

**TEMPLATE FOR COMMENTS**

<b><i>Document reviewed</i></b>	
<b>Title of the draft being reviewed:</b>	<b>Draft Standard and Guidelines for environmental impact assessment process</b>
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<b><i>General Comments</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We would like to express our deep gratitude for such tremendous efforts made by the Legal Technical Commission members and the ISA Secretariat for the development of standards and guidelines required to be established in parallel with development of exploitation regulations.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to regulation 45 Development of environmental standards of the draft exploitation regulations, it states that “Environmental Standards shall be developed in accordance with regulation 94 and shall include the following subject matters” while according to regulation 94 of the same draft regulations, it states that the “Commission shall” “make recommendations to the Council on the adoption and revision of Standards relating to Exploitation activities in the Area, including standards relating to: (a) Operational safety; (b) The conservation of the Resources; and (c) The protection of the Marine Environment.” Do the standards mentioned in these regulations 45 and 95 refer to the standard included in this draft standard for environmental impact assessment process?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is understandable that establishment of quantitative parameters is difficult while challenges for collecting and lifting technologies of polymetallic nodules and uncertainties towards environmental measures still exist. However, for implementation of an environmental impact assessment, it is desirable that thresholds of water depth for discharging return-water (the water after extracting polymetallic nodules) will be established, taking into account geographical characteristics and marine environment of a planned mining area and its surroundings, by the ISA as technical development for polymetallic nodules and understanding of marine environment are further advanced.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are wordings such as “harmful environmental effects,” “harmful effects” in the draft guidelines. Please define what is considered as “harmful effects.”</li> </ul>	

<b>Specific Comments</b>		
<b>Page</b>	<b>Line</b>	<b>Comment</b>
		Titles shown on the list of standards and guidelines on the ISA website and on the document are different. It would be helpful to have the same title for future reference.
7	271	What does it mean by "EIA Standard" stated in the " EIS process follows the steps specified in the EIA Standard, which includes the key components in Figure 1."?
7	272	It states that the "monitoring and EIA Audit components are covered as part the Guidelines on Environmental Management and Monitoring Plans (EMMP), and this Guideline does not discuss those components in any detail." It would be helpful where in the EMMP guidelines the monitoring and EIA Audit components are covered.
14	506	As for impact level for risk assessment, the table shows that consequence level of "Negligible" for proportion of habitat affected is "Affecting <<1% of area of original habitat". What is the definition of original habitat? As for "Minor," it states "affects <1-5% of total habitat area," and for "Moderate," it states "5-20% of habitat area is affected." If the range of habitat area to be considered is the same, it would be helpful if the same wording is used.
16	511, 513	It is understood that examination of confidence levels involves experts. Definition of experts would be helpful to implement such examination.
19	615, 617	Do "key stakeholders" mean the ones identified during scoping phase mentioned in line 594?
19	632	Who is considered as "the regulator"?
20	668	What does it mean by "secondary approvals required"? Does the Scoping Report require approval? If so, who is in charge of approving the scoping report?
25	853-857	What do "specified and previously agreed standards" mentioned in "For some impacts, e.g., noise, air and water pollution, impact significance may be assessed directly against numerical criteria and standards where these exist. Where it is predicted that such thresholds may be exceeded, mitigation plans must be incorporated into the project design to reduce the magnitude of the impact (and the significance of its effect) to within specified and previously agreed standards" mean? It is envisaged that standards for marine environment will be established as deep seabed mining sector matures. To allow applicants or contractors to prepare their application documents with most updated information, it is desirable that a framework to fairly share such newly established standards.

29	983-989	<p>“Threshold criteria (for changes in the receiving environment) will need to be developed as scientific knowledge grows with further exploration and studies proposed to support the EIA or EMMP for the application of an exploitation contract.</p> <p>79. Until such time as sufficient data on the Area exists to allow the Authority to establish thresholds for a range of key components that are assessed in the EIA process, an applicant or Contactor should use project-specific and area-specific impact thresholds based on data and analyses commensurate in quality with the importance of the impact.”</p> <p>According to the above explanation, who will determine such Who will determine such project-specific and area-specific impact thresholds are adequate?</p>
35	1207-1208	Regarding “Consultations could also be held at other stages where appropriate in the EIA process (e.g., Impact Assessment tasks),” what are Impact Assessment tasks? Its definition would be helpful as it is not mentioned in other parts of the document.
40	Appendix I, 1353	In the table, it shows that the ecosystems to be impacted by discharges of tailings; plume and burial potential caused by sediment discharges as the activity of “Extraction of Materials/Transport of Materials/Return-Water Discharge” is seafloor biota of any seafloor depth. As for other water regime, such as epipelagic zone (0-200m), mesopelagic zone (200-1000m) and bathypelagic to abyssopelagic (1000-6500m), the ecosystem to be impacted by accidental discharges of extracted material or tailings. From this table, it is understood that discharge of tailings, excluding accidental ones, is done only at seafloor. The depth to discharge tailings is not mentioned in the document and consistency in this matter would be necessary.
39, 40	Appendix 1, 1351-1353	What is the definition of tailings? As it is assumed to be different from the tailing for land mining, clear definition would be helpful. Moreover, it is understood that Mining Discharge Guideline will be prepared separately, it would be necessary to maintain consistency with such Guideline.
<p><i>Additional rows can be added to this table by selecting “Table” followed by “insert” and “rows below”</i></p>		

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