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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

Consideration of requests for observer status in accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly

Request for observer status in accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly by Cluster maritime français

Note by the secretariat

1. On 27 April 2022, Cluster maritime français submitted a letter to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, requesting observer status in the Assembly of the Authority, pursuant to rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly. The applicant also submitted an application form, which was prepared in the format prescribed in enclosure 1 to the guidelines for observer status of non-governmental organizations with the International Seabed Authority adopted by the Assembly at its twenty-fifth session ([ISBA/25/A/16](#), annex). The text of the letter and the application form provided by the applicant are contained in annexes I and II, respectively, to the present note.
2. In accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, non-governmental organizations with which the Secretary-General has entered into arrangements in accordance with article 169, paragraph 1, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and other non-governmental organizations invited by the Assembly that have demonstrated their interest in matters under consideration by the Assembly may participate as observers in the Assembly.
3. Paragraphs 5 and 6 of the same rule also provide that observers referred to in paragraph 1 (e) of the rule may sit at public meetings of the Assembly and, upon the invitation of the President and subject to approval by the Assembly, may make oral statements on questions within the scope of their activities, and that written statements submitted by observers referred to in paragraph 1 (e) of the rule within the scope of their activities that are relevant to the work of the Assembly should be made available by the secretariat in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements are submitted.

* [ISBA/27/A/L.1](#)



Annex I

[Original: French]

Letter dated 13 April 2022 from the President and the Founding President of the Cluster maritime français addressed to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority

Since your visit to our headquarters in Paris in December 2020, which we remember fondly, the French national strategy for the exploration and possible exploitation of marine mineral resources has evolved significantly. The Cluster maritime français, which we represent, has made a particular contribution to this strategy, as you know, in continuous collaboration with the ministries concerned and the General Secretariat for the Sea in our country.

In accordance with article 169 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority and the guidelines for observer status of non-governmental organizations with the International Seabed Authority, we hereby request observer status with the Authority as a non-governmental organization at its twenty-seventh session.

The Cluster maritime français is an organization created by and for maritime professionals, which works to promote sustainable maritime activities. It brings together all the stakeholders in the various sectors that make up the maritime industry, while acting as a key focal point for French institutions.

We look forward to becoming an observer with the Authority and to being able to contribute our specialized expertise to the work of the Authority, not only in terms of environmental preservation (for example, the impact of noise at sea and a comparison of environmental impacts between land-based and underwater mines), scientific research, technological development and innovation, but also in terms of the current regulations, which should be designed to maximize the conditions for the sustainable development of any new activity in the deep sea.

We remain at your disposal for any questions or additional information, and hope that a favourable response will be given to our request.

(Signed) **Frédéric Moncany de Saint Aignan**
President of the Cluster maritime français

(Signed) **Francis Vallat**
Founding President of the Cluster maritime français

Annex II

[Original: French]

Application for observer status**A. Information about the organization****1. Name of organization**

Cluster maritime français

2. Address of headquarters

47 rue de Monceau, 75008 Paris, France

3. Addresses of all branches and/or regional headquarters

None

4. Telephone number

+33 (0)1 42 25 00 48

5. Fax number

None

6. Email Address:contact@cluster-maritime.fr**7. Name, title and contact details of focal point***(a) Primary point of contact*

Frédéric Moncany de Saint Aignan (President of the Cluster maritime français)

f.moncany@cluster-maritime.fr

Mobile: +33 6 11 04 83 82

(b) Secondary point of contact

Francis Vallat (Founding President of the Cluster maritime français and Chair of the deep-sea working group)

fv.marine@orange.fr

Mobile: +33 6 07 23 91 64

And/or

Alexandre Luczkiewicz (Head of Overseas Relations and Actions, Leader of the deep-sea working group)

a.luczkiewicz@cluster-maritime.fr

Mobile: +33 6 72 86 14 33

8. Background information on the organization

The Cluster maritime français is an association governed by the Act of 1 July 1901 and the decree of 16 August 1901, and was founded in 2005 by and for maritime professionals. The Cluster maritime français brings together all the stakeholders in the maritime ecosystem, from industry to all types of maritime services and activities. Today, it is made up of more than 430 entities: companies of all sizes, competitive

clusters, federations and associations, laboratories, public and private research institutes and centres, universities, schools and training organizations, local authorities and economic stakeholders, as well as the French Navy.

The Cluster maritime français supports its members in the sustainable and responsible development of their activities and projects in mainland France, overseas and internationally, through various actions, such as institutional communication, the systematic search for operational synergies and actions to strengthen the weight and influence of maritime France. For more information, see www.cluster-maritime.fr.

