Talks about a world’s first in mining the sea-bed reached Papua New Guinea in 2008 when a Canadian company called Nautilus Mineral Inc decided to set up office in Madang.

Although there was some information about how volcanic vents were going to be dug up for their rich mineral deposits with this experimental mining method, there was little to no information about the potential damage this could have on the marine environment, the not-so dormant volcanoes and the lives that will be affected.

So the Bismarck Solomon Sea Indigenous People’s Council was formed and their continuous pressure on Nautilus Minerals Inc managed to drive out the prospect of experimental sea-bed mining in Madang Province.

However, a couple of years later in 2011 Nautilus Minerals Inc set up shop in New Ireland Province and have managed to convince the PNG government to grant them the world's first deep sea mining lease.

When Bismarck Ramu Group (BRG) shared this information with its networking partners on the ground a public protest resulted in Madang in 2012 which collected 24, 000 petitions. These included 9,200 signatures from Karkar Islanders. These petitions were presented to the Minister for Mining but to date Minister has not responded to this petition.

Karkar Island is located 64 km north of Madang town. The soil on Karkar Island is one of the richest in the country, which is one of the reasons it continues to sustain productive copra plantations. Another reason Karkar is famous is it is home to a “restless” volcano. It’s last violent eruptions occurred in 1974 and 1979. This volcanic island boasts a rich marine life and beautiful white sandy beaches that serves the 50, 000 or so inhabitants. The majority of the population belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea (ELC PNG).

As BRG and Karkar Islanders continued to work closely together, a milestone was achieved during an ELC PNG synod which was held on the island in 2014 were 1.2 million ELC PNG members agreed to support this campaign against experimental sea-bed mining in PNG.

In November 2014 as the PNG governments high profile members which included the Prime Minister Peter O’Neil and Mining Minister Byron Chan were preparing to fly to Sydney’s Hilton Hotel to hold further talks about the country’s “booming” mining industry, Karkar Islanders gathered their young and their old under majestic shade trees and discussed the latest development in their fight to stop ESM from reaching the shores of PNG. Palau and Martha, BRG’s community facilitators, were also there to provide information on the proposed changes to the mining act and their attempt to lure more mining investors to the country.

So on the eve of the PNG’s Minerals and Petroleum Investors conference in Sydney, Karkar Island stood up again to remind Mining Minister Byron Chan of their position on ESM.