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BAB 3990-15

June 24, 2011

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 Review – Addendum to the Environmental Assessment of Statoil’s Geophysical Program for the Jeanne d’Arc and Central Ridge/Flemish Pass Basins, 2011-19.**

As requested, Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) has completed a review of the document entitled “*Addendum to the Environmental Assessment of Statoil’s Geophysical Program for the Jeanne d’Arc and Central Ridge/Flemish Pass Basins, 2011-19*” dated June 2011 (SA1121-1).

General Comments:

The LGL Report dated 2006 (SA899) is referenced several times throughout the document. One of the mitigations listed in the 2006 report does not seem to appear in the above noted EA. On page 10 of the 2006 report one of the mitigations listed details that the electromagnetic source will not operate in shallow water and during turns. If this mitigation is still relevant for the above noted project, then it may be added.

The LGL Report dated 2006 also notes (on page 11) that data would be collected to verify EA predictions, due to the fact that the electromagnetic survey was a fairly new type of operation. This may not have been accomplished for various reasons, but if so, incorporation of such data may enhance the above noted EA report.

It is noted on page 22 of the Addendum that “*a more detailed assessment will be provided in a supplement to the EA if and when and electromagnetic survey is planned and designed*”. It is recommended that if the EM survey is initiated at a later date, the corresponding supplement to the EA should cite the most up to date literature on magnetic fields and their potential effects upon biological systems. In addition, if the survey is to take place over sensitive habitat containing corals and sponges, the possible consequences to these sensitive habitats should be addressed in the supplement to the EA.

Specific Comments:

<b>Page 5 of Addendum:</b>
<b>Comment (Section 4.3.4.2, Page 58, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence):</b> This sentence is confusing and should be rewritten
<b>Response:</b> The missing section (4.3.5 Fishing Gear) should read as follows.....



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**DFO Suggestion:** Page 6 of the Addendum (first paragraph on the page, 2<sup>nd</sup> last sentence of paragraph), is still confusing to read. *Thus, allowing slack for the anchor ropes on either send of the string.....approximately 1.8 km to 2.3 km.* Please revise.

**Page 7 of Addendum:**

**Comment (Section 4.5.1.3, Page 92, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph):** *Based on aerial searches and acoustic recordings, the south eastern edge of the Grand Banks remains an area populated by cetaceans during the winter. Therefore, the statement "although some individual baleen whales may be present in offshore waters of NL..." is not necessarily accurate.*

**Response:** DFO has placed autonomous acoustic recorders at the east and southeast edges of the Grand Banks and have recorded mysticete and odontocete calls throughout the winter (J. Lawson, Research Scientist, DFO, pers. comm.). PAL surveillance imagery, records, and observations by DFO staff have also shown there to be quite a few humpbacks and other large whales out in this area through the winter. Based on these observations, change the sentence referenced above to "Some baleen whales are present in offshore waters of Newfoundland year-round but most species presumably migrate to lower latitudes during winter months."

**DFO Suggestion:** It seems the comment and response is in agreement. It is suggested to simply remove the word "some" from the sentence above.

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 772-4912 or by e-mail ([shawn.kean@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:shawn.kean@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)).

Regards

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