

Attachment 1:

Cecile Ducatel, Ifremer – Discussion and information paper for EIA working group

Dear all,

First of all, I would like to thank you for your interest in the EIA (*Environmental Impact Assessment*) issue and for your contributions. Previous email exchanges have shown that, depending on the organization or institute we belong to, there are different procedures to assess the acoustic impact on marine mammals from scientific surveys and to obtain authorizations of work at sea.

As you have noticed, these issues are quite sensitive. There are strong differences in the national approaches to this topic and consequently, in the legislation. Application of mitigation procedures is an extra-cost for research projects, which may be significant. This context makes the permit authorization application process more and more heavy and difficult with uncertain results. We have to all confront the following problems:

- To be aware of regulations and especially in marine protected areas,
- To access the Marine mammals data (space-time distribution),
- To recruit MMOs and PAM operators with a correct experience and qualification at rates affordable for scientific research teams,
- To assess the acoustic impact in a credible and scientifically correct way.

Scientific institutes do not have the same resources than oil and gas companies to respond to such regulations. Working together will enable the scientific community to increase its potential for addressing this topic, and to improve the authorization application procedures.

The next OFEG-TECH will take place from 6 to 8 October 2015. It could be great to take the opportunity of this event to launch a workshop/working group on EIA issues for scientific seismic surveys. The aim of the workshop is multiple: firstly, to define preliminary recommendations in order to facilitate future scientific seismic survey applications. Secondly, we have to define longer-term tasks assignments in order to solve EIA issues at a higher level. This aim probably suggests creating a scientific group to work closely with the EU regulators to improve the EIA and permit application processes.

In order to prepare the workshop we want to collate information under the form of a white paper. It is intended to be distributed before the workshop to attendees as background information. Relevant aspects to present in the white paper could be:

- EIA realization: who conducts EIA? What aspects should be included in EIA?
- Acoustic source radiation modeling with regard to the EIA requirements
- What policy is applied to recruit and pay MMOs and PAM operators? What are the specific difficulties met for this recruitment?
- When there is no regulation, which code of conduct should be applied?
- Any other aspect you think to be useful for these discussions.

It is advised that each specialist from the different scientific research institutes come to Barcelona to start working efficiently on the relevant aspects e.g.:

- Description of the authorization application procedures,
- State of the art of the regulation,
- EU regulation for scientific research cruises,
- Common resources to access the MMs data,
- Sonar and seismic performances modelling; accounting for sound propagation; RL & SEL; frequency; species; durations...,
- Inventory and classification of sound sources to be considered,
- Technological watch (regulation, evolution of the scientific background),
- Common solutions for mitigation: project of a dedicated MMO & PAM Operator training to be shared them on scientific cruises?

Your contribution would be highly appreciated. Please may you confirm your participation by 24 August 2015.

The deadline for white paper contributions is 25 September.

Best Regards,
Cecile