



# Flash information mission on the seabed

## Summary of the report



### Rapporteurs

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For a long time, the deep sea has only been of interest to companies and scientists. However, rich in **mineral resources** and home to **numerous infrastructures essential to the economy** (submarine cables, gas pipelines, etc.), their vastness and opacity also make them an environment conducive to **hybrid attacks** that could, among other things, impede the freedom of action of naval forces. **The war in Ukraine**, including the sabotage of the *Nord Stream* gas pipeline, has demonstrated the reality and importance of these issues.

Having identified the seabed as a **new area of conflict**, the world's major powers have, to varying degrees, implemented **Seabed Warfare Strategies** based on the development of technologies derived mainly from civilian research and enabling intervention in this **hostile and largely unknown environment**.

With the second-largest exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the world, deploying its Navy on all seas to defend its interests and values, France has adopted a seabed warfare strategy on February 16th 2022. Noting the strategic importance of the challenges of the seabed, it sets a **dual ambition for our country, both operational and in terms of capabilities**, both being closely linked. Indeed, it is not possible to know, monitor and act on the seabed - the objectives of the MFM (seabed mission) strategy - without mastering a set of high technologies, some of which our country lacks today, in particular the ability of drones and underwater robots to descend to a depth of 6,000 meters.



With a high-performance and innovative industrial and technological base, France has the capacity to master the seabed and, with the **France 2030 program**, has set an important milestone for achieving this autonomously by 2025-2028. In the meantime, the **French Navy will rent drones and robots**, both to perform its MFM (seabed mission) missions and to refine its operational requirements.

Given the importance of these issues, your Rapporteurs have formulated **seven proposals for a truly ambitious MFM (seabed mission) strategy**, both in terms of capabilities and operations, that takes full advantage of all the possibilities offered by the seabed:

## PROPOSALS

**Proposal n° 1** : Clarify France's ambitions in the seabed, both operationally and industrially

**Proposal n° 2** : Strengthen as much as possible the pooling of resources between the various programs and the various players

**Proposal n° 3** : Include in the future military programming law (LPM) the credits required to control the seabed and simplify their use

**Proposal n° 4** : Explore the possibility of a fixed sensor system to protect our maritime approaches

**Proposal n° 5** : Create *centers of excellence* on the seabed

**Proposal n° 6** : Relocate our data in Europe to limit our dependence on submarine cables

**Proposal n° 7** : Nationalize Alcatel Submarine Networks (personal proposal from Mr Saintou)l)