

European Consortium Launches Blue Nodules Project



On 1 February 2016 a European consortium launched a new Horizon 2020 project: Blue Nodules. This project addresses the challenge of creating a viable and sustainable value chain to retrieve polymetallic nodules from the ocean floor. It will develop and test new highly automated and sustainable technologies for deep-sea mining that place minimal pressure on the

environment.

The technical side of the project is dedicated to subsea harvesting equipment in addition to the in-situ seafloor and sea surface processing of polymetallic nodules. The operational aspect focuses on sea operations and logistics, including compliance with, and development of, rules and regulations and the business case. The independent, dedicated environmental part will focus on environmental pressures and on an Environmental Impact Assessment. In all areas, [Blue Nodules](#) will build on the results of the European FP7 projects, MIDAS and Blue Mining and the EcoMining pilot action funded by the JPI Oceans initiative of the European science foundations.

Rodney Norman, Director at IHC Mining, project coordinator, explained that Blue Nodules is significant because it allows the European consortium to expand technological development beyond the vertical transportation system of Blue Mining to the seafloor mining vehicle and other components of the system.