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31 August 2017

NOTIFICATION

Submission of information on experiences in the use of measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate the significant adverse impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity

Dear Madam/Sir,

The purpose of this notification is to invite Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to submit information on experiences in the use of measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate the significant adverse impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity.

In paragraph 3 of decision XII/23, the Conference of the Parties (COP) encouraged Parties and other Governments as well as indigenous and local communities and other relevant stakeholders, to take appropriate measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate the potential significant adverse impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity. Paragraph 3 of decision XII/23 outlined specific types of measures in this regard, which are also annexed to this notification.

In decision XIII/10, the COP recalled decision XII/23 and also invited Parties, other Governments and competent organizations, including the International Maritime Organization, the International Seabed Authority, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the International Whaling Commission, other relevant stakeholders, and indigenous peoples and local communities to collaborate and share their experiences on the application of measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate the significant adverse impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity. In decision XIII/10, the COP also requested the Executive Secretary to continue the work on the compilation, synthesis and dissemination of these experiences.

Pursuant to this request, Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations are kindly invited to provide submissions of information on experiences in the use of measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate the significant adverse impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity, including measures specified in paragraph 3 of decision XII/23 (annexed to this notification).

This compilation will build on document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/20/INF/10, entitled “Compilation of Submissions and Further Information on Underwater Noise Mitigation Measures” (available at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-20/information/sbstta-20-inf-10-en.pdf>).

To: CBD National Focal Points, SBSTTA Focal Points, Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Focal Points; International Maritime Organization; International Seabed Authority; Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals; International Whaling Commission; other relevant organizations; indigenous peoples and local communities

Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations are kindly invited to provide their submissions as soon as possible but no later than **30 October 2017**, to enable timely compilation and collation of this information, which will be made available to the forthcoming twenty-second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice. Contributions should be addressed to the Executive Secretary of the Convention and sent via e-mail to secretariat@cbd.int or faxed to +1 514 288 6588. Submissions may include relevant scientific and technical information, relevant management plans at sub-national, national or regional levels, descriptions of specific measures taken, tools and guidance applied, case studies and lessons learned.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Cristiana Paşca Palmer, PhD
Executive Secretary

Enclosure

Annex. Activities listed in paragraph 3 of decision XII/23

- (a) Defining and differentiating types or intensities of underwater noise where there are adverse impacts, and characterizing noise by source;
- (b) Conducting further research on the remaining significant knowledge gaps relating to the impacts of underwater noise on aquatic life, including knowledge gaps relating to fishes, invertebrates, turtles and birds, characteristics of major sound sources, trends in the prevalence and magnitude, as well as the intensity and spatial distribution of underwater noise and the potential impacts of underwater noise on ecosystems and animal populations, including implications of cumulative and synergistic impacts of multiple sources of noise and other stressors;
- (c) Developing and transferring quieter technologies, and applying the best available practice in all relevant activities;
- (d) Including areas that are affected by different levels of sound when mapping the spatial and temporal distribution of sound;
- (e) Combining acoustic mapping with habitat mapping of sound-sensitive species with regard to spatial risk assessments in order to identify areas where those species may be exposed to noise impacts;
- (f) Mitigating and managing anthropogenic underwater noise through the use of spatiotemporal management of activities, relying on sufficiently detailed temporal and spatial knowledge of species or population distribution patterns combined with the ability to avoid generating noise in the area at those times;
- (g) Conducting impact assessments, where appropriate, for activities that may have significant adverse impacts on noise-sensitive species, and carrying out monitoring, where appropriate;
- (h) Including noise considerations in the establishment and development of management plans for marine protected areas within national jurisdiction and other relevant plans, as appropriate;
- (i) Considering thresholds as a tool to protect sound-sensitive species, taking into account their locations during critical life cycle stages as well as relevant results of research and additional information;
- (j) Standardizing metrics and sound measurements so that there are similar measures and approaches for all sounds and in all places;
- (k) Building capacity in developing regions where the awareness and scientific capacity to address this issue has yet to be strengthened;
- (l) Engaging industry and other relevant sectors, including the naval and mining sectors, when developing guidelines in order to increase their ownership and participation in the implementation of the guidelines;
- (m) Encouraging collaboration and communication among relevant international bodies to enhance synergies in addressing this issue; and
- (n) Linking relevant information on the adverse impacts of underwater noise on sound sensitive species when harmonizing different processes related to marine spatial planning and area-based management.

The full text of the decision is available at: <http://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/default.shtml?id=13386>