

Webinar on Test Mining – 14 June 2022 – hosted by Germany

Test mining for exploitation activities

General considerations

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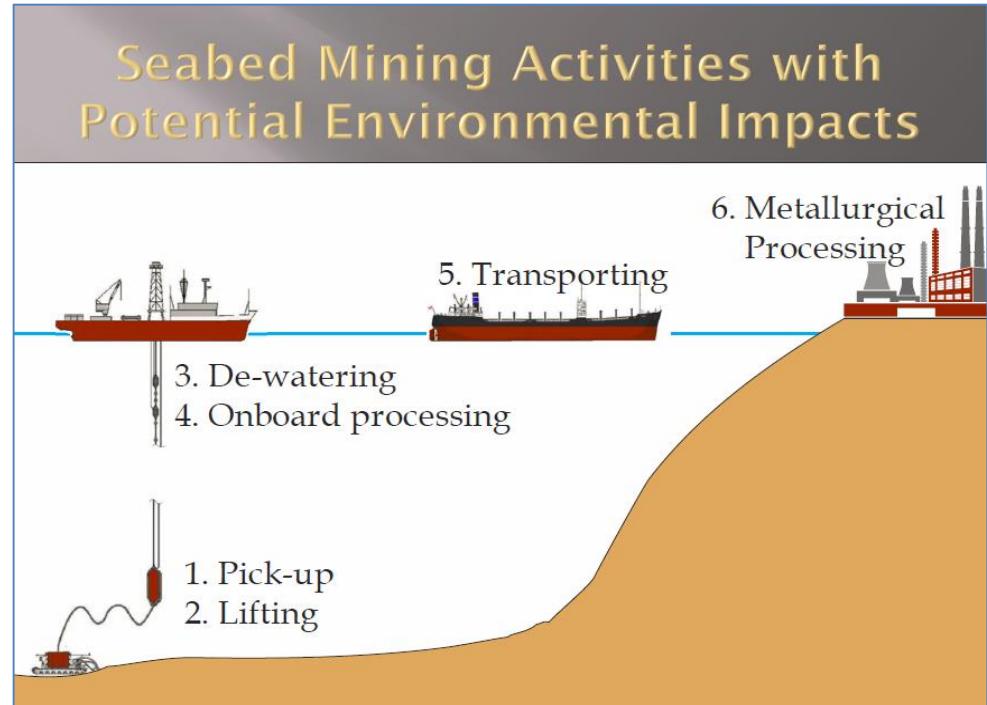
- UNCLOS – requirements for exploitation activities
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UNCLOS – requirements for exploitation activities

- Common heritage of mankind
- Three main objectives
 - Promotion of mining
 - Fair sharing of benefits
 - Protection of the marine environment pursuant to Article 145
- Draft Exploitation regulation
 - Application for the approval of a submitted plan of work
- Environmental standards on various parameters - under preparation
 - Legally binding – output
 - Pressure related standards Sediment plumes, introduction of hazardous substances, noise, light
 - Status related: Biodiversity – e.g. protection of particularly vulnerable and/or unique sites
- Exploitation activity
 - Compliance with requirements of
 - Article 145,
 - the Exploitation regulations
 - Relevant standards and guidelines

Rationale for Test Mining – main drivers of effects on the marine environment

- Extraction of ore
- Sediment plumes
- Noise and light
- Introduction of process-water
- Interface of techniques used and environment in situ
- Great knowledge gaps



Rationale for Test Mining – documentation of compliance with legal requirements

- Proposed Exploitation Draft Regulation 48bis para (1)
- In-field test of equipment necessary: recovery and lifting system, re-introduction of process-water
- Modelling insufficient and inappropriate
- Combination of in field testing and modelling: common methodology
- In situ assessment of techniques and of environmental effects with respect to specific conditions
- Adaptation of techniques
- Evidence of economic feasibility

Rationale for legally binding Test Mining – main drivers of effects on the marine environment

- Why obligation for all contractors? – Draft regulation 48bis
- Ensuring compliance with legal requirements for all exploitation activities
- Effective protection of marine environment pursuant to the „common heritage of mankind“ principle
- Development of suitable techniques
- Promotion of scientific knowledge on ecosystems
- Level playing field for all economic actors
 - Determination of minimum contents of test mining
- No free riders
- No „race to the bottom“

Legally binding Test Mining – Questions for now and for later sessions

For now:

- Is a legally binding Test Mining principally in accordance with UNCLOS and in the spirit of UNCLOS ?
- Are there any other options for contractors to document compliance with the legal requirements?
- Are there any alternative means to a legally binding test mining which achieve the same effects?

For later sessions:

- Full system tests required or combination with modelling thinkable?
- Test mining project as exploitation activities in disguise?
- Test mining between exploration, exploitation and commercial production – a procedural question
- Use of existing information by former test projects
- Environmental effects of test mining projects – how to avoid them?

Thank you!