



#WOMEN4OCEANS

My name is Farah Obaidullah. I am the Founder of Women4Oceans.

We know the challenges before us. Yet it is clear that governments are not meeting the moment with the urgency it demands.

As we gather to brainstorm solutions and celebrate efforts to protect the ocean, a few companies and governments are pushing to open the seabed in our global commons to deep-sea mining. An industry scientists warn will irreversibly destroy life in the deep-sea, have untold consequences to systems that sustain us, and risks disturbing locked-away carbon.

Why when there are hundreds of civil-society groups, scientists and major car companies, tech-giants and banks, all rejecting deep-sea mining, are we even debating this as viable option for our future? The simple fact is that our systems are dated. UNCLOS, only 40 years old, was designed when we were not concerned with the climate or biodiversity crisis. Our concept of wellbeing was different. Emerging from war and famine, security meant sovereignty, growth and material acquisition. Today security means protecting nature for survival, prosperity and wellbeing.

Negotiating how we use the ocean used to be the business of a few, but has now rightfully become the business of everyone, across all demographics, young, old, and from all parts of the world.

People are losing faith in governments and politicians. Climate-change, loss of nature, pandemics and war compound the feeling of hopelessness about the world and our future.

It's time for governments to reflect our changing values by renewing antiquated systems. It's time for governments to give back hope to the people. A first and easy step to restore faith is to establish a moratorium on deep-sea mining. It'll show people that we can come together and prevent a disaster from happening. That we dare to protect what belongs to all of us.