

## **WCC-2020-Res-113-EN**

### **Restoring a peaceful and quiet ocean**

CONCERNED that increasing human activity in the ocean causes underwater noise;

RECOGNISING that anthropogenic underwater noise can disrupt vital life functions of many marine species, with implications for global food security;

REAFFIRMING Resolutions 3.068 *Undersea noise pollution* (Bangkok, 2004) and 5.81 *Addressing ocean noise pollution in Africa* (Jeju, 2012);

RECALLING that the Species Survival Commission (SSC) Cetacean Specialist Group has identified that rising ocean noise threatens cetaceans;

NOTING that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) sets out the obligation on states to protect and preserve the marine environment and to assess the potential effects of activities that may cause substantial pollution or significant and harmful changes in the marine environment and that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 urges states to reduce marine pollution by 2025;

WELCOMING actions taken at all levels to manage and mitigate the effects of anthropogenic underwater noise, including those taken by the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and its development of *CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities*, by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) through the adoption of *Guidelines for the Reduction of Underwater Noise from Commercial Shipping to Address Adverse Impacts on Marine Life* (2014), and by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) through Resolution 71/312 *Our ocean, our future: call for action* (2017), calling on UN Member States to accelerate actions to address marine pollution, including underwater noise;

APPLAUDING the work by the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS) and the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS) on regulation of anthropogenic underwater noise;

RECOGNISING that the Pacific Islands Year of the Whale Declaration (Tonga, 2017) states that whale populations are vulnerable from emerging threats such as noise, and that UNGA Resolution 73/124 *Oceans and the law of the sea* (2018) called for international cooperation on studying the effects of underwater noise on marine life;

ACKNOWLEDGING new work by the Arctic Council that shows substantial recent increases in underwater noise from shipping in the Arctic Ocean;

DISTRESSED that the sixth Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) articulates how much remains to be done to mitigate ocean noise impacts; and

URGING immediate action to better understand, regulate and reduce the immediate, long-term and cumulative effects of anthropogenic noise on marine life;

#### **The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2020, at its session in Marseille, France:**

1. REQUESTS Council to establish an Inter-Commission Panel of Experts, comprised of Species Survival Commission (including specialists of cetaceans, mysticetes and odontocetes from SSC), World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) members and representatives of the underwater noise-generating sectors, to seek an integrated approach to abating anthropogenic underwater noise pollution, in cooperation with entities such as the Global Alliance for Managing Ocean Noise (GAMEON) initiative and the Maritime Environment Protection Committee under the International Maritime Organization;

2. REQUESTS WCPA to make recommendations promoting a precautionary approach on ways to reduce and limit anthropogenic underwater noise in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs) and Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) that may be adversely affected by underwater noise, by implementation of measures, based on scientific evidence, to manage certain human activities within and adjacent to MPAs, PSSAs and IMMAs, e.g. voluntary actions, speed limits, use of best-available technologies and redesign of shipping routes;
3. CALLS ON Members to apply the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities (2017);
4. ALSO CALLS ON Members to collaborate with the international community to encourage noise-producing entities to employ best-available noise-reduction and fuel-reduction technologies, especially in regard to commercial shipping, and to encourage the implementation of the IMO guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life (circular MEPC.1/Circ.833), and to support and contribute to the planned revision of the guidelines (MEPC 76/15 Para12.3);
5. ENCOURAGES UN Members to consider anthropogenic underwater noise pollution within the negotiations for a new international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS on biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction and State Members that are Party to UNCLOS to consider such pollution within the Exploitation Regulations under Part XI of UNCLOS; and
6. REQUESTS the Director General, with the assistance of the Inter-Commission Panel of Experts established under paragraph 1 of this Resolution, to provide a progress report at the next session of Congress on the implementation of this Resolution.