

Since UNICPOLOS VI...

June 2005

The sixth meeting¹ of **UNICPOLOS** proposed that the General Assembly should:

- Request further studies and consideration of the effects of ocean noise on marine living resources.

July 2005

In his report² to the General Assembly, **the UN Secretary General** stated that:

- Anthropogenic underwater noise is one of the *current major threats to some populations of whales and other cetaceans*;
- Impacts include *stranding and displacement from habitat, tissue damage and mortality*;
- *Fish are also damaged by noise and this may reduce fish catches*;
- *Better assessment of the impacts of underwater noise on acoustically sensitive oceanic species, including both fish and cetaceans, as well as consideration of noise abatement strategies, are needed.*

November 2005

The **General Assembly** passed Resolution 60/30³ which:

- *Encourages further studies and consideration of the impacts of ocean noise on marine living resources.*

February 2006

The Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction⁵:

- *Recognized ocean noise as a growing human pressure requiring urgent action through international cooperation and coordination*;
- *Cautioned that scientific uncertainty warranted a precautionary approach rather than a delay in adopting an ecosystem-based management approach*;
- *Called for pro-active, rather than re-active, measures with the use of best available scientific information as the basis for action.*




This Cuvier's beaked whale is one of four who stranded in an atypical mass stranding event in Southern Spain in January 2006. The necropsy results of all four whales reported Gas and Fat Embolic Syndrome as the cause of the deaths and gave anthropogenic acoustic activities as the most likely cause of the mass stranding event.⁴

This year's UNICPOLOS-VII meeting

The International Ocean Noise Coalition is building on the momentum of the past year to move toward the goal of international management of ocean noise.

Specifically, we call upon UNICPOLOS-VII to:

- **Recognize**, in line with the IWC, IUCN, the European Parliament, ASCOBAMS, ACCOBANS, and the Secretary General that anthropogenic ocean noise may have significant consequences for marine biodiversity and would benefit from an integrated ecosystems approach to ocean management;
- **Heed** the call of the Secretary General to better assess the impacts of underwater noise on acoustically sensitive oceanic species, including both fish and cetaceans, and to consider noise abatement strategies;
- **Urge** States, the General Assembly, UN Oceans and relevant international and national organizations to take all measures necessary to prevent, reduce and control the generation of harmful undersea noise, focusing especially on minimizing levels of harmful anthropogenic ocean noise within MPAs and in important marine mammal and fish habitat.



UNICPOLOS-VII Side Event: **Ocean Noise and the Marine Ecosystem – Impacts and Solutions** **Wednesday June 14th at 1:15pm**

*The International Ocean Noise Coalition will host a Side Event to discuss the management and mitigation of ocean noise within an ecosystem based approach. We will also be presenting our short film *Deadly Sounds in the Silent World II*.*

¹Report on the work of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea at its sixth meeting, 7 July 2005, A/60/99, page 8.

²Oceans and the law of the sea, Report of the Secretary-General, 15 July 2005, A/60/63/Add.1

³Resolution 60/30. Oceans and the law of the sea, General Assembly, 8 March 2006 (publish date), paragraph 84.

⁴Preliminary pathological study "Beaked whale mass stranding on Almería's coasts in Southern Spain" (26th-27th January, 2006), Antonio Fernández, DVM, PhD, ECVP, Professor of Veterinary Pathology, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 17 March, 2006.

⁵Advance and unedited Report on the work of the United Nations Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, March 9, 2006, A/61/.