

Für Mensch & Umwelt

Umwelt 
Bundesamt

Workshop on Test Mining – 16/17 Dec 2024 – Bremen, Germany

Test mining for exploitation activities -

A specific proposal – options and food for thought

Dr. Harald Ginzky
German Environment Agency

Disclaimer

Workshop

- No mandate
- No negotiations
- No commitments

Specific proposal

- Outlining the considerations during the workshop
- Outlining a potential integration of the various perspectives and concerns into a conceptual approach for test mining
- Outlining the pros and cons

Starting point

- DR 48 ter and DR 48 ter alt

Workshop – Outcomes

- **Need for high level of certainty of information before commercial production commences**
 - No legal definition of „commercial production“ in UNCLOS
 - Related to start the „productive capacity“ (according to specific PoW)
 - Definition in Draft regs
 - ... be deemed to have begun where a Contractor engages in Sustained Large-scale Recovery operations which yield a quantity of materials sufficient to indicate clearly that the principal purpose is large-scale production rather than production intended for information-gathering, analysis or the testing of equipment or plant.
- **No „real“ mining during and by test mining**
- **Three main concerns**
 - Economically feasible
 - Protection of the marine environment
 - Due to test mining
 - After exploitation starts
 - Interest of „sponsoring state“: avoidance of risk of liability
- **Solide information based on field data and modelling for the EIA and the application for a PoW**
 - Strong support
- **Testing of all components and of all potential cumulative effects (integrated system test)**

Workshop – Outcomes

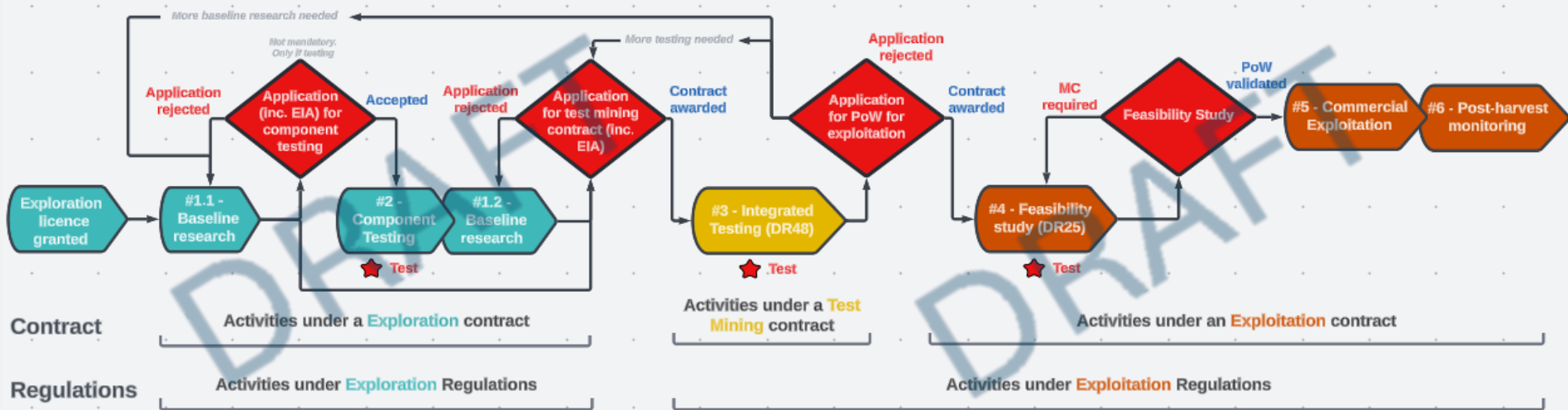
- **Technical readiness is advancing gradually**
 - Exemptions from test mining obligations potentially in future depending the development of the technologies
- **Field data in combination with modelling**
 - Interface needs to be understood better
 - Models are to be evaluated and improved
- **Full scale testing required after the approval of a plan of work before commercial production commences**
 - Two step approach
 - The before and after option still on the table
- **Regulatory approach**
 - Three concerns to be considered
 - Economic Interest, protection of environment, interest and responsibility of Sponsoring states
 - Level of prescription
 - Flexibility
 - Ensuring of compliance
 - Substantial requirements and/or procedural safeguards

Workshop – Outcomes

- **Objectives of test mining as leading „principles“**
- To have the appropriate level of certainty of information
to assess
- + The impacts and Effects on the Marine Environment,
- + the performance, efficiency and economic viability of the exploitation as well as
- + the efficacy of safety systems and monitoring systems.

Workshop – Outcomes

- **Standard for test mining**
 - Scale: duration, space, technical requirements
 - Monitoring requirements
 - Evaluation of models
- **Regulatory approach**
 - Project specific requirements
 - Evidence by contractors
 - Contents and methodology to be determined by Standard
- **Permission Procedure and Contract for test mining projects**
 - EiA required
 - „Requirement“ for exploitation PoW applicable ?



Questions

- What should be the objectives of Test Mining (TM)?
- What should be in the definition of TM?
- TM encompasses testing of components, does it also cover testing the integrated system? Better term cumulative effects ? And should the integrated system be down-scaled?
- When can TM occur? When shall TM occur? (i.e. could there be an element of choice for the Applicant/Contractant?)
- How should an exemption regime work?
- Which body within ISA should decide on the permit and conditions for a specific project?
- What should be the outcome of the TM (documents)?
- How should benefit sharing be addressed?