

**INFORMATION NOTE ON MATTERS BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED
AUTHORITY AT THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION**

27-31 July 2026, Kingston

Introduction

1. The meeting of the thirty-first session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority will be held from 27 to 31 July 2026, in Kingston, Jamaica, at the Jamaica Conference Centre.
2. The purpose of this note is to briefly describe the items contained in the provisional agenda of the Assembly ([ISBA/31/A/L.1/Rev.1](#)).
3. The provisional agenda as well as other official documents prepared for the upcoming session together with the indicative programme of work have been placed on the Authority's website. As more documents become available, they will be uploaded to the website. Delegations are kindly invited to monitor the website regularly.

Opening of the session (item 1 of the provisional agenda)

4. The thirty-first session of the Assembly will be declared open on Monday 27 July 2026 by the President, Ambassador Dwight Gardiner (Antigua and Barbuda) and is scheduled to close on Friday 31 July 2026.

Adoption of the agenda (item 2 of the provisional agenda)

5. The Assembly will commence its business with the adoption of its agenda for the session. The provisional agenda ([ISBA/31/A/L.1/Rev.1](#)) includes 21 items.

Election of the President and Vice-Presidents (items 3 and 4 of the provisional agenda)

6. After the adoption of the agenda, the Assembly will elect the President and the Vice-Presidents. It is the turn of the Western European and other States Group to nominate a candidate for the Presidency of the Assembly for the thirty-first session.
7. Each of the other regional groups will be entitled to nominate a Vice-President of the Assembly.
8. To facilitate a smooth running of the session, the secretariat would be grateful if regional groups could coordinate on the question of candidatures for the positions of President and Vice-Presidents in advance of the session and communicate any nominations to the secretariat (MadamSecretary-General@isa.org.jm and protocol@isa.org.jm and ola@isa.org.jm). The President and Vice-Presidents shall constitute the Bureau which can meet periodically throughout the session to review the progress of work of the Assembly.

Appointment of the Credentials Committee (item 5 of the provisional agenda)

9. Pursuant to rule 24 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Assembly will need to appoint a credentials committee at the beginning of the session. The Committee shall consist of nine members of the Assembly, who shall be appointed by the Assembly on the proposal of the President.

The Committee shall elect its own officers and examine the credentials of representatives of members and report to the Assembly without delay. A meeting of the Credentials Committee is scheduled on Wednesday 29 July, from 2 to 2:45 pm and the presentation of the report by the Chair of the Credentials Committee is scheduled on Friday 31 July. To facilitate the appointment, delegations are invited to coordinate on this matter in advance of the opening of the session in Kingston and to communicate any nominations for appointment of members of the Credentials Committee to the Secretariat (MadamSecretary-General@isa.org.jm and protocol@isa.org.jm).

Guidelines for observer status of contractors (item 6 of the provisional agenda)

10. During the previous session, it was agreed that contractors could participate as observers in their individual capacity and not be treated differently from other stakeholders. Contractors were invited to submit requests for observer status to be granted by the Assembly. For that purpose, the Assembly requested that the secretariat prepare guidelines for observer status of contractors with the Authority, including a comparison with the rules of procedure of other intergovernmental organizations such as the International Maritime Organization, to assist in the consideration of applications for observer status to be submitted by contractors from 2026. The Assembly also decided to include the item in its agenda for the next session and that it was unnecessary to amend the Assembly's rules of procedure.

11. The Assembly is invited to consider the Guidelines for observer status of contractors ([ISBA/31/A/7](#)) prior to its consideration of requests for observer status submitted by contractors (see below, paragraph 14).

Consideration of requests for observer status (item 7 of the provisional agenda)

12. The Assembly will continue its business with the consideration of requests for observer status in accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (d) and (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, and the Guidelines for observer status of non-governmental organizations with the International Seabed Authority ([ISBA/25/A/16](#), Annex).

13. Following its consideration of the Guidelines for observer status of contractors to assist in the consideration of applications for observer status to be submitted by contractors from 2026, the Assembly is first invited to consider the deferred request for observer status from Seafloor Mineral Developers Association ([ISBA/30/A/INF/12](#)), as well as the following requests submitted by contractors from 2026: Global Sea Mineral Resources NV ([ISBA/31/A/INF/14](#)); Nauru Ocean Resources Inc. ([ISBA/31/A/INF/12](#)); Tonga Offshore Mining Limited ([ISBA/31/A/INF/13](#)); and UK Seabed Resources Ltd ([ISBA/31/A/INF/15](#)).

