

## Editorial

### **UN High Seas Treaty is a Landmark**

The United Nations High Seas Treaty has been coming for a long time. Almost two decades of efforts will finally result in the first international law to offer some protection to the nearly two-thirds of the ocean that is beyond national control in the deep depths of world oceans. The Treaty is without doubt a major achievement. Amongst the prime goals is the capacity to create marine protected areas through decisions of a conference of the parties to the Treaty. It also recognizes that genetic resources of the high seas must benefit all of humanity. Moreover, companies planning commercial activities and organizations considering other large projects (such as potential climate interventions involving the ocean) will need to carry out environmental impact assessments. Countries will be permitted to profit from exploiting marine genetic resources, but they must channel a proportion of their profits into a global fund to protect the high seas. Although the details are still to be worked out, high-income countries active in marine genetic research will be asked to contribute proportionately more to the fund. It may be noted here that India plans to send a manned marine capsule 6 km to sea bottom in the Indian Ocean off the tip of southern Indian coastal town of Kanyakumari to study deep marine biodiversity. Good luck for humanity efforts to protect the sea, even if it is too late to address situations like plastic rocks found off the coast of Brazil!



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Snapshot 1



Life in deep sea: now protected by UN international treaty.

Snapshot 2



6 lambs born to a sheep - very rare instance!  
(See Environment News Futures)

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