

Greenpeace International Intervention at the 27th Session of the International Seabed Authority

Draft regulations on exploitation of mineral resources in the Area.
Review of progress on the roadmap.

Kingston, 4 Nov 2022

Thank you Mr. President,

I make this intervention on behalf of Greenpeace International, The Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG) and the Pacific Blue Line (PBL) Collective representing national, regional and southern based Civil Society Organizations in the Pacific.

While there is much that is not agreed upon, it seems that most here can find common ground that the pressure of the two-year loophole is not where we collectively want to be. And the question must be asked, how did we allow ourselves to get here in the first place?

The International Seabed Authority was conceptualized in a very different moment in time than the one we find ourselves in now. Our understanding of the deep sea and its role in the biosphere was just beginning, and the biggest existential threat in our minds was that of nuclear warfare on a politically polarized planet. The general public was largely not yet aware of the looming crises we would face with climate change and biodiversity loss, both of which were fueled by the very human activities that we once envisioned would advance peace and improve the state of human civilization, not unravel the very fabric of life we depend upon.

Most of the world has dramatically changed since that point. To address the truly existential threats to our survival we have adopted treaties on climate and biological diversity, and agreed upon common Sustainable Development Goals. And with a new appreciation of the value of the global ocean to our own survival, we are now negotiating a new treaty on marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. This new BBNJ agreement poses unique questions of overlap, jurisdiction and authority with this body, and has put new energy into dialogue around the ocean, our stewardship of the ocean, intergenerational equity, the rights of nature and the values we place on these crucial issues.

Meanwhile, this body feels stuck and struggling due to policies that were created for a world that no longer exists. Greenpeace acknowledges that there is a need to address the future of mineral resources, and we embrace dialogue on that with any who would care to have it. However we also point out that many are seeking to solve global problems created by extractivism, unchecked growth and production, with more extraction, unchecked growth and production. We would not address personal health concerns by doubling down on unhealthy

habits that caused them in the first place. That would be insanity - repeating mistakes time and time again.

With a message of urgency from the Pacific on how to avoid these mistakes, I ask for the consideration of delegates as I pass the remainder of this intervention to my colleague **Joey Tau**, part of the Greenpeace delegation representing the Pacific Network on Globalization.

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As State parties progress the draft exploitation regulations, Pacific civil society groups and regional and international partners will continue to caution the ISA of its mandate to protect and preserve the marine environment.

Recent announcements and policy positions ranging from a pause, stop, recess, moratorium, and ban on DSM by respective state parties to the ISA, must be considered.

The ISA at this stage, should not consider to approve test mining and applications for plan of works, rather the priority should instead be to enhance the other mandates of ISA's which is to preserve, protect and ensure the principles of intergenerational equity and do no harm to the common heritage of mankind.

Consideration of a plan of work under circumstances where the international community has not agreed rules and regulation for exploitation is a violation of the ISA's duty of due diligence.

The calls for a halt come at a critical time as the health of our ocean is in decline due to human activities and the need to protect and preserve is necessary to ensure the survival of our planet particularly in the context of a climate emergency.

As Pacific peoples, we have a deep understanding of what it means to be at the forefront of the climate emergency, one not of our making. As such, our multilateral engagements and positions including international legal norms are informed and shaped by our shared values as a people which prioritizes the health and well-being of our environment, people, and to safeguard our culture in perpetuity in the face of an existential crisis.

The ISA in its responsibility and duty of due diligence under UNCLOS must protect the common heritage of mankind, and consider the severity of the present climate emergency, a reality that can only be made worse by the risks posed by deep sea mining.

We recognize the potential cumulative impacts that deep sea mining will pose on the health of the ocean, and the transboundary harm respecting no human made boundaries. We must move beyond the often- narrow interpretation of stewardship of minerals for economic driven imperatives, and prioritize the health and wellbeing of our ocean not just for today, but for future generations.

We stand at a precipitous moment in history which demands great political leadership to govern our oceans. It is our hope that the global community will share in our vision of common stewardship and responsibilities for our oceans and support the growing call for a halt, a pause, moratorium and even for an outright ban on deep-sea mining from people, faith-based leaders, civil society members, scientists and growing number of political leaders including from our very own blue continent.

we thank you Mr President