

Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects
Second world ocean assessment (WOA II) – review by States

Instructions

NOTE: Only comments submitted in accordance with the six instructions below will be accepted and transmitted to the writing teams for consideration.

1. Each Member State may submit **one** set of written comments.
2. Comments must be submitted using the template provided in this document.
3. The document containing the comments must be saved in either **.doc** or **.docx** format
4. All comments must be in **English**.
5. Comments must be submitted either through the Permanent Mission to the United Nations, or through designated National Focal Point for the Regular Process.
6. Comments must be submitted to the secretariat of the Regular Process by e-mail (doalos@un.org; temnova@un.org; legesseh@un.org) no later than **midnight (New York time) on 11 November 2020**.

About the process for review by States

- States may comment on any aspects of the draft, including content, structure and references. States may provide general comments or comments on specific wording, tables, figures, maps, etc. Line numbers are provided to facilitate line-by-line review, should States so desire.
- All comments received from a State will be shared with the writing teams and the Group of Experts under the name of that State without featuring any sub-divisions (offices, departments, ministries etc.) of that State.
- The comments received from States will be shared with other States along with the second draft of WOA II and the agreed responses by the Group of Experts to the comments. States will then have the opportunity to review and raise any remaining questions they may have with the Group of Experts.
- Relevant background documents are made available on the website of the Regular Process: <http://un.org/regularprocess/WOA-II-review-by-states>

Tips on using the template

- The template below uses a table format. This format allows for an unlimited number of comments to be added for each chapter or sub-chapter. To add more comments on a chapter or sub-chapter, simply add more rows.
- States may copy text from the draft into the table if they wish to use “track changes” in editing text.
- The template is shared in **.doc** and **.docx** format. These formats can be used with Microsoft Office products, in Google Docs and open-source office suites such as LibreOffice.
- To enable cross-departmental collaboration across departments or agencies, States may wish to consider adding the template to a shared drive or cloud storage solution, where multiple collaborators can add their comments simultaneously.

Template

The Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects	
<i>Third draft of the second world ocean assessment (WOA II)</i>	
Comments submitted by Japan	
Contact person:	
<i>Please fill out the below with the details of a person the secretariat can contact in case there are any questions.</i>	
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Checklist:	
✓	This document contains all comments on the first draft of WOA II from Japan
✓	All comments are submitted in the template provided below.
✓	The document is submitted in either .doc or .docx format.
✓	All comments in this document are in English.
✓	This document is submitted by (1) the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations OR (2) its duly designated National Focal Point for the Regular Process.
✓	This document is sent to the secretariat of the Regular Process (doalos@un.org ; temnova@un.org ; legesseh@un.org) no later than midnight (New York time) on <u>11 November 2020.</u>

Chapter 5: Physical and chemical state of the ocean	
Section	Comment
<p>Section name</p> <p>5. Radioactive Substances</p> <p>5.2 Situation recorded in the First World Ocean Assessment (WOA I)</p> <p>Page 569</p>	<p>“The nuclear accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima resulted in large inputs of radioactive material to the ocean but were of limited concern by 2014; immediately after the accident at Fukushima, increments to the input were limited.” Should be replaced by “The nuclear accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima resulted in large inputs of radioactive material to the ocean; immediately after the accident at Fukushima, increments to the input were limited.”</p> <p>(Justification)</p> <p>When it comes to public concern about nuclear accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima, the year of 2014 is considered not a clear threshold, so it would be better to simply delete “but were of limited concern by 2014” for the purposes of accuracy.</p>
Chapter 6: Trends in the biodiversity of main taxa of marine biota (overall introduction)	
Chapter 6B: Marine invertebrates	
Section	Comment
<p>3. Description of the environmental changes (between 2010 and 2020)</p> <p>3.1 Marine invertebrate biodiversity</p>	<p>This report is issued as a part of projects managed by UN; therefore, it is desirable for the report to be consistent with UN’s policy. The name “Sea of Japan” is the only internationally established name for the sea area concerned. Since the international society is using this name at present, it is not acceptable to alter the expression in WOAI since it can cause the confusion affecting the safety of international maritime traffic.</p> <p>In addition to this, the US Board on Geographic Names officially published their determination that the name Sea of Japan is the only officially recognized name for the sea area concerned, and most of the governments of major nations, such as UK, France, Russia, Germany and China, apply the name of “Sea of Japan”. The GOJ requests again that “Sea-area between Japan and Korean Peninsula” needs to be changed to “Sea of Japan”.</p>
Chapter 6D: Marine mammals	
Section	Comment

