



**WHEREAS:** The deep sea contains many of the planet’s intact ecosystems and plays a crucial role in regulating the climate.<sup>1</sup> Studies indicate that mining this underexplored and complex area for battery-related minerals will create irreversible habitat and ecosystem loss and could permanently destroy invaluable carbon storage.<sup>2</sup>

Deep sea mining (DSM) for mineral deposits found in nodules on the seafloor can be devastating to marine ecosystems, even when performed cautiously. Removing nodules removes habitat.<sup>3</sup> Dredging obliterates seafloor life and releases sediment plumes laced with toxic metals that poison marine food chains.<sup>4</sup> Studies have found that deep-sea organisms are slow-growing and fragile, and habitats may never recover to pre-impact states.<sup>5</sup> The likelihood of biodiversity loss associated with DSM jeopardizes fish-based livelihoods and food supplies.<sup>6</sup> As importantly, industrial-scale seafloor exploitation could have grave consequences for the ocean’s ability to absorb carbon dioxide, and may lead to release of carbon stores.<sup>7</sup>

The scientific uncertainty and likely harms of DSM have caused civil society groups, governments, private organizations, and manufacturers to voice deep-seated concerns. Twenty-four governments have established bans, moratoriums, or precautionary pauses on DSM.<sup>8</sup> DSM is also at odds with global goals to protect and restore nature, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, the supply of deep-sea minerals is technologically and financially insecure, making it expensive and risky for automakers to incorporate deep-sea sourced minerals into supply chains.<sup>10</sup>

Companies are responding to the significant reputational risks inherent to such a destructive practice. Electric vehicle manufacturers, including BMW, Volvo, Volkswagen,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fclim.2023.1169665/full>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unepfi.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Harmful-Marine-Extractives-Deep-Sea-Mining.pdf>, p.11

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X1630495X?via%3Dihub>;  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-021-91703-4>

<sup>4</sup> <https://nhm.openrepository.com/handle/10141/622833>, p. 12,13;  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X18306407>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.fauna-flora.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/fauna-flora-deep-sea-mining-update-report-march-23.pdf>, p.17, 26

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/s44183-023-00016-8>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2020.00165/full>

<sup>8</sup> <https://savethehighseas.org/voices-calling-for-a-moratorium-governments-and-parliamentarians/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://planet-tracker.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Deep-Sea-Mining.pdf>, p.17

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.blueclimateinitiative.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/whitepaper.pdf>, p.1; <https://nautil.us/the-dubious-economics-of-deep-sea-mining-309597/>



Rivian, and Renault, have signed a global moratorium on deep sea mining, pledging to keep their supply chains deep-sea-mineral-free until scientific findings are sufficient to assess the environmental risks of DSM.<sup>11</sup>

Peers' commitment to a moratorium demonstrates the precautionary principle and the availability of more sustainable methods to obtain minerals. The BMW Group emphasizes that its "sustainability strategy is also relying more on resource-efficient closed-loop material cycles – with the aim of significantly increasing the percentage of secondary material in vehicles."<sup>12</sup>

Unlike its peers, General Motors (GM) has not supported a DSM moratorium or taken a public position on DSM, leaving shareholders concerned that the Company is not addressing the serious reputational, financial, and regulatory risks of DSM.<sup>13</sup> By taking a public stance on DSM and deep-sea sourced minerals, GM can assure investors that it is addressing the risks of DSM and practicing responsible sourcing.

**BE IT RESOLVED:** Shareholders request that General Motors publicly disclose the Company's policies on the use of deep-sea mined minerals in its production and supply chains.

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT:** At Board discretion, GM should disclose the criteria it will use for decision making related to the use of deep-sea sourced minerals.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.stopdeepseabedmining.org/endorsers/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global/article/detail/T0328790EN/bmw-group-protects-the-deep-seas>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.unepfi.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Harmful-Marine-Extractives-Deep-Sea-Mining.pdf>, p.34