



***Closing remarks by Alex Herman, Commissioner of the Seabed Minerals Authority at the Cook Islands 2020 Exploration Licensing Launch***

*Dome, National Auditorium  
22 October 2020*

Ladies and Gentleman, we have reached the end of our formalities. Again, on behalf of the Honourable Mark Brown, Minister for Seabed Minerals – as well as the Seabed Minerals Authority – we thank you for joining us on this special occasion. I would just like to briefly recap the speeches we heard today.

You first heard from His Excellency, Sir Tom Marsters. He reflected on the history of the Cook Islands development of and interest in seabed minerals. He also shared with us some of the key pioneers that explored our waters, as well as those officials who helped to start building this sector.

Then you heard from me, where I talked about the key areas of focus for the Authority, and also publicly released documents related to the licensing process.

Bishop Tutai Pere gave us a godly and uplifting speech. He gave examples of other countries blessed with natural resources – drawing the distinction between those who faced problems of corruption and greed, and those who prospered. The key Bishop Pere said is “our faith in the one God”. “For if God is for us, who can be against us” he said.

Finally, the Prime Minister addressed us, and asked us all to appreciate the significance of today and this licensing process. He shared the vision for the Cook Islands transformational future through the seabed minerals sector. He then officially launched our licensing process.

Let me close by reiterating the words of our Prime Minister – **Welcome to the future.**