

Deep Sea Minerals Corp. Provides Strategic Update on Cook Islands

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And U.S. NOAA Pathways as U.S. Accelerates Offshore Critical Minerals Policy and Expands Supply-Chain Investment

[Deep Sea Minerals Corp.](#) (CSE: SEAS) (OTCQB: DSEAF) (FSE: X45) ("Deep Sea" or the "Company"), a subsea mineral exploration and development company focused on advancing critical mineral opportunities from the deep ocean, today announced that it is actively pursuing offshore critical minerals initiatives, including concession pathways within the Cook Islands Exclusive Economic Zone ("EEZ") and U.S. permitting initiatives administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ("NOAA") under the Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act of 1980 ("DSHMRA").

Corporate Strategy: United States (NOAA / DSHMRA)

Deep Sea Minerals is actively advancing offshore critical mineral initiatives in the United States through permitting pathways administered by NOAA under DSHMRA. The Company believes the U.S. regulatory framework entered a material inflection point in January 2026, when NOAA announced revisions intended to modernize and consolidate the DSHMRA permitting process, followed by the launch of a federally funded hydrographic survey exceeding 30,000 square nautical miles offshore American Samoa as part of the U.S. Offshore Critical Minerals Mapping Plan. Together, these actions represent a shift toward a more structured, data-supported, and administratively defined offshore permitting environment under U.S. jurisdiction. The Company views the NOAA-administered pathway as distinct from international seabed regimes due to its integration with U.S. supply chain policy, national security priorities, and federally funded seabed mapping programs, and is allocating capital toward regulatory engagement, technical review, and procedural readiness within this framework.

Corporate Strategy: Cook Islands (Exclusive Economic Zone)

The Company is also advancing offshore critical mineral initiatives through concession pathways within the Cook Islands Exclusive Economic Zone ("EEZ"), one of the few jurisdictions with an established seabed mineral regulatory framework supported by decades of scientific assessment. The Company believes the Cook Islands' relevance as a seabed minerals jurisdiction was further reinforced in February 2026, when the Cook Islands Government and the United States formalized a framework for cooperation on critical minerals research and supply chain security, reflecting increased alignment with U.S.-led critical minerals policy objectives. This development builds on the Cook Islands' existing licensing regime, precautionary regulatory sequencing, and extensive baseline datasets, which together provide a structured and administratively defined environment for offshore mineral activity, consistent with the Company's disciplined, sequenced approach.

The Company is advancing its offshore critical minerals strategy within a rapidly evolving macroeconomic and geopolitical environment, where critical mineral supply chains are increasingly being treated as strategic infrastructure. The Company is executing across multiple parallel workstreams, including jurisdictional and regulatory positioning, evaluation of concession and application frameworks, technical and scientific collaboration related to seabed mapping and baseline data, and the development of partnership structures across marine services, data acquisition, and downstream processing. Capital is being allocated with a disciplined focus on procedural readiness, sequencing, and flexibility, supporting execution as offshore regulatory frameworks continue to standardize and mature.

Strategic Context: Accelerating U.S. Policy Support

On January 21, 2026, NOAA announced revisions intended to streamline and consolidate the U.S. process for deep seabed exploration licenses and commercial recovery permit applications under DSHMRA. These reforms represent a meaningful regulatory development for U.S.-aligned offshore critical minerals participants and may improve clarity around application pathways for qualified entities.

In addition, NOAA announced on January 22, 2026, that it will conduct a hydrographic survey exceeding

30,000 square nautical miles of federal waters off American Samoa, expected to begin in February 2026, as part of the U.S. Department of Commerce's implementation of the U.S. Offshore Critical Minerals Mapping Plan.

These parallel developments – permitting modernization and expanded mapping activity – signal increased U.S. institutional momentum toward identifying and enabling future offshore critical minerals options.

Recent U.S. Supply Chain Actions: US\$12 Billion “Project Vault” Initiative and Allied Coordination

The Company also notes recent U.S. declarations reinforcing the U.S. critical minerals initiative (“Project Vault”) intended to strengthen strategic mineral resilience through stockpiling and related supply chain measures. The Company believes these actions underscore the accelerating policy focus on securing reliable, scalable critical mineral access and reducing exposure to concentrated processing and supply risks.

The Company further notes recent public reporting indicating the United States is pursuing enhanced coordination with allied partners on critical minerals supply chains, reflecting a broader approach to mineral security that includes trade, industrial policy, and strategic sourcing initiatives.

Cook Islands: Evaluating Concession Pathways and Regulatory Environment

The Cook Islands continues to be viewed as a globally recognized jurisdiction for seabed mineral potential, supported by established regulatory institutions and a history of scientific evaluation.

