



Marine Mineral Resources of Africa's Continental Shelf and Adjacent International Seabed Area

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The workshop on Marine Mineral Resources of Africa's Continental Shelf and Adjacent International Seabed Area - Prospects for Sustainable Development of the African Maritime Domain in Support of Africa's Blue Economy was organized by the International Seabed Authority (ISA) and the Republic of Uganda in partnership with the African Mineral Development Centre (AMDC) and GRID-Arendal (Norway) and with the support of the African Union Commission (AUC), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the PEW Charitable Trust. It brought together over 60 participants from government mining ministries, international organizations, partner institutions, universities and other mining stakeholder groups. The workshop was held in Kampala, Uganda from 2-4 May 2017.

INTRODUCTION

The workshop discussed and proposed mechanisms for improving regional cooperation and participation of African countries in the deep seabed regime. It also addressed special interests of landlocked African countries. These issues were addressed within the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, SDG 14, which refers to conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

The workshop was planned to motivate African States to:

- Build relevant technical capacity in relation to activities in the deep seabed;
- Increase participation in decisions that affect the Area;
- Take part in the activities in the Area;

- Define and enable sustainable activities in Africa's continental shelf; and
- Contribute to the sustainable development of Africa's Blue Economy.

The workshop also contributed to the discussions and achievements of Africa's Blue Economy in the context of the Decade of African Seas and Oceans (2015-2025), which was launched by the African Union on 25 July 2015.

OUTCOMES

The main outcomes of the workshop were as follows:

- Raise awareness among African States, including the landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), about the importance of the Law of the Sea for the African continent and for the sustainable development of activities in the African continental shelf and adjacent international seabed areas;

- Raise awareness among African States, including the landlocked countries, of the politico-strategic and socioeconomic importance of the African continental shelf and adjacent international seabed areas, as well as help identify potential areas for scientific and technical cooperation;
- Produce guidelines on how to strengthen the Africa-based production, management and dissemination of geospatial information and how to create spatial data infrastructures (SDIs);
- Issue recommendations for the establishment of African Centres of Excellence, to provide African States with increased access to marine geoscientific information and high quality marine research, education and training; and
- Issue recommendations on how best to promote prospecting and exploration activities in the African continental shelf and adjacent oceanic areas by African initiatives.

Ultimately, the workshop provided an opportunity to demonstrate how the deep seabed could contribute to a sustainable African Blue Economy narrative to better reflect the kinds of development goals, partnerships, and forms of social reciprocity that African societies need as they move further into the 21st century.

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

The workshop was organized in five sessions:

Session 1 considered the socio-economic, political and strategic importance of the ISA and other entities created by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). It also considered the significance of the related rules, regulations and procedures, for the sustainable development of the African continent.

The topics of discussions and recommendations of the session focused on the development of legal frameworks with regard to Africa's Blue Economy, engagement in sustainable development of marine mining activities and how to further raise awareness of deep seabed mining among African states.

Session 2 was on state-of-the-art marine mineral exploration activities in the world's oceans and the prospect for sustainable development of activities on the African continental shelf and adjacent international seabed area. The discussions and recommendations focused on the potential for sustainable prospecting on the African continental shelf, the ISA and its scope, and the participation of African countries in the work of the ISA.

Session 3 discussed the importance of, and how to, strengthen the Africa-based production, management and dissemination of geological, mineral and environmental information to support decision-making, investment and governance of the African continental shelf and adjacent international seabed areas.



Photo L-R: Dr Kojo Busia, Director AMDC; Hussein Hassan, Head, Dept of Trade & Industry, African Union Commission; Secretary-General Michael Lodge, ISA; Kaiser de Souza, Head, Geology & Mineral Information Systems Section, AMDC; Chapi Mwango, Chief, Contract Management Unit, ISA.

The discussions and recommendations focused on the rationale behind deep seabed mining investments, African geological and mineral information systems and creating data centres to support policy making and stakeholder engagement in marine mining activities.

Session 4 discussed strategies for the establishment of African Centres of Excellence on seabed mapping and spatial planning. The discussions also addressed inter-institutional and regional collaboration and partnerships, and research and training platforms that could be used to inform industry and government about deep seabed mining issues.

Session 5 explored possible Private and Public Partnerships (PPP) for the development of African marine activities, as well as the prospects and requirements for the preparation of an application for a plan of work for exploration in the Area by African companies and governmental agencies.

The session also emphasized capacity building as a means to achieve responsible deep seabed mining activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for African countries:

- Raise awareness of the importance and impact of deep seabed mining, using established networks of institutions, experts, initiatives and organizations in the domestic and regional arena;
- Encourage governments of ISA-member States to be actively involved in the Authority's activities and encourage governments to consider membership to the ISA;
- Stimulate better understanding and increased awareness of the legal implications of the common heritage of humankind as it will inform policy-making;

- Form a collaborative body among African States to develop interest in deep seabed mining, by using the Pacific countries as a model of cooperation in deep seabed mining activities. This partnership can be organized regionally and embody collective action among its members with regard to seabed mining operations. This can also be utilized to sponsor contractors to engage in deep seabed exploration activities in reserved areas;
- Include environmental sustainable standards in African states' mining legislation, regulatory frameworks and policies in order to mitigate or minimize the environmental impact of mining activities;
- Develop a strategic approach to geo-spatial data collection, utilizing local sources, consortium of existing initiatives, research institutions and historical data, integrating these in a modernized data management system and cataloguing technologies;
- Engage the ISA in capacity building development for marine geology and seabed mining;
- Explore capacity building opportunities in deep seabed mining, particularly traineeship and scholarship schemes offered by ISA, InterRidge and other grant-giving bodies;
- Consider linkages of mining practices to the bottom-line and developing education, knowledge-building and capacity building in the field of deep seabed mining;
- Establish regional centres of excellence that are multi-disciplinary and inter-institutional and synergize local institutions to contribute to these centres of excellence; and
- Develop comprehensive communication strategies to sensitize deep seabed mining using current technologies, media tools and simple language.



