

**Press Release**  
**Hamburg, 20th October 2015**



**Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on further cooperation in deep-sea mining between industrial stakeholders in France and Germany**

Based on a unique and coherent set of resources, skills and expertise concerning seabed and mining operations industrial stakeholders from France and Germany have decided to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The French Maritime Cluster (CMF) and the DeepSea Mining (DSMA) are signing this MoU on industrial, technological and scientific cooperation in deep-sea mining during the 9th National Maritime Conference on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2015 in Bremerhaven.

Whilst many of these technologies have reached maturity, the necessary research and development still carries a risk; questions about the ecological footprint of underwater techniques must also be assessed, even though they provide a direct answer to several ecological problems arising from uses of land-based technologies. Concrete answers to these questions must be found before industrial development can proceed.

With respect to several EU activities the parties are discussing possible options to join deep sea mining forces of the industrial stakeholders in France and Germany in order to achieve higher impact strength for deep-sea mining in the EU and push for a much more ambitious vision from the EC.

Possible deep-sea mining partners in France and in Germany would be, for example, the members of the French Maritime Cluster and of the DeepSea Mining Alliance. French and German companies could form the core of an obvious network in an internationally-based deep-sea mining strategy.

The planned cooperation plan will possibly be elaborated for joint RTD, exploration and Joint Industry Projects, joint marketing activities, environmental impact assessment studies and the development of innovative and sustainable deep- sea technologies.

Germany holds an exploration license for manganese nodules in the Pacific Ocean since 2006 and a second exploration license for seafloor massive sulphides in the Indian Ocean since 2015. With the support of the German government's National Masterplan Maritime Technologies (NMMT), policy-makers and society have become more aware of deep-sea mining in recent years, and the issue has been high-lighted at various events. The objective of environmentally friendly deep-sea mining must be furthered. To this end, the related federal ministries, along with interested companies and research institutes and the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural

Resources (BGR), are required to prepare and implement an environmentally friendly technology demonstration project which can also take place in the European context and which has been coordinated with the ISA, taking into consideration the entire process chain.

The association “DeepSea Mining Alliance” was established in April 2014 with the support of the working group marine mineral resources of the German Association for Marine Technology (GMT), different VDMA working groups and the VDMA activities at the BDI (Federation of German Industries) level. As a joint platform of the industry, its main objective is to support the coordinated representation of interests vis-à-vis politics, industry and society. DSMA comprises more than 20 members mainly from the industry. A number of further membership applications - including also international applicants - are announced.

Mr Leonhard Weixler from Bauer Maschinen was elected as President of the DSMA and Prof Peter E. Halbach, Free University of Berlin, was elected as Chairman of the advisory board.

**Further information:**

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