



## CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

*Building and developing capacities of least developed countries in deep-sea related science, technology and innovation in support of sustainable development of blue emerging economies project*

<b>Area or work</b>	Ocean policy, marine science and technology
<b>Terms</b>	Research fellowship
<b>Duration</b>	3 months
<b>Department</b>	Office of Environmental Management and Mineral Resources (OEMMR) of ISA Executive Office of the Secretary General (EOSG) of ISA
<b>Duty Station</b>	Kingston (Jamaica)
<b>Posting Period:</b>	Jan 2024 to Mar 2024 (tentative)
<b>Deadline</b>	<del>31 October 2023</del> 7 December 2023

### **ABOUT ISA**

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) is an autonomous international organization established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1994 Agreement).

ISA is the organization through which States Parties to UNCLOS organize and control all mineral resources-related activities in the Area for the benefit of humankind as a whole. In so doing, ISA has the mandate to ensure the effective protection of the marine environment from harmful effects that may arise from deep-seabed-related activities. ISA, which has its headquarter in Kingston, Jamaica, came into existence on 16 November 1994, upon the entry into force of UNCLOS.

### **ABOUT UNTBLDC**

The United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries is a global organization dedicated to enhancing the contribution of science, technology and innovation for sustainable development in the world's 46 least developed countries. The UN Technology Bank helps least developed countries build the science, technology and innovation capacity that they need to promote the structural transformation of their economies, eradicate poverty and foster sustainable development.

## BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The oceans and their marginal seas, covering almost 71 per cent of the surface of the Earth, have since early times played a significant role in the development of humanity. They provide food and resources, generate oxygen, scavenge CO<sub>2</sub> and ensure communication and trade. The dependence of the world population on the ocean economy has steadily increased over the past 100 years to satisfy the ever-growing needs of humanity. Thanks to ongoing technological progress and innovation, access to different maritime areas and their resources, whether living or non-living, has reached new frontiers and opened new prospects. This presents new challenges and imperatives such as the need to manage global commons and to ensure equity in access to, and the distribution of benefits from, such resources. These imperatives are also central to Sustainable Development Goal 14 under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which urges *all States to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for development*. This includes the application of rigorous and adaptive measures for the protection and preservation of the marine environment.

This is achieved through the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which entered into force in 1994 after adoption of the Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of UNCLOS (1994 Agreement). States parties to UNCLOS have recognized the desirability of establishing through it a legal order for the oceans and seas which will facilitate international communication and promote their peaceful use, the equitable and efficient utilization of their resources, the sustainable development of their living resources, and the study, protection and preservation of the marine environment. They have also borne in mind that the achievement of these goals will contribute to the realization of a just and equitable international economic order which takes into account the interests and needs of humankind as a whole and, in particular, the special needs and interests of developing countries, whether coastal or landlocked.

At present, UNCLOS has almost achieved universality. As of November 2022, it has been ratified by 169 parties, which includes 168 States (165 United Nations member States plus the UN Observer State Palestine, as well as the Cook Islands and Niue) and the European Union. An additional 14 UN Member States have signed but have not ratified it. At the same time, 46 countries are designated by the UN as least developed countries (LDCs). **Nine of them, mainly landlocked States, have so far not become parties to UNCLOS.** It is to be noted that the interests of different LDCs regarding their rights and benefits under UNCLOS vary widely depending on their geographical location. **The majority of LDCs are coastal States, while 17 are landlocked.** Some are large coastal States and eight are small island States.

According to the Least Developed Countries Report 2020 issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), LDCs are among the world's most vulnerable economies, as reflected in the Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI), which indicates that they are 30 per cent more vulnerable than other developing countries and face the risk of being left further behind as the technological gap widens between them and more technologically-advanced countries.

