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BAB 3990-35

Darren Hicks
Environmental Analyst
Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board
140 Water St., 4th Floor
St. John's, NL A1C 6H6

Dear Mr. Hicks

Subject: Fisheries and Oceans Canada Review - Environmental Assessment of "HMDC's 2D/3D/4D/ Seismic Projects 2013-Life of Field, Newfoundland Offshore"

As requested, DFO has reviewed the document entitled "*HMDC's 2D/3D/4D/ Seismic Projects 2013-Life of Field, Newfoundland Offshore*" dated May 7, 2013. The following comments are provided for your review and consideration.

General

- Please be advised that the "Statement of Canadian Practice with respect to the Mitigation of Seismic Sound in the Marine Environment" (SOCP) specifies the mitigation requirements that must be met during the planning and conduct of marine seismic surveys, in order to minimize impacts on life in the oceans. These requirements are set out as minimum standards to be implemented during the planning and conduct of seismic programs. As such it is advised that the proponent adhere to all relevant minimum mitigations outlined in the SOCP including the Planning Seismic Surveys, Safety Zone and Start-up, Shut-down of Air Source Array(s), Line Changes and Maintenance Shut-downs, Operations in Low Visibility and Additional Mitigative Measures and Modifications sections of the SOCP.
- The report indicates that the 4D survey for 2013 may occur at any time from May 1 to December 31. Any potential other seismic surveys conducted during subsequent seasons in 2014-End of Field (EF) will also occur during the same temporal window of 1 May to 31 December. While the proponent does acknowledge that *Species at Risk Act (SARA)* requirements could change over this timeframe and that they will reassess accordingly, DFO would like to note that changes to the *SARA* could include additions to species on Schedule 1 of *SARA*, changes in species status, new recovery strategies, action plans and/or management plans and identification of critical habitat. Please continue to refer to the Species at Risk Public Registry (www.sararegistry.gc.ca) to get the most up to date information.



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- As is common practice sightings data for marine mammals and sea turtles should be forwarded to DFO.

Thank you for providing DFO the opportunity to comment on this document. Should you have any questions or comments regarding the above, you can contact me by phone at 772-8889 or by e-mail (jason.kelly@dfo-mpo.gc.ca).

Regards

Jason Kelly
Senior Fisheries Protection Biologist
Fisheries Protection Program