

# Participation Report

DOSI participation in the 5<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Marine Biodiversity

*Penang, Malaysia, July 2nd -July 5<sup>th</sup> 2023*

## Overview

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The World Conference on Marine Biodiversity (WCMB) is a tri-annual high-level international meeting that focuses on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity. The conference provides a platform for policymakers, scientists, conservationists, industry representatives, and other stakeholders to discuss current and emerging marine biodiversity issues and identify ways to protect and sustainably manage marine ecosystems and their resources. The 6th World Conference on Marine Biodiversity was hosted by the Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies (CEMACS) and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) from 2nd to 5th July 2023 in Penang, Malaysia with the theme of conference being “Marine Biodiversity Challenges in the Anthropocene”. The conference brought together over 400 participants from 50 countries with about 30% of local researchers. It is the first time WCMB is brought to Malaysia and to the Southeast Asia region, which is considered to be among the world’s hotspot in land and marine biodiversity. This meeting is a most suitable platform to inform marine scientists, academics and conservationists from Asia and Oceania about deep-sea mining and the current status of the development of a Mining Code at the International Seabed Authority as well as about DOSI and our actions in international fora.

## DOSI Ambassadors attending in person

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Patricia Esquete (University of Aveiro, Portugal)  
Pradeep Singh (Research Institute for Sustainability - Potsdam, Germany)  
Tina Molodtsova (P.P.Shirshov Institute of Oceanology, Russia)  
Khaira Ismail (University Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia)  
Angelika Brandt (Senckenberg Research Institute, Germany)

## DOSI Actions

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DOSI Ambassadors proposed and organized an in-conference Special session entitled “Deep seabed mining under scientific uncertainties: Biodiversity risks versus economic needs” that was held on 4th of July 2023, and convened by Tina Molodtsova, Khaira Ismail, and Pradeep Singh. In this special symposium, DOSI Ambassadors engaged researchers from multiple geographic areas and nations with diverse backgrounds to discuss their work on various aspects of biodiversity in areas hosting potential mineral resources and adjacent areas and biotopes. The main goal of the special session was to raise awareness on the deep-sea and mining activities that could start imminently, and to facilitate further interactions between science with policymaking at the international, regional and national levels.

The DOSI Special session included four 15 min/ talks on different aspects of the current status of deep-sea mining, that included general overview, political and regulatory aspects, the potential repercussions in terms of marine biodiversity, and the interactions with other human impacts such as climate change. The following were the titles of the presentations:

- DOSI-01 Biodiversity in Deep-Sea Ecosystems with Mineral Resources Patricia Esquete Garrote
- DOSI-02 Corals and Sponges of Deep-Sea Mineral Deposits Tina Molodtsova
- DOSI-03 Time Machine Biology: Climatic Impacts on Marine Ecosystems and Biodiversity Moriaki Yasuhara
- DOSI-04 Deep Seabed Mining: Legal and Policy Implications Pradeep Singh

The talks were followed by roundtable discussion, moderated by Khaira Ismail, where panelists including speakers and Prof Angelika Brandt could answer the questions from the audience. The session was well attended, attracting over 50 participants.

The topics discussed included ways used by DOSI to inform and engage the general public (e.g. of Asia and Pacific Small States) as well as scientists/researchers who are normally not involved in science or politics about deep-sea mining or other ongoing and emerging activities in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, the impacts of deep-sea mining on areas adjacent and in proximity to contract areas, and economic uncertainties. The discussion went well and extended beyond the time allocated for the session due to overwhelming interest.

## 1. Final thoughts

The DOSI ambassadors received good comments and feedback after the session. It was particularly appreciated the information shared on policy and the role of science in policy making in international fora, as well as for providing a detailed overview on the state-of-play of deep-sea mining and why the public should be concerned about the activity. Given the fantastic response from the audience and the relevance of the topic for the Southeast Asia region, similar events or workshops should be considered for the future.

## Gallery

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ANNEX I. Poster promoting the event

6<sup>th</sup> World Conference on **MARINE BIODIVERSITY**

**SPECIAL SESSION**

**Deep Seabed Mining Under Scientific Uncertainties: Biodiversity Risks Versus Economic Needs**

**TUESDAY 4 July 2023**  
4:15 – 5:45pm Langkawi Room

Presentations from: Patricia Esquete Garrote, Tina Molodtsova, Morjaki Yasuhara and Pradeep Singh  
Followed by Roundtable Discussion with Angelika Brandt and presenters, moderated by Khaira Ismail

Photo credit: Mountains in the Sea Research Team, the IFE Crew, and NOAA/OAR/OER

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10 YEARS  
2013-2023

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