



## Assembly

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### Twenty-third session

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**Consideration of requests for observer status in accordance with rule 82, paragraphs 1 (d) and (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly**

### **Request for observer status in accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly on behalf of the International Policy Laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

#### **Note by the secretariat**

1. On 22 May 2017, the International Policy Laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology submitted a letter to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, requesting observer status in the Assembly of the Authority. The text of the letter and additional information provided by the applicant are contained in annexes I and II to the present note.
2. In accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, non-governmental organizations with which the Secretary-General has entered into arrangements in accordance with article 169, paragraph 1, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and other non-governmental organizations invited by the Assembly that have demonstrated their interest in matters under consideration by the Assembly, may participate as observers in the Assembly.
3. Paragraphs 5 and 6 of the same rule further provide that observers referred to in paragraph 1 (e) of that rule may sit at public meetings of the Assembly and, upon the invitation of the President and subject to approval by the Assembly, may make oral statements on questions within the scope of their activities, and that written statements submitted by observers referred to in paragraph 1 (e) of that rule within the scope of their activities that are relevant to the work of the Assembly should be made available by the secretariat in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements are submitted.

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\* ISBA/23/A/L.1.



## Annex I

### **Letter dated 22 May 2017 from the International Policy Laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology addressed to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority**

The International Policy Laboratory (IPL) of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) requests approval by the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority of the present application for observer status under rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

The Laboratory facilitates the connection of research conducted at MIT with national and international policymakers and organizations that may benefit from that work. IPL supports the deep seabed mining project led by Professor Thomas Peacock of the Department of Mechanical Engineering of MIT.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology first began to work on international aspects of deep seabed mining in 1976 and was represented at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea by members of an MIT project on technology and the costs of deep seabed mining. The representatives of MIT worked as friends of the Conference in support of negotiations on financial terms of contract and production policies. They also went on to support the work of the Preparatory Commission, the Under-Secretary-General for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and the International Seabed Authority.

Professor Peacock is renewing the engagement of MIT in deep seabed minerals research, in cooperation with other academic research organizations, including the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. The researchers and IPL, collectively referred to as the "MIT team", hope to provide research results and other information relevant to the International Seabed Authority, delegates, contractors, observers and the public. Participation as an observer in the Assembly of the Authority, under the Assembly's rules of procedure, will facilitate the team's identification of and focus on the critical needs of the Authority in relation to ocean science, the marine environment, engineering and economics and will provide a mechanism for sharing results with the Authority, contractors, observers and other stakeholders.

We respectfully request the Assembly to grant observer status to the International Policy Laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and look forward to a long and mutually beneficial partnership.

*(Signed)* Chappell **Lawson**, Ph.D.  
Faculty Director, International Policy Laboratory  
Associate Professor  
Department of Political Science  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

*(Signed)* Thomas **Peacock**, D.Phil.  
Principal Investigator, Deep Seabed Minerals  
Professor  
Department of Mechanical Engineering  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

## Annex II

### International Seabed Authority observer status request

**1. Name of organization**

International Policy Laboratory, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**2. Address of office**

International Policy Laboratory  
 Room E40-435  
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
 Cambridge, MA 02139-4307  
 United States of America

**3. Names and addresses of proposed primary representatives**

*Faculty Director, International Policy Laboratory*  
 Chappell Lawson, Ph.D.  
 Department of Political Science  
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
 Cambridge, MA 02139

*Principal Contact*

*Managing Director and Senior Policy Adviser, International Policy Laboratory*  
 Daniel Pomeroy, Ph.D.  
 Department of Political Science  
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
 Cambridge, MA 02139

*Principal Investigator, Deep Seabed Minerals*

Thomas Peacock, D.Phil.  
 Department of Mechanical Engineering  
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
 Cambridge, MA 02139

**4. Aims and purpose of the International Policy Laboratory**

The mission of the International Policy Laboratory (IPL) is to enhance the impact of the research of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) on public policy, in order to best serve the nation and the world in the twenty-first century.

The Laboratory accomplishes its mission by:

- Assisting participating faculty in defining realistic policy goals and developing an effective impact plan on the basis of those goals
- Providing support for faculty members to translate their scholarship into workable policy recommendations and to deliver those recommendations to policymakers
- Working with partners to arrange meetings with relevant policymakers, media appearances, testimony and other events designed to impact the policy process

Examples of ongoing and upcoming work on deep seabed minerals include:

- Field experiments at sea to study the dewatering plumes that would be produced by surface ship nodule processing operations

- Numerical modelling of ocean transport for deep-sea mining (we are producing the only independent model of the proposed Solwara site)
- Student team working on the design of nodule harvesting vehicles
- Participation in workshops on deep-sea mining, including one to be convened at MIT later in 2017

Work at or affiliated with MIT will include technical modelling and economic analysis of deep seabed mining activities and assessment of potential operational regulations on both mineral collection and environmental impact.

