

tions in licenses and permits issued under this subchapter, and issue or transfer licenses and permits under this subchapter, only after public notice and opportunity for comment and hearings in accordance with the following:

(1) The Administrator shall publish in the Federal Register notice of all applications for licenses and permits, all proposals to issue or transfer licenses and permits, all regulations implementing this chapter, all terms, conditions, and restrictions on licenses and permits, and all proposals to significantly modify licenses and permits. Interested persons shall be permitted to examine the materials relevant to any of these actions, and shall have at least 60 days after publication of such notice to submit written comments to the Administrator.

(2) The Administrator shall hold a public hearing in an appropriate location and may employ such additional methods as the Administrator deems appropriate to inform interested persons about each action specified in paragraph (1) and to invite their comments thereon.

(b) Adjudicatory hearing

If the Administrator determines that there exists one or more specific and material factual issues which require resolution by formal processes, at least one adjudicatory hearing shall be held in the District of Columbia in accordance with the provisions of section 554 of title 5. The record developed in any such adjudicatory hearing shall be part of the basis for the Administrator's decision to take any action referred to in subsection (a). Hearings held pursuant to this section shall be consolidated insofar as practicable with hearings held by other agencies.

(Pub. L. 96-283, title I, §116, June 28, 1980, 94 Stat. 573.)

§ 1427. Civil actions

(a) Equitable relief

Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, any person may commence a civil action for equitable relief on that person's behalf in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia—

(1) against any person who is alleged to be in violation of any provision of this chapter or any condition of a license or permit issued under this subchapter; or

(2) against the Administrator when there is alleged a failure of the Administrator to perform any act or duty under this chapter which is not discretionary,

if the person bringing the action has a valid legal interest which is or may be adversely affected by such alleged violation or failure to perform. In suits brought under this subsection, the district court shall have jurisdiction, without regard to the amount in controversy or the citizenship of the parties, to enforce the provisions of this chapter, or any term, condition, or restriction of a license or permit issued under this subchapter, or to order the Administrator to perform such act or duty.

(b) Notice

No civil action may be commenced—

(1) under subsection (a)(1) of this section—

(A) prior to 60 days after the plaintiff has given notice of the alleged violation to the Administrator and to any alleged violator; or

(B) if the Administrator or the Attorney General has commenced and is diligently prosecuting a civil or criminal action with respect to the alleged violation in a court of the United States; except that in any such civil action, any person having a valid legal interest which is or may be adversely affected by the alleged violation may intervene; or

(2) under subsection (a)(2) of this section, prior to 60 days after the plaintiff has given notice of such action to the Administrator.

Notice under this subsection shall be given in such a manner as the Administrator shall prescribe by regulation.

(c) Costs and fees

The court, in issuing any final order in any action brought under subsection (a) of this section, may award costs of litigation, including reasonable attorney and expert witness fees, to any party whenever the court determines that such an award is appropriate.

(d) Relationship to other law

Nothing in this section shall restrict the rights which any person or class of persons may have under other law to seek enforcement or to seek any other relief. All vessel safety and environmental requirements of or under this chapter shall be in addition to other requirements of law.

(Pub. L. 96-283, title I, §117, June 28, 1980, 94 Stat. 573.)

§ 1428. Reciprocating states

(a) Designation

The Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the heads of other appropriate departments and agencies, may designate any foreign nation as a reciprocating state if the Secretary of State finds that such foreign nation—

(1) regulates the conduct of its citizens and other persons subject to its jurisdiction engaged in exploration for, and commercial recovery of, hard mineral resources of the deep seabed in a manner compatible with that provided in this chapter and the regulations issued under this chapter, which includes adequate measures for the protection of the environment, the conservation of natural resources, and the safety of life and property at sea, and includes effective enforcement provisions;

(2) recognizes licenses and permits issued under this subchapter to the extent that such nation, under its laws, (A) prohibits any person from engaging in exploration or commercial recovery which conflicts with that authorized under any such license or permit and (B) complies with the date for issuance of licenses and the effective date for permits provided in section 1412(c)(1)(D) of this title;

(3) recognizes, under its procedures, priorities of right, consistent with those provided