

Bites from the Deep

JULY-DECEMBER 2019

DEEP-SEA FISHERIES

- In September the DSCC attended the [Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization annual meeting](#), which succeeded in closing the last remaining seamount bottom trawl fishery within its area. After several years of debate, the fishery for the splendid alphonso on the Corner Rise seamount chain was closed, but only following the near extirpation of the species. NAFO also agreed to avoid scientific bottom trawl surveys in areas closed to commercial fishing; improvements in catch-data reporting protocols; and long-overdue measures to ensure that bycatch of deep-sea corals, sponges and other vulnerable species can be formally recorded. Protocols for recording bycatch of Greenland shark were also improved.
- In November the DSCC attended the [North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission annual meeting](#) where we called for the closure of all remaining seamounts to bottom trawling. NEAFC failed close the orange roughy fishery, but did agree to extend prohibitions on directed fishing for deep-sea sharks,
- Also in November, the [DSCC joined Greenpeace to demonstrate](#) the shocking scale of destruction caused by bottom trawl fishing by covering the lawn of New Zealand's parliament with colourful corals to show what's being lost. Last year alone, up to 3,000 tonnes of coral was decimated by New Zealand's bottom trawl fleet.



DEEP SEABED MINING

- In July the DSCC participated in the International Seabed Authority's annual meeting of the Council Assembly in Kingston Jamaica. We [intervened](#) on key items in the draft exploitation regulations and other issues. . To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the ISA, the DSCC delivered [a special intervention](#) along with [a film](#) featuring the Chair of the Board, Dr Lance Morgan. Both called on State Parties to take responsibility for the decisions they will make.

- The DSCC maintained an active presence on social media, which helped spread awareness about the threat of deep seabed mining. This was amplified by the release of a hard-hitting report from DSCC member Greenpeace, titled "[In Deep Water: The Emerging Threat Of Deep Sea Mining](#)", which called for a moratorium on deep seabed mining. Greenpeace fielded a delegation at the ISA meeting which made an intervention on the same day that their ship, the Esperanza, arrived in Kingston. Local activists staged a protest outside the meeting venue demanding protection of the seabed from mining.



- The Deep Sea Mining Campaign, another DSCC member organization, also released a report in July, entitled "[Why the Rush: seabed mining in the Pacific Ocean](#)". Focused on the threats posed by deep seabed mining and the companies behind the push to develop the industry, this report garnered further media attention.
- In August, we released our [new position statement](#) calling for moratorium on: i) deep seabed mining, ii) the adoption of exploitation regulations, and iii) the issuing of exploitation and new exploration contracts, unless and until a set of conditions has been met.
- Also in August, the DSCC attended the third UN Intergovernmental Conference on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). We held side meetings focused on raising the alarm about the risks of deep seabed mining and the non-transparent, biased processes at the ISA.
- The DSCC participated in the development of a draft resolution calling for a precautionary approach and a moratorium on deep-sea mining, for debate at IUCN's World Conservation Congress in June 2020. The resolution was accepted and is [available online](#).
- In October we submitted [extensive comments](#) on the latest draft of the ISA exploitation regulations issued in March.
- In November we participated in a workshop co-convened by the German and Dutch governments on developing rules-based Regional Environmental Management Plans. The results will be presented by the two countries to the ISA Council's February 2020 meeting.
- Also in November, the DSCC wrote a [public response](#) to a troubling 60 Minutes segment that contained a number of factual inaccuracies and biased messages.
- The DSCC and its members has been featured in numerous media stories on deep seabed mining, including in [Scientific American](#), [Forbes](#), [Financial Times](#), [Chinadialogue](#), [The Guardian](#) and [The Atlantic](#), as well as on a podcast series by Sustainable Asia that focused on deep seabed mining called "[Mining the Deep](#)". Our social media following continues to grow with over 4,400 followers on [Twitter](#) (@DeepSeaConserve), 330 likes on [Facebook](#), and 184 followers on [Instagram](#) (@deep_sea_conserve).

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

January to June 2020

- 10-18 February: The 8th Meeting of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation – Port Vila, Vanuatu
- 17-21 February: The 26th Annual Council Session of the International Seabed Authority – Kingston, Jamaica
- 23 March-3 April: Fourth session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction – New York, United States
- 17-21 April: 5th Scientific Committee Meeting of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission – Port Vila, Vanuatu
- 19-24 April: 10th Pacific Island Conference – DSM session, Noumea, New Caledonia
- 18-23 May: 24th Meeting of Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity – Montreal, Canada
- 19-21 May: UN Fish Stocks Agreement 15th Informal Consultations – New York, United States
- 2-6 June: UN Ocean Conference – Lisbon, Portugal
- 11-19 June: IUCN World Conservation Congress – Marseille, France
- 19-22 June: 6th Annual Session of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission – Sapporo, Japan
- 22-26 June: 21st UN ICP on Ocean and Law of the Sea – New York, United States