

Centre for International Law, National University of Singapore

**Workshop on the ‘Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity
of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction:
Preparing for the PrepCom’**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Introduction

For around a decade now, discussions on marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, frequently referred to as ‘BBNJ’, have been taking place at the United Nations (UN), primarily through the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to BBNJ (BBNJ Working Group). These issues have also been discussed in the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP).

The discussions revealed differing views on the legal regime applicable to BBNJ generally and more specifically, to marine genetic resources (MGRs). On the regime applicable to BBNJ generally, some emphasise the need to elaborate and strengthen the implementation of the general provisions of Part XII of the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), with a special focus on area-based management tools, in particular marine protected areas (MPAs), and environmental impact assessments (EIAs). Others consider that the principle of the common heritage of mankind is the basis for a future specific legal regime, similar to the one governing the Area (i.e., Part XI of UNCLOS, together with its implementing agreement). Yet others believe that MGRs fall under the legal regime governing the high seas (i.e., Part VII of UNCLOS), the existing instruments regarding the protection of the marine environment and marine biological diversity are sufficient, and therefore are opposed to negotiating a new benefit-sharing regime for the use of such MGRs.

On 19 June 2015, the UN General Assembly decided to develop ‘... an international legally-binding instrument under the Convention to deal with the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction ...’ and to that end, a preparatory committee (PrepCom) has been established and later, an intergovernmental conference may be convened. The PrepCom negotiations are to address the topics identified in the BBNJ Working Group’s ‘2011 package’, namely,

the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, in particular, together and as a whole, MGRs, including questions on sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including MPAs, EIAs and capacity building and the transfer of marine technology.

What would be the scope of the new international instrument under the Convention, should the conference prove to be a success? To what extent will such an agreement be modelled on UNCLOS two implementing agreements, namely the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI and the 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement? What are the essential elements for the successful negotiation of such an instrument and how will the rules of procedure of the PrepCom impact on the negotiation process? Clearly, any such agreement will need to respect, and be consistent with, UNCLOS and its two implementing agreements and other relevant existing agreements.

On 3 and 4 February 2016, the Centre for International Law, National University of Singapore (CIL) hosted a workshop in Singapore to help governmental and non-governmental delegations prepare for the Preparatory Committee charged by the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/292, 19 June 2015, to develop elements of an agreement in implementation of the Law of the Sea Convention regarding marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (Resolution 69/292). The PrepCom's first meeting is scheduled to be held 28 March–8 April 2016 at UN Headquarters in New York City. The second session of the PrepCom is now scheduled for 26 August–9 September 2016.

Present during the Workshop was the PrepCom Chairman Ambassador Eden Charles. Although Ambassador Satya Nandan, who led the negotiations for the 1994 and 1995 Implementing Agreements, was unable to attend the Workshop for family reasons, he provided valuable insight to speakers of his experiences. Over 100 attendees, representing all interests, actively participated in the discussions during the seven sessions of the Workshop and in informal discussions.

The full programme, reading materials and this Executive Summary are available at <http://cil.nus.edu.sg/programmes-and-activities/past-events/conservation-and-sustainable-use-of-marine-biological-diversity-of-areas-beyond-national-jurisdiction-preparing-for-the-prepcom/>. The full CIL Report of the Workshop will be uploaded there when completed.

Two documents are annexed to this Executive Summary. The first is a series of fundamental unanswered questions that will need to be answered during the PrepCom and any diplomatic conference (DipCon). The second is a glossary of defined terms provided to the participants.

II. Structure of Workshop

After Professor Tommy Koh's keynote address, and a session setting the background and context, the next five sessions of the Workshop addressed each of the topics tasked of the PrepCom in Resolution 69/292, including conservation and sustainable use of BBNJ, management tools and institutional arrangements, marine genetic resources (MGRs), asset and benefit sharing of MGRs, and capacity building and transfer of marine technology. Each session began with short presentations by subject matter experts followed by very constructive discussions among all the participants. The seventh session addressed the mandate and work programme of the PrepCom. The Workshop closed after considering next steps.

III. Keynote Address

The conflicting views on the various issues were summarised:

- On whether there is a legal lacuna on BBNJ: those supporting the lacuna focus on the lack of knowledge of life at the bottom of the sea, while those who are not in support rely on the existing legal regime applicable to fish in the water column.
- The applicable principle: those that believe the common heritage of mankind applicable to mineral resources should apply to the living resources of the Area versus those that believe the principle of high seas freedom should apply because the living resources of the Area are renewable, while the mineral resources are not.

