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International environmental obligations and liabilities in deep seabed mining

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Deep seabed mining (DSM) – mining activities in the seabed area beyond national jurisdictions (the Area) – is now in a crucial transitional period from the exploration to exploitation phase. Against this background, the question of how to secure the common interest of marine environmental protection in DSM becomes increasingly compelling. Linlin Sun deals with this issue by attempting to answer two major legal questions faced by all participants in DSM – the contractor, the sponsoring State and the International Seabed Authority (ISA). What are their international environmental obligations? What are the legal consequences in case of breaches of these environmental obligations?

In answering these questions, Linlin Sun analyses the existing legal regime of the Area, observes personally the functioning of the ISA, and draws on practice in related sectors such as environmental regulations in the shipping industry and the environmental treaties mechanisms. The analysis involves different specific fields of international law, including the law of the sea, international environmental law, international institutional law, the law of state responsibility and international liability. Through a comprehensive examination, Linlin Sun reveals the key issues and strong points of, as well as gaps and difficulties in, application of international environmental obligations and liability rules regarding DSM activities.

This is a volume in the series of the Meijers Research Institute and Graduate School of the Leiden Law School of Leiden University. This study is part of the Law School's research programme 'Exploring the Frontiers of International Law'.

International Environmental Obligations and Liabilities in Deep Seabed Mining

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