

The Safety and Environment Advisory (SEA) Group is an advisory body to the MSP-FB, SEP and IODP³ Operators and provides independent advice regarding potential safety and environmental issues associated with the general and specific geological settings of proposed IODP³ drill sites.

Safety and Environment Advisory Group

Terms of Reference



**INTERNATIONAL
OCEAN DRILLING
PROGRAMME**

Safety and Environment Advisory (SEA) Group Terms of Reference

1. General Purpose

The Safety and Environment Advisory (SEA) Group will be an advisory body to the MSP-FB, SEP and IODP³ Operators and will provide independent advice regarding potential safety and environmental issues associated with the general and specific geological settings of proposed IODP³ drill sites. The SEA Group may also provide advice on appropriate drilling technologies for the avoidance of drilling hazards and protection of the environment, and advice on geopolitical and cultural considerations that may affect implementation of drilling proposals..

2. Mandate

The primary responsibility of the SEA Group is to evaluate all prospective IODP³ drill sites and advise SEP and the MSP-FB on safety and environmental issues . The principal geological safety issue and most significant environmental hazard in ocean drilling is the possible release of high-pressure fluids and/or volatiles (including hydrocarbons) from subsurface reservoirs. Careful planning and appropriate site characterisation reduce or eliminate this risk.

Specifically, the SEA Group is responsible for:

- in liaison with the SEP-Site Co-Chair and SEP membership, advising proponents of IODP³ scientific drilling proposals at an early stage of the development of their proposals on general safety and environmental issues (including geopolitical and cultural issues) that may be associated with their target areas, and raising their awareness of the types of site survey data that will be required to identify these issues and mitigate any risks.
- independently examining and reviewing site survey data and operational plans of proposals passing through the SEP system, to determine if and how proposed drilling/coring operations can be conducted to maximise safety and minimise environmental impact.
- advising the MSP-FB and IODP³ operators on safety and environmental issues associated with proposals being considered for implementation upon request.

3. Membership

Members of the SEA Group will be specialists from the international scientific community who can provide expert advice on maximising safety and minimising environmental impact associated with drilling/coring of proposed sites, including sites in hydrocarbon prone and biologically, environmental or culturally sensitive areas. Members of the SEA Group will be primarily selected based on this specific expertise, following open calls for applications issued the IODP³-SO. Candidates for SEA Group membership will be recommended by the PMOs with the MSP-FB making the final selection, based on the PMO recommendations and other considerations. SEA Group members will be initially appointed for a three-year term renewable at the discretion of the SEA Group Chair and the MSP-FB.

The MSP-FB will select a Chair from the SEA Group membership to represent the SEA Group at meetings of the SEP, the MSP-FB, and the Scientific Drilling Forum. The Chair shall also act as an informal liaison with industry and have responsibility for inviting relevant industry, government or

cultural heritage representatives to attend the Scientific Drilling Forum. The Chair shall have a term of three years, renewable at the discretion of the MSP-FB.

4. Meetings

The SEA Group should convene virtually when requested by the SEP Co-Chairs and/or MSP-FB. Representatives from the IODP³ Operators will also attend SEA Group meetings as appropriate. The SEA Group will provide the IODP³-SO with minutes of the meetings, including voting results, within one month following each meeting.

5. Decisions

In conjunction with the IODP³ Operators, the SEA Group will provide recommendations to SEP and the MSP-FB as follows:

1. Site approved as proposed.
2. Amendment of a proposed drill site required with respect to location and/or allowed depth of penetration.
3. A specific drilling/coring programme (including drilling/coring order and the nature of any required monitoring programme).
4. Acquisition of additional data required to complete the safety review or address ecological or cultural heritage issues.
5. Denial of approval.

Approvals will be based on the judgement of the SEA Group that a proposed site can be safely drilled considering the available technology, information, and planning. Recommendations of the SEA Group will be based on consensus or voting, as decided on a case-by-case basis by the panel.

6. Conflicts of Interest

Actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be declared at the start of each SEA Group meeting. Members with declared conflicts of interest are encouraged to participate in the discussion of all drilling/coring sites. When determining the fate of an individual drilling/coring location, SEA Group members with a conflict of interest are excluded from voting.