



Cost of Clean Energy: Channels of Justice

Episode References

Intro Music

The Future Ancient Now, Nathan Moore

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Utyopp5mDgs>

Soundbites

00:45: Pacific countries are gathering in Tonga this week for a series of talks about the future of seabed mining in the region. A number of countries including Papua New Guinea, Nauru and the Cook Islands are looking to exploit minerals on the sea floor and some exploratory projects have already begun.

Blades, Johnny (14th February 2019) *Talks in Tonga on future of seabed mining in Pacific*. Radio New Zealand.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/382493/talks-in-tonga-on-future-of-seabed-mining-in-pacific>

These are things we take very seriously as an island state as an ocean people, we certainly not going to conduct any sort of exploitation of our minerals, if it causes any environmental damage that just will not occur.

Blades, Johnny (5th November 2020) *Cook Islands govt defends taking plunge on deepsea mining*. Radio New Zealand. Interview with Mark Brown.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/429915/cook-islands-govt-defends-taking-plunge-on-deepsea-mining>

The Cook Islands exclusive economic zone contains an estimated 10 billion tonnes of nodules on the sea floor which are rich in manganese, nickel, copper, cobalt and rare earth minerals. Some of these required for batteries for electric vehicles, so interest in them is growing.



Blades, Johnny (14th February 2019) *Talks in Tonga on future of seabed mining in Pacific*.
Radio New Zealand.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/382493/talks-in-tonga-on-future-of-seabed-mining-in-pacific>

2:10: So it's these things that are driving a lot of the larger multinational companies, the car manufacturing companies to look at sources where they're getting cobalt And currently, you know, some of these sources out of Africa, for example, not harvested in the most environmentally safe way or in social be accepted ways, which makes exploring our minerals an option for some of these companies.

Blades, Johnny (5th November 2020) *Cook Islands govt defends taking plunge on deepsea mining*. Radio New Zealand. Interview with Mark Brown.

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10:34: What we know for sure is there is very little marine life at the at that ocean depth, but it does exist in very small microscopic forms and other forms, of course.

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Music: Drums of Raratonga – Akirata Cultural Dance Troupe – Oct 13, 2008

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gWIWONYdbA>

There are a lot of people who have issues with it. And I think there would be a lot more people who had issues with the direction we're going if they were more informed of the environmental impacts that are likely to occur. And in terms of the precautionary approach that the country is taking.

Blades, Johnny (5th November 2020) *Cook Islands govt defends taking plunge on deepsea mining*. Radio New Zealand. Interview with Teuru Tiraa Passfield.



<https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/429915/cook-islands-govt-defends-taking-plunge-on-deepsea-mining>

18:00: So part of the exploratory licence requirements are that companies do have to collect baseline environmental data and a lot of the things that they have to collect already prescribed by the International seabed authority. So there are things that they specifically have to collect. But it's not true that that's the only avenue for research, we should have really focused and tried a little bit harder to get some more of that independent research. Before taking this route. We note to his notes that there that there were two expeditions that went out last year or the year before, to do some research. And it was a perfect opportunity to get some biological data. But they didn't. And when, when they were asked why they did and they said that, unfortunately, those boats weren't equipped for that sort of research. So that gives some sort of indication of the weight that's being placed on environmental research and data. Ideally, independent research, we wouldn't have to worry about incentives, the incentive for independent researchers isn't the potential for economic gain, but it's just the actual research itself.

Blades, Johnny (5th November 2020) *Cook Islands govt defends taking plunge on deepsea mining*. Radio New Zealand. Interview with Teuru Tiraa Passfield.

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20:00: But it's inevitable that for a country that is 99.99% ocean, that we will turn to our ocean for our livelihood, for our survival. And particularly during this time of COVID. When our tourism industry is essentially zero, it's important for us to look at diversifying the economy. And of course, with the demand for the minerals that are held in our nodules drives even further, the need for more research exploration to fully understand the marine environment to see if we can extract these nodules without damaging the ocean.

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<https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/429915/cook-islands-govt-defends-taking-plunge-on-deepsea-mining>

20:44: And our Honourable Prime Minister, he did say that he spoke about having an obligation to our people to have us the resources that we've been given to make our lives better.

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20:52: In our consultations with our people, they see the need for us to diversify the economy. So people have grown accustomed to a level of prosperity that we had under tourism. And we need to look at ways that how we can maintain that. And the minerals programme gives us an option, the global demand for these metals, as you illustrated through conversion to renewables. The movement towards electric vehicles is predicting a significant demand, particularly for metals like nickel and cobalt, which are these minerals.

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21:25: But I think where we're coming from is we believe the obligation is really to make sure that our people are properly informed of the potential risks. So whether people support or oppose the industry, that stance that people can take is informed by best evidence, not by vague reassurances that we're going to do the research and if there's any environmental damage, we'll stop. I don't think that that's enough.

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22:10: We have asked for no new calls for exploration until them what I'm one of marine spatial planning has done. And under this current call for tenders for exploration, we've also said not to finalise those until the special unique marine areas are noted on the map so that people know which areas to avoid if you want to avoid serious harm the potential for serious harm. We should have these areas of conservation significance mapped out and we need to seriously put effort into finding independent researchers.
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<https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/429915/cook-islands-govt-defends-taking-plunge-on-deepsea-mining>

28:02: The total value of materials contained in e-waste is estimated at 62 billion dollars
Urban Mining: A Literal Goldmine, Lombard Odier. Oct 28 2019.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Td3aj07YRBE> (02:10)

28:13: The challenge of recycling in small electronic equipment is a very interesting challenge and there are 2 billion small electronic equipment that are sold on the planet. The vast majority of them are lost somehow... There is a real real real business case to recover this material and to put it back into service so we are closing the loop.

Urban Mining: A Literal Goldmine, Lombard Odier. Interivew with Guy Ethier, Senior Vice President, Umicore. Oct 28 2019.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Td3aj07YRBE> (01:27)

Music: The Crows Did It Nathan Moore. No Copyright YouTube Music Library.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyl8fYSo1wk>