

# THREATS TO OUR OCEAN HERITAGE

## Deep Dive: Deep Seabed Mining (DSM)

### What is Ocean Heritage?

The stories of our societies and our ancestors are wrapped in intangible connection with the ocean and preserved on the seafloor as artefacts, shipwrecks, and remains of those lost or buried at sea. Marine global heritage has largely been based on natural features, and the inextricable link between natural and cultural has been ignored. Underwater Cultural Heritage (UCH) supports ecological marine biodiversity and helps boost sea connectivity in a shared space of natural and cultural heritage: Ocean Heritage.

#### Three Threats, Three Books

The Ocean Foundation has a new project that aims to bring awareness to the threats of bottom trawling, potentially polluting wrecks (PPW), and deep seabed mining (DSM) to underwater cultural heritage (UCH). In partnership with the Lloyd's Register Foundation Heritage and Education Centre and with cooperation from The International Committee on Underwater Cultural Heritage (ICUCH) within the International Committee on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), it is one of the only endorsed Activities under the UN Decade for Ocean Science focusing on cultural heritage. The project will publish one open access book on each topic by 2025.

The Lloyd's Register Foundation Ocean Safety Foresight Review stresses the need for vastly increased effort around purposeful marine data collection and supports the UN Global Compact sustainable ocean principles calling for interventions to stimulate sharing of relevant scientific data. This project is an opportunity to unite cultural and scientific data to effect real change.

Sign up for  
updates on the  
DSM book below!



Check out TOF's  
latest work on  
DSM here!



### What is Deep Seabed Mining?

Deep Seabed Mining (DSM) is a potential commercial industry attempting to mine mineral deposits from the seafloor, in the hopes of extracting commercially valuable minerals such as manganese, copper, cobalt, and nickel. However, this mining is posed to cause rippling damage to all levels of the ocean, from the physical mining of rocks that take millions of years to grow and churning of the ocean floor to dumping waste into the midwater column and spilling of potentially toxic slurry at the ocean surface, risking deep sea ecosystems, the water column, and underwater cultural heritage (UCH).

There are calls for a pause, ban, or moratorium on DSM (at least until baseline ecological and cultural information is collected) and a regulatory regime that can effectively protect the natural and cultural heritage of the marine environment is in place.

There is a time-limited conjunction of threat and opportunity. Never has UCH been under greater threat from industrial activity and the adverse effects of accelerating climate change. Equally, the launch of the UN Decade of Ocean Science and the agreement on the High Seas treaty means that there has never been a better opportunity to define and promote the standard and protocols required to deal with the urgent threats and safety challenges.

#### Key Topics

Legal Duty to Protect  
Ocean Heritage

The International Seabed  
Authority (ISA)

Intersection with the  
Biodiversity Beyond  
National Jurisdiction  
Agreement

Intangible Heritage

Case Studies

... and more!

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the Lloyd's Register Foundation

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