



WWF International Statement under Item 9: Annual report of the Secretary-General

Thank you, Mr. President for giving me the floor. Distinguished Delegates,

WWF thanks the Secretariat for its work and the Government and people of Jamaica for their hospitality. This Assembly meets at a pivotal time. This week, Mozambique and Mauritius joined the increasing number of governments calling for a moratorium or precautionary pause, bringing the total to 45.

Since the last Assembly, the BBNJ Agreement has entered into force. Assembly decisions should align with its objective of conserving and sustainably using marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Decisions made here at Assembly must reflect this objective.

WWF notes that major knowledge gaps remain regarding deep-sea ecosystems and the impacts of deep-sea mining. This was underscored by the LTC's discussion on environmental thresholds, referenced in paragraph 114 and 115 of the Annual Report, where it acknowledged insufficient scientific knowledge to establish such thresholds. At the same time, the best available science indicates that deep-sea mining could cause irreversible harm.

The rationale for deep-sea mining has increasingly shifted from the green transition to national security and strategic independence. However, a new WWF-commissioned report by the GIGA Institute finds that deep-sea mining is unlikely to deliver the mineral security its proponents promise. Instead, it highlights that ecological stability underpins long-term security and resilience, and warns that environmental damage could threaten fisheries, food security, coastal economies and climate resilience. It also finds that rushing the regulatory process, including the Mining Code without sufficient science or social legitimacy, could erode trust in the multilateral system. By contrast, circular economy approaches can strengthen resource security while reducing dependence on new extraction.

WWF looks forward to presenting the findings of this report more closely in the official side event scheduled for Friday at 2 pm.

Delegates, across the board, the risks of irreversible ecological harm, serious financial loss and governance fragmentation mean deep seabed mining is a nonstarter. From WWF's perspective, the implementation of a precautionary approach is establishing a moratorium or precautionary pause. This is necessary to ensure that decisions concerning the deep seabed are guided by science, equity, and the long-term interests of humankind as a whole.

Thank you Mr. President.



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