



## **International Ocean Noise Coalition Statement**

**33rd Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries  
FAO Headquarters, Rome, July 9 – 13, 2018**

### ***Agenda Item 10: Climate Change and other Environment Related Matters***

Dear Chairperson,

I have the honor to address you on behalf of the International Ocean Noise Coalition representing more than 150 non-governmental organisations concerned about the impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine ecosystems and their living resources.

Oceans are home to a tremendous amount of marine species, deliver vital ecosystem services and are the basis of our lives as they play a major role as a food source and source of income for communities worldwide. Yet, levels of noise in the ocean have doubled every decade, in some regions, for the past 60 years. These increasing noise levels in the oceans present a growing threat to fish stocks and the sustainability of fisheries globally.

Studies have shown that fish catch rates can drop substantially, with larger fish leaving an area coincident with ocean noise events. By-catch rates have also been observed to increase and fish abundance decreases in the presence of noise. Across the world, unchecked propagation of ocean noise is undermining efforts to restore fish stocks, as prioritised through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with serious implications for human livelihoods and food security.

SDG14.4 which calls for a restoration of fish stocks in the shortest time feasible can only be implemented if adequate consideration is given to the issue of anthropogenic ocean noise by all the stakeholders involved. We believe that further action could be taken by the FAO in this regard, specifically a review of existing evidence relating to the impacts of ocean noise on fish and expert investigation and analysis of the socioeconomic impacts and the provision of advice. This would be in line with the Sustainable Fisheries Resolution A/RES/68/71 which has already encouraged this action.

At the recent 19<sup>th</sup> United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP19) (New York, 18-22 June 2018) on the issue of Anthropogenic Underwater Noise a number of delegations highlighted the relevance of this issue for the fisheries sector and specifically identified the potential role of FAO in the context of conducting further studies on the impacts of anthropogenic noise on fish and invertebrates and the threat posed to marine resources and associated socioeconomic impacts. It was specifically recommended that the issue of anthropogenic underwater noise be raised at COFI33.

We thank you Chairperson and all the people in attendance for your attention.

International Ocean Noise Coalition (IONC) Representatives attending COFI:

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