



Council

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Agenda item 14

Report of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission on the work of the Commission at its thirtieth session

Decision of the Council of the International Seabed Authority on the standardized procedure for the development, establishment and review of regional environmental management plans

The Council of the International Seabed Authority,

Recalling article 145 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,¹ which requires the Authority to ensure the effective protection of the marine environment from harmful effects that may arise from activities in the Area,

Recalling also articles 162 and 165 of the Convention and section 1 of the annex to the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982,² which set out the functions of the Council and the Legal and Technical Commission in relation to environmental protection,

Recognizing the essential role of regional environmental management plans in contributing to the mandate of the Authority to ensure the effective protection of the marine environment, including through the establishment of area-based management tools and other environmental management measures,

Recalling its decision [ISBA/26/C/10](#) adopted at its twenty-sixth session, in which the Council, having considered the proposals on a procedure for the development, approval and review of regional environmental management plans,³ and on a template with minimum requirements for regional environmental management plans,⁴ requested the Legal and Technical Commission to develop a standardized approach, including a template with indicative elements, taking into account, as appropriate, the two proposals,

Recalling also the recommendations of the Legal and Technical Commission at its thirtieth session concerning the draft revised standardized procedure for the

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1833, No. 31363.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 1836, No. 31364.

³ [ISBA/26/C/6](#).

⁴ [ISBA/26/C/7](#).



development, establishment and review of regional environmental management plans, taking into consideration the comments received during the public consultation, as contained in document [ISBA/30/C/3/Rev.1](#),

Welcoming the recommendations of the Legal and Technical Commission on technical guidance to support the practical implementation of the standardized procedure and template, as contained in document ISBA/29/LTC/8,

Recognizing the importance of a transparent, inclusive and science-based process for the development and review of regional environmental management plans, including the contribution of stakeholders,

Noting that the standardized procedure and template will need to be aligned with the draft regulations for exploitation of mineral resources in the Area, once finalized,

Acknowledging the need for a standardized, structured and adaptive framework to guide the development and review of regional environmental management plans in various regions of the Area, consistent with the legal framework and environmental mandate of the Authority,

1. *Adopts* the revised standardized procedure for the development, establishment and review of regional environmental management plans, as contained in document [ISBA/30/C/3/Rev.1](#);

2. *Requests* the Legal and Technical Commission and the secretariat to implement the revised standardized procedure in their future work related to the development, establishment and review of regional environmental management plans, including by applying the template and recommendations referenced in the document;

3. *Requests* the Legal and Technical Commission to advance its work on the development, establishment and review of regional environmental management plans, with a view to recommending to the Council new regional environmental management plans for priority areas where there are currently exploration contracts, taking into account exploration or exploitation activities and the best available scientific information;

4. *Encourages* member States, observers, contractors, sponsoring States, relevant stakeholders and competent international organizations to contribute data, knowledge and expertise to the development, establishment and review of regional environmental management plans, in accordance with the revised standardized procedure.

*338th meeting
18 July 2025*