9. Is the organization a member of, affiliated to or otherwise associated with another organization that has been granted observer status with the Authority?

None.

10. Is the organization affiliated to consultants of the Authority, contractors with the Authority, entities in connection with the law of the sea, the offshore and deep-sea mining industry, research institutes or the mineral marketing and processing industry?

The Cluster maritime français includes among its members the Institut français de recherche pour l'exploitation de la mer, a contractor to the International Seabed Authority, as well as more than 100 companies interested in deep-sea exploration and mining, including:

- Abyssa (<https://www.abysa.com>)
- Alcatel Submarine Networks (<https://web.asn.com>)
- Bourbon Group (<https://www.bourbonoffshore.com>)
- Atomic Energy Commission (<https://www.cea.fr>)
- Cervval (<https://www.cervval.com>)
- Dassault Systèmes (<https://www.3ds.com>)
- ECA Group (<https://www.ecagroup.com>)
- Forssea Robotics (<https://forssea-robotics.fr>)
- iXblue (<https://www.ixblue.com>)
- Louis Dreyfus Armateurs (<https://www.lda.fr>)
- Loctudy World Nodule Company
- Mercator Ocean International (<https://www.mercator-ocean.eu>)
- Mappem Geophysics (<https://www.mappem-geophysics.com>)
- Naval Group (<https://www.naval-group.com>)
- Pôle Mer Bretagne Atlantique (<https://www.pole-mer-bretagne-atlantique.com>)
- Pôle Mer Méditerranée (<https://www.polemermediterranee.com>)
- Electricity Transmission Network (RTE) (<https://www.rte-france.com>)
- RTsys (<https://rtsys.eu>)
- DEME (<https://www.deme-group.com>)
- Ship as a Service (<https://www.shipasaservice.fr>)
- Technip FMC (<https://www.technipfmc.com>)

11. Relationships with intergovernmental organizations

The Cluster maritime français participates in the work of the Maritime Safety Committee within the French delegation to the International Maritime Organization.

12. List of publications and/or other relevant documentation

Selective list of publications in English and French, in French and European journals, available from the secretariat of the Authority:

“Bruit sous-marin: enjeux économiques et environnementaux en milieu marin – État de l’art sur le bruit anthropique en milieu marin, sur les mesures d’atténuation d’impact et sur les contraintes liées à leur mise en place” (underwater noise: economic and environmental issues in the marine environment – State of the art on anthropogenic noise in the marine environment, on impact mitigation measures and on constraints related to their implementation), Cluster maritime français, 2013.

“Towards a French deep sea mining industry”, Cluster maritime français, 2015.

“Les fonds marins, nouvel Eldorado” (the seabed, a new Eldorado), *Ecole Polytechnique* magazine “La jaune et la rouge”, 2016.

“Ressources minérales marines: de nécessaires innovations et ruptures technologiques” (marine mineral resources: necessary innovations and technological breakthroughs), *Études Marines* magazine, 2017.

“Quels sont aujourd’hui les atouts de la filière française de prospection et d’exploitation minières des grands fonds marins?” (what are the strengths of the French deep-sea exploration and mining industry today?) *Annale des Mines – Responsabilité et environnement* magazine, 2017.

“Grands fonds marins: une vraie nouvelle frontière” (deep seabed: a real new frontier), *Revue de Droit Maritime*, 2018.

“Joint French-German Deep-Sea Mining Activities: Expertise and Visions” (Cluster maritime français and the DeepSea Mining Alliance), 2018.

“Grands fonds marins, les industriels franco-allemands se mobilisent” (deep seabed, Franco-German industrialists mobilize), *Marine et Océans* magazine, 2018.

“La course aux abysses” (the race to the abyss), *La Baille* magazine, 2020

“Les ressources minérales marines: un enjeu géopolitique mondial pour le XXIe siècle” (marine mineral resources: a global geopolitical issue for the 21st century?), *Diplomatie – Les Grands Dossiers* magazine, 2020.

“Guide de bonnes pratiques relatives aux drones maritimes” (guide to good practice for maritime drones), Cluster maritime français, 2020.

“Ces ressources sous-marines qui refondent la géopolitique mondiale” (The undersea resources remaking the geopolitical world), *Marine et Océans* magazine, 2021.

B. Interest in matters under consideration by the Assembly

13. Briefly outline how your organization intends to demonstrate its interest in matters under consideration by the Assembly, including by answering questions 14 to 17 and by providing any other relevant information related to the application for observer status.

