

# APPLICATION FOR OBSERVER STATUS OF THE 29<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY

## A. Information about the organization

1. **Name of organization:** National Marine Biodiversity Institute of Korea (hereinafter 'MABIK')
2. **Address of headquarters:** 75, Jangsan-ro 101beon-gil, Janghang-eup, Seocheon-gun, Chungcheongnam-do, 33662, Republic of Korea
3. **Addresses of all branches and/or regional headquarters:** N/A
4. **Telephone number:** +82 41 950 0600
5. **Fax number:** N/A
6. **Email address:** N/A
7. **Name, title and contact details of focal point**
  - Dr. Youngik Yang, Manager of International Cooperation Team
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## 8. Background information on the organization

MABIK is a legal entity established by the government of Republic of Korea for the purpose of research, education and exhibition in the field of marine bio-resources. MABIK recognizes marine bio-resources as national assets and conducts marine biodiversity-related research using government funds to support priority issues such as the conservation of marine biodiversity, restoration and multiplication of endangered species through genetic technologies, search and rescue of marine animals and management of invasive species. They also maintain a large-scale exhibition of marine flora and fauna samples as an educational facility for the general public.

MABIK's expertise and programs include:

- (a) conservation plan for managed marine organism;
- (b) monitoring of biodiversity dynamics on diverse coastal habitats; and
- (c) establishment of infrastructure for sustainable use of marine resources.

**9. Is the organization a member of, affiliated to or otherwise associated with another organization that has been granted observer status with the Authority?**  
MABIK is affiliated to the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF). MOF is the Ministry in charge of conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ROK.

**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?** N/A

**11. Relationships with intergovernmental organizations**

11-1. The ISA Secretariat: MABIK has been collaborating with the Authority since 2019 about the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.

11-2. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD): MOF entered into a MoU with the SCBD in 2016 for cooperation on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity. MABIK is the local organization that implements and supports the activities especially related to the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) including SOI Global Dialogue and Capacity-Building Programs.

**12. List of publications and/or other relevant documentation**

(publications) MABIK published 71 publications related to marine biodiversity and marine organisms including; *Marine Flowering Plants in Korea*, *National List of Marine Species*, etc.

(relevant documentation) MABIK has 402 research theses, 93 research result reports, and 228 patent documents related to marine biodiversity and marine organisms.

**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.**

As a co-host, MABIK has been dedicated to the Authority through holding the Deep-Sea Taxonomy Workshops every year since 2020, the workshop became a platform for understanding of deep-sea marine biodiversity.

Getting the observer status for the 29<sup>th</sup> Assembly will be an opportunity for our experts to devote to protection of marine environment, scientific research on marine in international deep-sea area, capacity-building program, and initiatives align with the goals of the Authority.

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

MABIK is the only government office in ROK that specializes in marine biodiversity and its mission is developing the marine economy and promoting a better environment for the public by creating value using marine bioresources. The purposes and activities of the MABIK are closely related to the work of the Authority, particularly in biodiversity conservation and management. The MABIK likely engages in activities such as biodiversity research, conservation planning, species monitoring, and public education. These efforts align with the goals of the Authority, which aims to promote sustainable development and conservation of marine resources, including biodiversity.

**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.**

MABIK has been collaborating with the Authority since 2019 in relation to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Area and organized four joint workshops on Deepsea Taxonomic Standardization, in September 2020 focusing on strategic approaches for collaboration, in October 2021 on enhancing image-based biodiversity assessments, in November 2022 on enhancing genetic approaches to advance deep-sea taxonomy, and in October 2023 on enhancing biological data sharing to advance deep-sea taxonomy. In addition, MABIK collaborated with the Authority on the organization of the Inception workshop of the Sustainable Seabed Knowledge Initiative (SSKI) in November 2022.

**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.**

Since MABIK's establishment in 2015, it has been undertaking a wide range of tasks such as securing and managing marine bioresources, supporting the development of the marine bioindustry, and delivering the value of marine life to the public, as the only institution that is specialized in marine bioresource research, exhibition, and education in ROK.

MABIK's expertise in biodiversity conservation and marine research can make significant contributions to the Authority's effort to promote sustainable seabed management and protect the ecological integrity of the deep sea. The institute has around 30 experts in the field of taxonomy and ecology.

**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).**

MABIK has been supporting the Authority financially through the signing of funding agreements between MABIK and the ISA Secretariat. This agreement can contribute to the Authority's Sustainable Seabed Knowledge Initiative (SSKI) including; i) organization of the ISA Workshop on Deep-sea Taxonomic Standardization, and ii) facilitation of the ISA Secretariat's participation in, development and/or organization of activities and events related to deep-sea biodiversity research.

