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Report of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission on the work of the Commission at its twenty-seventh session

Report of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission on the work of the Commission at the second part of its twenty-seventh session

Addendum

Review of the environmental impact statement submitted by Nauru Ocean Resources Inc.

1. The present report is submitted to inform the Council of the action taken by the Legal and Technical Commission following the adjournment of its meetings in July 2022 in relation to the review of the environmental impact statement submitted by Nauru Ocean Resources Inc. (NORI) regarding its plans to carry out testing of components of a polymetallic nodule collector system in the NORI-D contract area of the eastern Clarion-Clipperton Zone, in the Central Pacific Ocean.

2. The Council will recall that, as reported by the Chair of the Commission in July 2022 ([ISBA/27/C/16/Add.1](#), paras. 42–47), the Commission had reviewed the environmental impact statement and made further specific comments on areas in which it felt that the statement (and especially the environmental management and monitoring plan) needed to include more detail or in which certain elements needed further consideration by NORI. The areas included aspects of the survey design, the level of benthic sediment plume monitoring, the pelagic sampling of biological impacts of the plume discharge, temporal issues of survey timing and duration, and the extent of noise monitoring. NORI was notified of the outcome of the review on 15 July and given 30 days to respond, as prescribed in the recommendations for the guidance of contractors for the assessment of the possible environmental impacts arising from exploration for marine minerals in the Area ([ISBA/25/LTC/6/Rev.2](#)). The Commission also decided that a working group of the Commission would be tasked with continuing the review and reporting back to the Commission.



3. On 1 August 2022, NORI submitted the additional information requested by the Commission. This was made available to all members of the Commission through the secure website of the Commission.
4. The working group of the Commission reviewed the information provided and met virtually on 8 August 2022. During that meeting, it was decided that greater efficiency in obtaining clarifications and responses could be gained by meeting with NORI. The working group met with NORI on 11 August 2022.
5. Following an in-depth review of the additional information provided by NORI, the working group was satisfied with the information provided and decided to recommend to the Commission that it: (a) take note of the further information provided by NORI on 1 August 2022; (b) acknowledge the review carried out by the working group; and (c) recommend to the Secretary-General that the environmental impact statement, with all additional information subsequently provided by NORI, be incorporated into the programme of activities under the contract.
6. At the request of the Chair of the Commission, the recommendations of the working group were placed under silence procedure from 30 August to 2 September 2022 for adoption by the Commission. In the absence of any objection, the recommendations were adopted by the Commission on 2 September 2022.
7. On 5 September 2022, the Secretary-General notified NORI of the recommendations adopted by the Commission and requested NORI to report on the result of the tests in the context of its next annual report.
