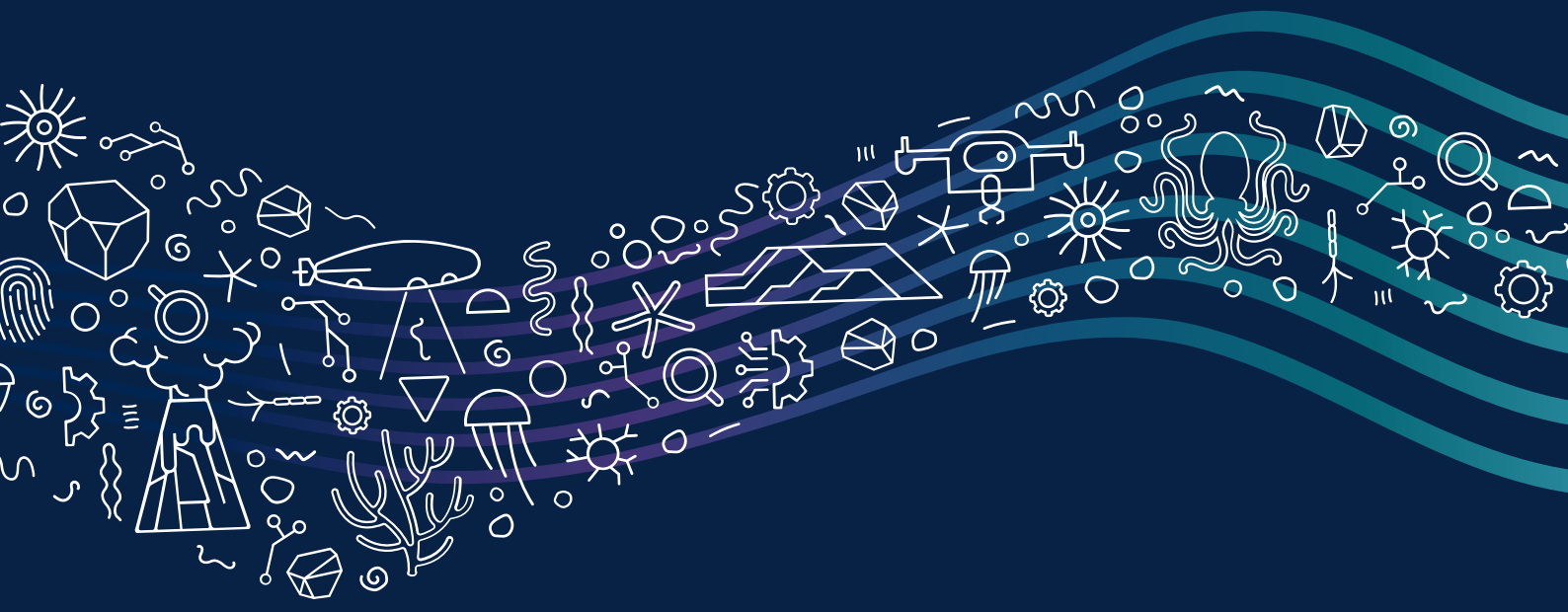
Strengthening LLDC Participation in the International Seabed Authority

Workshop Report

October 2026



INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY

WORKSHOP REPORT

Strengthening LLDC Participation in the International Seabed Authority



Participants of the workshop at the AECID Training Centre, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, 13–15 October 2026

Report of the Bolivia Workshop and High Level Engagement

13 to 15 October 2026

Santa Cruz de la Sierra
Plurinational State of Bolivia

Prepared by the Secretariat
October 2026

The workshop brought together legal, economic, scientific and diplomatic perspectives to support effective LLDC participation in the regime of the Area. Its discussions led to the Santa Cruz Roadmap, a participant-owned framework for continued cooperation.

Contents

Abbreviations **4**

Foreword by the Secretary-General **5**

Executive summary **6**

1. Workshop purpose and approach **7**

2. Building knowledge and capacity for effective participation **7**

2.1 UNCLOS and the institutional framework 7
2.2 Exploration regulation and oversight 8
2.3 Pathways for participation and application assessment 8
2.4 Equitable benefit sharing from activities in the Area 8
2.5 Article 82 from obligation to implementation 9
2.6 Terrestrial mining experience and engagement with the Area 9
2.7 Capacity development and scientific cooperation 9

3. Priorities identified by participants **10**

4. High level dialogue and institutional cooperation **10**

5. The Santa Cruz Roadmap **11**

Implementation of Article 82 of UNCLOS 11
Capacity development and institutional preparedness of LLDCs 11
Equitable sharing of financial and non monetary benefits 12
Representation diplomatic coordination and participation in ISA 12
Partnerships resource mobilization and international cooperation 12
Alignment with other international frameworks 12
Follow up and expected results 12

