

13 December 2017

Hon Eugenie Sage MP
Minister of Conservation
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160
NEW ZEALAND

Dear Ms. Sage,

We are writing to you on behalf of the International Association of Geophysical Contractors (IAGC). IAGC is the global trade association representing all segments of the geophysical industry, essential to discovering and delivering the world's energy resources.

We note recent media comments by the New Zealand Government about seismic surveys and would like to give our perspective as a global body with extensive experience in this field.

Seismic surveys are a common tool used by scientists around the world and to date there is no scientific data indicating that there have been any adverse effects to marine life by sound from seismic exploration activities. The IAGC and our members are committed to ensuring the production of safe, environmentally responsible geophysical data acquisition and results. Through research and more than eight decades of activity around the world, we have found no reason to believe seismic surveying is anything less than the safest, cleanest, most energy efficient technology for generating geological imagery.

Our industry takes pride in being safe, accurate and above-board, and there are no confirmed instances of harm to marine creatures resulting from sound from seismic surveying, according to the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) Chief Environmental Officer and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). While various suggestive speculations about possible adverse impacts have been promoted over the past 15-20 years, the fact remains that the hypothetical impacts still have not been confirmed, despite extensive efforts to find them.

New Zealand is considered to have some of the most precautionous standards for seismic surveys in the world, and this is particularly true for marine mammals such as whales and dolphins.

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New Zealand's Department of Conservation (DoC) has a detailed Code of Conduct for minimising acoustic disturbance to marine mammals which is strictly followed by the geophysical and seismic industry and takes a highly precautionary approach. All proposed projects include a detailed Marine Mammal Impact Assessment (MMIA) which must be approved by DoC before an operation can begin.

We would welcome the opportunity to provide any further information that might be of use to you regarding seismic surveys and to submit feedback on any review. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nikki C. Martin', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Nikki C. Martin
President
International Association of Geophysical Contractors