



**INTERNATIONAL
NICKEL STUDY GROUP**
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Ms. Leticia Reis de Carvalho
Secretary-General
International Seabed Authority (ISA)
Kingston, Jamaica

7 March 2025

Subject: Application for Observer Status in the International Seabed Authority (ISA)

Dear Secretary-General Reis de Carvalho,

On behalf of the International Nickel Study Group (INSG), I am pleased to formally apply for Observer Status in the International Seabed Authority (ISA). As an intergovernmental organization dedicated to promoting market transparency, sustainable development, and responsible practices in the nickel sector, the INSG believes that collaboration with the ISA will be mutually beneficial in addressing the challenges and opportunities related to seabed mining.

The INSG plays a critical role in providing comprehensive data, analysis, and forecasts on the global nickel market, ensuring transparency and informed decision-making for governments, industry stakeholders, and international organizations. Our work extends beyond market dynamics to address key environmental and economic issues associated with mining and metals production, including resource efficiency, recycling, and the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Nickel, along with its byproducts and coproducts, is an indispensable material for a wide range of industrial applications, particularly in the technology and energy transition. Nickel is a key component in lithium-ion batteries, which power electric vehicles (EVs) and energy storage systems essential for renewable energy integration. It is also critical in the production of stainless steel and other alloys used in clean energy infrastructure, such as wind turbines and solar panels. As the world moves toward decarbonization, nickel's role in enabling sustainable technologies is more important than ever.

Seabed mining represents a significant frontier in the global metals industry, with the potential to contribute to the sustainable supply of critical minerals, including nickel and its associated byproducts. These resources are essential for meeting the growing demand for clean energy technologies and advancing global climate goals. However, seabed mining also poses unique environmental, social, and governance challenges that require careful management and international cooperation.

The INSG is committed to promoting sustainable practices that minimize the environmental

impact of mining activities, including those conducted in marine ecosystems. We recognize the importance of conserving marine biodiversity and ensuring that seabed mining is carried out in a manner that protects fragile underwater habitats. Through our expertise in data collection, analysis, and stakeholder engagement, the INSG can contribute to the development of science-based policies and best practices that balance resource extraction with environmental preservation.

Specifically, the INSG can support the ISA in the following areas:

Data Sharing and Analysis: Providing reliable data on nickel and associated metals to inform environmental impact assessments and sustainable resource management strategies.

Best Practices: Sharing knowledge on responsible mining practices, including technologies and methodologies that reduce ecological disruption and promote ecosystem recovery.

Stakeholder Collaboration: Facilitating dialogue among governments, industry, and environmental organizations to develop balanced approaches to seabed mining that prioritize marine conservation.

Research and Innovation: Supporting research initiatives focused on minimizing the environmental footprint of seabed mining and exploring alternative solutions, such as enhanced recycling and circular economy models.

By granting the INSG Observer Status, the ISA would enable us to actively participate in your deliberations, share insights from the nickel sector, and support the development of policies and frameworks that balance the economic potential of seabed mining with the need to protect marine ecosystems and biodiversity.

We look forward to the opportunity to work closely with the ISA and its member states to advance shared goals in sustainable resource management. Please refer to the attachment for further background information, and do not hesitate to contact me at paul_white@ilzsg.org if you require any additional information or documentation to support our application.

Thank you for considering our request. We are confident that this collaboration will strengthen the global effort to address the challenges and opportunities of seabed mining in a responsible and sustainable manner, while supporting the critical role of nickel and its byproducts in the technology and energy transition and the fight against climate change.

Yours sincerely,



Paul White
Secretary-General

International Nickel Study Group (INSG)





International Nickel Study Group

Application for Observer Status with the International Seabed Authority

A. Information about the organization

1. Name of organization

International Nickel Study Group (INSG)

2. Address of headquarters

Rua Almirante Barroso, 38 – 5th
1000-013 Lisboa
Portugal

3. Addresses of all branches and/or regional headquarters

NA

4. Telephone number

00 351 213592420

5. Fax number

00 351 213592429

6. Email address

paul_white@ilzsg.org

7. Name, title and contact details of focal point

Mr. Jianbin Meng
Director of Economics and Environment
Tel: 00 351 213592423
Email: jianbin_meng@ilzsg.org

8. Background information on the organization

The International Nickel Study Group (INSG) is an autonomous intergovernmental commodity organization established in 1990. INSG is the sole multi-lateral institution dedicated to issues affecting nickel production, usage, and trade. Its activities, projects, and publications cover a wide range of topics, focusing on market transparency, market access, and sustainable development. Membership is open to any country involved in nickel production, usage, or international trade. The Study Group promotes enhanced cooperation on issues related to nickel, provides a global forum for producers, consumers, and governments to examine their common problems and carry out open dialogue and the free exchange of information, increases market transparency through comprehensive, reliable, and up-to-date statistics, as well as through special investigations, research, and studies, and considers special problems or difficulties that exist or may arise in the international nickel economy.

