



Secretariat

1 July 2017

Administrative instruction

Official documents and publications

The Secretary-General hereby promulgates the following:

A. Purpose

1. The purpose of this instruction is to describe the documentation process within the Secretariat and set out provisions for processing, formatting and translating documents of the International Seabed Authority. In addition, this instruction will also provide an overview of and guidance on attribution policies in relation to publications of the Authority.

Part I

Document format, length and submission process

B. Document control

2. The process of producing documents is often referred to as the document chain because one stage links to another in a continuous flow, from start (the preparation of manuscripts), to processing (editing and translation), to finish (the issuance of documents in the official languages, including the posting of documents to the Authority's website and the printing and distribution of hard copies).

3. The Documentation and Conference Management Officer is a key link in the document chain and is responsible for processing documents produced by respective departments, document formatting (layout and assignment of symbols) and coordinating document translation with the Department for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management, in New York.

C. Translation and submission deadline

4. Documents prepared for intergovernmental meetings, including those of the Council and the Assembly, are issued in the six official languages of the Authority (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish). In 2011, the United Nations translation services translated over 2,100 pages of Authority documents at considerable cost. Communicating clearly and concisely will result in lower costs



and make it more likely that the information contained in the documents will be read and absorbed.

5. All documents to be translated should be submitted to the Department for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management through the Authority's Documentation and Conference Management Officer. Official documents must be slotted for translation with the Department at least 10 weeks, or 70 calendar days, before the meeting at which they are to be used. The slotting system is a tool for documentation forecasting and planning. It is a means to achieve the timely issuance of documents through workload forecasting and capacity planning. The system requires that a table be submitted that outlines the estimated number of documents that will be sent for translation for a given session and that contains the title of each document, the estimated number of words and the date of submission for translation. Each document is then given a forecast number by the Documents Management Section, in New York, which is used to track the document from receipt to completion. Late submissions, incomplete texts, overly long reports and manuscripts submitted without a mandate disrupt the smooth, orderly and efficient production process and must be avoided.

D. Length of reports

6. Authority reports should be as brief as possible and, whenever possible, not exceed 8,500 words (around 16 physical pages)¹ for documents originating in the Secretariat and 10,700 words for documents not originating in the Secretariat, such as documents received from member States. If a document exceeds those limits, authors may wish to consider shortening the document or issuing it as a conference room paper, which is not translated and is not considered to be an official document. Exceptions to this rule are made for the annual report of the Secretary-General and legislative instruments such as regulations.

E. Format of International Seabed Authority documents

7. Official documents issued by the Authority begin with the symbol "ISBA". All documents of the Assembly, Council, Legal and Technical Commission and Finance Committee carry symbols. Each symbol consists of the following elements: (a) the abbreviation "ISBA", which appears by default; (b) a number that refers to the session sequence (for example, "17" for the seventeenth session); (c) a letter or letters to indicate whether it is a document of the Assembly (A), the Council (C), the Legal and Technical Commission (LTC) or the Finance Committee (FC); and (d) a document number. In addition, the letter "L" may be placed just before the document number (for example "L.1") to indicate that it is a provisional document for limited distribution to the members of the body concerned. Furthermore, the nature of the document may be denoted by the letters "WP" to indicate that it is a working paper or "CRP" to indicate that it is a conference room paper. The date of issue, the category of distribution (either "General" or "Limited"), the original language and the language of translation will be indicated in the document masthead. Documents issued for or under the authority of two or more organs may carry two or more symbols, one for each organ.

8. Manuscripts must be submitted in Microsoft Word. They need not be formatted, but should be single spaced, correctly paginated and in 10-point Times New Roman font (smaller font is permissible in tables and graphics). Tables, charts,

¹ See General Assembly resolutions [52/214](#), [53/208](#) and [59/265](#).

graphs, statements and other material may not be embedded in Microsoft Excel format; any file containing material embedded in non-Word format will be returned to the author for resubmission in Word-only format. Native Microsoft Excel files containing tables, charts and graphs represented within the Word document must be submitted along with the Word document. Documents must be submitted electronically by the Documentation and Conference Management Officer through the gDoc system. Direct submissions by e-mail will not be accepted by the Department for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management.

9. Whenever elements of a document are repeated from one year or session to the next (for example, documents that have previously been translated), those elements must be reproduced exactly, including footnotes. Submissions of a previously issued document, such as a report on a similar topic from a previous session or a draft text, must be based on the previous version that has been downloaded from the Official Document System (<http://documents.un.org>) and used as the basis for preparing the new document. Changes and new elements in the text should be indicated in track changes before submission to the Documentation and Conference Management Officer.

10. The twelfth edition of the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* is the current standard for spelling at the Authority. If more than one spelling is given in that dictionary, use the form listed first unless otherwise indicated below. Authors should also consult the *United Nations Editorial Manual Online* (<http://dd.dgacm.org/editorialmanual/>), which contains a spelling list that can serve as a quick reference for common words and compounds for which there may be more than one possible spelling. Some words commonly used in United Nations documents that are not in the twelfth edition of the dictionary are included in that list for ease of reference. For further guidance, see also the “Abbreviations and acronyms” and “Capitalization in English” sections of the editorial manual.

F. Attribution in International Seabed Authority documents

11. Documents of the Authority normally bear, in addition to a title corresponding to the subject or agenda item, a subtitle indicating the entity or official responsible for submitting the document. For example:

- (a) Report of the Secretary-General;
- (b) Statement of the President of the Assembly;
- (c) Report of the Finance Committee;
- (d) Summary report of the Chairman of the Legal and Technical Commission.

