



Position Statement: Deep sea mining

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The deep ocean is a vital force within the Earth system and must be protected from harm. The priority approach to the consumption of mineral resources should be one of sustainability, reuse, improved product design and recycling of materials rather than exploring for new sources of minerals, including in the deep-sea. If deep-sea mining is permitted to occur, it should not take place until appropriate and effective regulations for exploration and exploitation are in place to ensure that the full range of marine habitats, biodiversity and ecosystem functions are adequately and effectively protected, including through a network of marine protected areas and reserves.

The regulations and their framework must be robust and include:

- clear conservation and management objectives;
- transparent and enforceable procedures including access to information, public participation, and review procedures;
- requirements based on the precautionary and ecosystem approaches and the polluter pays principle;
- publicly available, comprehensive, prior environmental impact assessments, based on extensive, high quality environmental baseline information, and independent review procedures.

They should also ensure that significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and ecologically or biologically significant areas (EBSAs) are prevented and that other serious harm to the marine environment does not occur. Protected areas must be established to achieve agreed objectives and cumulative impacts from mining and other activities and sectors must be also considered.

The development and adoption of any deep-sea mining exploration and exploitation regulations must be transparent and participatory and any mining activities permitted thereafter must respect the common heritage of humankind and ensure real benefits to society as a whole. Mechanisms for liability and redress must be established, and research and other initiatives to promote conservation and sustainable management must be implemented. Management must be effective, accountable, and transparent with ongoing monitoring, compliance, enforcement and transparent review procedures.