

Annotated version – includes names of speakers and moderators

CONCEPT NOTE AND AGENDA



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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



CONCEPT NOTE

Workshop on the Participation of Land-Locked Developing Countries in the Regime of the Area and the Benefit-Sharing Mechanism under UNCLOS

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Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Plurinational State of Bolivia

Organized by the International Seabed Authority (ISA), in collaboration with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), and the Government of Bolivia as Chair of the LLDC Group

Background and Rationale

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides a comprehensive legal framework for ocean governance. Part XI and the 1994 Agreement entrust the International Seabed Authority (ISA) to organize and control activities in the Area—the seabed and ocean floor beyond national jurisdiction—on behalf of humankind. The Convention recognizes the special circumstances of Land-Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs), granting them rights to participate in the exploration and exploitation of the Area’s mineral resources and to share equitably in the benefits derived therefrom.

The Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs provides a framework for these countries to join the benefits of the blue economy. There are avenues for LLDCs to benefit from ocean-based opportunities through capacity development, partnerships, and knowledge transfer.

As the ISA advances toward finalizing the Mining Code, including its financial model and benefit-sharing mechanism, LLDCs have a timely opportunity to shape these provisions and secure their interests in the sustainable use of ocean resources. Understanding how its revenues interact with ISA’s benefit-sharing mechanisms is essential for LLDCs to position themselves strategically.

The Mining Code negotiations include the development of arrangements for the equitable sharing of financial and other economic benefits from activities in the Area, including consideration of a Common Heritage Fund.

Separately, Article 82 of UNCLOS establishes a payment and distribution regime for the exploitation of non-living resources of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles. UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement also address the interests of developing land-based mineral-producing States that may be affected by production from the Area. These issues are related to equitable benefit-sharing but arise from distinct legal and institutional mechanisms.

Finally, LLDCs can consider becoming sponsoring States for exploration or exploitation contracts, taking advantage of “reserved areas” for developing countries and the opportunities offered by the Enterprise, the ISA’s operational arm. Such engagement would allow LLDCs not only to access resources but also to build technical capacity and play an active role in the inclusive and sustainable blue economy of the future.

Against this background, the ISA, together with OHRLLS and in partnership with the Government of Bolivia, proposes to convene a global workshop in Santa Cruz de la Sierra. The event will provide an inclusive

platform for dialogue among LLDCs, ISA Secretariat, contractors, and other stakeholders to discuss current developments, build technical knowledge, explore concrete pathways for participation, and an opportunity for LLDCs to discuss their position in the final steps of negotiation of the mining code.

Back-to-back to this workshop, a one-day meeting with national officials of Bolivia across government offices and technical institutions will explore further participation of Bolivia in the activities ISA carries out.

Objectives

The workshop aims to:

- Enhance understanding of the rights and opportunities of LLDCs under UNCLOS and its Part XI, including their participation in activities in the Area and benefit-sharing mechanisms.
- Discuss the economic model and benefit-sharing framework currently under development by the ISA and its implications for LLDCs.
- Clarify the scope and implementation of Article 82 of UNCLOS, its relationship with ISA benefit-sharing, and modalities for distribution of payments.
- Facilitate dialogue with the Enterprise and ISA contractors to identify opportunities for collaboration, technology transfer, and training for LLDC experts.
- Identify existing LLDC institutional, scientific, technological and mining-related capacities that could support participation in activities related to the Area, as well as priority capacity gaps and opportunities for cooperation.
- Identify practical priorities for continued cooperation between ISA, LLDCs and relevant partners, to be reflected in a Santa Cruz Roadmap for follow-up.

Structure and Programme

The workshop will be held over three days, structured around thirteen agenda items as set out in the agenda below. Day 1 focuses on understanding the ISA regime: rights, responsibilities and pathways for LLDC participation. Day 2 addresses benefit-sharing, Article 82 and the mineral-development perspectives of LLDCs. Day 3 moves from capacity needs to action, covering non-monetary benefits and the development of the Santa Cruz Roadmap.

Working method: At the end of each substantive session, moderators should capture two or three emerging key findings or recommendations (Key finding | Priority issue | Possible follow-up) for progressive consolidation into the workshop report and the Santa Cruz Roadmap to support the participation of LLDCs in ISA and ocean governance.

AGENDA

Shuttle buses are provided only between Hotel Camino Real and the AECID Training Centre, at the times shown. Lunch is provided at the AECID Training Centre on all three days.

