



Area-Based Management Tools : Marine Protected Areas and Underwater Noise

Intervention OceanCare

UN BBNJ PrepCom I

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Thank you, Mr Facilitator. I have the honor to speak on behalf of OceanCare about how the issue of underwater noise fits into the discussion on area-based management tools in ABNJ.

Protection from human-generated underwater noise in the ocean is vital to preserving marine biological diversity in ABNJ. There currently exists a vast and rapidly expanding scientific literature base documenting the significant adverse effects of noise on a wide array of marine species, including not only whales and dolphins but also fish, squid and corals. Escalating ocean acidification due to climate change will increase these impacts by allowing low frequency noise to spread farther and faster.

OceanCare supports the use of area-based management tools such as MPAs that protect biological diversity from the impacts of underwater noise in ABNJ. MPAs must be developed and implemented under a global framework to be effective because noise easily crosses national boundaries and spreads throughout ABNJ, causing far-reaching impacts to marine ecosystems. MPAs must be large enough to provide a protective buffer from activities that emit noise and special quiet zones should be established in locations where noise is not permitted to rise above natural ambient sound levels.

OceanCare envisions the BBNJ process as an opportunity to advance protection from underwater noise through inter alia its inclusion as an integral consideration in the process developed for MPAs in ABNJ.

Thank you.

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