



OceanCare Statement

**Biological Diversity beyond National Jurisdiction Preparatory Committee II
United Nations Headquarters, New York
26th August –9th September 2016**

Distinguished Chair and Delegates,

Once again, I have the honour to address you on behalf of OceanCare. We are pleased to continue our longstanding support for the BBNJ process in building our consensus toward the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond national jurisdiction

OceanCare envisions the BBNJ process as an important opportunity to advance the management of human-generated underwater noise pollution in the ocean. At Prep Com I, we commented on how all four of the package elements relate to noise. Now we would like to emphasize the provisions for environmental impact assessments and marine protected areas. At our side event on 7th September we will discuss the science and law of incorporating noise into these elements of the new instrument.

OceanCare recognizes the urgent need for **environmental impact assessments** (EIAs) for all noise-generating activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and the new BBNJ instrument can best facilitate the development of this norm. EIAs must be comprehensive and mandatory; at a minimum they should collect baseline biological and environmental data, model sound propagation and areas of likely impact, assess cumulative and synergistic effects, describe monitoring measures, and consider the risks from the proposed activities as compared with other alternatives. This regulatory transparency will require industries to build noise mitigation measures into their plans starting from a project's inception.

OceanCare also advocates for area-based management tools such as **marine protected areas** (MPAs) that address the impacts of human-generated underwater noise pollution to be incorporated into the BBNJ provisions. MPAs outside national jurisdiction must either be large enough to provide buffers from the effects of noise or must trigger limitations on activities outside the protected areas to prevent noise from spreading into them. Important open-ocean migratory corridors must also be protected. 'Quiet zones' should be established in key regions of vulnerable biological diversity to create areas where noise does not rise above ambient sound levels.

The **management of human-generated underwater noise pollution** in the ocean is necessary to preserve marine biological biodiversity. Individual States and regions cannot effectively manage noise, and existing international bodies and instruments have neither the capacity nor the authority to meet all the cross-boundary challenges.



OceanCare, therefore, calls upon the international community to address human-generated underwater noise pollution through the BBNJ instrument and to require the use of the best available science, the application of best practice standards, and the enforcement of mandatory quieting measures in EIAs and MPAs.

For more information on how noise can be incorporated into the new BBNJ instrument, please come to our side event next Wednesday, 7th September at 1:15 pm. I also have a number of thumb drives with selected scientific and policy literature on noise in the ocean, so please feel free to ask me for one.

We thank you for your attention.

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