International Seabed Authority ISBA/31/C/33

Council

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Agenda item 17
Budget of the International Seabed Authority

Decision of the Council of the International Seabed Authority relating to the budget of the International Seabed Authority for the financial period 2027–2028

The Council of the International Seabed Authority,

Taking into account the recommendations of the Finance Committee of the International Seabed Authority,[1]

Recommends that the Assembly adopt the following draft decision:

The Assembly of the International Seabed Authority,

1. *Recalls* the independent role of the Finance Committee in the discharge of its functions under the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982;[2]

2. *Also recalls* that under section 9, paragraph 7 (c) of the annex to the Agreement, the Finance Committee is competent for making recommendations on "all relevant financial matters", including the use of funds;

3. *Approves* the proposed budget of the secretariat for the financial period 2027–2028 in the amount of $29,907,000, as proposed by the Secretary-General and revised by the Finance Committee;[3]

4. *Also approves* the proposed budget of the Enterprise for the financial period 2027–2028 in the amount of $794,500, as proposed by the Secretary-General and revised by the Finance Committee;[4]

5. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General to establish the scale of assessments for 2027 and 2028 on the basis of the scale used for the regular budget of the United Nations for the period 2025–2027, adjusted for differences in membership between

[1] See ISBA/31/A/10-ISBA/31/C/28.
[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1836, No. 31364.
[3] ISBA/31/A/4/Add.1 -ISBA/31/C/22/Add.1.
[4] Ibid.

the Authority and the United Nations, taking into account a maximum assessment rate of 22 per cent and a minimum rate of 0.01 per cent;

6. *Adopts* the process and criteria for the implementation of article 184 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea for consideration by the Assembly, as contained in annex I to the report of the Finance Committee;

7. *Requests* that the Finance Committee continue its work in respect of rules, regulations and procedures for the equitable sharing of financial and other economic benefits derived from activities in the Area, provide a presentation to the Council at its thirty-second session for its further consideration of the different options studied to date, and subsequently, provide recommendations on the basis of any guidance received for consideration by the Council and the Assembly in due course, in accordance with their respective mandates;

8. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General, for 2027–2028, in line with decisions ISBA/29/C/21 and ISBA/29/A/11, to transfer between sections, subsections and programmes up to 15 per cent of the amount of each section and subsection of the programme, and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Finance Committee on the adherence to this decision during the biennium, no later than four weeks before a meeting of the Committee;

9. *Notes* the significant amount of unspent resources for programme expenditure in 2025, and emphasizes the importance of the timely implementation of approved programmes and activities;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to explore the possibility of engaging the United Nations system auditors and to report thereon, through the Finance Committee, for the consideration of the Assembly;

11. *Takes note* of the matter referred to in paragraph 52 (g) of the report of the Finance Committee;

12. *Takes account* in its deliberations of the indicative timeline and cost for the operationalization of the Economic Planning Commission as set out in annex II to the report of the Finance Committee, and adopts the recommendations set out in paragraph 6 of that annex;

13. *Encourages* States, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to consider providing funding to support the costs of the reporting referred to in paragraph 51 of the report of the Finance Committee;

14. *Decides* that, in respect of Kyrgyzstan and Cambodia, which became members of the Authority in 2025 and 2026 respectively, the rate of assessment and the amounts of contribution to the general administrative fund and the Working Capital Fund shall be as reflected in paragraph 48 of the report of the Finance Committee;

15. *Appeals* to members of the Authority, including those with contributions in arrears for the period 1998–2025, to pay outstanding contributions to the budget of the Authority as soon as possible, and requests the Secretary-General to continue efforts to recover those arrears, including through bilateral engagement and coordination with regional group coordinators;

16. *Expresses* appreciation to the donors that have made contributions to the voluntary trust funds of the Authority, and encourages members, observers, contractors and other stakeholders to contribute financially to those funds;

17. *Calls upon* the secretariat, in future budget proposals, to provide greater clarity and transparency in the narrative accompanying the proposed budget,

including in relation to the actual and provisioned costs associated with staff litigation and other legal proceedings, for instance through a dedicated budget line for such expenditure;

18. *Requests* that the secretariat submit to the Finance Committee and the Assembly, four weeks before every meeting of the Committee, an up-to-date staffing table that indicates for every post the office, functional title, classification, post number and whether or not the post is filled as at the date of the table, and all temporary appointments, consultancies and assignments, noting that the table should separately list any personnel temporarily seconded to the Authority from other organizations or institutions;

19. *Also requests* that the Secretariat submit to the Finance Committee and the Assembly, four weeks before every meeting of the Committee, an up-to-date table of staff litigation and other legal proceedings that provides, with respect to each set of proceedings, details of the amounts claimed against the Authority and the status of the proceedings;

20. *Reiterates* the request that no reclassification decision be implemented without prior approval of the Assembly on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, and further requests, for the avoidance of doubt, that no decision on the establishment, abolishment or conversion of posts be implemented without prior approval of the Assembly, taking into account the recommendation of the Committee, whether on a permanent or a temporary basis;

21. *Takes note* of the indicative costs of a third part of a session for the Council during the 2027–2028 budget cycle, as set out in annex III to the report of the Finance Committee, noting that a supplementary budget may be required;

22. *Affirms* that the Finance Committee should meet for at least five consecutive working days during a budget year and that the use of webinars should be more frequent during informal meetings;

23. *Underlines* the importance of open, transparent and timely communication between the secretariat and the Finance Committee, including through the use of virtual exchanges ahead of future Committee sessions, and of establishing a constructive dialogue around the process for information exchange;

24. *Requests*, further to paragraph 23 above, the Secretary-General to continue to provide necessary administrative and technical support to the Finance Committee, at its request and in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the International Seabed Authority[5] and the Committee's rules of procedure,[6] as well as legal support, by ensuring among other things:

(a) That appropriate facilities are made available to the Committee during its meetings;

(b) Prompt and transparent communication of information to the Committee, where such information impacts the work of the Committee;

(c) Open and collaborative engagement with the requests of the Committee, including requests that relate to the provision of legal services;

(d) The timely preparation and distribution of documents at least two weeks prior to Committee meetings, for the Committee's consideration;

[5] ISBA/6/A/3.

[6] ISBA/5/FC/1.

(e) Regular consultation and coordination, as appropriate, between the secretariat and the Committee;

25. *Recalls* that the Finance Committee may request the Auditor to perform specific examinations and issue separate reports on the results, in accordance with regulation 12.5 of the Financial Regulations of the Authority, and also requests the Secretary-General to facilitate engagement with and access to the auditors as necessary, further to paragraph 23 above.

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24 July 2026