

REGIONAL FOCUS & CONTROVERSIES

Registration of BBNJ Research Activities: A Move towards Transparency in Research Governance

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The Prep Com recommended in July that the UNGA initiate a negotiating conference on areas beyond national jurisdiction. It is widely expected to make such a decision. Then, the long haul negotiation will begin. The 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea does not regulate marine genetic resources in areas beyond the national jurisdiction of States (BBNJ). Part XIII of the Convention could accommodate BBNJ research, but not its governance. The triangulation of three factors - the interim absence of an international framework for governance of BBNJ research, an indirect reference to this issue in the on-going BBNJ deliberations on access and benefit sharing and an interim laissez-faire attitude in BBNJ exploration and exploitation - leads to a need for transparency in governance of BBNJ research activities. To address this lacuna, a United Nations Register on BBNJ Research Activities is recommended, encouraging scientists from all regions including Asia to engage in BBNJ research.

Keywords

Governance, Marine Scientific Research of Bbnj, UNCLOS, Deep Seabed Area, Registration Convention

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