<p>P150 Keynote points</p>	<p>The number of species for which a conservation status is available has increased, with eight species moving from a status of data deficiency as a result of new information. Of baleen whales, 36 per cent of species are increasing in abundance. Overall, the status of coastal dolphins, sirenians and marine otters is deteriorating, with the vacquita close to extinction. Many species lack population abundance information.</p> <p>Should be changed to</p> <p>The number of species for which a conservation status is available has increased, with eight species moving from a status of data deficiency as a result of new information. Of baleen whales, <u>36 per cent of species are increasing, while X percent of species are decreasing and- Y percent of species are stable</u> in abundance. Overall, the status of coastal dolphins, sirenians and marine otters is deteriorating, with the vacquita close to extinction. Many species lack population abundance information.</p> <p>(Justification) The description of “36 per cent” would give the idea that more than 50% of all species that have been assessed and assigned a conservation status have been identified as decreasing, which is not what assessments and the literature reflect.</p> <p>In order to avoid such misunderstanding, reference to percentage of species that are “decreasing” and “stable” in abundance should be also provided.</p>
<p>P151 1. Introduction</p>	<p>Intentional takes for subsistence or for commercial harvest and bycatch and entanglement in other fisheries <u>continue to be identified</u> as the main conservation threats for all groups of marine mammals under assessments <u>conducted by the IUCN</u> (Figure 2; IUCN, 2019).</p> <p>Should be changed to</p> <p><u>The IUCN Species Survival Commission Specialist Groups has identified that</u> intentional takes for subsistence or for commercial harvest and bycatch and entanglement in other</p>

	<p>fisheries continue as the main conservation threats for all groups of marine mammals (Figure 2; IUCN, 2019).</p> <p>(Justification)</p> <p>The Secretariat comments that the threats listed in each section of this chapter are those that have been identified on the basis of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List assessments carried out by the IUCN Species Survival Commission Specialist Groups for cetaceans, pinnipeds, sirenia, otters and polar bears.</p> <p>However, this identification is not necessarily the same as others including ours. As explained in our previous comments, intentional takes of marine mammals for both subsistence or for commercial harvest have been strictly managed under the relevant international organizations or in accordance with the management procedure adopted by those organizations, and therefore, they cannot be regarded as threat.</p> <p>Given the such situation and in order to avoid any controversies, it is appropriate to clarify that such identification has been made by one of ICUN groups.</p>
<p>P.157 6.1 Line 11-14</p>	<p>Despite the citation #90 on page 151, following sentence still contains misinformation on catches in the western north Pacific.</p> <p>”Commercial catches in the western north Pacific have remained broadly stable since WOA I (IWC, 2019, catches taken under Special Permit) and catches in Antarctic waters were suspended in 2019 (IWC, 2019).”</p> <p>1. Catches in the western north Pacific between 2015 and 2018 are <u>not commercial catches</u> but catches under Special Permit.</p> <p>2. Japanese catches in Antarctic waters <u>have been ceased</u> following the 2019 withdrawal from the International Convention for the Regulator of Whaling (ICRW).</p> <p>Based on the above, Japan kindly suggests that following modification be made so that the description of the citation will be reflected on the text in order to avoid any misunderstandings.</p>

