

Full House For FIGS Eventsâ€™™ Lecture On Deep-Sea Mining



'Deep-Sea Mining: An Emerging Marine Industry – Challenges and Responses' was the topic of the recent 3rd FIGS Events Lecture. Delivered to an invited audience from different fields of engineering, science, regulation, law and technology at Prince Philip House, London (UK), Oceanographer, Attorney-at-Law and Visiting Colleague at the University of Hawai'i, Dr Philomène Verlaan JD PhD FIMarEST, entranced and educated a full house as she described the multi-faceted political, economic, technological, scientific, environmental, social, industrial and legal aspects that must be addressed to achieve commercially viable results.

As if these challenges were not enough, she told her audience that they are either governed by, or must take into account, the burgeoning regulatory regime promulgated by

the International Seabed Authority (ISA), with consequent effects on operating conditions.

Dr Verlaan described the three principal deep-sea metal-bearing hard mineral deposits that are currently of the most immediate interest to the deep-sea mining industry – ferro-manganese (Fe-Mn) nodules, cobalt (Co)-rich Fe-Mn crusts, and polymetallic sulphides, and their distinctive biogeophysical marine environments (abyssal sediments, seamount flanks and hydrothermal vents, respectively).

Various Aspects Covered

She also provided the audience with an overview of their resource interest, extraction technologies, technical and environmental issues, international regulatory regime, and innovative responses to these myriad challenges. And then she went on to explain that the experience of the deep sea-mining industry could inform the responsible development of other new deep sea industries, such as those related to marine genetic resources.

Questions continued throughout the networking session that followed. Indeed, we were hard pressed to clear the room at the end of the evening, as Philomène answered question after question.

A [video of the lecture and a copy of the technical paper](#) are available on line.