



## Council

Advance Unedited Version  
18 March 2026

English only

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### Thirty-first session

Council session, part I

Kingston, 9–20 March 2026

Agenda item 10

**Consideration, with a view to approval, of applications  
for extension of a contract for exploration, if any**

### **Decision of the Council of the International Seabed Authority relating to an application for extension of the contract for exploration for polymetallic nodules between the China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association and the Authority**

*The Council of the International Seabed Authority,*

*Acting upon the recommendation of the Legal and Technical Commission,<sup>1</sup>*

*Recalling that, on 22 May 2001, the China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association entered into a 15-year contract for exploration for polymetallic nodules with the International Seabed Authority,*

*Recalling also that the contract was extended for a period of five years to 21 May 2021<sup>2</sup> and for a further five years to 21 May 2026,<sup>3</sup>*

*Noting that, on 21 November 2025, the Secretary-General of the Authority received an application for an additional five-year extension of the contract,*

*Recalling section 1, paragraph 9, of the annex to the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982,<sup>4</sup>*

*Recalling also the decision of the Council of the Authority relating to the procedures and criteria for the extension of an approved plan of work for exploration pursuant to section 1, paragraph 9, of the annex to the Agreement,<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> ISBA/31/C/8.

<sup>2</sup> ISBA/22/C/24.

<sup>3</sup> ISBA/26/C/53.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1836, No. 31364.

<sup>5</sup> ISBA/21/C/19.

*Considering* the report and recommendations of the Legal and Technical Commission relating to the application by the China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association for extension of the contract,<sup>6</sup>

1. *Decides* to approve the application for extension of the contract;
2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the steps necessary to execute the extension of the contract, with effect from 22 May 2026, by signature of an agreement in the form set out in appendix II to the annex to the decision of the Council of the International Seabed Authority mentioned above;<sup>7</sup>
3. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its next session on the status of the extension agreement.

*352<sup>nd</sup> Meeting  
18 March 2026*

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<sup>6</sup> ISBA/31/C/8.

<sup>7</sup> See ISBA/21/C/19.