



Call 2023-1.1

Call for expression of interest to develop a training course on Environmental Impact Assessment for exploration activities carried out in the Area

I. Context

1. During its meeting of 1 June 2023, the Board of the ISA Partnership Fund (ISAPF), endorsed the development and implementation of a **Training Course on Environmental Impact Assessment for exploration activities carried out in the Area** for officials as well as scientists of ISA Members States involved in deep-sea related matters.

2. Environmental impact assessment (EIA) is a key component to ensure the sustainable management of activities carried out in the seabed and ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction (Area).

3. Under Article 145 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), ISA is responsible for taking the necessary measures to ensure the effective protection of the marine environment from the harmful effects that may arise from activities in the Area. The 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI UNCLOS (1994 Agreement) reaffirms those responsibilities by stating that between the entry into force of UNCLOS and the approval of the first work plan for exploitation, ISA shall concentrate on, inter alia, the *“adoption of rules, regulations and procedures incorporating applicable standards for the protection and preservation of the marine environment.”* Procedurally, the 1994 Agreement requires that an application for approval of a plan of work shall be accompanied by an assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed activities and by a description of a programme for oceanographic and baseline environmental studies in accordance with ISA rules, regulations and procedures.

4. Based on Part XI of UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement, ISA has developed detailed and substantive provisions, regulations and recommendations related to the assessment of possible environmental impacts arising from exploration for marine minerals in the Area, which define the sort of activities that require EIA, its form and content, as well as [guidance on baseline studies, monitoring and reporting](#).

5. EIA is also a fundamental element of the architecture established under the draft exploitation of mineral resources of the Area for the effective protection of the marine environment. Although the regulations have not been adopted yet, it is anticipated that the complexity of the procedures and of the required data for EIA will increase, and so the need for specific training will arise.



II. Course design and objectives

6. Requests for EIA training and assistance in relation to exploration activities in the Area from developing States, Members of ISA, have multiplied significantly in the last decade. Indication is that the demand for EIA training will continue to expand and evolve as the status of activities in the Area progress.

7. A lack of trained professionals is a major impediment to the effective implementation of EIA procedures. Overcoming this barrier requires training in the technical, policy and public participation aspects of EIA. In this context, this project - which will be developed through the contribution provided by Greece in February 2023 to the ISAPF - aims at developing a practical training course on EIA for exploration activities to be carried out in the Area.

8. The main target audience will be governmental representatives and scientists of ISA Members involved in deep-sea related matters. Specifically, the purpose of this EIA training course will be to develop the knowledge and skills that are needed by participants to conduct meaningful impacts assessments for exploration activities planned to be carried out in the Area and to better engage in the work of ISA in accordance with the [ISA Strategic Plan 2019-2023](#) and the associated [High Level Action Plan](#).

9. With the support of experts in the field, the training course should meet the following objectives:

- 1) provide selected trainees with the necessary legal and technical tools to understand, manage and realise an EIA (exploration activities) throughout its different phases; and
- 2) enhance participation of scientists and policy makers of ISA Members in the EIA process.

10. The training course will consist of a general part addressing the main principles and techniques underpinning EIA, and a specific part dedicated to EIA in the context of exploration activities in the Area.

11. All the relevant steps of an EIA will be addressed with particular emphasis being paid to stakeholders' consultation. With a view to facilitate the training process, a **handbook** for attendees will be developed and a **toolkit** be made available at the end of the course, to ensure the widest dissemination of the acquired competences and skills at national level.



III. Expected outcomes

12. This project aligns with two programmatic documents of ISA, i.e. the [Action Plan of the International Seabed Authority in support of United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#) and the [Capacity development Strategy](#). It aims at advancing scientific knowledge, and understanding of ecosystems, including biodiversity and ecosystems functions, in the Area; enhancing scientific knowledge and understanding of potential impacts of activities in the Area; strengthening deep-sea scientific capacity of ISA's Members, in particular developing States; as well as rising awareness and understanding of the programmatic activities implemented under the action plan in support of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

13. It is anticipated that at the end of the course, participants should be able to identify and assess potential environmental impacts determined by activities in the Area, and particularly to:

- (i) Understand EIA principles and process;
- (ii) Understand the legal framework in place for EIA relating to exploration activities in the Area;
- (iii) Learn how to lead the preparation of an EIA and contribute to evaluating potential environmental impacts relating to exploration activities in the Area and identify an applicable mitigation measures, based on current best practices;
- (iv) Prepare practical EIA reports to enable decision makers to evaluate the feasibility of proposed projects;
- (v) Identify appropriate strategy to engage stakeholders in public consultations.

Based on the acquired skills and knowledge, trainees would be expected to transfer such acquired skills and knowledge in the field of EIA for exploration activities at national level.

