

DSCC intervention to the 30th Session of the Assembly of the ISA

24 July 2025

Agenda item 8

Thank you, this intervention is on behalf of DSCC, Oceans North

Mr. President, fellow delegates,

We thank the Secretary General for her report, particularly in relation to the importance of science. Just over one month ago, world leaders came together in Nice at the One Ocean Science Congress and the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference and delivered a powerful message: the deep sea **MUST** be protected, not plundered.

Today, 38 countries support a moratorium, precautionary pause or ban on deep-sea mining. Last week, 40 financial institutions, representing \$3.8 trillion of assets, that are members of The Finance for Biodiversity Foundation, issued a statement affirming that deep-sea mining must not go ahead until the environmental, social, and economic risks are comprehensively understood and alternatives to deep-sea minerals have been fully explored. Prior to this meeting, the United Nations human rights rapporteurs in July called on States again to implement a precautionary pause on exploitation in order to respect the right of future generations to live on a healthy planet. Just this past Sunday, people in over 26 countries rose up, taking to the water - on surfboards, sailboats, and shorelines - for a global mobilization to defend Earth's last untouched frontiers from deep-sea mining.

We welcome the strong speeches by France, Palau, Panama and many others in support of a moratorium. Protecting marine biodiversity as well as the largest natural carbon sink, the deep ocean, should not be up for negotiation - it should be an international imperative.

I might add that we see an important role for the Assembly as the supreme body of the ISA. In light of the statements of Palau, Panama, Chile, Zambia, Germany, Costa Rica, Switzerland, Tuvalu, and others we see the need for both a General Policy for the protection of the marine environment and the Article 154 review. Decisions on these two issues will be a measure of the success or failure of the meeting of the Assembly this week in exercising its authority and responsibilities.

The Mining Code as it stands today is not capable of protecting the marine environment or upholding equity. It cannot be: there is insufficient science, as the LTC reported at a side event during the first Council week. A hasty adoption of a flawed Mining Code is not the solution to the threat of unilateral action. This is a disingenuous and dangerous misconception, and risks

undermining the credibility of the ISA. An international moratorium, and a firm commitment by ISA member countries to prevent companies and individuals within their jurisdiction from engaging in any unilateral mining, is the most effective way to defend the deep ocean and the integrity of the ISA.

A moratorium ensures that any future decision on deep-sea mining is grounded in evidence-based scientific research, including traditional knowledge and values, and an evolved understanding of what it means to benefit human kind as a whole, rather than industry pressures. It offers the stability needed to avoid a chaotic race to destruction.

We support the observations made by Chile, Brazil, France, Switzerland, Netherlands and others with respect to TMC's application to mine the deep seabed outside the ISA framework. The ISA must stand firm and stand together to ensure this does not happen.

This is a moment of truth. Decisions taken now will shape the fate of the deep ocean for generations to come. We urge you to ensure that the ISA aligns with global expectations for environmental protection, legal integrity, multilateral cooperation and a right to a clean and healthy environment.

The world is watching and is calling on you to take action.

Thank-you