Annex I Santa Cruz Roadmap **13**

I. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE 13
Pillar 1. Implementation of Article 82 of UNCLOS 13
Pillar 2. Capacity development and institutional preparedness of LLDCs 13
Pillar 3. Equitable sharing of financial and non-monetary benefits 14
Pillar 4. Representation, diplomatic coordination and participation in ISA 14
Liaison mechanism 14
Pillar 5. Partnerships, resource mobilization and international cooperation 15
Pillar 6. Alignment with other international frameworks 15
FOLLOW-UP 15
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE 15
EXPECTED RESULTS 15
FINAL PROVISION 16

Annex II Workshop programme **17**

Day 1 Tuesday 13 October 2026 Understanding the regime and participation pathways 17
Day 2 Wednesday 14 October 2026 Benefit sharing Article 82 and mineral development perspectives 18
Day 3 Thursday 15 October 2026 Capacity development and the Santa Cruz Roadmap 19

Annex III List of participants **21**

Participants 21
International Seabed Authority 23
Host and support 24

Abbreviations

EPC	**Economic Planning Commission**
ISA	**International Seabed Authority**
ITTLLDC	**International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries**
LDCs	**Least developed countries**
LLDCs	**Landlocked developing countries**
LTC	**Legal and Technical Commission**
UNCLOS	**United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea**
UN-OHRLLS	**United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States**

Foreword by Madam Secretary-General

The Area and its resources are the common heritage of humankind. Ensuring that landlocked developing countries can participate effectively in its governance and share equitably in its benefits is central to the work of the International Seabed Authority. Their development priorities, knowledge and expertise are important to shaping an inclusive international seabed regime.

The Santa Cruz workshop provided an opportunity to advance this objective. Convened with the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and UN-OHRLLS, it connected the principles of UNCLOS with practical avenues for participation. Participants examined the institutional framework, responsibilities and opportunities under the regime of the Area, building a shared understanding of how their countries can engage more effectively with ISA.

The discussions highlighted the value of participation across the Authority's mandate, from diplomatic engagement and equitable benefit-sharing to scientific research, training and technical cooperation. They also recognised the contribution that national geological and terrestrial mining expertise can make to this work. Exchanges with national authorities and partner institutions explored opportunities to develop these connections further.

The Santa Cruz Roadmap translates the participants' priorities into a framework for continued cooperation. Its implementation offers a means to build on the knowledge developed during the workshop, strengthen partnerships and support sustained LLDC participation. Progress will depend on shared commitment, country ownership and activities that deliver practical benefits.

I thank Bolivia for hosting the workshop and for its leadership as Chair of the LLDC Group, UN-OHRLLS for its collaboration, and all participating delegations and institutions for their contributions. I look forward to working with Member States and partners to carry the Santa Cruz outcomes forward and make the opportunities provided by UNCLOS more accessible to LLDCs.

Secretary-General
International Seabed Authority

Executive summary

The Bolivia workshop, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra from 13 to 15 October 2026, advanced practical understanding of how landlocked developing countries can participate in the International Seabed Authority and engage with the opportunities provided for under UNCLOS. Organised by ISA in collaboration with UN-OHRLLS and the Government of Bolivia as Chair of the LLDC Group, it brought substantive learning, country perspectives and cooperation opportunities into a common discussion.

The programme progressed from the legal and institutional framework to the practical dimensions of participation. It explained the roles of ISA organs, exploration responsibilities and application assessment, including the relevance of the Enterprise and reserved areas for developing countries. It then examined equitable benefit-sharing from activities in the Area and the distinct arrangements under Article 82 of UNCLOS. Discussions of terrestrial mining expertise, training and scientific cooperation connected these subjects with existing national capabilities.

Participants gained a clearer basis for understanding proposals, identifying relevant expertise and assessing different forms of engagement. Participation was presented broadly, encompassing diplomacy, technical and financial discussions, research, training and institutional partnerships, alongside any national consideration of sponsorship.

Participants highlighted the value of continued technical learning, access to scientific cooperation and opportunities to contribute their expertise to ISA processes. Dedicated consultations with African LLDCs and LLDCs that are also least developed countries brought regional and development perspectives into the discussion. Associated meetings with Bolivian authorities, mining-sector representatives and the United Nations country presence explored additional avenues for cooperation.

