



Statement of Canadian Practice on the Mitigation of Seismic Noise in the Marine Environment

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Seismic surveys in the marine environment are conducted by earth scientists and geophysicists to understand the structure and movement of the earth's crust and to detect and delineate potential commercial quantities of sub-sea oil and gas resources.

The potential for environmental impacts from seismic surveys on key components of the marine ecosystems has been recognized for some time.

In order to understand the state of scientific knowledge, DFO sponsored a peer review by Canadian and international science experts. Their objective was to develop scientific conclusions and advice on the potential impacts of seismic noise on marine fish, marine invertebrates, marine zooplankton, eggs and larvae of fish and invertebrates, marine turtles and marine mammals. A copy of the peer-reviewed report, entitled "Review of Scientific Information on Impacts of Seismic Sound on Fish, Invertebrates, Marine Turtles and Marine Mammals" (Habitat Status Report 2004/002) is available at http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas/Csas/status/2004/HSR2004_002_E.pdf.

Based on this peer-reviewed advice and an assessment by technical experts of the best available and internationally-recognized techniques to mitigate the effects of seismic noise in the marine environment, a group of federal and provincial experts in marine regulatory policy and practice developed a Statement of Canadian Practice. The Statement of Canadian Practice is intended to formalize and standardize the mitigation measures in Canada with respect to the conduct of seismic surveys in the marine environment. It will consist of minimum standards which will be given effect through existing regulatory authorities. For oil and gas seismic activities, Natural Resources Canada and Indian Affairs and Northern development, the provinces of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and British Columbia, and their related boards, the National Energy Board, the Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board, will give effect to the Statement under their respective regulatory instruments. Non-oil and gas related seismic surveys will be regulated by the *Oceans Act*.

The Statement of Practice is being released by the Government of Canada and the Provinces of British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia for public comment for a period of sixty days (April 19th, 2005). A copy of the Statement can be obtained electronically at http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/canwaters-eauxcan/infocentre/media/seismic-sismique/statement_e.asp.

