

DOSI Intervention regarding Item 10: Draft Regulations on exploitation of mineral resources in the Area: Fourth meeting of the Informal Working Group on the Protection and Preservation of the Marine Environment

Annex IV Section 4 - Description of the existing physiochemical and geological oceanography.

#23 Delivered by 22 March 2023 by Sonigitu Ekpe

Thank you, Madame Facilitator. Regarding Section 4, the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative welcomes the majority of the changes made, as they will allow for a more robust description to ensure that an EIS will lead to effective protection of the Marine Environment.

We recommend that the description of the existing oceanographic environment should not be limited to the impact area, as indicated in the opening paragraph and throughout this section, but should also include explicit description of the Preservation Reference Zones and regional context in reference to the applicable Regional Environmental Management Plan. We support the comments of France on this matter.

With regard to Paragraph 4.7, DOSI is concerned about the deletion of a requirement for including projections of how the chemical oceanography setting may change over the next 50 years. Potential mining impacts will occur in addition to environmental changes because of climate change. It is important for the EIS to include such climate change considerations, which are available in the scientific literature, as part of the description of the Marine Environment.

To address the comments by Russia on recommending deleting the mention of the oxygen minimum zone because it is not relevant within 200m of the seabed, DOSI respectfully reminds the council that mining may occur on seamounts with summits and flanks which may intersect the oxygen minimum zones in the water column, so we recommend maintaining this provision.

Many thanks, Madame Facilitator.