The workshop adopted the Santa Cruz Roadmap as its principal collective outcome. Its six pillars address Article 82; capacity development and institutional preparedness; equitable sharing of financial and non-monetary benefits; representation and diplomatic coordination; partnerships and resource mobilisation; and alignment with other international frameworks. The Roadmap identifies technical work, training, research, dialogue and partnership activities, with arrangements for coordination and monitoring. It provides continuity beyond the event and a common framework for sustained LLDC participation.

1. Workshop purpose and approach

The regime of the Area gives LLDCs a direct interest in international seabed governance and the equitable sharing of benefits under UNCLOS. Participation also offers opportunities for scientific research, training and institutional cooperation. The workshop was convened to make these avenues more accessible by connecting the legal foundations of the regime with practical knowledge of how ISA works.

Its objectives were to explain LLDC rights and opportunities, clarify the responsibilities associated with activities in the Area and examine the substantive issues relevant to participation. The programme also considered how national geological, mining and scientific expertise could contribute to engagement with ISA and cooperation among institutions.

Presentations and plenary exchanges followed a progressive sequence. The first day introduced the regime, its institutions and participation pathways. The second examined benefit-sharing, Article 82 and mineral-development perspectives. The third focused on capacity development, scientific cooperation and preparation of the Santa Cruz Roadmap. This approach enabled participants with different backgrounds to build a common understanding before identifying priorities and an outcome for follow-up.

The event combined the substantive programme with dedicated consultations and associated high-level meetings. These exchanges connected the workshop with national interests, regional perspectives and institutions able to contribute to cooperation. Bolivia's role as host and Chair of the LLDC Group, together with collaboration with UN-OHRLLS, linked the initiative to the wider LLDC development agenda.

2. Building knowledge and capacity for effective participation

2.1 UNCLOS and the institutional framework

The programme began with the development of UNCLOS, Part XI and the legal framework governing the Area. This foundation situated LLDC participation within the common heritage of humankind and explained why geographical location does not remove a country's interest in the regime. It also provided context for the institutions through which States contribute to the Authority's work.

The Secretariat presentation on the Economic Planning Commission connected institutional architecture with development concerns. Its treatment of the Commission's functions and relevance to LLDCs helped explain the place of economic analysis and the interests of developing land-based mineral-producing States within the regime. The practical issue for national authorities is to identify the economic and mining expertise needed to follow these discussions and contribute through applicable procedures.

This introduction helped participants understand where issues are considered, how ISA bodies contribute and why national participation extends beyond mining operations. It provided a basis for explaining the Authority's work to decision-makers and identifying the expertise needed for different discussions.

2.2 Exploration regulation and oversight

The exploration presentation explained the system through the life of a contract: application, plan of work, contract, exploration activities, environmental obligations, reporting and oversight, periodic review, and possible extension or transition. This sequence linked legal requirements with the continuing responsibilities that arise during implementation.

The presentations also addressed the responsibilities of sponsoring States and contractors. These subjects clarified that an application is the beginning of a continuing set of responsibilities. Countries considering sponsorship need to understand the regulatory, technical and environmental requirements and the institutions needed to meet them.

For participants, the practical contribution was a clearer distinction between the functions of the Secretariat, LTC, Council, sponsoring States and contractors. Environmental responsibilities were presented as integral to the exploration lifecycle. This gives officials a basis for asking informed questions about national readiness, oversight and the expertise needed for continued engagement.

The lifecycle approach made the system easier to follow for participants with different levels of familiarity with ISA. It connected procedures with practical responsibilities and helped identify questions that national authorities would need to examine.

2.3 Pathways for participation and application assessment

The presentation on application assessment explained the respective roles of the Secretariat, LTC and Council. It linked eligibility, submission and assessment to the institutional steps leading to a decision. The treatment of eligible applicants covered States Parties, the Enterprise, State enterprises, and natural or juridical persons, together with participation through groups, partnerships or consortia subject to applicable requirements.

The wider participation framework included representation in ISA processes, scientific cooperation, training, sponsorship, the Enterprise and reserved areas. The presentations explained how these mechanisms relate to developing-country participation and the conditions that govern access.

Participants could distinguish the available pathways and the preparation each requires. Diplomatic and scientific engagement can be strengthened while a country separately considers whether sponsorship is appropriate. This distinction supports informed national choices.

2.4 Equitable benefit sharing from activities in the Area

The presentations connected the legal foundations of the common heritage principle with analysis of possible benefit-sharing mechanisms and the work of the Finance Committee. Together, the contributions explained the purpose of equitable sharing and the practical choices involved in its implementation.

The material explained why the design of distribution mechanisms matters to LLDCs. Direct allocations, fund-based approaches and combinations raise different questions about eligibility, predictability, access, governance and development results. A possible Common Heritage Fund was considered as an option requiring further examination, rather than an established source of funding.

