

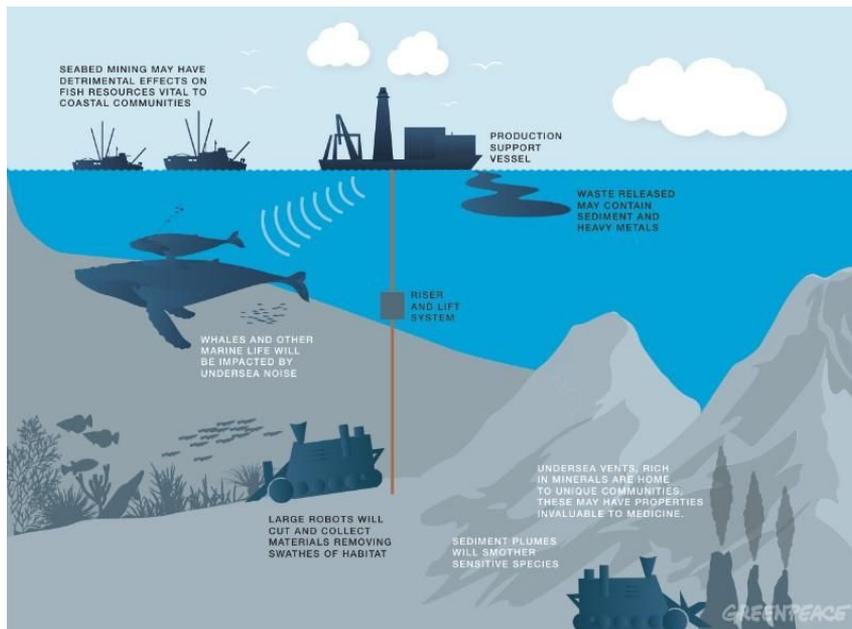
Deep-sea mining in the Arctic and Pacific region, a threat to our environment and political stability

Environmental committee

PRAMUN 2017

Deep sea mining is a new possible solution for raising the number of metal deposits. These deposits are based at the bottom of seas and oceans inside the burnt out hydrothermal vents or in polymetallic nodules. They offer us the extensive resources of (precious) metals as silver, gold, copper, manganese, zinc or even petroleum. Each metal is located in a different depth. On the real bottom (4000-6000m), we can find metals such manganese or cobalt, in the higher locations (1400-3700m) particularly gold and silver. In the highest positions (800-2400m), we can find platinum and molybdenum for example.

This new process does not have just a bright side. When the mined metal comes to the surface, the tailings from the metal come back to the sea and it helps to make the plumes. These plumes modify the zooplankton and so it affects the nourishment in the ocean. Moreover, the mining places are damaged. It affects animals, organisms, sea plants and also the toxicity of water. Deep sea mining is a quite new method which did not have a possibility to be tested in the long term. Some of the consequences are predictable, but the research did not have a chance to come as far as it should.



The mining is supported mainly by the states of Asia with high production of technologies and electronics where the precious metals are needed. Not just the Asian countries are interested. France, UK, Germany and Russia will participate too. The first well-working petroleum station should be placed at the bottom of the ocean by 2020. The potential areas for deep sea mining are mostly in Pacific Ocean. Solwara 1 Project was one of the first experiments. It took place in Papua New Guinea. Unfortunately, there were some conflicts with the government of the country, so it should continue in 2018.

The deep-sea mining is a controversial idea which was not enough elaborated. Now it is up to you, how the future of our oceans and seas is going to look like in the future!

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UN Policy

As I already mentioned, the problem of deep-sea mining is a new topic, which was not well discussed. That is the reason why the UN does not have resolutions for it. Despite this, the United Nations Conventions on the Law of the Sea in 1994 created the International Seabed Authority. This organization takes care about the protection of seabed and supervises the proceeding of mining or choosing the locality.

Questions to be considered

1. Does your country support the process of deep-sea mining?
2. Is there a future want of precious metals in your country?
3. Is your country a member of the International Seabed Authority?

Helpful resources

http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_overview_convention.htm

<https://www.isa.org.jm/>

<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/campaigns/oceans/marine-reserves/deep-sea-mining/>

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/en/frontpage/490>