



**MINISTERIO
DE RELACIONES
EXTERIORES**



UN-OHRLS

Workshop on the Participation of LLDCs in the Regime of the Area and the Benefit-Sharing Mechanism under UNCLOS



13 - 15 October 2026



**Santa Cruz de la Sierra,
Plurinational State of Bolivia**

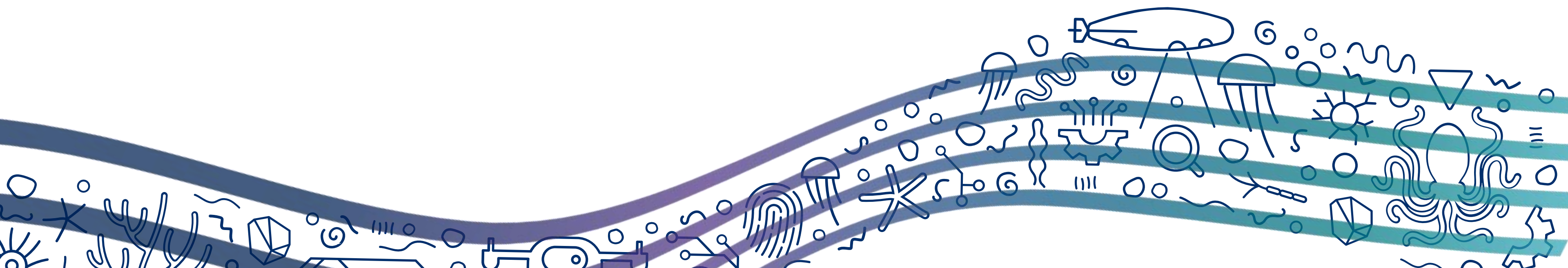




Agenda Item 3 - UNCLOS, Part XI and the institutional framework for LLDC participation

The Economic Planning Commission: Functions, current developments and relevance for LLDCs

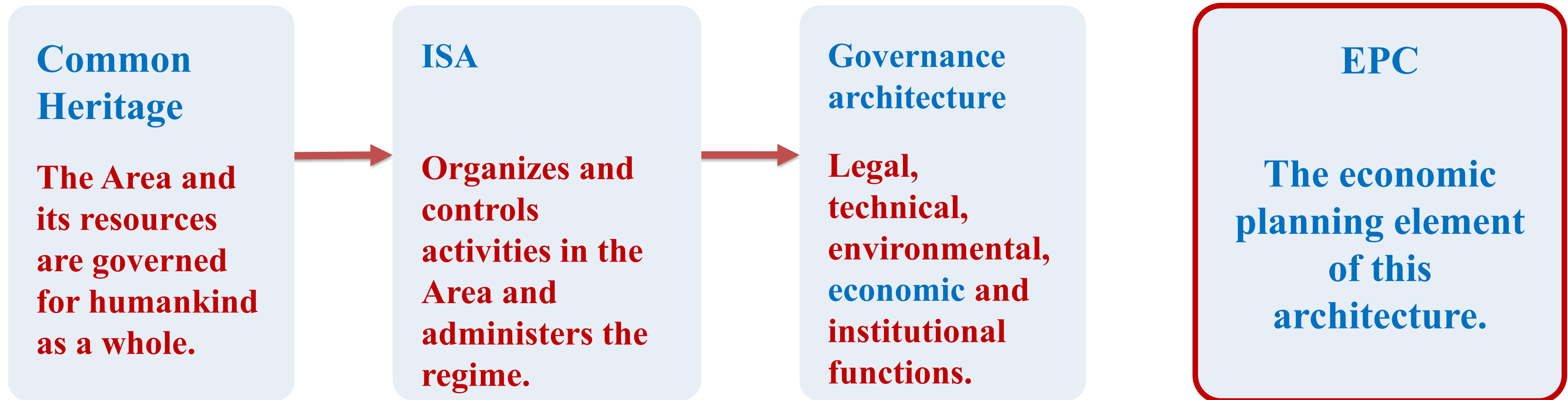
Kaiser de Sousa · International Seabed Authority





The EPC within the Common Heritage architecture

The Authority administers a broad regime of governance
— not only mining regulation



The EPC makes sense only within the larger constitutional logic of Part XI.

It helps ensure that economic consequences, developing-State interests and mineral-market questions are considered within ISA decision-making.



What exactly is the Economic Planning Commission?

A specialized economic advisory body of the Council

UNCLOS organ of the
Council

15 independent experts

Economic & mineral-
market focus

Development perspective

Expertise

Mining • mineral-resource
management • international
trade • international
economics

Core task

Understand the economic
consequences of activities in
the Area and advise the
Authority.

Focus

Mineral markets, developing
economies, adjustment needs
and economic assistance.

The EPC provides the Authority with a dedicated capacity to understand the economic consequences of activities in the Area.



Why did UNCLOS create an Economic Planning Commission?

Because seabed mineral development can have consequences far beyond the seabed



1 Mineral markets

Supply, demand, prices and production trends

2 Developing economies

Special attention to potential effects on developing States

3 Economic adjustment

Identification of adverse effects and possible responses

4 Common Heritage

Economic consequences considered alongside technical and environmental questions

The EPC makes the economic dimension of the Common Heritage regime visible within ISA decision-making.



From dormant institution to operationalization

An evolutionary institutional approach

UNCLOS

Creates the EPC as one of the Council's expert commissions.



1994 Agreement

**Introduces an evolutionary institutional approach.
LTC performs EPC functions during the initial phase.**



2025–2026

Council initiates operationalization and election arrangements.

Key message: Operationalization reflects ISA's evolution from an exploration-focused institution towards broader exploitation readiness.



Why does the EPC matter for LLDCs?

Relevance is wider than direct participation in seabed mining



1 Economic consequences

Assess mineral-market effects and developing-country vulnerabilities

2 Transferable expertise

Bring terrestrial mining, geology, trade and resource-governance experience

3 Development interests

Connect economic diversification, adjustment and broader developing-State interests

4 Institutional participation

Use ISA processes to shape the economic governance of the Area

For LLDCs, relevance does not depend on having access to the sea; it depends on having interests, expertise and a voice in economic governance.



From understanding to participation

Understanding the EPC opens practical pathways for
LLDC engagement



Follow

EPC
operationalization
and future
work
programme

Contribute

Mining,
mineral
economics,
trade and
resource-
governance
expertise

Identify

National
interests,
vulnerabilities
and
opportunities

Engage

Through ISA
institutions,
capacity-
development
mechanisms
and regional
cooperation

Connect

Terrestrial
mineral
experience with
seabed
governance

The Common Heritage regime was designed to include developing States not only as observers, but as participants in shaping governance.



Thank you

