

WELCOME REMARKS

Hyun Tae Kim, Director, Marine Development Division

It's very nice to meet you all. I am Hyun Tae Kim, the Director at the Marine Development Division of the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, Korea.

It's my honor and pleasure to have Mr Odunton, the esteemed Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority; Dr Jae Myung Yoo, the Vice President of KIOST and dedicated taxonomists from around the world.

As one of the contractors for polymetallic nodules and massive sulphides on the seafloor, the Korean Government gladly takes up the chance to host this workshop.

Many contracts for the exploration of polymetallic nodules in the Pacific are drawing near to their expiration in 2016.

It means that the world's underwater mining is on the verge of advancement from its exploration phase to the exploitation stage.

So since 2012, ISA has been striving to establish the international code for exploitation. Accordingly, the leading figure in the scene is being changed from each national government to non-governmental corporations like a Canada-based company Nautilus Minerals.

Contrary to the notable progress on the development side, the environmental aspect is facing rising concerns against the development-incurred impact.

Such concern will not be dissolved until we come up with viable solutions for the minimization of environmental impact and the conservation of biodiversity.

It is especially so in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone where plural contractors' mining fields are congested.

Joint efforts require an across-the-board coordination among contractors, international organizations and scientific communities.

To this effect, this workshop bears significance in terms that all concerned experts are pooling their findings and insights on macrofauna, a potentially major scapegoat that we have to rescue from the upcoming underwater development.

Since the early 1990s when the industrial use of deep-sea minerals was adopted as a goal, the Korean Government has invested in the resource exploration and the technical development.

Consequently, the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries obtained a contract to probe polymetallic nodules in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone in 2002 and another for seafloor sulphide minerals in the Indian Ocean in June this year.

As a newly elected member of the Council Group B, the Ministry is looking forward to the realization of the practical use of the long-awaited resources.

The practical use will benefit the world economy at stake as well as a seriously resource-deficient country of Korea.

I give you my word that the Korea Government will continue to support various programs both for resource development and environmental conservation.

Compliments to the ISA Secretariat, and KIOST staff for their services to prepare this workshop.

I hopefully believe that the unsparing and unreserved exchange of experiences and knowledge this week will be found dearly conducive to the underwater environmental management plan.

Thank You.