



Terms of Reference

ISA workshop on DeepData: focusing on data management strategy

Organizer: ISA Secretariat

Date: 21-25 September 2020

- Part I (21-22 September): Closed meeting for LTC members
- Part II (23-24 September): Closed meeting for Contractors
- Part III (25 September): Open meeting for general public

Modality: Online Virtual Workshop

Note: This virtual session will be held for 3-4 hours per day. The organizer will ensure that the activities of the workshop are within a convenient time of day for as many participants as possible.

Background:

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) Deep Seabed and Ocean Database (DeepData, accessible at <https://data.isa.org.jm/isa/map/>), represents the collective efforts of contractors, the Legal and Technical Commission (LTC) and the ISA Secretariat, to enable the ISA to connect our knowledge of the deep-sea environment and its resources, and thereby contribute to the benefit of humanity. Part XI of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) establishes a carefully balanced and comprehensive legal regime that not only safeguards the rights and interests of all humankind for administering the mineral resources in the Area, but also pays particular attention to the protection of the marine environment from harmful impacts arising from activities in the Area. DeepData is designed and developed to reflect this unique balance and comprehensiveness, covering data and information on both mineral resources and the marine environment in the Area.

It is however important to note that DeepData, is a single component of the ISA Data Management Strategy. The LTC in ISBA/22/LTC/15 outlined the framework for the development of the ISA Data Management Strategy. In its review of the information management arrangements at the Secretariat, the LTC working group on data management strategy had highlighted the need for the creation of a metadata catalogue to aid in the management and storage of digital data submitted by contractors.

The LTC also highlighted the need for Standard Excel files (reporting templates) that will be submitted and checked for content and format. In this regard, the Secretariat has modified the reporting templates provided in Annex IV of ISBA/21/LTC/15 to facilitate a more efficient extraction, transformation and loading procedure into the database. The modified reporting templates also incorporate a wide range of data accuracy and quality control mechanisms.

In this context, the Secretariat is convening the captioned workshop to update the users of DeepData with different levels of data accessibility (LTC members, contractors and the general public) on the progress made in the development and implementation of the ISA data management strategy, including, *inter alia*, data governance policies, updated reporting templates, and data submission workflow, along with various metadata collection mechanisms, with different emphasis for different groups of end users.

Objectives of the workshop:

Building on the experience gained from the development and initial implementation of DeepData and the ISA data management strategy, this workshop will focus on the following specific objectives:

Closed Meetings for LTC members and Contractors (Part I and Part II)

- To develop with relevant LTC members the protocol for the submission of digital data by contractors, when submitting annual reports, including appropriate cataloguing, referencing from annual reports and metadata creation.
- To review the proposed updates to the reporting templates, as contained in Annex IV of ISBA/21/LTC/15, within the context of data quality and control mechanisms.
- To inform contractors on the steps involved in effectively populating the updated reporting templates.
- To increase understanding on the features and functionalities of DeepData.

Open Meeting for the General Public (Part III)

- To increase awareness and understanding on the historical background, the contents, the current and emerging functionalities and the potential use of DeepData, to support the fulfillment of ISA mandates on environmental protection.
- To provide updates on the results of Part I and Part II workshop discussion.
- To explore possible mechanisms for collaboration with members of the scientific community and other stakeholders to support development and review of DeepData.

Expected outcomes:

The expected outcomes of the workshop include:

1. Enhanced implementation of recommendations and guidelines governing the submission of digital data by contractors.
2. Consolidation of updated reporting templates and standardized mechanism for the cataloguing and referencing of digital data during the submission of annual reports.
3. Creation of a mechanism for review of DeepData through feedback from different user groups, including the scientific community and other stakeholders.
4. Increased awareness and knowledge on DeepData and its application.

Expected participants:

- Interested members of the LTC
- Database-related personnel of contractors

- General public
- Secretariat members and DeepData consultants
- Other relevant experts from partner organizations (e.g. OBIS-IOC/UNESCO, IHO/Seabed 2020, OECD secretariat, etc.)

Language:

The activities of this workshop will be conducted in English.