The Doha Programme of Action (DPoA) for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2022-2031, adopted during the first part of the LDC5 conference in March 2022 calls for a new generation of renewed and strengthened commitments between the LDCs and their development partners, including the private sector, civil society, and governments at all levels. The DPoA highlights the need for the UN system including its specialized agencies to provide finance, technical support, assistance and policy support to the LDCs on priority focus areas. The six key areas of focus identified in the DPoA include: (a) Investing in people in least developed countries: eradicating poverty and building capacity to leave no one behind; (b) leveraging the power of science, technology, and innovation to fight against multidimensional vulnerabilities and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals; (c) supporting structural transformation as a driver of prosperity; (d) enhancing international trade of LDCs and regional integration; (e) addressing climate change, environmental degradation, recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and building resilience against future shocks for risk-informed sustainable development; and (f) mobilizing international solidarity, reinvigorated global partnerships and innovative tools and instruments: a march towards sustainable graduation.

The DPoA recognizes the UN Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries as the focal point for the LDCs in the field of science, technology and innovation including as it related to capacity building and invites Member States and international organizations to provide voluntary financial and in-kind contributions on enhancing capacity and effectiveness.

According to UNCLOS, the International Seabed Authority (ISA) is mandated to promote the effective participation of developing States having due regard to their special interests and needs, and in particular to the special need of the landlocked and geographically disadvantaged among them to overcome obstacles arising from their disadvantaged location, including remoteness from the Area and difficulty of access to and from it<sup>2</sup> (UNCLOS, Art. 148). ISA is also under the obligation to take measures to promote and encourage the transfer to developing States of technology and scientific knowledge relating to activities in the Area, so that all States parties benefit therefrom (UNCLOS, art.144(1)(b)). While it is stipulated that ISA must avoid discrimination in the exercise of its powers and functions, special consideration is nevertheless permitted for developing countries.

### **ABOUT THE ISA-UN TECHNOLOGY BANK PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**

It is in this context that the ISA and the UN Technology Bank for Least Developed countries (UN Technology Bank) have decided to partner with a view of conceptualizing, designing and implementing joint activities with a view to build and develop the capacities of LDCs in support of the sustainable development of blue emerging economic sectors. The ISA - UN Technology Bank partnership will particularly focus on two priority areas of the DPoA, namely: (i) investing in people in LDCs: eradicating poverty and building capacity to leave no one behind, and (ii) leveraging the power of science, technology, and innovation to fight against multidimensional vulnerabilities and to achieve the SDGs.

The main objective of the partnership between ISA and the UN Technology Bank would be to create the enabling conditions for LDCs to:

- 1) Better understand the rights recognized to them under UNCLOS which should support the sustainable development of blue emerging economic sectors aligned with their respective national socio-development priorities;
- 2) Effectively engage in the global ocean governance processes including the activities of ISA through increased marine scientific, technical and legal capacities;
- 3) Recognize and identify specific measures to facilitate the participation of women scientists from LDCs with deep-sea related skills in research and technology-oriented programmes and activities.

It is envisaged that this project will place particular focus on two selected LDCs, one in Asia-Pacific, one in Africa.

One of the expected results of the project is to strengthen national science- policy framework on emerging blue economy sectors. Accordingly, the project is designed to provide 3-months fellowship opportunities as ISA for two (2) officials from Least Developing Countries and strongly encourages applications from women with a view to increase their meaningful participation in emerging deep-seabed related scientific and technical sectors.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Strengthening national science-policy interface on emerging blue economy sectors in LDCs**

The main objective of such fellowships is two-fold. Firstly, build on existing capacity development initiatives to provide national experts with technical skills on deep-seabed related matters. Secondly, enable the ISA Secretariat to benefit from the contribution of such experts with a view of advancing specific tasks identified in partnership with the Legal and Technical Commission (LTC).

In relation to the potential areas of work for selected candidates, the following areas of work which relate to the needs of LDCs in the field of ocean governance have been identified, seabed exploration, environmental baseline acquisition and marine monitoring and protection.

