

26 November 2023

Mario Cordero
Chief Executive Officer
Port of Long Beach
415 W. Ocean Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear Mr. Cordero,

A Maltese flagged vessel called *The Hidden Gem* is currently traveling towards your port with a [reported ETA](#) of 12pm on Monday, November 27th. Originally a drill ship, the vessel has been retrofitted for the singular purpose of deep sea mining. This nascent industry has significant environmental concerns, and a growing coalition of [scientists](#), [civil society groups](#), [Indigenous Peoples](#), [corporations](#), and [investors](#) are calling for a moratorium or outright ban on the practice. At least [24 countries](#) are now advocating for either a ban, precautionary pause, or moratorium.

The ship is carrying cargo that [may be radioactive](#) and could present a health risk to workers. It is unclear why the material is being transported into the United States or what the vessel's intentions are with it. The material was collected on an [exploration license issued by the International Seabed Authority \(ISA\)](#), a U.N. related agency established by the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea with competency over the international deep seabed, and cannot be sold commercially under [an exploration license](#).

The history of this material is that it was collected between September and November 2022 in a remote area of the central Pacific called the Clarion Clipperton Zone, located between Hawai'i and Mexico within an exploration license area designated to [NORI](#), a Nauru-based subsidiary of a Canadian-based deep sea mining corporation called The Metals Company. The corporation reported that over [4,500 tons of polymetallic nodules were collected](#) during these mining tests, with 3,000 tons of this placed in the hull of the ship. From that point the vessel returned to the Port of Manzanillo, Mexico and remained there for over a year before departing for the Port of Long Beach on 19 November 2023. The collection of nodules has since been [documented as a radiation exposure risk](#), including the inhalation or ingestion of nodule fines, the inhalation of radon gas in enclosed spaces and the potential concentration of some radioisotopes during nodule processing. Inappropriate handling of polymetallic nodules could pose serious health risks.

Greenpeace International has been in communication with AllSeas, the company that operates *The Hidden Gem*. In a communication this past week, after the ship began course for Long Beach, the CEO of AllSeas, Mr. Pieter Hereema confirmed that the cargo in question remains on the vessel.

In addition to the health risk, and concerns around the commercial use of the material, we would like to emphasize that the practice of seabed mining is illegal in the State of California under the

[California Seabed Mining Prevention Act](#) (California Assembly Bill 1832) passed on August 26th, 2022. While the law does not prohibit passage of foreign deep sea mining vessels in California waters, the fact is that a vessel designed specifically for this activity and carrying a material acknowledged under California law as contrary to public interest is using a California port and infrastructure. This flies in the face of the will and intent of the people of California, as well as significant concerns raised globally on the environmental and social impacts of this activity.

We urge you to prohibit entry of this vessel and ask for access to any information you have concerning the plans for this vessel to berth in your Port. Details on their planned activities, including location of berth, intended duration of stay, and any plans to onboard or offboard equipment or cargo would be kindly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Arlo Hemphill

Arlo Hemphill
Global Corporate Lead, Stop Deep Sea Mining Campaign
Greenpeace USA

C.C. Governor Gavin Newsom
Rex Richardson, Mayor of Long Beach
Los Angeles Times
Tina Calderon, Ocean Protectors Program Director, Sacred Places Institute
Violet Sage Walker, Chairperson, Northern Chumash Tribal Council
Board of Harbor Commissioners, Long Beach