



Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation
to the International Seabed Authority

№ 190

Attachment:
on 4 pages.

The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the International Seabed Authority presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the International Seabed Authority and with reference to the ISA Secretary-General's verbal note № ISA/EOSG/2023/146 dated 26 May 2023 has the honour to forward comments by the Russian Side on a first draft of a strategic plan for the ISA for the period 2024-2028.

The Permanent Mission avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the International Seabed Authority the assurances of its highest consideration.

Kingston, 30th June 2023



THE INTERNATIONAL
SEABED AUTHORITY
SECRETARIAT

Kingston

Answers to questions on a draft Strategic plan for the ISA for the period 2024-2028

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. *Does the Draft Strategic Plan for the period 2024- 2028 clearly encapsulate the mandate and responsibilities set out for the Authority by the Convention and the 1994 Agreement?*

It appears so.

2. *How do you think the Strategic Plan and associated High-Level Action Plan have contributed to fulfil the mission of ISA (as per the mission statement)?*

The Strategic Plan (obviously, the Strategic Plan for the period 2019-2023) has specified the mission of the Authority through the Strategic Directions (hereinafter referred to as SD). The High-Level Action Plan for the period 2019-2023 has included a list of actions aimed at implementing these Strategic Directions. Thus, the implementation of these actions definitely contributed to the fulfillment of the mission of the ISA.

Examples of the specification of the Authority's mission through the Strategic Directions:

- The ISA's mission is to be an organization through which the members of the Authority organize and control activities in the Area (SD 1,4, 1,5; SD 2; SD 8; SD 9), which is the common heritage of mankind (SD 1.3; SD 7), to promote an orderly, safe and responsible management and development of the resources of the Area for the benefit of humanity (SD 1.2), including by ensuring effective protection of the marine environment in accordance with best practices for environmental management and contributing to the achievement of agreed international goals and principles (SD 2.2; SD 3; SD 4), including the Sustainable Development Goals (SD 1.1; SD 4; SD 5). This will be achieved through the development and application of a comprehensive regulatory mechanism for commercial deep seabed mining (SD 1.4; SD 2; SD 9.3), which will include the effective protection of the marine environment,

human health and safety (SD 2.2; SD 3), the equitable sharing of financial and other economic benefits derived from activities in the Area (SD 1.3; SD 6.5; SD 7), and will allow for the fully integrated participation of developing States through the exchange of knowledge and best practices consistent with the principle that the Area and its resources are the common heritage of mankind. (SD 2.4; SD 5; SD 6).

The draft Strategic Plan for the period 2024-2028 includes a similar (slightly expanded in comparison with the previous one) list of strategic directions. Thus, it can be expected that the implementation of these actions will also contribute to the fulfillment of the mission of the Authority.

3. To what extent do you think the work of ISA provides a useful model for sustainable management of the global commons as Steward of the Area and its resources?

The principle of the common heritage of mankind is a unique principle that has no analogues. The potential exploitation of deep-sea minerals is an entirely new industry. The ISA, in turn, is a unique organization that helps to organize this new industry on behalf of all mankind and taking into account various interests (benefits of all mankind, protection of the marine environment, capacity building of developing countries). It appears that the ISA can be considered an example of a successful model of sustainable management of the global commons.

4. What should be the priorities of the Authority for the next five years?

The priorities of the Authority's activities for the next five years should be the following:

- 1) Finalization and adoption of the Regulations on exploitation in the Area, including set of related standards and guidelines.
- 2) Addressing issues related to ensuring effective protection of the marine environment. One of the most important steps in this direction may be the development and adoption of scientifically based thresholds for the acceptable

environmental impact of mining activities.

- 3) Promoting marine scientific research in the Area and monitoring programs.
- 4) Development of a mechanism for implementing the principle of the common heritage of mankind.
- 5) Further steps for the operationalization of the Enterprise and the commencement of work of the Economic and Planning Commission.
- 6) Further implementation of capacity-building programs for developing states.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

5. *Does the "Mission Statement" (unchanged from the first strategic plan) continue to accurately reflect the mandate of the Authority?*

It appears so.

6. *How do you consider that the context and challenges identified remain relevant? Should there be any new elements identified?*

We suppose that the context and all the identified problems remain relevant. At the same time, issues related to the soonest (and at the same time at the appropriate legal and scientific level) finalization and adoption of the Regulations on exploitation of Mineral Resources in the Area, as well as related standards and guidelines, addressing the issues of the payment mechanism and the implementation of the principle of the common heritage of mankind, ensuring effective protection of the marine environment, facilitating the marine scientific research in the Area and studying the potential impacts of deep-sea mining on the environment, the development and approval of Regional environmental management plans.

Among the new challenges, it should be noted the activation of the so-called "two-year rule" and the need for legal resolution of this situation.

It can also be noted the growing trend to promote and join the moratorium/precautionary pause on deep-sea mining and the need for the Authority to respond to this challenge.

7. Are the Results and Priority Outputs” appropriate and is there a clear link between the “Strategic Directions” and the “Results and Priority Outputs”?

It appears so.

8. Are there any specific observations or comments that Member States and other stakeholders wish to make in connection with any other aspect of the Draft Strategic Plan for 2024-2028?