



**Marine Mammal Commission**

*An independent agency of the U.S. Government*

# Strategic Plan 2015-2019

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# Strategic Objective 1

**Marine mammal populations in the Arctic** are maintained as viable functioning elements of their ecosystems through management measures that address direct and indirect effects of climate change and the ensuing economic, scientific, and other activities in the region.

- Offshore energy exploration in Alaska
- Shipping impacts on marine mammals
- Model Consultation process between AK Native Communities and Feds
- Polar Bear Range States, Alaska Nanuuq Commission
- CBMP SAMBR Report
- 2016 Alaska Listening Sessions
- Arctic Session at CHOW 2016



# Strategic Objective 2

**Scientifically robust mitigation and monitoring** measures are developed, refined, and implemented to **prevent, minimize, or mitigate the impacts of offshore oil and gas and renewable energy activities** on marine mammals and their ecosystems.

- Gulf of Mexico research and monitoring
- Comment on 2017-2022 Draft Proposed Offshore Leasing Program
- Regulatory oversight of offshore exploration and exploratory drilling
- Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill and Ecosystem Conference
- Sound field characterization of pile driving activities associated with an offshore wind farm in Taiwan





# Strategic Objective 3

**Marine mammal strandings are more thoroughly investigated and analyzed to improve understanding of the factors causing mortality and affecting the health of marine mammals,** determine the efficacy of measures such as ship speed reduction to reduce mortality, and elucidate the relationships between marine mammal health and human health and ecosystem services.

- Marine Mammal Health Monitoring and Analysis Platform (Health MAP)
- 2016 National Marine Animal Health and Stranding Network Conference
- Marine Mammal Health Data Standards
- NMFS International Beluga Health Monitoring Workshop



# Strategic Objective 4

**Anthropogenic threats to marine mammals**, particularly those most vulnerable to extinction, are **identified and reduced in the coastal and fresh waters of other nations and on the high seas** worldwide through bilateral and multilateral scientific and conservation efforts and sharing of expertise.

- Vaquita conservation
- Fighting bycatch in global fisheries
- Freshwater dolphins
- IWC and Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling
- IWC/SC Small Cetacean sub-committee
- Arabian Sea humpback whales
- Global status of baleen whales



# Strategic Objective 5

**Understanding of human impacts** on marine mammals and their ecosystems, and the management of those impacts, **is improved through enhanced scientific research, policy analysis, and information dissemination.**

- Assessment of right whale ship strike rule efficacy
- Florida Manatee harassment
- Workshops on Advanced survey technology
- Take Reduction Teams
- Hill Briefing on Marine Mammal Bycatch:
- Economics of Marine Mammal Bycatch





# Multiple Objectives

- Recommendations and reviews of various agency actions (113 letters in FY16)
- Advancing marine mammal research (Small grant program)
- Review of Stock Assessment Reports
- Marine mammals in the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS)
- Congressional outreach
- Annual Meetings
- Annual Reports



# Discussion

Additional issues, topics, priorities for the Commission's agenda now or in future years?

Current and continuing work on the five strategic objectives

- What projects, activities, and research relevant to best meeting those objectives should we be aware of?
- Are there elements we should be doing more on or should downplay?
- Are the currently designated high priority projects still applicable in this mid-term period?
- Any advice on those or ideas for additional projects?

Updating the plan

- Are the current objectives likely to remain on target?
- Are there developments in the field that suggest they might need to be modified in the next five-year plan?





That was easy!



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