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Sven Petersen from GEOMAR. The Kiel geologists predict the occurrence of further large deposits in different shelf regions, hidden below the seafloor. This could include gold deposits off the coast of West Africa, nickel deposits under the Arctic Ocean, and lead-zinc deposits in the Gulf of Mexico or the Mediterranean. "The list of possible occurrences is long and could change our view of the worldwide offshore mineral resources", Hannington says.

According to the GEOMAR scientists, a further advantage of subsea mineral deposits under the shelf is that mining could be performed in a more environmentally friendly way by means of tunnels from land or from artificial islands or platforms. Fewer legal issues would be expected as well, since the deposits in coastal regions are already within declared exclusive economic zones.

"Subsea coastal resources could offer a comparatively low-risk option to help meet increasing demands on metallic and mineral raw materials", Prof. Hannington concludes.