



Intergovernmental conference for the development of a new international legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction under the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea, second session

**United Nations, New York
26 March 2019**

Statement delivered by the Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative

Re: Marine Genetic Resources, agenda item 6

3.3. Monitoring of the utilisation of marine genetic resources from areas beyond national jurisdiction and ‘Clearinghouse mechanism’

Thank you Madam Facilitator, we would like to offer views on two issues.

Firstly, a clearinghouse mechanism under the BBNJ agreement could support several measures to strengthen scientific best practices in support of benefit-sharing, as outlined in ‘*Clearinghouse*’ Option I (1)(2). For example a global online platform consolidating information about scientific research activities, opportunities for collaboration and capacity building, as well as links to relevant databases could support transparency, scientific best practices and capacity building. The Ocean Data and Information System currently being developed by IOC-UNESCO is an example of how such a mechanism could evolve. An effective and sustainable clearinghouse will require careful design as well as sufficient technical, human, and financial resources for implementation. In terms of access to data, success of a clearinghouse will hinge on support for, access to and awareness of existing data and information systems.

Secondly, regarding, monitoring of the utilisation of genetic resources - this is complex, as illustrated by experiences in implementing the Nagoya Protocol. The scientific community can continue to support the development of pragmatic solutions that will work in practice. Turning to the proposed “system of prior notification” referred to in *Item 3.3, Option I (2)(b)*. A first step in such a system could be notification of a research activity such as a cruise, as the EU and others have referred to. Research cruises, from which samples and data are collected in ABNJ, usually require months of advance planning and scientists typically register cruise information in relevant national data repositories. However, practices vary in this regard; and no central global cruise registry currently exists to facilitate information sharing. A global open-access portal for notification of research cruises and of the resulting collections could advance research and serve as a modality of benefit-sharing enhancing information and knowledge exchange, and the availability of un-worked samples (which are otherwise effectively invisible or potentially lost). Such a portal could be linked to a clearinghouse mechanism under the agreement, and build on scientific best practices and existing data sharing platforms such as the Ocean Biogeographic Information System.

Thank you Madam Facilitator.