

## **THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY'S ACTIVITIES IN RESPECT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES IN THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AREA**

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The International Seabed Authority is the international organization through which States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea shall, in accordance with Part XI of the Convention and the 1994 Agreement relating to the implementation of this Part, organize and control activities in the seabed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Currently, the Authority is the process of finalizing a set of regulations and rules governing the exploration for polymetallic nodules in areas beyond the limits of the national jurisdiction. In 1998 and 1999 the Authority organized two workshops. The first workshop was devoted to the development of guidelines for the assessment of the possible environmental impacts arising from the exploration for polymetallic nodules. The second workshop dealt with the present state of seabed mining technologies for polymetallic nodules, the future trends in the development of such technology and the promotion of cooperation in the development of technology. The next workshop will be held in 2000 and will deal with mineral resources other than polymetallic nodules in particular polymetallic sulphides and cobalt-rich crusts. The activities the Authority is carrying out is to facilitate the development of exploration and exploitation of mineral resources in the international seabed area. Among its activities, is the development of a database on polymetallic nodule resources (POLYDAT). The database has proven useful for resource assessments of areas reserved for the Authority.