

**We call on the International Seabed Authority to stop granting contracts for deep sea mining and on the United Nations to ensure responsible use of mineral resources.**

**We call on the European Union to stop supporting deep sea mining and focus instead on becoming a world leader in the transition to sustainable economies.**

**We call on all countries to cease sponsoring exploration and exploitation licences in the Area and not to issue permits for deep sea mining on their continental shelf.**


**#KeepItInTheSeabed**

## SEAS AT RISK

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Seas At Risk is an umbrella organisation of environmental NGOs from across Europe that promotes ambitious policies for marine protection at European and international level.

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1. Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, 2016 2. International Seabed Authority, 2017  
3. Avaaz, 2016 4. Euronews, 2016 5. NOAA 6. UNEP, 2015 7. European Commission, 2014

## SEAS AT RISK

# Deep sea mining? Stop and think!

**Deep sea mining has no place in a future shaped by the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.**



## The race for seabed grabbing is on, but governance is deeply flawed.

For more than a century we have ripped apart the land, exploiting it beyond its limits in our insatiable quest for minerals such as gold, copper, magnesium, nickel, lead, lithium, titanium, platinum, zinc and rare earth elements. Now the industry is aiming to move into the deep sea.

Some deposits lie beneath national waters and are sovereign resources. Many others lie in the Area Beyond National Jurisdiction ('the Area').

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) regulates access to resources in the Area and has so far put in place 26 exploration contracts. No exploitation contracts are in effect yet.

A 2016 periodic review of the ISA pointed to severe structural shortcomings in terms of its transparency and capacity, putting into question its ability to govern the Area.

**1.2 million km<sup>2</sup>** are licenced for deep sea mining exploration in the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian oceans - an area the size of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

**As the global steward of the world's ocean heritage the ISA must prioritise conservation of the deep sea, the rights of coastal communities and the rights of mankind as a whole.**

Sponsoring states for ISA exploration contracts:<sup>2</sup>

Belgium	Cuba	Nauru
Brazil	France	Poland
Bulgaria	Germany	Russia
Czech Republic	India	Singapore
China	Japan	Tonga
Cook Islands	Kiribati	United Kingdom
	Korea	



## Deep sea mining should only be allowed if it has the prior and informed consent of civil society – it doesn't.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea declared the seabed in the Area and its mineral resources as the 'Common Heritage of Mankind' – the ISA should manage activities in the Area "for the benefit of mankind as a whole".

