STOP DEEP SEABED MINING

BEFORE INDUSTRY WIPES OUT PARTS OF THE PLANET WE KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT.
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.

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.

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 650 scientists have said no to the industry because there isn’t enough rigorous scientific information available concerning deep sea species and ecosystems.


Amon et al. (2022) Assessment of scientific gaps related to the effective environmental management of deep-seabed mining. Marine Policy

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.

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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

1.2 MILLION KM$^2$ area of ocean floor already licensed for mining by the ISA
From some of the largest brands in the world, to civil society movements, from global leaders and parliamentarians to leading scientists.

– Dr. Diva Amon

Deep-sea mining will have direct impacts that we can easily predict as well as possible indirect impacts that may be much harder to forecast. We need to be guided by science when faced with decisions of such great environmental consequence.

– Sir David Attenborough

The rush to mine this pristine and unexplored environment risks creating terrible impacts that cannot be reversed. We need to be guided by science when faced with decisions of such great environmental consequence.

– Patrick Hudde

Head of Supply Chain Sustainability and Indirect Purchasing Raw Materials Management, BMW Group

There are currently insufficient scientific findings to be able to assess the environmental risks of deep-sea mining. For this reason, raw materials from deep-sea mining are not an option for the BMW Group at the present time.

– Mario Galbert

Jamaican Youth delegate, co-chair of the UN decade on ecosystem restoration youth task force

The children and youth group recognize that we need to call for support from some member states on the need to put a moratorium on deep seabed mining. It is not worth the risk, we firmly believe the cost outweighs the short-term benefits.

– Surangel Whipps

President of Palau

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WWF wants a moratorium on deep seabed mining activities, unless and until...

1. The environmental, social and economic risks are comprehensively understood.

2. It is demonstrated that deep seabed mining does not harm the marine environment and prevents biodiversity loss.

3. Where relevant, the free, prior, informed consent of potentially affected Indigenous peoples and local communities is sought.

4. Alternative sources for the responsible production and use of the metals also found in the deep sea have been fully explored and applied.

5. Public consultation mechanisms are established and there is broad and informed public support for deep seabed mining.

6. Member States reform the International Seabed Authority to ensure a transparent, accountable, inclusive and environmentally responsible decision-making and regulatory process.
THE GREEN TRANSITION DOES NOT NEED MINERALS FROM THE DEEP SEA.

Check out the smart way forward to protect people and the planet

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

For all products and materials, from extraction, use, and disposal:
• Reduce the demand for minerals
• Extend the lifetime of products and materials
• Recycle all basic materials

RECYCLING — SUBSTITUTE FOR MINERAL EXTRACTION

• Increase collection rates
• Upscale best available techniques for mineral recovery from low-carbon technologies
• Capitalize on urban mining

Our target is to source 50% of metals for battery cell production from recycling by 2030

- Northvolt

TECHNOLOGICAL CHOICES

CIRCULAR ECONOMY - 18%

WE CAN REDUCE THE MINERALS DEMAND BY 58%

Cumulative mineral demand: 690Mt

Shift to new technologies with less critical minerals:
• Batteries
• Stationary applications without lithium-ion batteries
• Electric traction motors and wind turbine generators with low or no rare earth elements

TECHNOLOGICAL CHOICES

RESIDUAL DEMAND

By 2050, most of the minerals needed for the green transition will be supplied by recycled minerals

Cumulative mineral demand: 362Mt

Click here to read The Circular Economy and Critical Minerals for the Green Transition Report

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Check out the smart way forward to protect people and the planet
The risks of deep seabed mining are clear, and opposition to the industry is growing globally. The UN Environment Programme’s Finance Initiative recommends 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 km² 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

wwf.panda.org/noDSM