

In response to Under-Secretary General Hans Corell's letter of December 30, 2003, the Sierra Clubs of United States and Canada -- North America's largest and oldest private environmental organizations with more than 700,000 members -- are pleased to contribute the following list of issues which we recommend be addressed in the Secretary General's report to the Fifth Meeting of the Consultative Process on oceans and law of the sea in June, 2004 at New York.

1. **INADEQUATE FRAMEWORK.** The lack of ocean governance frameworks and suitable and enforceable policies for new energy-related activities, open ocean aquaculture, and bio prospecting needs attention. These activities all involve long-term use of public ocean space by private entities. They also raise significant issues about conflicting uses and the ability to manage the marine environment with an ecosystem approach.
2. **MARINE NOISE.** Human-produced noise throughout the oceans that adversely affects marine mammals and fish received growing attention from courts and regulatory bodies in 2003 as a significant ecosystem problem.
3. **DEPLETED FISH STOCKS.** Existing regulatory and scientific regimes have not stabilized diminishing fish stocks which continued to collapse in 2003.
4. **GLOBAL WARMING.** Global warming and climate change are negatively affecting the ocean's living systems (coral reefs, phytoplankton, sea-level rise, etc.). Research in 2003 indicates collapse of plankton could have extremely dangerous consequences for the earth's biological and climate systems.
5. **TOXIC POLLUTION.** Harmful levels of mercury and other toxic chemicals deposited in oceans by fossil fuel combustion work their way up the food chain into fish stocks and, consequently, people who eat them. This received increasing attention in 2003.
6. **MARINE RESERVES.** Scientific support for more marine reserves and coastal refuges has continued to accumulate. Also evident has been an organized backlash by special interest groups against such reserves in the U.S. and elsewhere.
7. **BOTTOM TRAWLING.** Progress toward banning bottom trawling that destroys habitat was not apparent in 2003.
8. **WHALE PROTECTION AREAS.** There is a need to provide scientific support and adequate international funding for whale protection areas set up in Polynesia and elsewhere by responsible governments.

Sincerely

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