14. In addition, the Assembly will consider the following 12 requests for observer status which were received by the Secretary-General:

- DMUN Foundation ([ISBA/31/A/INF/1](#));
- L'Académie Africaine de la Pratique du Droit International ([ISBA/31/A/INF/2](#));
- Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals ([ISBA/31/A/INF/3](#));
- Deep Currents Collective ([ISBA/31/A/INF/4](#));
- Hugo Grotius gGmbH ([ISBA/31/A/INF/5](#));
- Natural History Museum ([ISBA/31/A/INF/6](#));

- Senckenberg-Leibniz Institution for Biodiversity and Earth System Research ([ISBA/31/A/INF/7](#));
- Centre for International Law and Multilateralism ([ISBA/31/A/INF/8](#));
- University Technology of Sydney ([ISBA/31/A/INF/9](#));
- INESC TEC – Institute for Systems and Computer Engineering. Technology and Science ([ISBA/31/A/INF/10](#));
- University of Vienna ([ISBA/31/A/INF/11](#));
- Koro Nui o Te Vaikava ([ISBA/31/A/INF/16](#)).

Election to fill any vacancy on the Finance Committee (item 8 of the provisional agenda)

15. The Assembly will hold an election to fill the vacancy on the Finance Committee following the resignation of Ms Lee-Anne Yarr (United Kingdom) in accordance with section 9, paragraph 5, 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. By a note verbale dated 29 June 2026, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom informed the secretariat of the Authority of the nomination of Mr Greg Reisman (United Kingdom) to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term ending on 31 December 2027. This is detailed in the note contained in the document ISBA/31/A/9.

Annual report of the Secretary-General under article 166, paragraph 4, of the Convention (item 9 of the provisional agenda)

16. The Secretary-General will present her annual report submitted pursuant to article 166, paragraph 4, of the Convention ([ISBA/31/A/2](#); [ISBA/31/A/5](#)). The Assembly will be invited to take note of the information provided in the report.

17. The Secretary-General will also present a progress report on the implementation of the action plan of the International Seabed Authority in support of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development ([ISBA/31/A/3](#)). The Assembly will be invited to take note of the report, request the Secretary-General to continue her efforts to mobilize the necessary resources for the implementation and upscaling of the strategic research priorities under the action plan for marine scientific research and encourage all members of the Authority, other States, relevant international organizations, academic, scientific and technical institutions, philanthropic organizations, corporations and private persons to contribute to the implementation of the action plan for marine scientific research.

18. In line with the usual practice of the meetings of the Assembly, a preliminary list of speakers will be established for this item. Regarding statements, the following is to be noted:

- a) speakers are invited to deliver the statement at a speed that facilitate simultaneous interpretation (100 to 120 words per minute);
- b) speakers are encouraged to be mindful of the length of their statements;
- c) delegations are invited to submit their statements in PDF format to the secretariat (assembly@isa.org.jm) with reference to the item agenda, the date of delivery and the number of the meeting. The statement should be submitted well in advance of the meeting, but no later than two hours before delivery, for purposes of ensuring the quality of the interpretation. Delegations are invited to indicate in the subject line and in the body of the email whether the statement is for the use of interpreters only or should also be posted online. The statements will remain embargoed until their delivery;

- d) delegations may also request extended versions of their statements or statements that they have not delivered orally to be posted online

Periodic review of the international regime of the Area (item 10 of the provisional agenda)

19. During the twenty-eighth session, the Assembly decided to include the periodic review of the international regime of the Area pursuant to article 154 of the Convention as an agenda item for the twenty-ninth session of the Assembly in 2024, with a view to adopting a decision thereon (see [ISBA/28/A/16](#)). The Assembly also requested the Finance Committee to consider and provide recommendations to the Assembly on the budgetary implications pertaining to the undertaking of a second periodic review. Those recommendations are contained in the report of the Finance Committee presented during the twenty-ninth session of the Authority ([ISBA/29/A/9-ISBA/29/C/20](#) at paragraphs 22 and 23).

20. During the twenty-ninth session, the Assembly decided to defer its consideration of the question of the periodic review of the international regime of the Area pursuant to article 154 of the Convention as an agenda item for the thirtieth session of the Assembly in 2025. At the thirtieth session of the Assembly, the Assembly did not reach consensus on the proposal for conducting the periodic review of the international regime of the Area pursuant to article 154 of the Convention, and again decided to defer its consideration of this question, to the thirty-first session in 2026.