## **5. History**

Through its Department of Ocean Engineering and the Sloan School of Management, in partnership with Harvard Law School, MIT began studies of deep seabed mining in 1973, concurrent with the first session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. From 1977 to 1980, MIT researchers contributed to the negotiation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. In 1979 and 1980, MIT researchers presented the MIT model of technology and costs to participants in the negotiation of the financial terms of contracts. In addition, two researchers attended sessions as friends of the Conference to support delegates and the Chair of Negotiating Group 2, on financial arrangements, Ambassador Tommy Koh. The team provided similar support in the negotiation of production policies under Ambassador Satya Nandan.

Following the adoption of the Convention in 1982, MIT and former team members continued to provide support to the Under-Secretary-General for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. MIT made contributions on analysis of future mineral markets to the Preparatory Commission for the International Seabed Authority and the United Nations and provided support as contractors to the International Seabed Authority on mineral market analysis, the implementation of voting rules, the status of technology, economic models of financial terms of contracts and the rules governing reporting on mineral resources and reserves.

## **6. Structure**

Work on deep seabed mining with IPL is conducted by researchers in departments and laboratories across MIT and directed by Professor Thomas Peacock in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Affiliated researchers will be drawn from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and other academic and institutional partners.

The Laboratory, through the deep seabed mining project, will partner with groups and organizations that may contribute to its mission, including:

- Rule of Law Committee for the Oceans (non-profit project focused on implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, with special attention to Part XI of the Convention)
- Marine Policy Center, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
- Consortium for Ocean Leadership (representing oceanographic research centres and institutions throughout the United States)

The project will also engage with several observers to the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority, including:

- Law of the Sea Institute, University of California at Berkeley
- Center for Oceans Law and Policy, University of Virginia

- Committee for Mineral Reserves International Reporting Standards
- African Minerals Development Centre
- The Pew Charitable Trusts
- International Union for Conservation of Nature

Through its deep seabed mining project, IPL is building relationships with contractors, international environmental non-governmental organizations, the European Cooperation in Science and Technology Actions programme and the African Minerals Development Centre.

#### **7. International Policy Laboratory collaborators**

Within the United States, IPL works with:

- Environmental Solutions Initiative, MIT
- Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
- Third Way
- MIT Office in Washington, D.C.

#### **8. Recent activities**

Immediately following the twenty-third session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority, Professor Peacock and Professor Pierre Lermusiaux will conduct at-sea studies of the behaviour of plumes of seawater in the Pacific Ocean that will provide insight into the dewatering activities associated with hydraulic lift systems for the recovery of nodules from the deep sea floor.

Caitlyn Antrim, a member of the MIT team, has developed an economic analysis tool for nodule exploitation activities for the secretariat of the International Seabed Authority. She has given presentations to workshops held by the Authority on mineral reserve reporting, the state of seabed technology and economics and the outlook for metal markets. She participated in a sensitization seminar held by the Authority in Mexico City in 2013 and has represented the Council on Ocean Law and the Law of the Sea Institute at seven sessions of the Assembly of the Authority.

#### **9. Descriptive statement on the extent to which the purposes of the International Policy Laboratory relate to those of the International Seabed Authority, including, in particular, the contributions that can be made to the work of the Authority**

The mission statement of MIT reads:

The mission of MIT is to advance knowledge and educate students in science, technology, and other areas of scholarship that will best serve the nation and the world in the twenty-first century.

The Institute is committed to generating, disseminating and preserving knowledge, and to working with others to bring this knowledge to bear on the world's great challenges. MIT is dedicated to providing its students with an education that combines rigorous academic study and the excitement of discovery with the support and intellectual stimulation of a diverse campus community. We seek to develop in each member of the MIT community the ability and passion to work wisely, creatively and effectively for the betterment of humankind.

With over 40 per cent of its graduate student body coming from other countries, MIT contributes globally to the advancement of research capabilities

around the world, with particular strength in its Center for Ocean Engineering, the Environmental Dynamics Laboratory and the Environmental Solutions Initiative.

The commitment of MIT to the implementation of its mission in relation with the International Seabed Authority is demonstrated by the work of MIT and its alumni over the past 45 years. MIT has worked to support the negotiation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the planning of the Preparatory Commission and the implementation of the Convention by the International Seabed Authority. Its work on the technology, environment and economics of deep seabed mining are strong indicators of the Institute's commitment to continuing its work in support of the mission of the International Seabed Authority in the future.

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