

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

**DR59 – Closure Plan
Delivered 22 March 2023**

Thank you, Madame Facilitator. The Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative highlights that Paragraph 2(a) could benefit from replacing the vaguely defined “scheduling of studies” with reference to the Environmental Management and Monitoring Plan that defines the monitoring used to inform the Closure process, as it is not clear what kind of studies would be done outside those already defined in the EMMP.

In Paragraph 2(e), DOSI advises that the data and reporting from monitoring of residual Environmental Effects should be made publicly available, not just reported to the Authority, to enable independent scientific assessment of these effects to ensure effective protection of the Marine Environment.

Referring to **para 2(f)**, and supporting Germany, DOSI again raises the concern that restoration and rehabilitation are not known viable mitigation measures in the deep sea. To date, there have been no long-term large-scale restoration experiments carried out in deep-sea ecosystems under mineral exploration, and experiments from comparable deep-sea ecosystems point to very slow and very incomplete recovery. Multi-decadal-scale research is needed to prove or disprove that restoration is possible in the deep sea. If restoration or remediation is deemed to be possible after such decadal-scale studies, independent experts will be needed to define what restoration or rehabilitation criteria or standards are.

Thank you, Madame Facilitator