Participants were provided with a basis for evaluating proposals in relation to national interests. Financial expertise is needed to understand distribution assumptions, while development

institutions can help assess how benefits might support scientific cooperation, training and institutional strengthening. Illustrative models should remain clearly identified as analytical tools, rather than forecasts or agreed entitlements.

2.5 Article 82 from obligation to implementation

The session on Article 82 addressed its legal framework, implementation questions and the distribution of payments or contributions. The presentations connected the underlying obligation with lessons from technical work and the Finance Committee's consideration of equitable sharing.

The presentations examined the arrangements needed to implement the obligation. These included identifying responsibilities, exchanging information, calculating amounts, making payments or contributions, acknowledging receipt and reconciling records. Elements of a possible model agreement helped explain the operational issues requiring further consideration.

For LLDCs, the immediate value was to understand why implementation and distribution questions require sustained attention. Officials need to distinguish the coastal State's role from ISA's role and assess how equitable-sharing proposals could address developing-country interests. Contributions in kind also raise practical questions that differ from receiving funds and would require appropriate operational arrangements.

2.6 Terrestrial mining experience and engagement with the Area

The presentation connected existing terrestrial mining capabilities with participation in the seabed regime. Geological surveys, mineral-resource assessment, environmental management, laboratory work, data systems and public administration provide relevant starting points for cooperation.

The practical question was how to use existing strengths while recognising the additional requirements of deep-sea activities. Marine environmental knowledge, specialised technology and the institutional framework governing the Area require further learning. A national mining tradition can support engagement, but does not by itself establish readiness for sponsorship or seabed operations.

The discussion helped participants recognise the relevance of existing strengths and the value of partnerships that combine terrestrial expertise with specialised marine knowledge.

2.7 Capacity development and scientific cooperation

The final substantive stage examined capacity development, scientific cooperation, technology and knowledge. It presented training and research as practical forms of participation and considered how cooperation can connect national institutions with marine expertise and scientific networks.

The discussions covered ISA capacity development, contractor training and marine scientific research initiatives. Fellowships, internships, secondments and other learning opportunities were considered alongside institutional partnerships and access to research material. This provided a broader understanding of non-monetary benefits and their potential contribution to national scientific capabilities.

A deep-sea biobank initiative in the Republic of Korea was discussed as an example of scientific cooperation that could connect researchers with marine samples and research networks. The exchange illustrated the relevance of scientific partnerships to countries whose institutions have limited access to such material.

The presentations also explained how training and research opportunities relate to the different subjects addressed earlier in the programme. Legal, financial, geological and environmental expertise each contribute to participation in ISA. Connecting these disciplines helped participants consider how individual learning opportunities can support a continuing institutional contribution.

The programme thus moved from understanding the regime to recognising practical ways to engage with it. Its value lay in making the subjects accessible to participants with different levels of experience while retaining the technical substance needed for informed discussion.

3. Priorities identified by participants

Participants' contributions highlighted their interest in a sustained relationship with ISA across its mandate. The discussions brought together perspectives on equitable benefits, access to knowledge and the use of existing expertise, while recognising differences in national experience and development priorities.

Participants expressed interest in engaging more effectively with benefit-sharing, Article 82 and the EPC. They valued opportunities to examine the legal, economic and financial issues in greater depth and to relate the options under discussion to their countries' interests. Clear technical explanations were identified as useful for supporting national consideration of these matters.

Training, internships and research opportunities attracted particular interest as practical means of participation. Participants highlighted the importance of access to marine scientific knowledge, research material and institutional partnerships. The exchanges also addressed paid internships and clarified that Junior Professional Officer opportunities depend on external sponsorship.

The discussions recognized the relevance of geological surveys, mining institutions, universities and environmental expertise. Participants explored how these capabilities could support engagement with the Area and cooperation among countries and institutions. Terrestrial mining experience provided a useful foundation for considering scientific and technical partnerships.

Dedicated consultations with African LLDCs and LLDCs that are also LDCs enabled participants to relate these interests to their particular circumstances. The exchanges addressed opportunities for further workshops, research and project cooperation, including through regional institutions. They reinforced the importance of activities responding to country priorities and providing practical, lasting benefits.

4. High level dialogue and institutional cooperation

Meetings with authorities responsible for foreign affairs, coordination and planning, mining policy and the Bolivian Navy explored closer cooperation with ISA. The discussions connected Bolivia's geological and mining expertise with scientific and technical opportunities under the international seabed regime.

The authorities informally expressed interest in assessing possible sponsorship of activities in the Area. The exchange addressed the legal and institutional preparation that this would require, taking

account of national legislation and constitutional provisions. The interest was exploratory and did not constitute an application. The Navy expressed particular interest in capacity development, while participation by national experts in ISA activities and bodies was also discussed, subject to applicable procedures.

