



Annotation to agenda Item 4.10: AMSA II(G) Addressing Impacts on Marine Mammals

Background

AMSA Recommendation II(G) provides:

That Arctic states decide to engage with relevant international organizations to further assess the effects on marine mammals due to ship noise, disturbance and strikes in Arctic waters; and consider, where needed, to work with the IMO in developing and implementing mitigation strategies.

PAME II-2012 adopted a record of decision (ROD) inviting the United States to “submit information to PAME I-2013 on the work of the IMO, ISO, and IWC related to impacts of shipping on marine mammals” in furtherance of AMSA Recommendation II(G).

Recommendations for the attention of the PAME I-2013 Meeting

Bearing in mind article 65 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea which provides, “States shall cooperate with a view to the conservation of marine mammals and in the case of cetaceans shall in particular work through the appropriate international organizations for their conservation, management and study,” the United States recommends:

- ✓ that PAME encourage its member governments to work through specialized bodies, such as the IMO’s Marine Environmental Protection Committee, to utilize relevant ship noise measurement methods (such as the under development at the ISO) to better understand and where practicable mitigate the adverse impact on marine mammals of underwater noise incidentally generated by merchant shipping;
- ✓ that PAME member governments support, where feasible, efforts in other international and intergovernmental bodies such as the IMO and IWC to better understand and address the impacts on marine mammals in the Arctic of noise incidentally generated by merchant shipping;
- ✓ that PAME member governments explore the possible development of proposals to IMO of ship routing and/or reporting measures to minimize ships strikes of cetaceans in Arctic waters; and
- ✓ That PAME member governments invite a representative of the U.S. Cetacean Density and Distribution Mapping Working Group to give a presentation at PAME II-2013 on the group’s current work to create an online portal to access information on cetacean density (number of individuals expected to be found in a given area), distribution, and biologically important areas (known areas of specific importance for cetaceans, such as reproductive areas, feeding areas, migratory corridors and areas in which small or resident populations are concentrated). Such maps are being used to inform ship strike and noise exposure risk assessments for cetaceans in U.S. waters in conjunction with vessel tracking and sound field mapping work. Arctic regional cetacean and sound field mapping products could be used to inform the merits of possible IMO routing and reporting measure proposals for this region.