- Matters that should be covered in the new agreement: protection of the unique and fragile marine environment of the Area should apply equally to exploitation of the mineral and living resources of the Area.

It was noted that respect and protection of the integrity of UNCLOS is reflected in the UNGA resolution's mandate to negotiate 'under the Convention'. It was emphasised that the resulting agreement must be consistent with and subordinate to the Convention.

There is a need to be faithful to the Convention's delicate balance between competing interests, for example between the protection of the marine environment and the freedom of navigation. Further, discovery of new knowledge should be encouraged as should incentivisation and reward of entrepreneurship. It is not in anyone's individual or collective interests to impede innovation or to fail to reward entrepreneurship.

How benefits should be shared in a fair manner in the interest of a fair and just world, a desire shared by all, needs to be answered. The compulsory dispute settlement system of the Convention is one of its strengths and need not be replicated in an implementing agreement.

IV. Session on Background and Context

The first session covered two topics: UNCLOS and its Implementing Agreements, and a summary of the BBNJ issues.

With regard to the first topic, the General Assembly tasked the PrepCom in essence to develop the elements of an implementing agreement under UNCLOS. The 1994 Agreement implementing Part XI of the Convention was a means to amend Part XI before the Convention entered into force and thus is less suitable as a template for a new agreement. On the other hand, taking into account the structure and content of the 1995 Implementing Agreement (also commonly known as the 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement), it was suggested that it might form a more suitable model for the BBNJ Agreement. With only a few word changes, the Preamble and the first and third parts (i.e., Parts I and VIII-XIII) of the 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement could be copied into the BBNJ Agreement, leaving the PrepCom to focus on the substantive elements of the agreement.

There followed a comprehensive overview of the BBNJ process at the UN and the main issues of the process. The diverse views and priorities among States expressed during the working group sessions revealed that important questions regarding the scope of a new instrument remain unanswered. The separate views on the following topics were explained: (i) access and benefit sharing through the application of the common heritage of mankind principle, (ii) enhancing environmental protection through area-based management tools and environmental impact assessments (EIAs), and (iii) better implementation of existing provisions of UNCLOS.

Speakers and participants emphasised that existing relevant legal instruments and frameworks and global, regional and sectoral bodies should be respected and any duplication avoided. Further, every effort should be made to agree on the text of a new legally binding instrument by consensus, for having as broadly agreed an agreement as possible is vital if a new instrument is to be widely endorsed, ratified and effectively implemented.

V. Session on Conservation and Sustainable Use of BBNJ

The discussions highlighted a tension between the need to improve coordination between international, regional and sectoral bodies and governance frameworks and solve the gaps whilst not undermining these existing international, regional and sectoral bodies and governance frameworks. Representatives of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Seabed Authority (ISA) reiterated that the role of their secretariats is to ensure the optimal functioning of the organisation and any actions taken by the international organisation can only be done at the request of member States. In the context of the BBNJ discussion, it is important to note that their mandate does not extend to ensuring overall consistency of the sectoral regimes.

The absence of a global systematic approach was highlighted in the context of the Sargasso Sea Initiative (developed by the Sargasso Commission), which attempts to use the existing governance framework to protect and conserve living resources from that part of the Sargasso Sea that is beyond national jurisdiction. This required compliance with distinct and separate processes involving different international, sectoral and regional bodies. This led to the suggestion by several participants that having an overall body to help coordinate these actions and processes could promote more effective management of areas beyond national jurisdiction in the Sargasso Sea. Suggestions included the establishment of a high seas authority. This does not necessarily require the establishment of a new body; one alternative could be to extend the mandate of existing organisations such as the UN-Ocean and ISA. Such an organisation could also have responsibility for ensuring that EIAs for all marine and maritime activities include an assessment of their cumulative impact.

VI. Session on Management Tools and Institutional Arrangements

Presentations and discussions highlighted that the EIA processes developed for different activities that are regulated or managed by international or regional organisations (as the case may be) are specific to those activities undertaken within a particular geographic or environmental context. For example, EIAs for fishing activities managed by the FAO and NEAFC are different from those developed by the IMO regulations and treaties and the ISA regulations. This results in a lack of common EIA standards applicable across marine and maritime activities to establish reference environmental baselines and assess and monitor the potential and actual impacts of such activities. Furthermore, this can also make the assessment of cumulative impacts from the different activities very challenging.

