



## Assembly

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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 submitted by the Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea for observer status in accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly**

#### **Note by the secretariat**

1. On 22 April 2019, Chair of the Board of the Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea submitted a letter to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, requesting observer status in the Assembly of the Authority. The text of the letter received from the applicant is attached as an annex 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 further provide that observers referred to in paragraph 1 (e) of that 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 that 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.

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\* ISBA/25/A/L.1/Rev.1.



**Annex****Letter dated 22 April 2019 from the Chair of the Board of the Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea addressed to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority**

In accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, the Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea respectfully requests to be granted observer status in the Authority and that this application be considered at the meeting of the Authority in July 2019.

Founded in 1952 by the then-Member of Parliament, and later Prime Minister, James Callaghan, the Committee is a non-governmental organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of the marine environment through the application of independent and sound science; the rule of law; advisory and public awareness activities; and the facilitation of international multidisciplinary, trans-sectoral, cooperative discussions, with a view to enabling practical agreements on the sustainable use of marine resources and ocean space. Its website is [www.acops.org.uk](http://www.acops.org.uk). The internal structure of the Committee consists of trustees, a Chair of the Board of trustees, an honorary President, an administrator and advisers.

The Committee has consultative observer status with numerous intergovernmental bodies responsible for marine environmental protection, including the Arctic Council, the International Maritime Organization, the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention), 1972, and the 1996 Protocol thereto and the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic. The Committee is a charity registered in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (No. 290776).

The Committee initially concentrated on encouraging international agreements to prevent, reduce and control marine oil pollution, but soon thereafter also included in its portfolio other actual and potential sources of marine and coastal environmental degradation resulting from land- and vessel-based activities, as well as developing environmentally and economically sound approaches to marine resource development and use. The Committee works closely with a small team of internationally recognized experts in the fields that it covers.

With regard to deep-sea mining, the Committee has long been engaged in that area. Recent activities include: convening a House of Lords dialogue on deep-sea mining; serving as an external adviser to the Managing Impacts of Deep-sea Resource Exploitation (MIDAS) project of the European Union; participating, by invitation, in the stakeholder consultations on deep-sea mining organized by the Government of Belgium; contributing to the Authority's stakeholder consultations; and assisting the Authority in the discussions on deep-sea mining conducted under the auspices of the meetings of the governing bodies of the London Convention and the Protocol thereto.

As commercial deep-sea mining approaches, the Committee considers that it could contribute further to assisting the Authority in achieving its challenging dual mandate – to develop the resources of the Area and ensure effective protection of the marine environment – by joining the meetings of the Authority that non-governmental organizations may attend as observers. Formal accreditation as an observer would enable the Committee to share its experience, accrued through 67 years of engagement in the protection and preservation of the marine environment, by consulting and cooperating directly with the Authority, as the Authority deems appropriate.

Should its request for observer status be received favourably, the Committee would nominate its senior adviser for deep-sea mining, Philomène Verlaan, who is also a trustee of the Committee, as its representative to the meeting of the Authority to be held in July 2019.

The Committee stands ready to provide the Authority with any further information that it may need. The Committee looks forward to the Authority's response.

(Signed) Youna **Lyons**  
Chair of the Board

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