L-R: Duncan Laki, Legal Advisor, Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations, New York; Secretary-General Michael Lodge; Hussein Hassan, Head of Trade & Industry Dept., African Union Commission and Dr Kojo Busia, Director AMDC

General Recommendations for the AU, ISA and AMDC

- Organize regional and country sensitization workshops to promote Africa's Blue Economy and deep seabed mining;
- Provide a deep seabed mining policy framework that would serve as a basis for the development of the deep seabed mining legal frameworks for individual African countries;
- Work with partner organizations to create awareness and disseminate information from deep seabed mining activities, technology and development; and
- For the African Union: form a maritime strategy for African countries to have a cohesive position on deep seabed mining.

Recommendations for the International Seabed Authority:

- Organize workshops to sensitize African States to deep seabed mining;
- Share information of African nationals who have been on ISA training programmes so government institutions will be able to engage them in potential deep seabed mining-related activities;
- Reach the widest number of potential candidates for marine geology and deep seabed exploration traineeship programmes through effective dissemination of information, utilizing various channels including government ministries, African mining networks, Geological Survey Organizations (GSOs), and other stakeholder groups; and
- Circulate opportunities for training amongst relevant women's associations such as the Association of Women in Geosciences, the African Women in Mining Associations, and Women in Maritime in Africa (WIMAfrica) to encourage female representation in deep seabed mining.

Recommendations for the African Minerals Development Centre:

- Assist African States to develop communication and advocacy strategies to sensitize Africa's Blue Economy and deep seabed mining;
- Identify the various institutions in Africa that are involved in marine mineral resources data gathering, mapping, explorations etc. (i.e. the Organisation of African Geological Surveys and the Geological Society of Africa);

- Harmonize the capacities and capabilities of these institutions and organizations through a regional workshop where they could all be invited to present their capacities and capabilities;
- Put together a scoping study document of the potential capacities and capabilities for African marine mineral resources institutions and organizations. These may also involve a summary of the findings over the years as presented by these organizations;
- Select regional centres based on the aforementioned information gathered.
- Work on modalities of operations, scope and coverage of these regional centres; and
- Organize a stakeholders' meeting involving potential investors, collaborators (research) and States to present a way forward for the development of African marine mineral endowments.

Recommendations for the Geological Mineral Information System (GMIS):

- Strengthen national geological surveys organizations (GSOs) and research institutions;
- Strengthen national and regional capacities to standardize and manage geological and geospatial information;
- Strengthen national and multi-national geographic survey capacities. Develop uniform data systems. Gather new data and integrate new data and old data in a uniform African Geographic Information System with the capacity to integrate economic, environmental, and social considerations;
- Engage universities and other centres of expertise;
- Develop a continent-wide African Blue Economy strategy;
- Increase mapping and geological surveying activities in the African continental shelf and adjacent oceanic areas;

- Develop mineral inventory programme for the African continental shelf and adjacent oceanic areas; and
- Develop international cooperation for activities in the international seabed areas.

Recommendations for other partners:

- Engage in sharing information, data research and capacity building efforts in deep seabed mining activities for African States
- Share information about possible marine mining activities so that African States will have a starting point if they choose to engage in seabed mining operations

PRESENTERS

Aphary Muyongo, Acting Deputy Director, Geological Survey of Namibia; Bramley Murton, Senior Scientist, National Oceanography Centre, UK; Carlos Fuentes, Legal Officer, Division for Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea, United Nations, New York; Duncan Laki, Legal Advisor, Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations, New York; Edwin Egede, AMDC Consultant, Senior Lecturer, Cardiff University, UK; Hussein Hassan, Head of Trade and Industry Department, African Union Commission, Ethiopia; James Kateka (Tanzania), Judge, International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS); Kaiser De Souza, Head, Geology and Mineral Information Systems Section, African Minerals Development Centre, UN Economic Commission for Africa, Ethiopia; Kojo Busia, Director, African Minerals Development Centre, UN Economic Commission for Africa, Ethiopia; Kris Van Nijen, General Manager, Global Sea Mineral Resources, DEME-Group, Belgium; Kristina Thygesen, Programme Group Leader - Marine and Coastal Resources, GRID-Arendal, Norway; Liesbeth Lijnzaad, Legal Adviser, Head of the International Law Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands; Miles Macmillan-Lawler, Programme Lead for State of the Environment and Spatial Planning Programme, GRID-Arendal, Norway; Raj Mohabeer, Deputy Permanent Secretary, IOC- Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), Mauritius; Tunde Muitala Arisekola, Vice-Chair, Resource Classification, Nigerian Geological Survey Organization, Nigeria; Yannick Beaudoin, Chief Scientist, GRID-Arendal, Norway.



The International Seabed Authority is an autonomous international organization established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Authority is the organization through which States Parties to the Convention shall, in accordance with the regime for the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction (the Area) established in Part XI and the Agreement, organize and control activities in the Area, particularly with a view to administering the resources of the Area.