Similarly, the sectoral approach also results in different criteria having been developed for the designation of areas where protective measures (including restricting marine and maritime activities) should be taken. Examples include Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) developed under the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD); Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs) developed by the IMO; Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) developed by the FAO; and Areas of Particular Environmental Interest (APEIs) developed by the ISA.

Discussions raised the desirability for greater consistency, be it through a unique reference set (that may be difficult to agree on) or at least a common system of classification. Having such consistency could also facilitate the conservation of living resources that move between the seabed and water column and correspondingly, from one legal regime to another.

VII. Session on Marine Genetic Resources (MGRs)

Discussions acknowledged the difficulty in reconciling the ideological differences that currently exist between States that support the view that MGRs are the Common Heritage Mankind (CHM) and those that believe that their exploitation is a freedom of the high seas. As a compromise, what may be needed is a shift from this ideological paradigm to a pragmatic paradigm that focuses on the monetary and non-monetary values derived from MGRs and how such values may be shared. One solution could be to create a new *sui generis* regime for MGRs that would fit within UNCLOS and could either be managed by a new institution or be included within the mandate of an existing institution. In that respect, it was mentioned that the ISA's mandate already includes the distribution of revenues from the exploitation of mineral resources in the Area and on the extended continental shelf and is therefore functionally able to undertake the monetary aspects of access and benefit sharing for MGRs.

Participants and speakers also questioned the scope of the discussion on MGRs; some insisting that all MGRs, including genetic compounds derived from fish, should be included in the new regime under discussion. This discussion highlighted the relevance of distinguishing between accessibility and appropriation of MGRs. In the case of genetic compounds derived from fish, appropriation of MGRs through intellectual property would be the main concern rather than the issue of accessibility, unless such genetic compounds can only be derived from fish that are not easily accessible (e.g., being endemic to deep oceanic trenches).

VIII. Session on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)

Speakers and participants emphasised that the difference between bioprospection and Marine Scientific Research (MSR) is one of intent - some research cruises might begin with the intention to develop commercial applications, but most will start as MSR and may later develop into bioprospection, although the exact point when this occurs may not be clear. All MSR (whether pure research or bioprospection) is treated as a freedom of the high seas and there is currently no mechanism to ensure that the data from MSR is made publicly available. For States that lack the financial resources to conduct MSR, this raises first and foremost the issue of accessibility; second, the question arises as to whether appropriation or the right to commercially exploit the MGR may be derived from this data.

With respect to appropriation, challenges resulting from the patenting of genetic resources from biological diversity and access and sharing of benefits of genetic resources are not specific to marine biological diversity. Such challenges have been discussed within the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), as well as the FAO.

In the context of MGRs, a critical debate centres around the test of inventiveness required for a discovery to be patentable under the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property rights (TRIPS Agreement); domestic regulations and States' views differ on whether the mere isolation of a genetic compound is sufficient to meet the inventiveness test. Scientists highlighted that as genetic science is progressing quickly, the simplification and decrease in cost of DNA sequencing processes may result in DNA sequencing not meeting this test. They also emphasised that given the rapid advance of scientific progress, it may be preferable that international regulations be drafted in such a way so as to be able to adapt to new scientific developments.

States have been trying for over fifteen years to resolve the conflicting views on access and benefit sharing of genetic resources in the context of the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Nagoya Protocol within the Intergovernmental Committee on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC) of WIPO. The current draft provisions developed in this context exclude marine biodiversity from areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) on the basis that MGRs are treated as benefitting from free access, being a freedom of the high sea; in such a situation where access is not restricted, the issue of ABS is irrelevant. However, in the event that a new MGR regime, for example, provides for new disclosure requirements in respect of the bioprospecting process, these WIPO draft provisions could become relevant.

Speakers also highlighted ongoing discussions seeking to amend the TRIPS Agreement and review its relationship with the CBD in order to introduce a disclosure mechanism to ensure that the patent system promotes the CBD objectives. Should it be applicable to MGRs in ABNJ, such disclosure mechanism could provide the traceability of the source of MGRs requested by some States.

Speakers and participants also highlighted the relevance to the discussion of MGRs in ABNJ of the 2001 International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) administered by the FAO, including the mechanism of gene banks and gene banks standards, the purpose of which is to safeguard the free exchange of plant resources listed in the annex. Another relevant and possibly useful development in genetic science is that of open-source genetics and genome databases that may result in fundamental changes in the framing of appropriation of genes through intellectual property rights (as when genetic resources become ineligible for patenting).

