

Office of the CNMI Governor
BOEM RFI Process

1. BOEM published the Request for Information (RFI) on November 12, 2025, and opened a public comment period through December 12, 2025. BOEM has extended the public comment period to January 12, 2026. All comments, information, and indications of interest in response to this RFI must be received by BOEM no later than January 12, 2026.
2. **Announcement & Publication:** BOEM announces its intent to issue an RFI and publishes it in the Federal Register, starting a public comment period
3. Information Gathering: The RFI requests specific info on:
 - Mineral/resource potential (e.g., polymetallic nodules).
 - Environmental & cultural sensitivities (e.g., deep-sea habitats, tribal lands).
 - Conflicts with existing uses (fishing, navigation).
 - Industry interest and desired lease areas (Inclusion/Exclusion Areas).
4. Public Comment: Stakeholders, including local governments, Tribes, industry, and the public, submit comments. Comments must include names (or reasons for anonymity concerns).
5. Analysis & Area ID: BOEM reviews submissions, leading to Area Identification (Area ID), defining areas for further study, not yet a lease decision.
6. Next Steps: Based on Area ID, BOEM might move to a Proposed Leasing Notice, Environmental Assessments (NEPA), and eventually a lease sale.

Why It Matters (Example: CNMI Critical Minerals)

- BOEM is exploring seabed critical minerals (cobalt, nickel, etc.) offshore the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) (CNMI).
- The RFI helps BOEM understand the potential and impacts in deep waters (thousands of feet) east of the Mariana Trench.

Where to Find Info:

BOEM's website (boem.gov) under relevant programs (Marine Minerals, Renewable Energy). Federal Register for official RFI notices. **Docket No. BOEM-2025-0351**

1. Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the search box at the top of the webpage, enter BOEM-2025-0351 and then click "search." Follow the instructions to submit public comments and to view supporting and related materials.
2. By mail to the following address: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Pacific Region, Office of Strategic Resources, 760 Paseo Camarillo (CM 102), Camarillo, California 93010.

Other resources: Informational -

[<https://www.boem.gov/marine-minerals/commonwealth-northern-mariana-islands-cnmi-activities>](https://www.boem.gov/marine-minerals/commonwealth-northern-mariana-islands-cnmi-activities)
& Video

[<https://www.boem.gov/marine-minerals/critical-minerals/cnmi-ocs-mineral-leasing-presentation-dec-2025>](https://www.boem.gov/marine-minerals/critical-minerals/cnmi-ocs-mineral-leasing-presentation-dec-2025).