IV. Instructions for expression of interest

14. Expressions of interest must be submitted in English, should be concise but thoroughly and sufficiently demonstrate/provide:

- (i) the competence and expertise of the potential proponent to develop the Training Course in line with the course design and objective and expected outcomes information provided in paragraph 2 and 3 of this call for interest.
- (ii) an outline of the training methodology for the course.
- (iii) a tentative programme of the course with clear indication of time allotted to specific topics, identified speakers and presenters.
- (iv) a summary of contents to be included in the handbook and in the toolkit.



- (v) an indication of necessary equipment for the course, if necessary.
- (vi) a CV (if more than one proponent, include one for each proponent).

15. Proponents must complete and submit **Annex A**.

16. Proponents are to send requests for clarifications and the documents in support of the expression of interest not later than 3 November 2023 via email: isapf@isa.org.jm

17. It is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure that the necessary documents reach ISA on or before the deadline.

18. ISA implements a zero-tolerance policy on fraud and other proscribed practices, including corruption, unethical practices and obstruction. ISA is committed to preventing, identifying and addressing all such acts and practices against ISA and third parties involved in its activities.

19. ISA requests that every proponent prevents and avoids conflicts of interest by disclosing clearly to ISA any involvement or possible conflict of interest. The ISA Secretariat reserves the right to ask one or more applicants to merge their proposals for the delivery of the project.

V. Timeline

20. Expressions of interests shall be communicated to ISA by **3 November 2023** and will be thereafter evaluated by a selection committee. Selected proponents will be required to sign a consultancy contract, stick to the general conditions of contracts for the services of consultants and individual contractors and sign a non-disclosure agreement.

21. All proponents will be informed about the outcome of the selection.

22. Selected proponents shall commit to be able to process the design and implementation of the Training course, once the contract is signed, in the first quarter of 2024 and submit all the deliverables by the end of March/April 2024.

VI. Eligibility criteria

23. Proponents should meet the following eligibility criteria:

- (i) Being an individual expert or an institution. If the proponent is an institution, a track record shall be included in the expression of interest.
- (ii) A minimum of 10 years of proven previous professional experience in the field of environmental impact assessment in ocean-related activities.
- (iii) A minimum of 10 years of proven previous experience in capacity development and training activities.
- (iv) Record of previous experience in design and organisation of training courses in the field of environmental impact assessment in ocean-related activities.



- (v) Excellent written and oral communication skills (English).
- (vi) Good level of familiarization with the work of ISA is desired.
- (vii) Ability to deliver outputs against tight deadlines.

VII. Budget

24. The budget allocated by the ISAPF to the training course on Environmental Impact Assessment for exploration activities carried out in the Area is 100,000.00 USD. This amount could be adjusted on the basis of the final contract and specific deliverables agreed.

VIII. Monitoring

25. As the administrator of the Partnership Fund on behalf of the donors, ISA will enter into a contract with recipients consistent with the purposes of the ISAPF and on the terms and conditions set forth. The ISA Secretariat will be responsible for the supervision of the activities and deliverables carried out as per the term of the contract.



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ANNEX A – PROPONENT INFORMATION FORM

Date: (day, month, year)

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1. Full name:
2. Legal address:
3. E-mail address:
4. Provide detail on a minimum of 10 years of proven previous professional experience in the field of environmental impact assessments for ocean-related activities.
4. Provide detail on a minimum of 10 years of proven previous experience in capacity development and training activities
5. Provide detail on record of previous experience in design and organization of training courses in the field of environmental impact assessment for ocean-related activities.
6. Provide detail on good level of familiarization with the work of ISA



7. Confirm that the expression of interest comprises:

- Proof of competencies as per paragraph 6 of the Call for expression of interest
- A training methodology for the Training Course as per paragraph 6 of the Call for expression of interest
- Tentative programme as per paragraph 4 of the Call for expression of interest
- Summary of contents as per paragraph 6 of the Call for expression of interest
- Indication of the necessary equipment for the Training Course, if necessary, as per paragraph 6 of the Call for expression of interest
- Curriculum vitae of the proponent(s)
- Copy of national ID passport or track record of the institution as appropriate

7. Provide any additional information considered key in meeting/exceeding the requirements:

8. Are there any indicting circumstances of which the ISA should be aware?

Please provide details:

DECLARATION

By submitting this application, I confirm that I am able to commit to the terms and conditions set out in paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the Call for expression of interest.

I acknowledge that the personal information supplied to ISA is done voluntarily to facilitate the processing of this application. I furthermore acknowledge that the information provided by me, is to the best of my knowledge both true and correct, and any incorrect or inaccurate information or documentation submitted may adversely affect the processes my application.

10. Date and Signature:



2021 United Nations Decade
2030 of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development