The meeting with companies and mining-sector representatives provided an opportunity to explain ISA and the legal, scientific and environmental requirements associated with activities in the Area. Participants discussed Bolivia's mineral potential and national mining context. The exchange connected sector expertise with a broader understanding of the seabed regime and the forms of cooperation available.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator offered to help identify experts and disseminate relevant opportunities. The discussion highlighted how the UN country presence could connect ISA initiatives with national ministries, universities and scientific institutions.

The African LLDC consultation addressed the proposed ISA–African Union memorandum of understanding and cooperation through the Joint Training and Research Centre in Alexandria. These discussions considered ways to organise sustained training and research around African priorities. Exchanges also addressed possible cooperation with the United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries. Together, the meetings broadened the institutional relationships relevant to future engagement.

5. The Santa Cruz Roadmap

Participants translated the workshop discussions into the Santa Cruz Roadmap for the effective participation of LLDCs in the regime of the Area and benefit-sharing mechanisms under UNCLOS. As the event's principal collective product, it sets out a framework for cooperation among LLDCs, ISA, UN-OHRLLS and relevant partners, including the African Union and ITTLLDC.

The Roadmap is organized around six pillars. These bring the substantive issues considered during the workshop together with practical activities for continued cooperation.

Implementation of Article 82 of UNCLOS

The Roadmap identifies technical and legal workshops and a study on implementation, including potential revenues and benefit-sharing scenarios. It provides for consideration of model-agreement elements and outstanding operational questions, as well as further consideration of paragraph 4 of Article 82 by the relevant ISA organs, without prejudging decisions of States Parties.

Capacity development and institutional preparedness of LLDCs

National capacity mapping and legislative assessment are linked to fellowships, internships, secondments, workshops and online learning. The Roadmap calls for a specific training target for LLDC nationals and encourages ISA, UN-OHRLLS and ITTLLDC to explore cooperation on policy research, capacity development and knowledge-sharing.

Equitable sharing of financial and non monetary benefits

The Roadmap calls for comparative analysis of direct distribution and fund-based mechanisms, together with further examination of a possible Common Heritage Fund. It identifies non-monetary benefits and opportunities associated with reserved areas, the Enterprise and the functions of the EPC as subjects for continued work.

Representation diplomatic coordination and participation in ISA

The Roadmap encourages national focal points, technical follow-up and coordination through Permanent Missions. It provides for an ISA–LLDC dialogue linked to the Assembly and a follow-up meeting in New York, and encourages participation by LLDC nationals in the relevant ISA organs in accordance with applicable rules.

Partnerships resource mobilization and international cooperation

A matrix of potential funding sources will distinguish eligibility requirements, procedures and areas of support, as well as potential sources, applications submitted and resources committed. The Roadmap promotes South-South cooperation and partnerships with universities, scientific centres, contractors and the private sector, alongside joint projects with clear objectives and lasting benefits.

Alignment with other international frameworks

The Roadmap links cooperation with the Awaza Programme of Action 2024–2034 and promotes a repository of legal, technical and training materials drawing on ISA's existing resources. These provisions connect the workshop outcome with the wider LLDC development agenda and continued access to specialised knowledge.

Follow up and expected results

The Roadmap envisages a Coordination Group comprising ISA, UN-OHRLLS, Bolivia as Chair of the LLDC Group, the Thematic Coordinators of the Global LLDC Group and national focal points. The Group will prioritise activities, assign responsibilities with partners and review progress.

Initial actions are envisaged for the final quarter of 2026, including dissemination of the Roadmap, preparation of the New York follow-up, identification of partners and resources, and advancement of substantive activities. Baselines and quantitative targets are to be established in the first quarter of 2027. Monitoring will cover focal points, training, studies, participation, partnerships and funding sources identified.

The expected results include technical studies, training and scientific cooperation programmes, stronger participation and a portfolio of projects with potential funding sources. The Roadmap provides continuity between the knowledge developed in Santa Cruz and sustained cooperation, while preserving country ownership and respect for applicable mandates and procedures.