The Company notes recent public reporting that the Cook Islands has extended aspects of its seabed minerals exploration program timeline, reflecting ongoing scientific work and a continued focus on a precautionary approach. The Company believes this evolving landscape reinforces the importance of rigorous data review, stakeholder engagement, and careful sequencing for any future offshore initiatives.

On February 4, 2026, the Cook Islands Government formally established a strategic framework for critical minerals research and supply chain security with the United States. This framework establishes a structured basis for collaboration across research, exploration, investment facilitation, processing, and supply chain development.

Industry Developments: Increased Attention to NOAA as a Permitting Pathway

The Company notes recent industry reporting that has highlighted increased attention to NOAA-administered pathways under International Seabed Authority (“ISA”) processes. The Company believes this broader industry context further supports the view that the U.S. regulatory channel is becoming a focal point for offshore critical minerals strategy.

Broader Market Context: U.S.-Led Critical Minerals Trade Bloc Initiative

In parallel with U.S. domestic policy developments, on February 5, 2026, U.S. officials unveiled plans to create a critical minerals trade bloc involving approximately 55 countries aimed at countering China's dominance in the global critical minerals sector. The initiative proposes coordinated price floors maintained through adjustable tariffs to support allied market stability and encourage diversified sourcing for critical minerals central to advanced manufacturing, electric vehicles, semiconductors, and defense systems. At the same time, the U.S. administration launched Project Vault, a strategic stockpile supported by public and private funding, to buttress supply chain resilience and reduce reliance on concentrated foreign processing capacity.

“The aggressive action taken by the U.S. Government in recent weeks reinforces the critical minerals imperative and validates our strategic focus. The institutional momentum is profound.

U.S. collaboration with the Cook Islands Government attests to the nation's critical minerals importance, consistent with Deep Sea's evaluation of this area.” said James Deckelman, Chief Executive Officer of Deep Sea Minerals Corp.

OTCQB Uplisting

The Company is pleased to announce its graduation from the OTC Pink Market to the OTCQB Venture Market, effective today. Upon graduation, the Company's common shares will trade on the OTCQB Venture Market under the symbol OTCQB: DSEAF. The OTCQB Venture Market is designed for early-stage and developing U.S. and international companies and provides increased visibility, improved liquidity, and enhanced disclosure standards for investors.

“Graduating to the OTCQB is an important milestone for Deep Sea Minerals as we continue to advance our strategy and broaden our exposure to U.S. investors,” said James Deckelman, Chief Executive Officer of Deep Sea Minerals Corp. “We believe this listing enhances our visibility and accessibility in the U.S. market and supports our ongoing efforts to build long-term shareholder value.”

Stock Option Grant

Pursuant to the Company’s Stock Option Plan and subject to regulatory approval, the Company has granted 575,000 stock options (the “Options”) to certain Directors, Officers and Consultant of the Company. The Options are exercisable into common shares in the capital of the Company (the “Shares”) at an exercise price equal to the market price of the Shares at the time of grant for a period up to five (5) years from the date of grant of the Options, with vesting over a period of six (6) months to twenty-four (24) months. The Shares to be issued on the exercise of the Options will be subject to a hold period of four months and one day from the date of grant of the Options.

ABOUT DEEP SEA MINERALS CORP.

Deep Sea Minerals Corp. is a subsea mineral exploration and development company focused on evaluating opportunities to support the future supply of critical minerals through the acquisition, exploration, and development of deep-sea mineral assets.

The Company’s strategy is centered on identifying jurisdictions and geological settings with potential exposure to polymetallic nodule systems, which are recognized for containing combinations of metals that may be relevant to defense, industrial manufacturing, clean energy infrastructure, advanced electronics, and artificial intelligence-related supply chains. These seabed resources represent a largely undeveloped component of the global mineral supply base and are the subject of increasing policy, scientific, and regulatory attention worldwide.

As part of this process, the Company has commenced early-stage engagement with selected governments and regulatory bodies in the Pacific Ocean region to assess potential pathways for future exploration initiatives, subject to applicable international, national, and environmental frameworks.

For further information, please see the Company’s website: <https://www.deepseamineralscorp.com>

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ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

“James A. Deckelman”
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Forward-Looking Statements

This news release includes "forward-looking information" that is subject to a number of assumptions, risks and uncertainties, many of which are beyond the control of the Company. Forward-looking statements may include but are not limited to Company's plans, objectives and strategies, expected benefits of subsea mineral exploration and development, and are subject to all of the risks and uncertainties normally incident to such events. Although the Company believes the expectations expressed in such forward-looking statements are based on reasonable assumptions, such statements are not guarantees of future performance and actual results may differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements.

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