	<p>“Commercial catches <u>Catches</u> in the western north Pacific have remained broadly stable since WOA I (IWC, 2019; catches taken under Special Permit) and catches in Antarctic waters were suspended in <u>have been ceased since</u> 2019 (IWC, 2019).”</p>
Chapter 7Q: Ridges, plateaus and trenches	
Section	Comment
<p>2. Description of the environmental changes (between 2010 and 2020)</p> <p>2.1.4. Hadal trenches</p>	<p>This report is issued as a part of projects managed by UN; therefore, it is desirable for the report to be consistent with UN’s policy. The name “Sea of Japan” is the only internationally established name for the sea area concerned. Since the international society is using this name at present, it is not acceptable to alter the expression in WOAI since it can cause the confusion affecting the safety of international maritime traffic.</p> <p>In addition to this, the US Board on Geographic Names officially published their determination that the name Sea of Japan is the only officially recognized name for the sea area concerned, and most of the governments of major nations, such as UK, France, Russia, Germany and China, apply the name of “Sea of Japan”. The GOJ requests again that “and its marginal seas” needs to be changed to “and Sea of Japan”.</p>
Chapter 11: Liquid and atmospheric inputs from land, ships and offshore installations	
Section	Comment
<p>5. Radioactive Substances</p> <p>5.3. Description of the environmental changes (between 2010 and 2020)</p>	<p>Page 571, Lines 16-18</p> <p>JNFL schedules the “completion” of RRP in the first half of fiscal year 2022, so we request to modify the description from “come into operation” to “come into completion”.</p> <p>Therefore, we would suggest that the description is modified as follows.</p> <p>In Japan, the nuclear reprocessing plant at Rokkasho is expected to come into <u>completion operation</u> by October 2022 (JNFL, 2020).</p>
Chapter 21: Anthropogenic noise	

2. Description of the environmental status	<p>“; Tsujii and others, 2018” should be deleted. If “; Tsujii and others, 2018” is to be retained, “with potential consequences on the survival of populations and communities across a number of marine taxa.” should be deleted.</p> <p>Rationale: As mentioned at the replying to our comments, we Japan understand that changes in singing of humpback whales was reported by Tsujii et al. 2018. However, at the paper, we can't find the link between the changes in singing and the potential consequences on the survival of populations and communities. So, it is a jumping conclusion that shipping noise is potential consequences on the survival of populations and communities in humpback whales.</p>
Chapter 27: Marine hydrates	
Section	Comment
4. Marine hydrates as a source of energy	On page 808, "4. Marine hydrates as a source of energy", The wording in the end of the text as "the Tohoku earthquake". However, the official name of this earthquake is "the Great East Japan Earthquake", thus this should be modified.
Chapter 30: Management approaches (incorporates elements from Chapter 8D)	
Section	Comment
P861 3.2. Area-based management tools	<p>Marine protected areas may also be used in combination with fisheries management tools and sanctuaries (no take zones which may be within MPAs). <u>Sanctuary</u> areas and seasonal and year-round fisheries closures and exclusion zones provide area-based management mechanisms that seek to improve species population and biodiversity recovery. <u>For example, the International Whaling Commission has established two sanctuaries, both of which prohibit commercial whaling: the Indian Ocean Sanctuary which was established in 1979 and covers the whole of the Indian Ocean south to 55°S; and the Southern Ocean Sanctuary which was established in 1994 and covers the waters around Antarctica.</u></p> <p>Should be changed to</p>

	<p>Marine protected areas may also be used in combination with fisheries management tools and sanctuaries (no take zones which may be within MPAs). <u>Well defined sanctuary</u> areas and seasonal and year-round fisheries closures and exclusion zones <u>can</u> provide area-based management mechanisms that seek to improve species population and biodiversity recovery.</p> <p>(Justification)</p> <p>The Secretariat says that “the purpose of this text is to provide examples of management approaches that “seek to improve species population and biodiversity recovery””.</p> <p>However, as explained in our previous comment, the two sanctuaries have been adopted by the IWC in 1982 or 1994 without scientific justifications.</p> <p>It is true that IWC finally adopted a management plan for the Southern Ocean Sanctuary (SOS) in 2018, but it should be noted that NO such management plan had been adopted until then since the establishment of SOS in 1994. IWC has never adopted a management plan for the Indian Ocean Sanctuary, thus no substantial action has been taken except for the prohibition of commercial whaling irrespective of stock condition of whale species distributed.</p> <p>It should be also noted that NO management activities for SOS in accordance with the management plan finally adopted in 2018 have been conducted by the IWC itself after its adoption. In fact, NO progress was reported at IWC Scientific Committee in 2019 nor 2020.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no reason to introduce these sanctuaries as appropriate examples of “management approaches”.</p>
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