



## DEEP SEA CONSERVATION COALITION REACTION

### SERIOUS CONCERNS OF PRO-MINING AGENDA OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY REPORTED IN NEW YORK TIMES

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**An article published yesterday (19 March) in the New York Times [highlights concerns](#) by International Seabed Authority (ISA) State delegates surrounding a lack of impartiality of the ISA's Secretary General. The article points to the pro-mining agenda of the ISA Secretary General - the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC) calls for urgent reform of the Authority.**

As ISA negotiations get into their second week in Kingston, Jamaica, The New York Times has reported that the ISA Secretary General has pushed diplomats that sit on the ISA's Council to accelerate the start of industrial-scale mining. According to interviews with State representatives, Germany, Costa Rica and others have stated that the ISA Secretary General, Michael Lodge, has "stepped out of line by resisting efforts by some council members that could slow approval of the first mining proposal."

In a letter sent by Germany to the Secretary General on March 16, Franziska Brantner, Germany's Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, stated that Lodge has "actively taken a stand against positions and decision making proposals from individual delegations." highlighting that the German delegation were "seriously concerned about this approach." In a reply by Lodge, [published by the New York Times](#), he instructed Brantner and his staff "not seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities."

Furthermore, Costa Rica reminded the Secretary General of his administrative functions in the March 8 intersessional meeting and that the ISA Council, formed of ISA member States "are the ones in charge and the Secretary General has administrative functions."

This is not the first time the ISA Secretariat and the Secretary General have come under fire. [Last year](#) it was revealed that the ISA shared confidential information with prospective deep-sea miners The Metals Company, in order to help them to secure the supposedly most profitable locations for deep-sea mining in the Clarion Clipperton Zone. The report also highlighted Secretary General Lodge's previous comments regarding the widespread criticism leveled at the deep-sea mining industry, which has included mocking public concerns about the potential environmental harm deep-sea mining would cause to ecosystems and biodiversity.

The DSCC are present in Kingston throughout negotiations, advocating for a moratorium on the risky industry in the face of a lack of social license; environmental and climate risks; and a lack of confidence in the Authority to regulate the industry. Emma Wilson, Policy Officer for the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition stated: *“This is another article that highlights a deeply rooted pro-mining agenda of the ISA Secretariat, which is charged with safeguarding the ‘common heritage of humankind.’ It is vital that the Authority is reformed as soon as possible, so that it becomes a body that we can all have faith in to act on behalf of humankind.”*

The DSCC’s Deep Sea Mining Moratorium Campaign Lead: Sofia Tsenikli commented: *“If deep-sea mining were to go ahead, it would dwarf all other industrial activities in the ocean. The DSCC is seriously concerned by these new reports. It is clear that the only way forward is a moratorium - an official and global pause to deep-sea mining operations.”*

## **ENDS**

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