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 exploitation and exploitation licences in the Area and not to issue permits for deep sea mining on their continental shelf.

#KeepItInTheSeabed

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#SeasAtRiskEndorsesEnd of Mining Support

The context of this leaflet is the need to end mining in the Area and ensure that the area is conserved, not exploited. It highlights the need to protect the Area and calls on all countries to end their support for deep sea mining. The leaflet also includes the hashtag #KeepItInTheSeabed to encourage action.

SEAS AT RISK

Deepest 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 quarter century we have disputed the seas, realizing it is vital to our livelihoods, wealth and well-being in our struggle with nations such as China, Russia, Japan, Korea, India, the United Kingdom, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal, Germany, and others.

Some deep-sea mining companies are now looking beyond the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the international legal framework for the use of the seabed, to mine for resources at depths well beyond 2,000 meters.

SEAS AT RISK

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) regulates access to the Area in the Area and has set forth draft rules to regulate exploitation. No exploitation contract is in effect yet.

A 2018 report by the ISA points to severe structural shortcomings in the system of transparency and accountability, putting into question its ability to govern the Area.

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

#KeepItInTheSeabed

1.2 million km² are targeted for deep sea mining operations, especially in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans.

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

With mining operations now taking place in the Area, it is crucial that we ensure the Area is protected and conserved for future generations.

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Sponsoring status for ISA exploration contracts:

Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Cook Islands, Cuba, France, Germany, India, Japan, Kiribati, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Palau, Russia, Singapore, Tonga, United Kingdom

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

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.

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 tiny heavy metal particles risk spreading for hundreds of kilometers, contaminating marine ecosystems for decades after 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.

About 750,000 marine species are yet to be identified, many of them likely to be found in the deep sea.

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 species around the globe <0.1% have been explored.

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

Deep sea mining is driven by uncontrollable patterns of production and consumption, such as our massive throwaways of one-time use plastic bottles and other single-use products that are designed to be thrown away, cannot be repaired and are only partially recycled.

The 2019 Sustainable Development Agenda aims for healthy oceans, responsible consumption and production, clean energy production and irreversible, inclusive economic development, well-being and innovation. This needs a fundamental transition of our economies and the lives 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 illegitimately traded or dumped.

Every year, 100 million mobile phones are discarded in the EU.

Leaves protected by the International Seabed Authority for a moratorium on deep sea mining.