



Pacific Conference of Churches

Serving the Pasifika Household of God

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**PACIFIC OCEAN GUARDIANSHIP IS NOT FOR SALE:
PACIFIC CHURCHES STAND IN SOLIDARITY
AGAINST DEEP SEA MINING IN AMERICAN SAMOA**

To Whom It May Concern,

I write on behalf of the 36 national member churches and 11 national councils of churches across 20 Pacific Island countries and territories—representing the spiritual voice of millions throughout Oceania.

We speak in solidarity with our members in American Samoa: the Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa and the American Samoan Council of Churches, and we stand with the American Samoan Government, civil society, and Indigenous communities in strong opposition to the decision by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to lease areas for deep sea mining (DSM) in the waters and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of American Samoa.

This action, in clear disregard of Executive Order 006-2024—which declares a moratorium on DSM in American Samoa's EEZ—is both unjust and alarming.

As the Pacific Conference of Churches, we affirm that the issue of deep sea mining is not merely scientific or technical; it is a moral, spiritual, and human rights issue.

Our Sacred Truth is that the ocean is the living blue heart of our planet. It is our common heritage and our common responsibility. We are not passive observers of its decline—we are its guardians. In the Pacific, we proclaim: We are the ocean. And in its protection, we are preserved.

Yet today, this sacred ocean is under siege. Among the most insidious threats is Deep Sea Mining—an experimental extractive industry seeking to plunder the ocean floor under the guise of innovation and sustainability.

Our Declaration Is Clear:

- Deep Sea Mining is Not Needed. Not Wanted. Not Consented.
- If it is not safe in our EEZs, it is not safe anywhere in the Pacific.

- If it is not safe in the Pacific, it is not safe for the planet.

We Therefore:

- Call for the recognition that the ocean, as our shared heritage, demands shared responsibility for its protection;
- Call on all Pacific leaders to join the growing coalition of governments, churches, scientists, civil society organisations, and Indigenous peoples globally in opposing deep sea mining;
- Welcome the stand taken by several Pacific Island governments in imposing moratoria within their EEZs, but urge all to go further—and advocate for a global ban on DSM.
- Call on the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to immediately review its decision and reaffirm Executive Order 006-2024.

This is not just an environmental issue. It is a question of justice, sovereignty, and faithful stewardship.

Too often, extractive industries exploit the language of “sustainability.” The dominant Blue Economy agenda has commodified our ocean and reduced Pacific peoples to stakeholders, rather than recognising us as custodians. This narrative—disguised as opportunity—serves industrial powerhouses and profit-driven corporate interests. It is a second wave of colonisation: Blue Colonisation

We must not forget: our ocean still bears the scars of nuclear injustice, militarisation, and political expediency. We must not allow new wounds to be carved into its depths.

Let us act—not from fear, but from faith.

Not in reaction, but in relationship.

Let us root our resistance in ancestral wisdom and our theological conviction:

“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.” —Psalm 150:6

And let everything with tide, pulse, and current be protected and cherished.

This is our prayer.

Let us paddle and sail together—not toward a sea of exploitation, but toward an ocean of peace, justice, and wonder.

In solidarity and sacred responsibility,



James Shri Bhagwan (Rev.)

General Secretary – Pacific Conference of Churches