This discussion highlighted the general lack of understanding of intellectual property (IP) issues relating to MGRs by national delegations that generally follow law of the sea matters (as IP issues tend to fall within the purview of other government agencies) and the need for greater coordination between the relevant international fora (FAO, WIPO, WTO, PrepCom), as well as between the relevant agencies within national governments.

IX. Session on Capacity Building and Transfer of Marine Technology

The participants recognised that the scope of capacity building and transfer of marine technology is broader than the two main issues set out in Resolution 69/292. They also recognised that this is a trans-sectoral topic. The discussion focused on how to vitalise or revitalise Part XIV of the Convention, specifically on how to find ways to implement Part XIV of the Convention. The participants discussed the need to articulate between capacity building and new ways of transferring marine technology, which could possibly include a multi-stakeholder transfer of marine technology. There was recognition that an implementation agreement for BBNJ will need to include an article or provision on capacity building, together with a funding mechanism.

X. Session on the Mandate and Work Programme of the PrepCom and Next Steps

The discussion focused on the role of the PrepCom, which is to agree on elements – not to agree to an agreement – as the actual text will not be developed at the PrepCom. It was noted that there will be a formal decision on the diplomatic conference later, in 2018. The participants discussed that the only way forward is consensus, which is recognised in the resolution. There was also the practical acknowledgment that if there was no consensus on particular elements, then the different options will be included in the report from the PrepCom.

Annex A

Fundamental Unanswered Questions

The Workshop revealed a number of fundamental issues that need to be decided:

1. What is meant by ‘consensus’? Former UN Legal Counsel Hans Correll gave an opinion decades ago that not all delegations agreed with. IATTC Antigua Convention defines ‘consensus’ as ‘the adoption of a decision without voting and without the expression of any stated objection’. Correll ruled that more had to be done than merely state an objection to break consensus.
 - a. No voting at the PrepCom?
 - b. If there is voting, what rules should apply to the voting process?
2. Where should elements not achieving consensus go in the report of the PrepCom?
 - a. In a section of the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee to the General Assembly?
 - b. In an annex to the report?
3. What would constitute an ‘element’ of a ‘draft text of an internationally legally binding instrument’ as that word is used in para. 1(a) of Resolution 69/292?
 - a. Draft wording of texts?
 - b. Answers to some of the following questions regarding marine biological diversity?
4. What is ‘marine biological diversity’, including its subject matter and geographic scope?
 - a. Should the definition in the Convention on Biological Diversity be relied on?
 - b. All living organisms in the whole of the high seas and on the Area?
 - c. Only those living organisms on the seabed of the Area?
 - d. Only the living organisms in the water column near specific seabed formations that support endemic and unique communities such as hydrothermal vents and cold seeps?
 - e. Should both of the latter two proposed definitions exclude other living organisms higher in the water column?
 - f. What are ‘marine genetic resources’? Are they included or excluded from marine biological diversity?
 - g. Marine genetic resources of what living organisms?
5. What, if anything beyond the mineral resources of the Area, should be included as common heritage of mankind?
 - a. Living organisms on and in the seabed of the Area, or just their MGR?
 - b. Living organisms in the water column that remain in contact with the seabed (such as communities surrounding hydrothermal vents), or just their MGR?
 - i. ‘Area’ is defined in UNCLOS, Article 1(1)(1) as ‘the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction’.

- ii. UNCLOS, Article 146: ‘The Area and its resources as the common heritage of mankind’.
 - iii. UNCLOS, Article 133(a) defines ‘resources’ as ‘all solid, liquid or gaseous mineral resources *in situ* in the Area at or beneath the seabed, including polymetallic nodules’.
 - iv. Resources, when recovered from the Area, are referred to as ‘minerals’ (UNCLOS, Article 133(b)).
 - v. Sedentary species of the continental shelf are ‘organisms which, at the harvestable stage, either are immobile on or under the seabed or are unable to move except in constant contact with the seabed or the subsoil’ (UNCLOS, Article 77(4)).
6. Is a new institutional mechanism needed to improve the fragmentation of the existing ocean governance regime? If yes, which and how?
 7. Should bioprospection be defined and distinguished from basic marine scientific research?
 - a. If yes, what would be the criteria?
 - b. Is the key component the characterisation of possible commercial intent or is it the realisation of financial gain?
 8. What assets and benefits should be shared?
 - a. Monetary? Of royalties, revenues, etc.?
 - b. Non-monetary? What kinds?
 - c. How should the monetary and non-monetary benefits be shared? In the same or different ways?
 9. Could publication of the results of marine scientific research constitute non-monetary benefits?
 10. Could lists of open-access genes be developed as non-monetary benefits?
 11. How should intellectual property rights on MRGs be regulated?
 - a. In the BBNJ agreement?
 - b. By the WIPO IGC work?
 - c. By incorporation by reference of the WIPO IGC work in the BBNJ agreement?
 - d. Through an amendment to the TRIPS Agreement?
 - e. Can the patentability of naturally occurring MGRs be effectively limited?
 12. Should there be separate area-based management tools for the seabed of the Area and for the water column (high seas), or should they be homogenised?
 13. What should be the threshold for requiring EIAs?
 - a. UNCLOS, Article 206?
 - b. Some other threshold?

