

Challenges of the Lisbon 2022 conference

2022 UN Ocean Conference (UNOC)

- The United Nations Conference on the Oceans (UNOC) was held in Lisbon from June 27 to July 1, 2022, on "Scaling up science and innovation-based ocean action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions". The objective of the conference was "to put in place much needed science-based innovative solutions to open a new chapter in global ocean action and mobilize action".

The "Our Ocean, Our Future, Our Responsibility" political declaration

- Aimed at deepening ocean knowledge and marine technology transfer, this Conference Closing Statement specifically articulates the commitment of Member States to:
 - strengthen efforts of scientific and systematic observation and environmental and socio-economic data collection, particularly in developing countries;
 - improve cooperation at all levels of marine scientific research and assist developing countries in overcoming difficulties in accessing marine technologies;

- ensure that policies are based on the best available science and relevant Aboriginal, traditional and local knowledge.

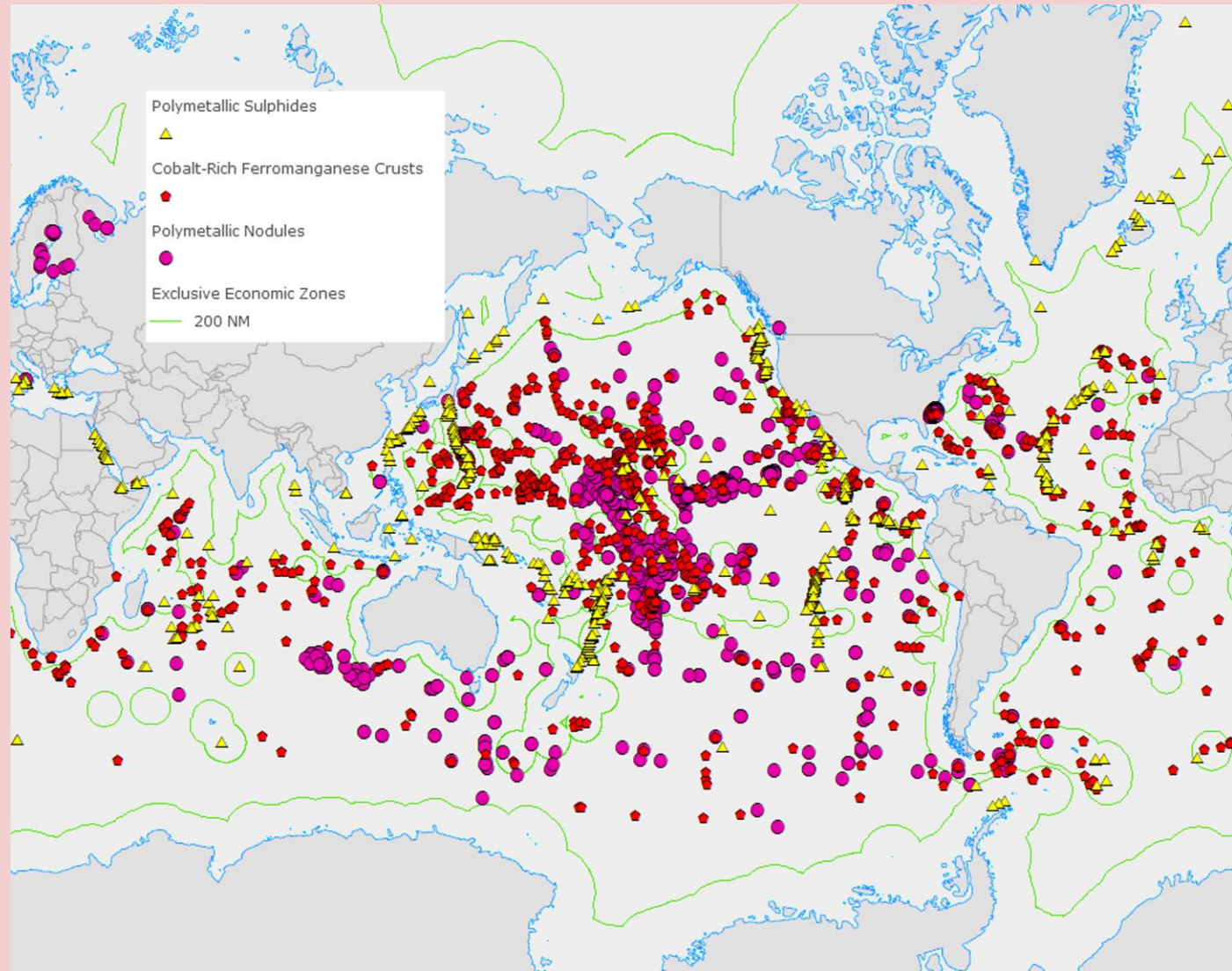
The issue of seabed mining

- The debate was launched at the opening of the conference by the Delegate of the Republic of Palau (Micronesia) who initiated a new "Alliance of Countries for a Moratorium on Ocean Mining".
- In July 2023, the International Seabed Authority (ISA) will have to process State applications for exploitation licenses, whether or not a mining code is formalized. Considering that the economic interest of exploiting deep-sea mineral resources in the short term has yet to be proven, particularly since its impact on deep-sea ecosystems has not yet been clearly established, a number of States, associations and scientists are calling for a moratorium on deep-sea mining, and even for the placement of these areas within a strong protection zone, thus prohibiting any future mining. The Alliance for a Deep Sea Mining Moratorium was formed in 2022 to lobby in this direction, mainly led by Pacific States, primarily impacted by this issue.