Day 1 - Tuesday, 13 October 2026

Time	Workshop Activities
08:15	Shuttle bus: Hotel Camino Real → AECID Training Centre
09:30 – 10:15	Agenda item 1. Opening of the workshop - Welcome by the Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Lionel Magne Molina, Ceremonial and Protocol Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia H.E. Amb. Fernando García Casas, Ambassador of Spain to the Plurinational State of Bolivia Madam Secretary-General Leticia Reis de Carvalho, International Seabed Authority H.E. Rabab Fatima, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) – <i>video message</i> H.E. Mr. Héctor Francisco Huanca Gutiérrez, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Plurinational State of Bolivia
10:15 – 11:00	Group photo and coffee break
11:00 – 11:15	Agenda item 2. Workshop objectives, approach and expected outputs Jose Dallo and Yongsheng Cai (ISA) – Objectives of the workshop and the proposed agenda
11:15 – 12:30	Agenda item 3. UNCLOS, Part XI and the institutional framework for LLDC participation Session moderated by Yongsheng Cai (ISA) Prof. Galo Carrera (International Consultant) – Evolution of UNCLOS and Part XI, LLDC participation in the negotiations, and the legal framework governing the Area Kaiser de Sousa (ISA) – The Economic and Planning Commission: functions, current developments and relevance for LLDCs - Plenary discussion, moderated by Yongsheng Cai (ISA)
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break (provided at the AECID Training Centre)
14:00 – 15:30	Agenda item 4. Exploration in the Area: regulation, responsibilities and oversight Session moderated by Aleksei Shapoval (ISA) Kaiser de Sousa (ISA) – What exploration is, how it is regulated, contract management, reporting and environmental requirements, and overview of exploration contracts Anton Dmitrievich Shapovalov (Russian Federation) – Role and responsibilities of the sponsoring States Vladimir Antonovich Petrov (Russian Federation) – Role and responsibilities of the contractors - Plenary discussion, moderated by Aleksei Shapoval (ISA)
15:30 – 16:00	Afternoon coffee break
16:00 – 17:30	Agenda item 5. Pathways for LLDC participation in the ISA regime Session moderated by Aleksei Shapoval (ISA) Kaiser de Sousa (ISA) – Process for assessment of applications by the Secretariat, Legal and Technical Commission and Council Eden Charles (The Enterprise, ISA) – Role of the enterprise and the opportunities reserved areas provide to LLDCs - Plenary discussion, moderated by Aleksei Shapoval (ISA)
17:45	Shuttle bus: AECID Training Centre → Hotel Camino Real
19:00 – 21:00	Cultural dinner hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for all workshop participants Venue: Restaurante Regiones – Sabores de Bolivia, Boulevard del Ventura Mall, 4to Anillo, Santa Cruz de la Sierra

Day 2 - Wednesday, 14 October 2026

Time	Workshop Activities
08:15	Shuttle bus: Hotel Camino Real → AECID Training Centre
09:00 – 10:30	Agenda item 6. Benefit-sharing from activities in the Area: principles, mechanisms and LLDC interests Session moderated by Jose Dallo (ISA) • Prof. Galo Carrera (International Consultant) – The Common Heritage of Mankind Principle and the concept of benefit sharing under UNCLOS • Eden Charles (The Enterprise, ISA) – Discussions on the benefit-sharing mechanism • Kaiser de Sousa (ISA) – Equitable benefit-sharing: key findings and considerations from recent analytical work • Plenary discussion, moderated by Jose Dallo (ISA)
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	Agenda item 7. Article 82 of UNCLOS: payments, distribution and implications for LLDCs Session moderated by Jose Dallo (ISA) • Prof. Galo Carrera (International Consultant) – Article 82, its legal framework and implementation complexities • Kaiser de Sousa (ISA) – From Article 82 obligation to implementation: lessons from the ISA international workshop and elements of a model agreement • Eden Charles (The Enterprise, ISA) – Discussions concerning Article 82 • Plenary discussion, moderated by Jose Dallo (ISA)
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break (provided at the AECID Training Centre)
14:00 – 15:30	Agenda item 8. LLDC perspectives on benefit-sharing and participation in ocean governance Session moderated by Aleksei Shapoval (ISA) • Amb. Duncan Laki (Uganda) – LLDC contribution to the benefit-sharing in ISA processes and broader ocean governance, including implementation agreements under UNCLOS • Plenary discussion, moderated by Aleksei Shapoval (ISA)
15:30 – 16:00	Afternoon coffee break
16:00 – 17:30	Agenda item 9. From terrestrial mining to participation in the Area: critical minerals, transferable capacities and partnerships Session moderated by Yongsheng Cai (ISA) • Kaiser de Sousa (ISA) – Linkages between terrestrial mining experience and engagement with the ISA • Plenary discussion, moderated by Yongsheng Cai (ISA)
17:45	Shuttle bus: AECID Training Centre → Hotel Camino Real

Day 3 - Thursday, 15 October 2026

Time	Workshop Activities
08:15	Shuttle bus: Hotel Camino Real → AECID Training Centre
09:00 – 10:30	Agenda item 10. Identifying LLDC capacity-development needs and priorities Session moderated by Yongsheng Cai (ISA) • Collen Chiutsi (Zimbabwe) – Linkages of the ISA regime with the Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs 2024–2034 • Plenary discussion to identify and prioritize technical, institutional and knowledge gaps and potential partners, moderated by Yongsheng Cai (ISA)
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	Agenda item 11. Non-monetary benefits: capacity development, science, technology and knowledge Session moderated by Aleksei Shapoval (ISA) • Yongsheng Cai (ISA) – ISA Capacity Development programmes and initiatives • Jose Dallo (ISA) – ISA Marine Scientific Research Action Plan and flagship initiatives • Plenary discussion on capacity-development needs of LLDCs, moderated by Aleksei Shapoval (ISA)
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break (provided at the AECID Training Centre)
14:00 – 15:00	Agenda item 12. From dialogue to action: developing the Santa Cruz Roadmap Session moderated by Jose Dallo (ISA) • Plenary discussion on potential areas of cooperation, facilitated by Amb. Guadalupe Palomeque (Bolivia)
15:00 – 15:30	Agenda item 13. Conclusions, Santa Cruz Roadmap and next steps • Closing remarks by Collen Chiutsi (Zimbabwe) as ocean focal point for the LLDC Group • Closing remarks by Jose Dallo and Yongsheng Cai (ISA) • Amb. Guadalupe Palomeque (Bolivia) – Presentation of key takeaways and proposed Santa Cruz Roadmap and follow-up actions, and closing of the workshop
15:30	Shuttle bus: AECID Training Centre → Hotel Camino Real