12. Documents originating in the Secretariat shall be attributed to the Secretary-General in the following cases:

- (a) If they have been prepared in accordance with a request expressly addressed to the Secretary-General;
- (b) If they deal with a policy question that engages the responsibility of the Secretary-General;
- (c) If they involve formal acts carried out by the Secretary-General under staff rules and regulations, operational rules of the organs of the Authority or any other relevant regulation, agreement or protocol.

Documents dealing with detailed and technical matters not requiring policy clearance are normally attributed to the Secretariat.

G. Guidance for writers

13. Writing for the Authority calls for the same qualities of brevity, simplicity of language and logical organization of material that are desirable in all writing of a factual character. A broad range of internal and external guidelines and resources, including support for writers, are featured in the *United Nations Editorial Manual Online*. Authors are encouraged to make use of those resources.

H. Cartographic clearance

14. Cartographic clearance is essential for any map included in an Authority publication or document, even if it is sourced from a United Nations organization or agency. All requests for cartographic clearance must be submitted to the Office of Legal Affairs. Documents and publications may be fully prepared up to that stage immediately prior to printing, but cannot be printed or distributed until cartographic clearance has been received from the Office of Legal Affairs. Short or long form disclaimers (see annex) should be included beneath the map that is being included in the publication.

15. United Nations maps that have been pre-cleared can be found on the website of the United Nations Geospatial Information Section (<http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/english/htmain.htm>).

Part 2 Publications policies

I. Attribution of authorship in International Seabed Authority publications

16. The policy relating to attribution to individual authors has the following objectives:

- (a) To acknowledge original intellectual contributions in the preparation of Secretariat publications and reports;
- (b) To facilitate dialogue with the international academic and professional communities;
- (c) To provide appropriate recognition of the intellectual accomplishments of individual staff members of the Secretariat;
- (d) To assure current and potential staff members, known to be experts in their respective fields, that their professional work in the Secretariat will be recognized among their peers;
- (e) To increase staff responsibility in the creation of high-quality publications and reports.

17. Attribution to organizational units smaller than a department, or to individual authors, may appear anywhere in the publication, as deemed appropriate by the author department concerned, **except** on the front cover, title page or reverse-of-title page. This practice is valid in the case of: (a) flagship and other major publications; and (b) intergovernmental reports and major publications substantially edited for wider public dissemination.

18. In the case of specialized technical publications, including collections of scholarly papers, and periodicals, attribution to organizational units smaller than a

department, or to individual authors, may appear anywhere in the publication, as deemed appropriate by the author department concerned, **including** on the front cover, title page or reverse-of-title page.

19. Attribution of authorship shall not be considered in public information materials, such as brochures, pamphlets, press releases, flyers, catalogues or other materials designed primarily to inform the public about the activities of the Authority.

J. Signature of forewords and prefaces

20. In publications prepared by the Secretariat, a foreword or preface may be signed only by the Secretary-General or, as appropriate and upon his instructions, by an official who is authorized to assume responsibility for the publication.

K. Attribution to consultants

21. As a general rule, attribution or other reference to consultants may be made at the discretion of the Secretary-General. When a consultant is engaged to prepare a report for the Authority, authorship of the report shall not be attributed to the consultant. A reference to the consultant's contribution may, in appropriate cases, be made in a footnote of the report. All rights, including title, copyright and patent rights, to any work remain with the Authority (see [ISBA/ST/AI/2003/01](#), section H, "Title rights").

L. Attribution to other organizations, government representatives and authors other than International Seabed Authority staff

22. The names and logos of other organizations, governments and entities may appear on the cover and title page as authors if they are jointly responsible for the preparation of a publication that the Authority has produced. Alternatively, acknowledgement may be made in a foreword or preface.

M. Disclaimer

23. When a publication is in whole or in part attributed to individual authors within the Authority, the prefatory matter shall contain a statement indicating the position of the Authority towards such material. Such a disclaimer shall read: "The views expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the International Seabed Authority".

N. Final provisions

24. The present administrative instruction shall enter into force on 1 July 2017.

(Signed) Michael W. Lodge
Secretary-General

Annex

Disclaimers used on maps

One of the disclaimer forms set forth below should be used in connection with every map issued under the responsibility of the International Seabed Authority. Certain circumstances may require a special statement, which will be provided by the Office of Legal Affairs in consultation with the United Nations Geospatial Information Section.

Short form

English

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Seabed Authority.

French

Les frontières et les noms indiqués et les désignations employées sur cette carte n'impliquent pas reconnaissance ou acceptation officielle par l'Autorité internationale des fonds marins.

Spanish

Los límites y los nombres y las designaciones que figuran en este mapa no implican su apoyo o aceptación oficial por la Autoridad Internacional de los Fondos Marinos.

Long form

English

The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the International Seabed Authority concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

French

Les appellations employées dans cette carte et la présentation des données qui y figurant n'impliquent de la part du Secrétariat de l'Autorité internationale des fonds marins aucune prise de position quant au statut juridique des pays, territoires, villes ou zones, ou de leurs autorités, ni quant au tracé de leurs frontières ou limites.

Spanish

Las denominaciones empleadas en este mapa y la forma en que aparecen presentados los datos que contiene no implican, de parte de la Secretaría de la Autoridad Internacional de los Fondos Marinos, juicio alguno sobre la condición jurídica de países, territorios, ciudades o zonas, o de sus autoridades, ni respecto de la delimitación de sus fronteras o límites.