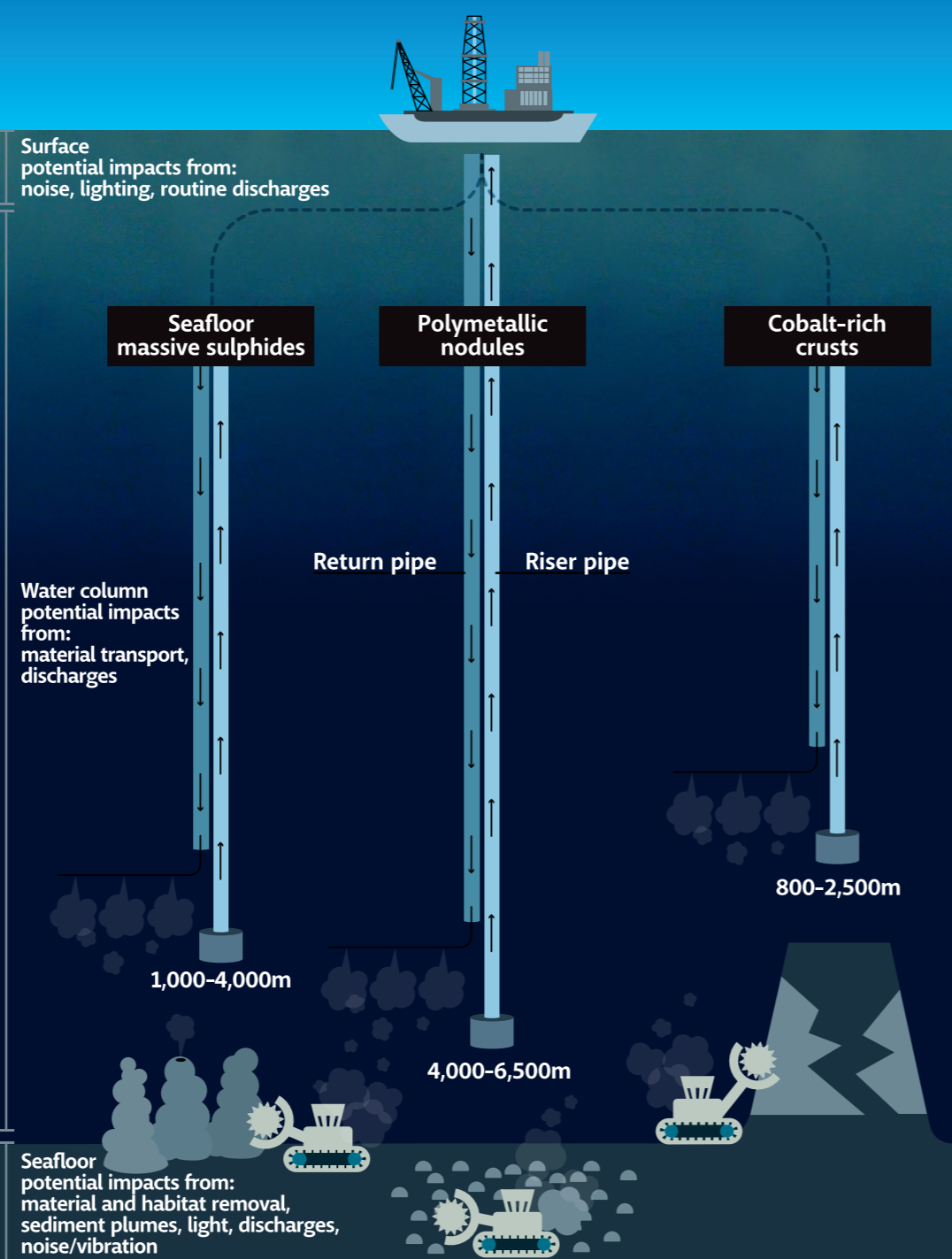
It is therefore crucial that public opinion is taken into account and the risks, benefits and alternatives of seabed mining properly considered.

To date, a comprehensive and informed public debate about the need for deep sea mining has not been held. It is high time we have this debate in a democratic and participatory way.

**783,806** people petitioned the International Seabed Authority for a moratorium on deep sea mining.<sup>3</sup>



## Types of deep sea mining



## The science is clear: deep sea mining imposes a serious threat to sustainability.

Deep sea mining risks damaging fragile ecosystems that are rich in biodiversity. These will take hundreds or thousands of years to recover from such an invasive activity, if they recover at all.

Plumes containing toxic heavy metal particles risk spreading for hundreds of kilometres, smothering marine ecosystems far beyond the mining sites.

The deep sea has a huge diversity of life, including genes that may be the next cancer medicine, the next important pharmaceutical substance.

The socio-economic benefits of deep sea mining are highly uncertain and will be short term.

Around **750,000** marine species are yet to be identified, many of them likely to be found in the deep sea.<sup>4</sup>

Scientific knowledge about the deep sea is extremely limited. The precautionary principle advises to prioritise sustainable alternatives to avoid our economy to become locked-into this high risk technology.

Of the more than 100,000 seamounts around the globe

**<0.1%** have been explored.<sup>5</sup>

## Deep sea mining has no place in the world's Agenda 2030 for sustainable development.

Deep sea mining is driven by unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, such as our market-driven appetite for new smart phones, tablets and other electronic devices - products that are designed to be thrown away, cannot be repaired and are only partly recycled.

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda sets goals for healthy oceans, responsible consumption and production, clean technologies and renewable energy, inclusive economic development, wellbeing and innovation. This needs a fundamental transition of our economies and the way we live.

Instead of deep sea mining, we need a circular economy that puts eco-design, re-use, repairing, sharing and recycling at its heart. We need new business models that respect the commons, and well-informed consumers that make responsible choices.

Up to **90%** of world's electronic waste is illegally traded or dumped.<sup>6</sup>

Every year, **100 million** mobile phones in the EU go unused, less than **10%** are recycled.<sup>7</sup>

