



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

8 June 2012

Paul Shone  
Chair, Executive Committee  
OGP Sound and Marine Life Joint Industry Project (JIP22)  
c/o Chevron Energy Technology Company  
Chevron Corporation - Room C1144  
6001 Bollinger Canyon Road  
San Ramon, CA 94583-2324

Dear Mr. Shone:

The Marine Mammal Commission would like to thank the members of the Sound and Marine Life Joint Industry Project (JIP) for its leadership in addressing research priorities related to sound and its effect on the marine environment. The JIP has contributed significantly toward research to understand the sources, effects, and mitigation of underwater sounds associated with oil and gas exploration and production. Research to date has improved greatly our understanding of sound produced during seismic surveys and pile driving, the physiological and behavioral response of marine mammals to various sound sources, and methods for mitigating and monitoring the effects of exploration and production-related sound on marine mammals and other wildlife. Research results have led to the development and application of science-based, cost-effective tools for estimating marine mammal densities and potential takes, detecting and avoiding animals, and reporting interactions. For example, the JIP funded PAMGUARD, a software program used by companies worldwide for acoustic detection, classification, and localization of marine mammals to mitigate against harm from seismic surveys. The Commission is hopeful this will lead to the development of standards for passive acoustic monitoring and how it is used by seismic operators.

The Commission understands that the JIP Executive Committee will decide soon whether to extend to a third phase. Doing so would allow for continued research on topics that the Commission considers a high priority, but which have yet to be fully investigated. These include—

- determining the biological significance of physical, physiological, and behavioral responses of marine mammals and their prey to sound
- understanding the long-term and cumulative effects of both individual and multiple sound sources on the marine environment
- developing web-based systems for compiling, archiving, and accessing survey and observer data and other research results from JIP-funded projects
- investigating the potential environmental effects of new technologies, such as marine vibroseis and active acoustic monitoring.

Given the JIP's extremely successful track record, the Commission strongly encourages the Executive Committee to support a third phase of the JIP's collaborative research efforts. Please contact me if I can provide any assistance as you consider your future directions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy J. Ragen".

Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.  
Executive Director