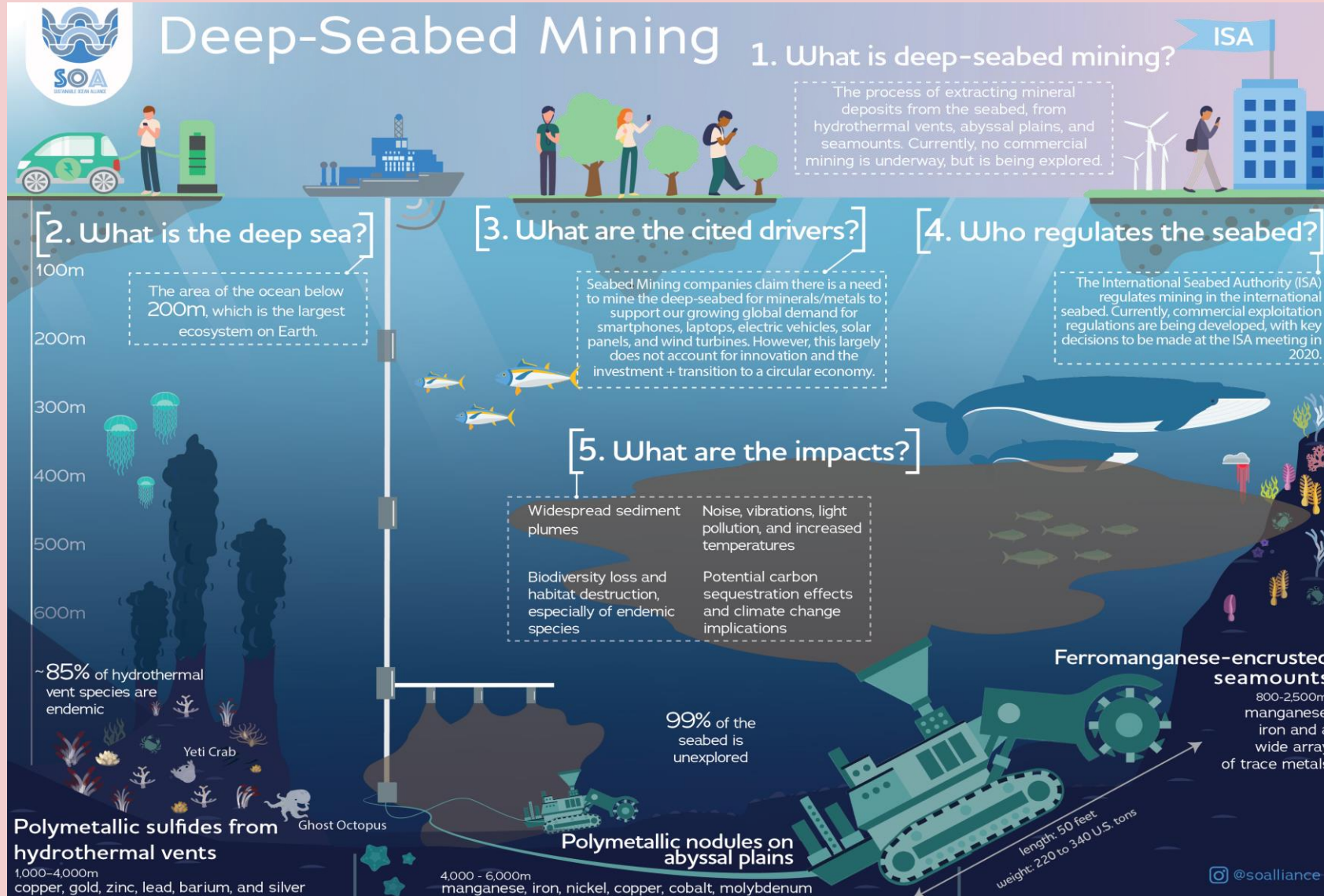
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Global distribution of three main types of deepwater mineral resources

Source: [UNEP/DEWA adapted from ISA, 2014a](#)



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Source: soalliance.org

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The issue of SIDS and Indigenous Peoples

- In summary, sustainable, informed and proactive use and protection of the seabed and, more broadly, of all marine resources, requires an understanding of oceanosphere mechanisms and, to this end, intensified research efforts.
- However, research, development, technology and innovation (RDTI) require significant financial, human and technological resources, especially in relation to the ocean where the cost of scientific campaigns is considerable.
- Given the limited means available in this area, it is therefore necessary to multiply exchange activities between developed and developing countries, especially SIDS (Small Island Developing States), to enhance scientific and technological cooperation.
- The inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge holders in these processes is equally important because their empirical knowledge can be applied more quickly than scientific knowledge, which requires lengthy validation processes.
- Finally, Africa requires special attention: OceanHub Africa, an ocean impact startup incubator based in South Africa, has advocated for local capacity building and empowerment of coastal communities in ocean affairs.

References

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