In 2011, the Cluster maritime français created a “deep-sea” synergy group that works on issues related to the exploration and exploitation of deep-sea marine mineral

resources in French territorial waters and in the Area. This working group regularly brings together representatives of shipowners, insurers, classification societies, scientific and research organizations, as well as industrial companies and/or companies active in technological development and innovation. It also receives, on an ongoing basis – or occasionally on specific subjects – experts, foreign delegations, non-governmental organizations and representatives of ministries and of the French administration. For example, the working group has received the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority on two occasions.

The group's work is helping to structure the sector and to prepare the conditions for technology development, in particular through the development of a technology matrix. This is updated regularly and defines in particular the characteristics of the phases of work to be carried out in order to go from exploration to potential exploitation, and it allows for exchanges on French and European scientific and industrial programmes. The Cluster maritime français also has a working group on noise impact at sea and another on maritime drones.

14. Briefly outline whether and how the purposes or activities of the organization relate to the work of the Authority.

In summary, the Cluster maritime français is closely following the work carried out under the two exploration contracts granted by the International Seabed Authority to France in the Area. It is also for this purpose that, in 2011, the Cluster maritime français created its deep-sea working group, which brings together all stakeholders (scientists, institutions and companies) concerned by the subjects of deep seabed exploration and exploitation. The objective is to create synergies between these stakeholders and to determine, in liaison with the administrations, a strategy consistent with the work of the Authority.

The Cluster maritime français has already made a significant contribution to the French strategy for deep-sea exploration and exploitation developed by the Government and supported the participation of its members in the European Commission's calls for the "raw materials" and "horizon" projects. Through the projects of its members, it will also participate in the France 2030 innovation programme, whose tenth objective concerns deep-sea exploration.

15. Briefly outline whether and how your organization intends to contribute to the work of the Authority, for example by providing specialized information, advice or expertise, or by identifying or helping to procure the services of experts or consultants.

For exploitation and exploration purposes, the Cluster maritime français can contribute the thoughts and expertise of its various working groups on the deep sea, particularly through the panel of representatives of its members on scientific, technical, industrial and regulatory aspects. The Cluster maritime français produces reports (for example, its report comparing the impacts of offshore and underwater mines), position papers, watchdog reports, and scientific and industrial progress matrices.

The Cluster maritime français is also in a position to identify experts from among its members and to make them available to the International Seabed Authority so that they may, depending on their specialization, contribute to the Authority's working groups and its work.

- 16. Briefly outline whether and how your organization has the expertise and the capacity to contribute, within its field of competence, to the work of the Authority, in particular in connection with the law of the sea, the protection of the marine environment, the offshore and deep-sea mining industry, technology, minerals processing and marketing, activities in the Area and marine scientific research in the Area.**

The membership of the Cluster maritime français includes a comprehensive ecosystem of companies, research institutes and institutions, covering all aspects of deep-sea exploration and possible exploitation. Its deep-sea working group regularly brings together marine environment consulting firms, start-ups, shipowners, underwater equipment manufacturers, equipment suppliers, companies specializing in maritime research and development/innovation, universities and colleges, law firms specializing in maritime law and law of the sea, as well as insurers and marine insurance brokers, each of whom, through the Cluster maritime français, can contribute to the work of the International Seabed Authority.

As such, the Cluster maritime français has prepared, among other things, a “technology road map” matrix in 10 phases, from exploration to exploitation.

In addition, the Cluster maritime français maintains relations at a European level with the DeepSea Mining Alliance (Germany), with which it signed a memorandum of understanding in 2015 allowing a strengthening of the technological and scientific cooperation between the two countries. At least twice a year, representatives of the Cluster maritime français and the DeepSea Mining Alliance meet in plenary sessions in Paris and Berlin to review their respective progress and identify possible avenues for cooperation. It has also held exchanges in the past with Japanese public and private officials.

- 17. Briefly outline whether and how your organization intends to contribute to the capacity-building programmes and initiatives of the Authority (e.g., Secretary-General’s award, voluntary commitments of the Authority).**

The Cluster maritime français wishes to contribute to the International Seabed Authority’s initiatives, particularly in the field of capacity-building, by sharing the work that it has already carried out on various subjects, such as the impact of noise at sea or the establishment of regulations for the use of maritime drones. This work concerns both strategic and technological aspects, through the development and joint construction of the sector with the relevant stakeholders.

It is also envisaged, in line with the Secretary-General’s Award, to encourage research related to the advancement of scientific knowledge on the deep sea environment, or to the development of ecologically sustainable regulatory frameworks in the scientific and research organizations of members of the Cluster maritime français, particularly in the French overseas territories.