Annex I Santa Cruz Roadmap

SANTA CRUZ ROADMAP FOR THE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE REGIME OF THE AREA AND BENEFIT-SHARING MECHANISMS UNDER UNCLOS

I. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

Within the framework of the Awaza Programme of Action 2024–2034, the Santa Cruz Roadmap establishes a framework for cooperation among Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), the International Seabed Authority (ISA), the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), and relevant partners, including the African Union (AU) and the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries (ITTLLDC), based in Mongolia. Its objective is to strengthen the effective and sustained participation of LLDCs in the regime of the Area to promote their equitable access to the financial and non-monetary benefits provided for under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The Roadmap translates the priorities of the Santa Cruz de la Sierra Workshop, held from 13 to 15 October 2026, into actions concerning national capacities, diplomatic and technical participation, benefit-sharing, the implementation of Article 82 and resource mobilization. Its implementation will be aligned with the Awaza Programme of Action 2024–2034 and other relevant processes, with due regard for the mandates and scope of application of each regime.

Pillar 1. Implementation of Article 82 of UNCLOS

The technical and legal exchanges highlighted the importance of promoting legal, financial and institutional mechanisms to advance the implementation of Article 82, concerning payments and contributions in respect of the exploitation of non-living resources of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles, with particular attention to the interests and needs of developing countries and LLDCs.

To this end, it is important for ISA to support the organization of technical and legal workshops for officials working in legal, economic, technical and financial matters. As part of the workshops, a study will be prepared on the implementation of Article 82, including potential revenues and benefit-sharing scenarios, taking into account relevant information on the outer limits of the continental shelf submitted to the Secretary General of the United Nations and the Secretary General of the ISA in accordance with the provisions of Part VI of the Convention. The workshop will also examine elements of a model agreement and operational options for outstanding legal and technical issues. Consideration of paragraph 4 of Article 82 will be promoted within the relevant ISA organs, including the Finance Committee and the Assembly, with a view to developing recommendations and practical mechanisms, without prejudging the decisions of States Parties.

Pillar 2. Capacity development and institutional preparedness of LLDCs

To strengthen the effectiveness of LLDCs as a negotiating group, it is essential to map national capacities, identifying geological surveys, ministries, environmental authorities, universities, research centres, specialists and databases, alongside a legislative assessment to identify gaps and scientific and technical needs.

On this basis, it is essential to promote fellowships, internships, secondments, workshops, online courses, webinars and access to training programmes offered by ISA and its contractors, with a view to establishing a specific training target for LLDC nationals and fostering South-South cooperation with States possessing relevant experience.

ISA, UN-OHRLLS and the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries (ITTLLDC), based in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, are encouraged to explore opportunities for cooperation in policy research, capacity development, knowledge-sharing and follow-up activities to support the effective participation of LLDCs in the regime of the Area, in line with the Awaza Programme of Action 2024–2034.

Pillar 3. Equitable sharing of financial and non-monetary benefits

LLDCs should promote benefit-sharing mechanisms that take into account their special circumstances and development priorities. A comparative analysis should therefore be undertaken relating to the direct distribution of financial resources and fund-based mechanisms, assessing predictability, eligibility, access, and their respective advantages and entitlements, while retaining the possibility of combining approaches.

With regard to a possible Common Heritage Fund, options for financing, governance, project selection and eligibility should be reviewed further, particularly in relation to training, scientific cooperation, technical assistance and institutional strengthening.

Priority non-monetary benefits will also be identified, including shared scientific facilities, data platforms, joint research, and the transfer of science and technology. Opportunities associated with areas reserved for developing countries, the Enterprise of ISA and the functions of the Economic Planning Commission will also be identified. The findings will inform recommendations and coordinated positions.

Pillar 4. Representation, diplomatic coordination and participation in ISA

Each LLDC will be encouraged to designate a national focal point to coordinate implementation of the Roadmap, exchange information and identify needs. A coordination mechanism will be established to follow negotiations within the Authority, analyze financial proposals and explore common positions, while respecting the autonomy of each State. An expert group (think tank) will also be established to provide technical follow-up.

Efforts will be made to convene an ISA–LLDC dialogue in connection with the ISA's Assembly, as well as a follow-up meeting in New York to review the workshop's outcomes, agree on next steps and establish a timetable. The participation of LLDC nationals in the relevant ISA organs will also be encouraged, in accordance with the applicable rules.

Liaison mechanism

LLDCs are encouraged to coordinate their positions through Permanent Missions

Pillar 5. Partnerships, resource mobilization and international cooperation

The need was identified for a matrix of potential funding sources specifying eligibility requirements, application procedures and areas of support. Options to be considered include the ISA Partnership Fund, bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and national budgets.

The matrix will distinguish between potential sources, applications submitted and resources committed. A South-South cooperation network and partnerships with universities, scientific centres, ISA contractors and the private sector will be promoted to support exchanges of experience, training, research and technology transfer.

Joint projects suitable for funding will be promoted, with clear objectives, transparency, accountability, and verifiable and lasting benefits for LLDCs.

