

Summary Record,
SACLANTCEN Marine Mammal Environmental Policy
and Mitigation Procedures Panel,
La Spezia, Italy, 17 - 19 June 1998

1. Mr. E. HARLAND, Chairman of the SACLANTCEN Marine Mammal Environmental Policy and Mitigation Procedures Panel, invited the Director, Mr. Jan L. SPOELSTRA, to welcome the Panel.
2. The Director welcomed panel members (Annex AA) and outlined his reasons for convening the meeting. He stressed that it was in the common interest to manage the conduct of underwater acoustic research in a demonstrably responsible manner. The SACLANTCEN low frequency acoustic research programme would be resumed as soon as an acceptable policy had been formulated and implemented.
3. The SACLANTCEN Bioacoustics Panel Co-Chairperson, Ms A. D'Amico, reviewed the Summary Record (Section 1) of the Panel meeting which had taken place from 15 to 17 June.
4. Dr. R. GISINER reviewed the issue, US laws and regulations relating to and the impact of anthropogenic noise on the marine environment and described the goals of relevant U.S. naval research programmes, (Annex BB). Dr Gisiner concluded his presentation by expressing the opinion, that due to a paucity of data, U. S. monitoring and mitigation standards tended to be too conservative.
5. CDR M. J. M. BORSBOOM presented a description of Netherlands national and navy policy (Annex CC) with specific reference to an environmental protection statement on the use of low frequency active sonar.
6. CDR C. DI NATALE and Dr. G. NOTARBARTOLO DI SCIARA presented statements on Italian navy environmental policies and monitoring methods and their marine biological and legal basis, with specific reference to the Ligurian Sea, (Annex DD).
7. CDR D. PALIATSOS described Greek policy, (Annex EE), which includes identification of conservation areas on Greek hydrographic charts.
8. PROF. DR. P. WILLE, the Panel member representing Germany, presented a policy statement, (Annex FF).
9. Following a question from the SACLANTCEN Ship Manager on legislation which prohibits use of explosives by the German navy, the Panel agreed that guidelines on the use of explosives were essential.
10. CDR J. P. LAROCHE DE ROUSSANE presented a statement on French requirements and policies relating to marine conservation, (Annex GG).

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11. Dr D. M. F. CHAPMAN described ocean acoustics research and environmental protection at the Defence Research Establishment Atlantic (DREA), (Annex HH). It was emphasised that DREA completes and files an environmental assessment, even though it is not legally required to do so.
12. LCDR R. J. ROGERS presented a review of UK legislation on environmental policy and mitigation procedures, (Annex II) and UK MoD environmental policy objectives and requirements. Environmental assessment had been incorporated into equipment procurement acceptance trials.
13. Mr R. HOWARD, SACLANT Legal Adviser, emphasised that the SACLANTCEN policy document under review by the Panel, may influence national policies and invited members to bear this fact in mind during the discussion, for which he suggested a framework, (Annex JJ)
14. The Canadian member suggested that general guidelines would be more acceptable than specific, detailed recommendations. The SACLANT Legal Adviser reminded the Panel that the precautionary principle was paramount.
15. The Chairman reviewed environmental policy in terms of critical gaps in knowledge, (Annex KK) and invited members to contribute to his review. Panel members suggested: improvements in signal processing and marine mammal acoustic signal database for training of sonar operators
16. The Chairman reviewed the terms of reference (Annex LL) and invited Panel members to submit their comments, criticisms and suggestions for incorporation in interim procedures which would allow SACLANTCEN to resume sea trials.
17. The Netherlands representative outlined the rationale of a suggested methodology which would facilitate discussion, (Annex MM)
18. The Chairman reviewed the suggested methodology in the context of the terms of reference and stressed that the remit of the Panel was to provide guidance to the Centre, to assist in formulating a procedure of responsible, self regulation in relation to environmental issues, with a recommendation that NG2 and NG3 consider the deliberations of the Panel in establishing NATO procedures.
19. C. GOBEY, Head, SACLANTCEN Ship Management Office, presented the document entitled *Strawman for SACLANTCEN marine environmental risk mitigation policy, guidelines for the Mediterranean and the contiguous Atlantic area*. Suggestions by Panel members, following a detailed review, would be incorporated in separate, revised policy and mitigation documents. The revised title of the document would be: *SACLANTCEN environmental risk assessment, monitoring and mitigation policy, guidelines and procedures*.
20. The Chairman stated that key contributions from the Panel to the SACLANTCEN policy document were that the maximum sound level to which marine animals should knowingly be exposed, was to be 160 dB re 1µ Pa and as an additional safety measure, transmissions must cease if any animals are detected visually or acoustically within 2 km of the source ship, unless it is evident that the animals had approached the ship deliberately.

21. The Greek representative emphasized that the views of Dr Frantzis were not endorsed by the Greek Government.
22. It was recommended that the covering letter to the SACLANTCEN document, *SACLANTCEN environmental risk assessment, monitoring and mitigation policy, guidelines and procedures* should include the following statements:
 - *Although specifically applicable to SACLANTCEN, this document represents a consensus which is commended to NG2 and NG3 as the basis of a STANAG.*
 - *The SACLANTCEN policy and mitigation documents should be made available on the SACLANTCEN Website, in due course.*
 - *The environmental policy and mitigation procedures were developed as a self-regulatory approach, within the constraints of financial provisions governing the SACLANTCEN Scientific Programme of Work and the absence of a formal NATO, SACLANT or SACLANTCEN environmental policy.*
 - *A panel meeting should be convened after an appropriate interval, in order to re-evaluate the recommended measures and consider their effectiveness.*
 - *Nations are encouraged to acquire data on conservation areas and species distribution for collation by the Centre.*