



Council

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Kingston, 9-20 March 2026

Item 10 of the provisional agenda*

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

Draft 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 International Seabed Authority

The Council of the International Seabed Authority,

Acting upon the recommendation of the Legal and Technical Commission,¹

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 by agreement between the International Seabed Authority and the China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development concerning the extension of the contract for a period of five years to 21 May 2021,² and a further five years to 21 May 2026.³

Noting that, on 21 November 2025, the Secretary-General of the Authority received an application for an additional five-year extension of that 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 1982,⁴

* ISBA/31/C/L.1

¹ ISBA/31/C/8

² ISBA/22/C/24

³ ISBA/26/C/53

⁴ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1836, No. 31364

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,⁵

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,⁶

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,⁷
3. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its next session on the status of the extension agreement.

⁵ ISBA/21/C/19*

⁶ ISBA/31/C/8

⁷ ISBA/21/C/19*