14. What should be the applicable standards for baseline constitution and scoping of impact assessment, including cumulative impact?
15. Capacity building and transfer of marine technology of what subjects?
 - a. What financial means?
 - b. How can Part XIV of UNCLOS be better operationalised?
16. What form should a BBNJ agreement take?
 - a. How to ensure that the new legally binding instrument is ‘under the Convention’ as required by para. 1(a) of Resolution 69/292?
 - b. Treaty linked to UNCLOS, or something else?
 - c. Modelled on 1995 Implementing Agreement (Preamble, Parts I and Parts VIII-XIII)?
 - d. What to adapt from the 1994 Implementing Agreement?
17. Will there be a DipCon? Resolution 69/292 is ambiguous. Para. 1(k) states UNGA ‘*will decide* on the convening and starting date of an intergovernmental conference’. Whereas, the first operative paragraph of the Resolution states that the UNGA ‘*decides* to develop an international legally binding instrument’ and para. 1(a) states that UNGA ‘*decides* to establish, prior to holding an intergovernmental conference, a preparatory committee’ [emphasis added].

Annex B

Glossary of Defined Terms

1982 UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 (Law of the Sea Convention) (<i>see also: LOSC, UNCLOS</i>)
1994 Implementing Agreement	1994 Agreement Relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the UNCLOS 10 December 1982 (<i>see also: Part XI Agreement</i>)
1995 Fish Stocks Agreement	1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UNCLOS of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (<i>see also: Fish Stocks Agreement</i>)
ABNJ	Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
ABS	Access to genetic resources and related Benefit Sharing
APEI	Areas of Particular Environmental Interest
BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond Areas of National Jurisdiction
CBD	1992 Convention on Biological Diversity
CCAMLR	1980 Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
CHM	The Common Heritage of Mankind
COBSEA	Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia
COP	Conference of the Parties
DipCon	Diplomatic Conference
DOALOS	United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
EBSA	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas
ECS	Extended Continental Shelf
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
Fish Stocks Agreement	1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UNCLOS of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (<i>see also: 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement</i>)
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
IA	Implementing Agreement
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICM	Integrated Coastal Management
ICPC	International Cable Protection Committee
IGC	Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore

IMO	International Maritime Organization
IMO MEPC	International Maritime Organization Marine Environment Protection Committee
IP	Intellectual Property
IPRs	Intellectual Property Rights
ISA	International Seabed Authority
ITLOS	International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
ITPGRFA	2001 International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUU	Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing
LOSC	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 (<i>see also: 1982 UNCLOS, UNCLOS</i>)
MARPOL	1973/1978 International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
MEPC	International Maritime Organization Maritime Environment Protection Committee
MGR	Marine Genetic Resources
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSC	International Maritime Organization Marine Safety Committee
Nagoya Protocol	2010 Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity
NEAFC	North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
OSPAR	1992 Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
Part XI	Part XI of the UNCLOS: The Area
Part XI Agreement	1994 Agreement Relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the UNCLOS 10 December 1982 (<i>see also: 1994 Implementing Agreement</i>)
Part XIII	Part XIII of the UNCLOS: Marine Scientific Research
Part XIV	Part XIV of the UNCLOS: Development and Transfer of Marine Technology
PEMSEA	Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia
PIC	Prior Informed Consent
PrepCom	BBNJ Preparatory Committee established by UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/292 on 19 June 2015
PSSA	Particularly Sensitive Sea Area
REO	Regional Environment Organization
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
ROP	Rules of Procedure
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment

SMTA	Standard Material Transfer Agreement
TRIPS	Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 (Law of the Sea Convention) (<i>see also: 1982 UNCLOS, LOSC</i>)
UNCLOS III	Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, 1973-1982
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
VME	Vulnerable Marine Eco-System
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization