

Erica Wales
Marine Policy Seminar
5/8/14

Transfer of Marine Technology Related to Marine Genetic Resources in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction

Marine genetic resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction are the new frontier, contained in a distant environment yet to be thoroughly explored. New and improving technologies make for endless possibilities in biotechnology, medicine, chemistry, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and more. However, only a few countries have access to the technology required for research and development of marine genetic resources. The gap between developed and developing countries concerning the technology and expense required for exploration, extraction, and development of these resources is a major issue in United Nations negotiations. Talks have centered on new mechanisms for access and benefit sharing, somewhat ignoring the established mechanisms for capacity building and technology transfer already established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). This presentation explores what it takes to exploit marine genetic resources, who has that capacity, what mechanisms currently exist for technology transfer in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and how current mechanisms can be used to further discussions on capacity building in areas beyond national jurisdiction.