Pillar 6. Alignment with other international frameworks

The Roadmap will be aligned with the Awaza Programme of Action 2024–2034 to connect its five priority areas for development with opportunities under the regime of the Area, translating these linkages into training, technical cooperation, knowledge-sharing and resource mobilization to give effect to rights under international law.

The development of a repository of legal documents, technical studies, training materials and national experiences will also be promoted to facilitate access to specialized information and preserve institutional memory, drawing on ISA's existing library of materials on the Area.

FOLLOW-UP

A Coordination Group comprising ISA, UN-OHRLLS, Bolivia as Chair of the LLDC Group, the Thematic Coordinators of the Global LLDC Group and national focal points will prioritize activities, assign responsibilities in collaboration with relevant partners and review progress.

Monitoring indicators should cover the designation of focal points, training activities, studies, participation in training, partnerships and funding sources identified. Baselines and quantitative targets will be established in the first quarter of 2027.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

During the final quarter of 2026, the Roadmap will be disseminated, preparations will be made for the follow-up meeting in New York, partners and funding sources will be identified, the designation of focal points will be encouraged and the Coordination Group will be established.

Work will also be advanced on the Article 82 workshop, the mapping of capacities, the benefit-sharing analysis and the identification of training opportunities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The expected results include an operational coordination mechanism; national assessments and studies on Article 82 and benefit-sharing; training and scientific cooperation programmes; stronger diplomatic coordination and LLDC participation in ISA; and strengthened partnerships and a portfolio of projects with potential funding sources identified.

These results should help ensure that the development needs of LLDCs are taken into account in benefit-sharing mechanisms.

FINAL PROVISION

The Santa Cruz Roadmap provides a framework for cooperation to progressively strengthen LLDC participation in the regime of the Area and the benefit-sharing mechanisms provided for under UNCLOS.

Its implementation requires sustained commitment, institutional coordination, resource mobilization and respect for applicable mandates and procedures. LLDCs are invited to designate focal points, identify priorities and technical assistance needs, and contribute to the first operational work programme. The Roadmap remains open to all LLDCs and may be updated to reflect progress and national priorities.

Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Plurinational State of Bolivia, 15 October 2026.

Annex II Workshop programme

The workshop was organized by the International Seabed Authority (ISA), in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), and the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia as Chair of the LLDC Group. It was held at the AECID Training Centre, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, from 13 to 15 October 2026 and was structured around thirteen agenda items over three days. The programme below reflects the final annotated agenda.

Day 1 Tuesday 13 October 2026 Understanding the regime and participation pathways

Time	Session
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; Secretary-General Leticia Reis de Carvalho, International Seabed Authority; H.E. Rabab Fatima, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative (UN-OHRLLS) – video message; 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 Moderator: 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
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:30	Agenda item 4. Exploration in the Area: regulation, responsibilities and oversight Moderator: 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

Time	Session
	Vladimir Antonovich Petrov (Russian Federation) – Role and responsibilities of the contractors Plenary discussion
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 17:30	Agenda item 5. Pathways for LLDC participation in the ISA regime Moderator: 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
19:00 – 21:00	Cultural dinner hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for all workshop participants

Day 2 Wednesday 14 October 2026 Benefit sharing Article 82 and mineral development perspectives

Time	Session
09:00 – 10:30	Agenda item 6. Benefit-sharing from activities in the Area: principles, mechanisms and LLDC interests Moderator: 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
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	Agenda item 7. Article 82 of UNCLOS: payments, distribution and implications for LLDCs Moderator: 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
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:30	Agenda item 8. LLDC perspectives on benefit-sharing and participation in ocean governance Moderator: Aleksei Shapoval (ISA)

Time	Session
	Amb. Duncan Laki (Uganda) – LLDC contribution to benefit-sharing in ISA processes and broader ocean governance, including implementation agreements under UNCLOS Plenary discussion
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 17:30	Agenda item 9. From terrestrial mining to participation in the Area: critical minerals, transferable capacities and partnerships Moderator: Yongsheng Cai (ISA) Kaiser de Sousa (ISA) – Linkages between terrestrial mining experience and engagement with the ISA Plenary discussion

Day 3 Thursday 15 October 2026 Capacity development and the Santa Cruz Roadmap

Time	Session
09:00 – 10:30	Agenda item 10. Identifying LLDC capacity-development needs and priorities Moderator: 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
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	Agenda item 11. Non-monetary benefits: capacity development, science, technology and knowledge Moderator: 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
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:00	Agenda item 12. From dialogue to action: developing the Santa Cruz Roadmap Moderator: 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

Time	Session
	Roadmap and follow-up actions, and closing of the workshop

Back-to-back with the workshop, a one-day meeting with national officials of Bolivia from government offices and technical institutions explored further participation of Bolivia in the activities carried out by ISA.

