>2</sup> the High-Level Action Plan of ISA for 2019-2023,<sup>3</sup> the six Strategic Research Priorities of the Action Plan of ISA for the United Nations Decade of Ocean

Science<sup>4</sup> and the programmatic approach for capacity development of ISA,<sup>5</sup> the Steering committee developed a work plan centred on the priority needs identified by developing States, Members of ISA.<sup>6</sup>

Based on the discussions of the ISA-China JTRC Steering committee, the Secretariat, the Training department and the Research department were established. The terms of reference for each department were finalized.

## JTRC STEERING COMMITTEE DIRECTOR



The JTRC Secretariat has coordination and administrative functions and is responsible for communication and exchange of information with the Steering committee and the ISA Secretariat. The Training department is responsible for preparing, coordinating and implementing training programmes in

close coordination with the ISA Secretariat. The Research department oversees the administration and execution of research programmes in close coordination with the ISA Secretariat once approved by the Steering committee.

<sup>2</sup> ISBA/24/A/10.

<sup>3</sup> ISBA/25/A/15

<sup>4</sup> ISBA/26/A/17

<sup>5</sup> ISBA/26/A/18

<sup>6</sup> ISBA/26/A/7 and Policy brief 2021/1 on national capacity development priorities identified by Members of the International Seabed Authority in 2020



# ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

## Framework documents

In 2021, significant time was dedicated to developing and finalizing the administrative framework within which the JTRC will operate. This led to the identification of internal workflows.

Now, additional work is needed to progress necessary workflows pertaining to the organization of training programmes under the JTRC. It is expected that all necessary documents will be finalized in 2022 in coordination with the ISA Secretariat and the China Deep Ocean Affairs Administration.

## Development of the JTRC training curriculum

The objectives set out for the JTRC training activities aim to support and reinforce the Strategic directions of the ISA Strategic plan, the High-level action plan 2019-2023<sup>7</sup> and the priorities identified in the ISA Action plan for marine scientific research in support of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science, and follow the programmatic approach of ISA to capacity development, including the national capacity development priorities identified by ISA Member States in 2020.

Recognizing the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Steering committee agreed that the JTRC would prioritize offering blended training courses based on a mix of online and on-site training. In support of the online component of the training programme, the JTRC Secretariat collaborated with Chinese experts to produce a total of more than 60 sessions of video course material. In addition, the development of an e-learning platform has been completed to host the products.

## Planning of the first JTRC training workshop

The work on the first training workshop, planned for May 2022, continued throughout 2021. The draft plan of the first training workshop sets out the modalities for the nomination and selection of candidates.

It establishes procedures for special consideration for candidates from the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. The JTRC will also give special consideration to female candidates, which is in line with the commitment of ISA to advance women empowerment and leadership in marine scientific research, including through the implementation of the Women in Deep-Sea Research project.

The draft plan of the first training workshop also sets out the structure, learning pathway and training content for the first training workshop, which is expected to cover, among other, the fields of survey and evaluation of mineral resources in the Area, characteristics and management of typical deep-sea habitats and exploration data compilation and management.

<sup>7</sup> Particularly Strategic direction 5 (building capacity for developing States) and Strategic direction 6 (ensuring fully integrated participation by developing States).



## FINANCE AND RESOURCES

In 2021, the JTRC received a generous funding of RMB618,000 from China. In addition, the JTRC benefitted from in-kind support from the ISA Secretariat corresponding to USD13,375 equivalent of staff time by allocating ISA staff members to support the implementation of the JTRC activities.

