

Draft decision of the Assembly relating to ensuring adequate scientific understanding to support informed decision-making

Sponsor: Republic of Vanuatu

The Assembly of the International Seabed Authority,

1. **Affirms** the importance of ensuring that decisions relating to the commencement of exploitation activities in the Area are supported by a sufficient, robust, independent, transparent and accessible scientific evidence base, including adequate environmental baselines and scientifically robust environmental thresholds, as appropriate, to enable comprehensive assessment of potential impacts on the marine environment and informed decision-making consistent with the Convention, the ecosystem approach and the precautionary principle or approach;
2. **Requests** the Secretary-General, building upon the Action Plan for Marine Scientific Research and other relevant work of the Authority, and without prejudice to the respective functions of the Assembly, the Council and the Legal and Technical Commission, to prepare for consideration by the Assembly at its thirty-second session a report identifying priority scientific knowledge gaps relevant to informed decision-making concerning exploitation activities in the Area and setting out options for a transparent process through which the adequacy of the scientific evidence base may be considered, in consultation with the Legal and Technical Commission, members of the Authority, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and other relevant stakeholders and in cooperation with relevant international and regional organisations and, independent scientific institutions.