

The Concept of “Benefit” as a Central Topic in International Policy & Legal Discussion of Commercial Space Resources Development. Ian Christensen¹, ¹Secure World Foundation, 525 Zang Street, Suite D, Broomfield, CO 80021, ichristensen@swfound.org

As plans for commercial utilization of lunar resources (both in cooperation with governments and in purely private sector activities) progress, those plans have resulted in considerable discussion of the legal and policy context at the multilateral and international level (as well as in context of national policy and regulation) A supportive policy and legal environment – that is consistent with key tenants and principles of international space law – will be an important element of developing a functional market for lunar resource use.

This lightning talk will discuss the importance of elucidating, describing, and sharing benefit(s) from space resources development with the broader space community (beyond those entities directly participating in any space resources activity) as a key element of achieving a supportive policy context for development of an in-space economy based on lunar resources utilization.

The Hague International Space Resources Working Group has published 19 policy and legal “building blocks” to support and enable the policy environment for space resources development. One of these building blocks focuses exclusively on benefit-sharing types and methods, identifying a number of potential benefit sharing approaches and outcomes which do not rely upon monetary benefit-sharing. The recently-released Commercial Lunar Propellant Architecture Study also identifies a number of benefits arising from lunar resources development and recognizes the important of this topic in the policy context.

The author is a member of the Hague International Space Resources Working Group and the author’s organization is a founding partner of the Working Group. The author also serves as Chair of the Working Group’s SocioEconomic Panel which seeks to foster dialogue and cooperation between governments, industry, international organizations, academia and civil society on socio-economical aspects of space resources activities; and to identify socio-economical challenges and benefit related to the use of space resources.