

WWF International – Agenda item 8

Thank you, Mr. President,

Thank you, Madam Secretary-General, and sincere thanks also to the Secretariat and to Jamaica for once again welcoming us.

This Assembly meets at a pivotal time. Concerns around deep seabed mining are mounting—as reflected just weeks ago at the UN Ocean Conference in Nice. Today, thirty-eight countries support a global moratorium or precautionary pause.

They are joined by over 900 scientists, by Indigenous Peoples, civil society, and more than 60 major companies—including Apple, Google, Samsung, and Volvo—alongside global banks and insurers. These major actors are investing in reuse, recycling, and innovation, not in a high-risk industry with irreversible impacts.

Markets are changing. Battery technologies are moving away from cobalt and nickel—the very minerals targeted in the deep. The evidence is clear: these minerals are not needed for the energy transition.

Delegates, this Assembly has a profound responsibility. The deep ocean floor is part of the common heritage of humankind, and decisions made here will shape whether we treat that heritage with care—or expose it to irreversible harm. Good governance requires transparency and learning. We urge a full Article 154 review of the ISA's performance, with inclusive stakeholder participation, as mandated by UNCLOS.

As a mother, the advice I have always given my children when facing a difficult decision is simple: think deeply, take your time, gather the facts, and understand the long-term consequences before you go forward. We owe that same here to future generations. It is common sense for our common heritage.

Sir David Attenborough writes in his most recent book **Ocean** on the topic of deep seabed mining and the ISA:

“The deep ocean is our last true unexplored wilderness. The remaining place where we can discover things about our world that are beyond our capacity to imagine, a common area owned by no one yet vital for all life. Perhaps for the first time this is a chance to demonstrate what we have learned as a species. We can respect the rights of indigenous peoples, we can be led by scientific evidence, we can cooperate for the good of all and define value as something quite different to money.”

We cannot afford to rush into an untested industry that could cause irreversible harm. We urge all states to act with care, courage, and foresight—and to join the growing global call for a moratorium or precautionary pause.

I urge you to think deeply - the future of our children depends on it.

Thank you.