



Webinar | Marine Scientific Research Information Series for Africa

Topic 1. Deep-sea Mineral Resources and Technologies

Kingston, Jamaica

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OPENING REMARKS

By Mr. Michael W. Lodge,

Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority

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It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the International Seabed Authority's Marine Scientific Research Information Series for Africa. This first webinar in the series will focus on Deep-Sea Mineral Resources and Technologies.

I would like to express my thanks to H.E. Mr. Harold Adlai Agyeman, Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, for chairing this webinar and for the ongoing support provided by his delegation as the coordinator of the African Group to the Authority. My sincere appreciation also goes to all the speakers and the panellists for their contribution to this event.

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the International Seabed Authority has the duty to promote and encourage marine scientific research in the Area. The Convention also requires that ISA strengthen the research capabilities of developing States and technologically-less-developed States and ensure their effective participation in deep-sea exploration and research programmes.

In 2020, the ISA Assembly adopted a dedicated Action Plan in support of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development to formalize ISA's contribution. This Action Plan reflects the vision of the Members of ISA as outlined in the Strategic Plan and High-level Action Plan for the period 2019-2023. The Action Plan identifies six strategic research priorities, including the need to facilitate

technology development for activities in the Area and to strengthen the deep-sea scientific capacity of ISA Members, particularly developing States.

Developing the capacity of African States with a view to conduct scientific research in the Area will be an essential pillar of Africa's blue economy. This is reflected in the specific strategy adopted by the African Union in 2019, which also identifies deep-sea mining as a key driver of change and highlights the need to expand relevant education and research activities. Such priority is also reiterated in the Agenda 2063's vision to develop Africa's blue economy through exploitation of deep-sea mineral resources, among other opportunities.

It is in this context that the ISA Marine Scientific Research Information Series for Africa was designed. Building on the ongoing activities of the Africa's Deep Seabed Resources (ADSR) project implemented by ISA in partnership with the African Union and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, this new initiative aims to further address the priority needs of ISA's African Member States.

These needs were identified during the workshop on "Capacity development, resources and needs assessment" convened by ISA in February 2020 and regularly re-assessed through the ADSR project. Accordingly, we do expect that the Information Series webinar will provide a platform for African stakeholders to discuss Africa's strategic approaches for enhancing collaboration to advance marine scientific research in the Area.

The first edition, which focuses on topics related to deep-sea mineral resources assessment and mining technologies, aims to present the complementarity between exploration and research activities in the Area as the foundation for enhancing the global knowledge base to ensure sustainable ocean development.

Effective cooperation and coordination among all ISA stakeholders, especially developing States, are a prerequisite to ensure sustainable development of activities in the Area for the benefit of humankind. We must act together to expand our efforts to improve our understanding of mineral resources in the Area and to find innovative and efficient technological solutions, which will support effective transition from exploration to exploitation of deep-sea mineral resources based on robust science and the best practices for environmental protection.

I look forward to successful outcomes that will help Africa realize its full economic potential through sustainable development of deep-sea mineral resources.

Thank you all for your participation and continued support to the work of ISA.

I wish you a fruitful discussion.
