



Development of Environmental Threshold Values

Mid-Term Stakeholder Engagement Webinar on the Report of the Intersessional Expert Group (IEG)

Dialogue hosted by the Secretariat and IEG Co-chairs

7 October 2026 | 7:00-8:30 pm (UTC-5)

8 October 2026 | 8:00-9:30 am (UTC-5)

Background

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) has launched the report of the Intersessional Expert Group (IEG) on the development of environmental threshold values for activities in the Area. The report represents the outcome of a multi-year expert process led by the Legal and Technical Commission (LTC) and addresses threshold development for four key pressure areas:

- Toxicity
- Turbidity and settling of resuspended sediments
- Underwater noise
- Light pollution

The report proposes a science-based framework centered on Ecological Reference Points (ERPs) and a Zone of Impact approach to support the future development of project-specific environmental threshold values and management measures. The report has been released for formal stakeholder consultation on 3 August 2026, for a period of 90 days, prior to consideration by the LTC and submission of recommendations to the Council, in accordance with Council decision ISBA/27/C/42.

Purpose of the Webinar

The webinar will be held approximately halfway through the public consultation period to:

1. Provide stakeholders with an overview of the report and its key findings.
2. Clarify the scope and methodology of the proposed framework for threshold development.
3. Encourage informed and constructive participation in the consultation process.

4. Provide guidance on how stakeholders can prepare and submit comments.
5. Foster transparency and inclusive engagement across ISA Member States and other stakeholders of the Authority, including observers, exploration contractors, intergovernmental organizations, scientific and academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, industry associations and representatives, and the general public.

Objectives

Participants will:

- Gain a clear understanding of the report's objectives and recommendations.
- Better understand the proposed Zone of Impact and ERP methodology.
- Learn about key scientific considerations, uncertainties, and research priorities identified by the IEG.
- Obtain clarification regarding the consultation process and timelines.
- Have an opportunity to raise questions and share initial feedback.

Expected Outcomes

- Improved stakeholder understanding of the report.
- Increased participation in the consultation process.
- Identification of recurring questions and issues requiring further clarification.
- Enhanced transparency of the threshold development process.
- Broader and more informed stakeholder submissions.

Format

The event will be conducted online. Short, focused presentations will be followed by a moderated question-and-answer session. The event is designed as an orientation and clarification session, not a forum for negotiation or detailed technical debate.