



## Canada Misses Opportunity to Join Global Leaders in Calling for a Moratorium on Deep Seabed Mining

*Minister Wilkinson of Natural Resources and Minister Murray of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard issued a [statement](#) today on seabed mining that fails to align Canada with global calls for a moratorium on seabed mining in international waters. Canada's statement promotes the development of deep seabed mining regulations over adopting a moratorium, precautionary pause or ban position as supported by Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Germany, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, New Zealand, Palau, Panama, Samoa, Spain and France.*

(Vancouver, February 9) The Fifth International Congress on Marine Protected Areas ([IMPAC5](#)) wrapped up today in Vancouver, after a week of [demonstrations](#), [intense lobbying](#), and a [statement from Canadian parliamentarian Gord Johns](#) in the House of Commons calling on Canada to declare a moratorium on deep seabed mining in international waters. Canada's [position statement](#) issued today fails to support calls for a moratorium, which [global scientists](#) insist is necessary to avert irreversible destruction of deep sea habitats and related species.

"Canada's statement asserts the need to protect the global ocean and combat biodiversity loss, but it does not acknowledge that these goals are incompatible with deep seabed mining" says Catherine Coumans, who participated in IMPAC5 for MiningWatch Canada.

Canada's statement notes that Canada will continue the work of negotiating 'robust standards' at the international level, and also discusses conditions for the possible development of regulations for deep seabed mining at the national level. The statement says that Canada will 'negotiate in good faith on regulations to ensure that seabed activities do no harm to the marine environment.' MiningWatch Canada joins many other [civil society organizations](#) and frontline communities in the [Pacific](#) who do not believe it is possible to mine the deep seabed without doing serious and irreversible harm.

"Given the nature of proposed deep seabed mining of polymetallic nodules, which will destroy the very habitat deep sea creatures depend on over very large swaths of the ocean floor, deep seabed mining will in fact create widespread dead zones in the Pacific seabed" says Coumans.

Canada is a member of the International Seabed Authority (ISA), which is actively engaged in negotiations on mineral exploitation regulations for mining of the seabed in international waters. Upcoming meetings in March are expected to advance negotiations on regulations and mining applications could be considered by the ISA, for the first time, as early as July 2023.

Canadian companies have been at the forefront of the push to mine the deep sea, with Vancouver-based The Metals Company conducting underwater tests last year that resulted in [unauthorized dumps of waste](#) into surface waters and which [scientists say](#) were tainted by flawed monitoring.

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**Links to statements from Canada:**

- [NRCAN statement](#) on seabed mining
- [NRCAN press release](#) on territorial waters

**Links to media coverage during IMPAC5:**

- [Global News Canada](#)
- [Canadian Broadcasting Company](#)
- [Radio Canada](#)
- [The Guardian](#)