9. Is the organization a member of, affiliated to or otherwise associated with another organization that has been granted observer status with the Authority?

No.

10. Is the organization affiliated to consultants of the Authority, contractors with the Authority, entities in connection with the law of the sea, the offshore and deep-sea mining industry, research institutes or the mineral marketing and processing industry?

No.



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11. Relationships with intergovernmental organizations

The International Nickel Study Group (INSG) is an independent legal entity. INSG shares the same secretariat with the International Copper Study Group (ICSG) and the International Lead and Zinc Study Group (ILZSG). The three Groups co-headquarters in Lisbon, Portugal.

12. List of publications and/or other relevant documentation

The International Nickel Factbook
World Nickel Statistics (Monthly + Yearbook)
World Directory of Nickel Production Facilities
Report on Lithium-Ion Market Study – Focus on Nickel
Nickel Production and Usage in Indonesia
The Use of Nickel in Batteries
World Nickel-based Alloys
Nickel Production in South East Asia: Trends and Perspectives
Primary Nickel Usage: New Frontiers in China
China's Nickel Mine and Refined Nickel Production
Nickel – A Surface Technology Material
Nickel Ore Market of Southeast Asia
Market for Nickel: Fundamentals Driving Change
Nickel Pig Iron Study
Nickel Heap Leaching Study
Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) Regulations Relating to Nickel

B. Interest in matters under consideration by the Assembly

13. Briefly outline how your organization intends to demonstrate its interest in matters under consideration by the Assembly, including by answering questions 14 to 17 and by providing any other relevant information related to the application for observer status.

The Study Group's main mandate is to promote market transparency and provide a forum in which stakeholders including governments, industry, and NGOs can discuss issues of common concern and interest such as commodity market trends and environment, health and safety issues related to resource extraction and metal production, international trade and usage. The Study Group is the sole multilateral mechanisms set up by governments dedicated to issues related to the production, usage, and trade of nickel. The Study Group have been informing and will continue to inform government delegations and their industrial representatives about the development and issues related to seabed mining.

14. Briefly outline whether and how the purposes or activities of the organization relate to the work of the Authority.

Production, usage, stocks, trade, and prices of minerals and metals, present and future capacities of mines, plants, smelters/refineries, environment, health and safety issues are all contemplated and continuously deliberated at the Study Group. Similar issues related to seabed mining need to be addressed as that of terrestrial mining, there therefore exists an opportunity for the ISA and the Study Groups to cooperate.

15. Briefly outline whether and how your organization intends to contribute to the work of the Authority, for example by providing specialized information, advice or expertise, or by identifying or helping to procure the services of experts or consultants.

The Study Group has accumulated a huge amount of data regarding Nickel. These data could be shared with ISA on a reciprocal basis. Measuring seafloor mineral resources, responsible and sustainable exploitation of the seafloor minerals, complementary effects of seabed mining and terrestrial mining, deployment of advanced pyro and hydrometallurgical processes in extracting metals, and many other issues related to minerals and metals could be shared topics at the Study Groups meetings. The Industrial Advisory Panel of the Study Groups could be a potential conduit between the industry and the ISA.



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16. Briefly outline whether and how your organization has the expertise and the capacity to contribute, within its field of competence, to the work of the Authority, in particular in connection with the law of the sea, the protection of the marine environment, the offshore and deep-sea mining industry, technology, minerals processing and marketing, activities in the Area and marine scientific research in the Area.

The Study Group has well-established working relationships with government delegations to the Study Groups. These government delegations are responsible for policy development in the field of minerals/metals in their respective countries, seabed minerals resources of some of the Study Group's member countries may become a factor of consideration in policy formulation. Collaboration between the Study Groups and the ISA could help policymakers make better-formed decisions relating to minerals and metals.

17. Briefly outline whether and how your organization intends to contribute to the capacity-building programs and initiatives of the Authority (e.g., Secretary-General's award, voluntary commitments of the Authority).

The Study Group has extensive networks within the minerals and metals sectors through their members across Asia, Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Oceania. They have cooperated on various projects in the developing world in advancing the production and use of minerals and metals, sometimes with funding support from the Common Fund for Commodities in past years. The Secretariat, in consultation with member governments, will be able to assist in the identification of areas in the developing world, least developed countries, and small island countries where capacity could be developed and enhanced in order to maximize resource endowment potential.

Paul White

Secretary-General

International Copper Study Group (ICSG)

International Lead and Zinc Study Group (ILZSG)

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