1. the need to support the Office of Environmental Management and Mineral Resources of the ISA Secretariat (OEMMR):
  - i. in undertaking the assessment of contractors' exploration and environmental data provided to ISA's DeepData database;
  - ii. in identifying gaps in data needed for ISA to monitor the development of the resources of the Area.
2. the need to work with the ISA Secretariat and the data management group of the LTC to structure scientifically the collected data in ISA's database;
3. the need to support the Executive Office of the Secretary General (EOSG) of ISA in relation to ocean governance, ocean/blue economy policy and capacity development;

4. foster cooperation with local university (geoscience) with a view to increase awareness on the work of ISA.

### **Role and responsibilities**

1. The fellowships are an opportunity for officials from Least Developing Countries, members of ISA, to be deployed within the ISA secretariat for a 3-month period.
2. The experts will report directly to the Programme Management Officer (Mining Geology) or the Programme Manager (Capacity Development) for all matters relating to the programme of work assigned and deliverables.
3. In the field of geological work, the successful selected fellow will work closely with the Director/OEMMR to achieve the following:
  - i. Support the assessment of data already owned by ISA and identifying gaps/needs;
  - ii. Work in close collaboration with the Data Management, and Geology&Technology Groups of the LTC;
  - iii. Foster the relationship between international Universities to increase awareness on the work of the ISA

### **Eligibility criteria**

Fellowships will be opened to government officials from LDCs, with a focus on Nepal and Tanzania, members of ISA, who meet the following requirements (preference will be given to Government Officials):

1. **Profile:** must be a post-doctoral or doctoral researcher at the time of selection and if applicable, continue to receive their benefits during the fellowship from their respective academic institution. **Interns will not be considered.**
2. **Education:** should be equipped with relevant degree in geoscience (geology, geochemistry, geophysics - marine geoscience will be considered as an added advantage) and/or policy studies.
3. **Experience:** mid-career professionals with a proven track-record of experience and achievement in (a) resources assessment, resources management or (b) ocean policy, Blue Economy.
4. **Language:** good knowledge of English for daily conversation, reading and writing.
5. **Health condition:** be in good mental and physical health.
6. **Age:** between 32 and 50 years of age.
7. **Nationality:** ISA members with a focus on LDCs and nationals from Tanzania and Nepal.

### **How to apply**

All applicants should submit the following:

- Curriculum vitae
- Motivation letter
- Proof indicating post-doctoral or doctoral studies
- Copied of degrees and transcripts
- Biometric page of national passport

### **Selection process**

1. All applications shall be submitted to the ISA Secretariat ([capacity-development@isa.org.jm](mailto:capacity-development@isa.org.jm)) not later than **Tuesday 31 October 2023 Thursday, 7 December 2023.**
2. The ISA Secretariat will Be responsible for selected the candidates.
3. The successful candidates will then be notified by the ISA Secretariat which will make, in close coordination with each candidate and relevant authorities, the necessary arrangements for their onboarding.

### **Fellowship terms and conditions**

1. The Secretariat will **ONLY** cover the cost incurred by travel (most direct and economic route), visa requirements and accommodation in Kingston. The fellow will not be eligible to any ISA Staff entitlements.
2. Stipend will be provided for the duration of the fellowship and may be paid monthly.
3. No salary replacement will be provided. Where applicable, **the releasing academic institution or organization shall continue to support the researcher.**
4. During the time of the fellowship, fellow will not be subject to the ISA Staff rules and regulations (nor benefits and entitlements).

### **Reporting requirements**

1. Upon completion of his/her fellowship, the fellow should provide an “End of Fellowship” report to the **Office of Environmental Management and Mineral Resources** and the **Executive Office of the Secretary-General** describing:
  - i. The achievements realised against the agreed plan of work;
  - ii. The lessons learnt;
  - iii. Specific capacities and skills strengthened;
  - iv. How the work undertaken will benefit the country of citizenship and ISA.
2. The Secretariat may request further reports during and after the fellowship term.

### **Further information**

Should further information be required, please contact:

- Ms. Margaret Koli, Programme Management Officer (Capacity Development) [mkoli@isa.org.jm](mailto:mkoli@isa.org.jm)
  - Dr. Ulrich Schwarz-Schampera, Programme Management Officer (Mining Geology) [uschampera@isa.org.jm](mailto:uschampera@isa.org.jm)
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