

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 Environmental Impact Statement
Intro, Executive Summary, and Sections 1 and 2
#21 Delivered 22 March 2023 by Sonigitu Ekpe**

Thank you, Madame Facilitator. Regarding your request, Madame Facilitator, for guidance on which elements of the Annexes should be moved to Standards and Guidelines and which should be retained in the regulations, the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative will endeavor to provide this guidance in written comments submitted following Council.

Before we provide specific comment on the Annex IV text under consideration, the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative would like to remind the Council that robust scientific understanding of Marine Environment baselines and potential impacts requires decadal scale research to enable robust Environmental Impact Statements, so development of the specific elements required in the regulations and standards will be difficult to define now. On this point, DOSI warmly invites all delegations to a side event this evening at 7:00PM at the Jamaica Pegasus where deep-sea scientists will present information on baseline studies and gaps in scientific understanding of impacts, and we stand ready to assist any delegation that wants to learn more about these topics.

Regarding Annex IV, the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative welcomes many of the proposed revisions, and we thank you for your hard work to develop this Annex. In the Executive Summary, the Deep-Ocean Stewardship prefers the completeness of Paragraph (a) rather than Alt(a)bis. We support the inclusion of Alt (d ter) on expected recovery rate. Understanding the rate that an ecosystem is expected to return to an original state is a key component of environmental impact assessment, as some impacts may be short term while others may have much longer timescales. Finally, we support the inclusion of (e) bis.

Regarding Section 2, the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative supports the proposed text changes and welcomes the inclusion of Paragraph 2.6 on Ecologically and/or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) and Area-based management tools.

Many many thanks, Madame Facilitator.