



# FACTSHEET

NO DEEP SEABED MINING



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## PROTECTING THE SEABED BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

There is widespread concern in the scientific community about deep seabed mining (DSM) and the irreversible impact it would have on delicately balanced deep ocean ecosystems. Economists are also projecting far-reaching consequences for the industries and communities that depend on a healthy ocean. The International Seabed Authority (ISA) – the agency that, paradoxically, is responsible for licensing DSM while also protecting the ocean from its impact – has proven itself unfit for purpose. We urgently need to change course, before irreparable damage is done.

**“A transition towards a 100% renewable energy supply – often referred to as the ‘energy revolution’ – can take place without DSM.”**

*Report by the Institute for Sustainable Futures*

### DANGERS OF DEEP SEABED MINING



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- 01** Destruction of habitats and loss of biodiversity
- 02** Release of toxic chemicals, waste products and sediment plumes
- 03** Noise pollution affecting whales, dolphins, sea turtles and fish
- 04** Compromise of future scientific discoveries and developments
- 05** Disruption of livelihoods and food sources due to impact on fisheries

**1,000**

species discovered in a 30km<sup>2</sup> area of abyssal plain allocated for DSM

**90%**

of recently studied deep ocean animal species are new to science

**1.2 million km<sup>2</sup>**

area of ocean floor already licensed for mining by the ISA

The ocean is worth more than just the value of its finite resources. The intrinsic long-term benefits of a healthy ocean far outweigh any short-term incentives offered by deep seabed mining. Opening up this new frontier for extraction would destabilize delicate ocean ecosystems and fatally undermine the foundations of a circular ocean economy.

## TARGET A global moratorium on deep seabed mining

Growing demand for metals and minerals doesn't have to cost the Earth. Alternative solutions already exist – a combination of innovation, recycling and repair can satisfy industries' need for raw materials without opening the seafloor to mining. It doesn't have to be a choice; the journey to a more sustainable future begins with a simple decision: No deep seabed mining.

Guided by the Sustainable Development Goals 14 (conserve and sustainably use marine resources) and 12 (responsible consumption and production), WWF is working across sectors to propose alternative solutions.



### Businesses

can source their materials through more conventional, less destructive means of extraction, and invest in innovation, recycling and reparability.



### Consumers

can recycle their old phones, reduce consumption and investigate where their materials come from.



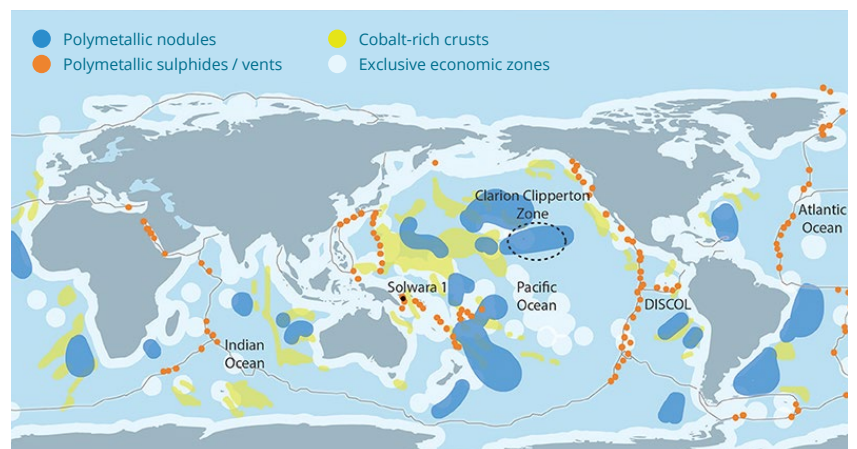
### Government

can support a global moratorium on deep seabed mining and invest in the circular economy.

## A GLOBAL MORATORIUM

**A global moratorium on all deep seabed mining activities is urgently needed. Extraction must not go ahead until the environmental, social and economic risks are understood, and all alternatives to deep sea minerals have been explored. Then appropriate regulation would be needed to protect the marine environment and human well-being.**

The threat of seabed mining anywhere is a threat to ocean health everywhere



Calls for a moratorium are increasing, with local and international NGOs, community leaders, scientists, governments and fishers' organizations leading the way. WWF is proud to take this stand for our ocean alongside a global coalition of individuals, businesses and governments. It is now a question of what reaches the ocean floor first: Protection in the form of a global moratorium, or the deep-sea bulldozers of DSM.

**"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."**

Sir David Attenborough, March 2020



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