Report of the interim Director-General of the Enterprise (item 11 of the provisional agenda)

21. The interim Director-General of the Enterprise will present his report on activities undertaken since assuming office in performing the functions of the Enterprise as specified in Section 2 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 (“the 1994 Agreement”). The Assembly is invited to take note of the report which is contained in the document [ISBA/31/A/6-ISBA/31/C/23](#).

Report and recommendations of the Finance Committee (item 12 of the provisional agenda)

22. The Assembly will consider the report and recommendations of the Finance Committee which will be presented by the Chair of the Finance Committee (ISBA/31/A/10-ISBA/31/C/28).¹

Adoption of the budget of the Authority and adoption of the scale of assessment for the contributions to the budget of the Authority (items 13 and 14 of the provisional agenda)

23. The Assembly is required to approve the budget of the Authority for the financial period 2027–2028 and the scale of assessment for contributions to the budget, taking into account the recommendations of the Finance Committee and the Council.

Statement by the President of the Council on the work of the Council during the thirty-first session (item 15 of the provisional agenda)

24. The President of the Council for the thirty-first session, Mayank Joshi (India) will deliver his statement on the work of the Council during the first and second parts of the thirty-first session

¹ As recommended by the Assembly at the previous session (ISBA/30/A/11), for the development of the concept of the Common Heritage of Mankind as one of the possible ways for distribution of income from activities in the Area, the Secretariat has prepared a report entitled A Framework for the Common Heritage Fund: Equitable Sharing of Financial and Other Economic Benefits from Deep-Sea Mining ([A Framework for the Common Heritage Fund.pdf](#)). This report is presented to the Finance Committee.

([ISBA/31/C/19/Rev.1](#) and forthcoming ISBA/31/C/19/Add.1). The Assembly will be invited to take note of the report.

Report of the Credentials Committee (item 16 of the provisional agenda)

25. The Chair of the Credentials Committee will present the report on credentials, including a draft decision relating to credentials of representatives at the thirty-first session which the Assembly will be invited to adopt.

Consideration of a request for an advisory opinion from the Seabed Disputes Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea pursuant to article 191 of the Convention on matters relating to the legal implications for the International Seabed Authority of activities in the Area undertaken by non-States Parties (item 17 of the provisional agenda)

26. To assist the Assembly in its consideration of this item proposed by the Secretary-General of the Authority, the Assembly is invited to consider the note with an annexed draft decision prepared by the Secretary-General which is contained in the document [ISBA/31/A/8](#).

Ensuring adequate scientific understanding to support informed decision-making (item 18 of the provisional agenda)

27. As requested by the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu, the item “*Ensuring adequate scientific understanding to support informed decision-making*” has been included on the provisional agenda of the thirty-first session of the Assembly (ISBA/31/A/L.1/Rev.1).²

Election to fill vacancies on the Council (item 19 of the provisional agenda)

28. Elections to fill vacancies on the Council for a four-year term from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2030 will take place in accordance with article 161, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. In 2024, the Assembly elected 18 members of the Council in each of the five interest groups referred to in paragraph 15 of Section 3 of the Annex to the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the Convention (see [ISBA/29/A/14](#)). The terms of office of the remaining 18 members of the Council who were elected in 2022 (see [ISBA/27/A/14](#)) will expire on 31 December 2026. It is therefore necessary for the Assembly to elect 18 new members of the Council for the period 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2030. Two vacancies will need to be filled in Group A, three vacancies in Group B, two vacancies in Group C, three vacancies in Group D and eight vacancies in Group E.

29. It should be noted that the 1994 Agreement, Annex, Section 3, paragraph 9, requires the Assembly, before electing the members of the Council, to establish lists of countries fulfilling the criteria for membership in each of the interest groups. In order to facilitate the work of the Assembly in this regard, the Secretariat has prepared two information papers to assist member States in determining the States eligible for election in each group of the Council (see [ISBA/31/A/CRP.1](#) and [ISBA/31/A/CRP.2](#)).

Dates of the next session (item 20 of the provisional agenda)

30. At the end of the session, the President of the Assembly will announce the dates for the thirty-second session of the Assembly.

² [Item proposed](#) by the Republic of Vanuatu by [letter](#) dated 25 May 2026, submitted in accordance with rule 10 (e) of the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

Other matters (item 21 of the provisional agenda)

32. The Assembly will be invited to take note of a note on the status of the pending proceedings before the Seabed Disputes Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (forthcoming ISBA/31/A/10). The Assembly may also be required to consider any other items, as appropriate.

17 July 2026