Annex III List of participants

A total of 49 participants attended the workshop: 34 representatives of LLDCs, partner States and experts, 8 members of the ISA Secretariat and the Enterprise, and 7 host and support personnel.

Participants

No.	Surname	First name	Country	Affiliation
1	Hasanov	Shavig	Azerbaijan	Ministry of Digital Development and Transport of Azerbaijan
2	Wangchuk	Kezang	Bhutan	Social and Development Division, Department of Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade of Bhutan
3	Alfaro Palma	Ernesto Adalid	Bolivia	Bolivian Navy, Ministry of Defence of Bolivia
4	Condori Mamani	Eugenia	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
5	de la Cruz	Guadalupe Palomeque	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
6	Ferrufino Bascopé	Raúl Alejandro	Bolivia	Bolivian International Registry of Ships (RIBB), Ministry of Defence of Bolivia
7	Huanca Gutiérrez	Héctor Francisco	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
8	Ide	Carlos Paz	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
9	Lázaro Rosas	Cristhian	Bolivia	Bolivian Navy, Ministry of Defence of Bolivia
10	López Terrazas	José Luis	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
11	Quispe Nina	Gladys	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the

No.	Surname	First name	Country	Affiliation
				Plurinational State of Bolivia
12	Sandy Quinteros	Carla Lorena	Bolivia	Permanent Mission of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the United Nations
13	Yujra Surco	Edwin Felix	Bolivia	Ministry of Mining and Metallurgy of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
14	Zubieta Mariscal	Franz Jhasmany	Bolivia	Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)
15	Molomo	Keneilwe Latoya	Botswana	Ministry of International Relations of Botswana
16	Some	Gaston Olivier	Burkina Faso	Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso to the United Nations
17	Gulema	Tolossa Fufa	Ethiopia	Ministry of Transport and Logistics of Ethiopia
18	Sengdara	Xayfhong	Lao PDR	Department of Treaty and Law, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao PDR
19	Chibwana	Mathata Celeste	Malawi	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Malawi
20	Camara	Mamadou	Mali	Directorate of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali
21	Carrera Hurtado	Galo	Mexico	Independent (International Consultant)
22	Byambaa	Otgonbaatar	Mongolia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia

No.	Surname	First name	Country	Affiliation
23	Gangaa	Ganbaatar	Mongolia	Ministry of Transport of Mongolia
24	Tsenguun	Shijir	Mongolia	Mongolian Maritime Administration
25	Aryal	Krishna	Nepal	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal
26	Aboubacar Daddo	Idrissa	Niger	Permanent Mission of Niger to the United Nations
27	Aguayo	Virgilio David Medina	Paraguay	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay
28	Shapovalov	Anton Dmitrievich	Russian Federation	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation
29	Petrov	Vladimir Antonovich	Russian Federation	Department of Geology and Mineral Resources of the World Ocean, Russian Federation
30	Casas	Fernando García	Spain	Embassy of Spain in La Paz
31	Muhumuza	Duncan Laki	Uganda	Permanent Mission of the Republic of Uganda to the United Nations
32	Njekwa	Namatama	Zambia	Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations
33	Chiutsi	Collen	Zimbabwe	Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe to the United Nations
34	Dhliwayo	Brenda Joy	Zimbabwe	Ministry of Environment, Climate and Wildlife of Zimbabwe

International Seabed Authority

No.	Surname	First name	Title
35	Reis de Carvalho	Leticia	Secretary-General
36	Cai	Yongsheng	Director, Office of Contract Management and Capacity-Building
37	Dallo Moros	Jose	Director, Office of Stewardship,

No.	Surname	First name	Title
			Environment and Resources
38	Charles	Eden	Interim Director-General, The Enterprise
39	Shapoval	Aleksei	Senior Professional Officer (Mineral Resources and Economic Development)
40	Alcolea Krauss	Rebecca	Policy and Strategic Initiatives Officer
41	Navoti	Asenaca	Senior Liaison Assistant, Office of the Permanent Observer for the International Seabed Authority to the United Nations in New York
42	de Souza	Kaiser	Senior Adviser for Ocean Governance

Host and support

No.	Surname	First name	Country	Affiliation
43	Tigreros-Acevedo	Leonardo	Colombia	United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)
44	Claros Gómez	Brayan Alberto	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
45	Molina	Lionel Magne	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
46	Porcel Celis	Gabriel Fernando	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
47	Quezada	Fernanda	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
48	Ramírez Delboy	Álvaro Gabriel	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
49	Vitto Flores	Adrián Alexandro	Bolivia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia