STOP DEEP SEABED MINING

BEFORE THE INDUSTRY WIPES OUT PARTS OF THE PLANET WE KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT.
We know less about the deep seabed than we know about the moon. And yet, a new extractive industry is intent to scrape off millions of km$^2$ from this fragile ecosystem. The consequences could be dramatic. Many species living in the deep sea are found nowhere else; disturbances in just one mining site could wipe out entire species. According to scientists, closing the scientific gaps related to deep seabed mining would be a “monumental task”. In fact, over 620 scientists have said no to the industry because there isn’t enough rigorous scientific information available concerning deep sea species and ecosystems.

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) is working on global rules covering deep seabed mining, which might be finalised as soon as 2023. If the industry proceeds, the intensity and methods of deep seabed mining could remove entire habitats, species and the services they provide. This is a risk that we simply can’t afford to take. With our ocean already under major strain from overexploitation, the last thing we need is a new threat to ocean life. The consequences could very well be irreversible for the ocean and humanity.

The deep seabed mining industry would have you believe that its activities are paving the way towards a sustainable future. Read on to find out why that’s not the case.

Using destructive and damaging extracting technologies far away in the deep sea to power the renewable energy revolution makes no sense. We don’t need minerals from the deep sea. In fact, the minerals we need are all around us. We just need to be smarter about recovering/repurposing them to fuel the renewables sector.

Governments have a shrinking window of time to push for a moratorium on deep seabed mining, and to let the science speak. Failing that, they’ll be complicit to the accelerated demise of the ocean.

There is growing momentum against deep seabed mining, from some of the largest brands in the world, to groups of committed citizens, and parliamentarians to leading scientists.

1,000 species discovered in a 30km$^2$ area of abyssal plain allocated for deep seabed mining. 90% of recently studied deep ocean animal species are new to science.

Sources:
2. Amon et al. (2022) Assessment of scientific gaps related to the effective environmental management of deep-seabed mining. Marine Policy
The potential risks of deep seabed mining are clear, and opposition to the industry is growing globally. Even the UN Environment Programme’s Finance Initiative has recommended that investors shun deep seabed mining. Instead of perpetuating a linear and extractive model, it’s time to be bold and innovative — and embrace the circular economy. How? By reducing demand for primary materials. Through product-life extension and materials recovery among others, governments can lead the way towards a “closed-loop” economy that works with nature, not against it.

The circular economy is not a distant vision. It’s a US$4.5 trillion opportunity that is spurring more and more companies across industries to adopt circular principles to reduce costs, increase revenues, and manage risks.

The fate of millions of km$^2$ of deep seabed—and the countless amazing animals that live there—now lies in the hands of decision makers. These fragile ecosystems are out of sight, but no longer out of mind — and this provides our political leadership with a momentous opportunity to create a legacy that will impact generations to come.

SAY NO TO DEEP SEABED MINING

#DEFENDTHEDEEP

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