



UNITED NATIONS OCEAN CONFERENCE NICE, FRANCE 2025

UNOC3 Conference Side Event Event V43

Disturbance in the Deep: A Rights-Based and Values Based Approach to Deep Sea Conservation]

June 9th 1pm to 230pm Online

Organized by:

Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, NGO Mining Working Group, Congregation of Sisters of St Joseph of Peace, Maryknoll Sisters, Temple of Understanding, Mercy International Association, Presbyterian Church of the USA, Company of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent De Paul

Background on the event:

This virtual side event will use a rights-based approach to evaluate concerns over unsustainable proposals to develop the deep seabed, concentrating on deep sea mining. The event featured three outstanding speakers. Rev. James Bhagwan, secretary general of the Pacific Council of Churches emphasized that the ocean is not a resource it is a relationship and people perceive their intimate relationship to it as a part of their spiritual and cultural heritage. Andrew “Whit” Whitmore introduced the audience to a 101 crash course on the technical elements of deep seabed mining. And Bobbi-Jo Dobush explained the financial constraints of deep seabed mining and how even

financially it makes no sense. The presentations were followed by a lively discussion among the audience and presenters about the need for an outright ban on deep seabed mining. This event can be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0ZVIOPS4TM>

Key Issues discussed

1. How indigenous coastal people view the ocean
2. How none of the trials of deep seabed mining accurately represent what could happen
3. There is no need to do deep seabed mining.
4. How even financial institutions are hesitant about it and how international insurers have removed it from their underwriting portfolios
5. The vast number of ecosystems and forms of biodiversity that exist which have still not been touched by research
6. How we as faith groups need to further develop a spirituality of nature that would allow us to relate to the ocean as deeply as indigenous coastal people.

Key recommendations for action / voluntary commitments

1. A call for a total ban on deep sea mining.
2. As organizations we will limit our use of plastic as much as possible.
3. We will not invest in companies involved in extractives and especially deep seabed mining.
4. We will continue to follow international debates over seabed mining and continue our advocacy for a ban on it.

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