

**Applied Geoscience and
Technology Division (SOPAC)**
Private Mail Bag Suva
Mead Road Nabua, Fiji Islands
Telephone: (679) 3381377
Fax: (679) 3370040/3384461
www.sopac.org
Email: director@sopac.org
SPC Suva Regional Office



SPC Headquarters
BP D5
98848 Noumea Cedex
New Caledonia
Telephone: +687 26 20 00
Fax: +687 26 38 18

**TECHSEC: 245
MRU/9.3**

4th June 2014

**Mr Miguel de Serpa Soares
Under-Secretary-General
Office of Legal Affairs
United Nations
NEW YORK**

Email: doalos@un.org

Dear Mr Soares

**Re: Contribution to the second part of the Secretary-General's report on Oceans and
Law of the Sea to the Sixty-Ninth Session of the General Assembly**

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community ('SPC') Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC) notes the request for contributions to the Secretary General's Report on oceans and the law of the sea pursuant to General Assembly Resolution A/67/L.21. We are pleased to offer below a note summarising the capacity-building initiatives and assistance we offer to the Pacific Islands aimed to assist these developing States to realise the benefits of sustainable development of marine mineral resources. Please do not hesitate to let us know should further assistance or information from us be required.

The emerging deep sea minerals industry has the potential to provide much needed economic growth for the Pacific region, but precautionary environmental management, and prudent financial management will be required for States to realise net benefit and sustainable development from this seabed mineral potential. Very few countries world-wide have policy and law in place to regulate deep sea mineral development.

Recognising the particular commercial interest in seabed minerals, and related capacity gaps in the Pacific Islands, and at the request of Pacific Island country leaders, the European Union worked closely with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SOPAC Division) to develop a regional project that could help to increase much-needed support in the development of effective policies and management approaches for this emerging sector.

The SPC-EU Deep Sea Minerals Project provides technical advice and assistance to 15 Pacific States to develop national policy, law, and fiscal regimes, and to build technical capacity in-country, for their engagement with seabed mining activities both within national jurisdiction, and beyond. It aims for responsible governance of seabed mineral developments across the region in accordance with international law, with particular attention to the protection of the marine

environment, and securing reasonable and equitable arrangements for Pacific islanders for the development of their deep sea mineral resources.

The SPC-EU Deep Sea Minerals Project has a strong focus on a multi-stakeholder approach, and capacity-building for all Pacific Islanders. The Deep Sea Minerals Project has undertaken numerous activities in its first 3 years of operation (2011-2014). Some of its achievements are summarised below:

- Developing the Pacific Regional Legal and Regulatory Framework for deep sea minerals. This world-first guide to policy and law development for deep sea minerals was endorsed by all 15 project member countries and launched, to global acclaim, by Pacific Forum leaders in 2012 (copy available here: http://www.sopac.org/dsm/public/files/reports/SOPAC_RLRF_for_DSM_Final_12.07.12_.pdf).
- Supporting 15 in-country national stakeholder consultation workshops attended by over 420 participants.
- Supporting 6 countries to establish multi-stakeholder National Offshore Mineral Committees.
- Supporting 5 countries to run nationwide public awareness and consultation programmes.
- Coordinating 5 thematic technical training workshops and 2 regional meetings, bringing world-leading experts to over 570 participants (for copies of the meetings' papers, please see here: <http://www.sopac.org/dsm/index.php/regional-meetings-and-trainings>)
- Training 19 Pacific Island lawyers from 11 countries in DSM law via the Project's legal internship programme (for more information, please see here: <http://www.sopac.org/dsm/index.php/internship-program>).
- Collaborating with the United Nations Environment Programme and GRID-Arendal to publish the Deep Sea Minerals Report, an assessment of the regions' deep sea minerals resources. This report series - targeted to assist Pacific Island Government officials - contains chapters written by 60 world-leading experts on geology, biology, technology, law, environmental management, sociology and economics (copy available here: <http://www.sopac.org/dsm/index.php/publications-and-reports>).
- Collaborating with the International Seabed Authority to publish a technical study on environmental management of deep sea mining activities (containing a world-first adaptable template for environmental impact assessment) – copy available here: <http://www.sopac.org/dsm/index.php/publications-and-reports> .
- Producing a wealth of user-friendly information materials, including: 15 themed information brochures; two 25-minute documentaries; and range of valuable information available via the project website at: www.sopac.org/dsm.
- Supporting enactment of the Fiji International Seabed Mineral Management Decree and providing advice on draft deep sea minerals laws and policies in 9 other Pacific Island countries.
- Supporting international training opportunities for Pacific Island Government Officials, such as: Rhodes Law of the Sea summer school; geo-chemical analysis training with the US Geological Survey; intensive GIS training, and attendance at the International Geological Congress.

For more information about the SPC-EU Deep Sea Minerals Project, please contact the Project Team Leader, Mr. Akuila Tawake on akuilat@spc.int, or the Project Legal Advisor, Ms. Hannah Lily on hannahl@spc.int.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. J. Petterson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and "J".

Prof Michael Petterson
Director –SOPAC Division

cc: Ms Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, Division for Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea;
Email: goettsche-wanli@un.org
Mr Vladimir Jares, Deputy Director, Division for Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea; Email: jares@un.org
Email: changj@un.org
Ms Charlotte Salpin, Legal Officer, Email: salpin@un.org
Ms Esperanza Francois, Legal Assistant, Email: francois6@un.org