

## US Arctic OCS - IAGC submitted comments on NOI to prepare an EIS for oil and gas activities

As reported in the [January-February 2010 newsletter](#), on 8 February 2010 the US National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published in the Federal Register a [Notice of Intent \(NOI\) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement \(EIS\) on the Effects of Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic Ocean](#). In the EIS, NMFS will analyze the environmental impacts of issuing Incidental Take Authorizations (ITAs) pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) to the oil and gas industry for the taking of marine mammals incidental to offshore exploration activities in Federal and state waters of the US Chukchi and Beaufort Seas off Alaska. The NOI initiated the scoping process for the EIS and allows all interested parties the opportunity to assist NMFS in identifying the significant issues and alternatives for analysis in the EIS.

On 9 April 2010, on behalf of its members, IAGC [submitted comments](#) on the NOI to NMFS. The IAGC letter provided information regarding the location, type, and estimated number of geophysical surveys IAGC members anticipate conducting in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas over the next several years. In addition, the comment letter emphasized that geophysical surveys do not result in adverse impacts to populations of marine mammals, that existing scientific information and not speculation should be used when analyzing potential environmental effects of seismic surveys, and that feasible and effective mitigation and monitoring measures should be implemented as necessary. Also, IAGC reminded MMS of the role of the non-exclusive data business model and its importance in providing the necessary seismic data for exploration and production. The full

IAGC comment letter is available [here](#).

IAGC staff would like to thank all the members who participated in the development of the IAGC comment letter by providing information and reviewing the Draft letter. The efforts of IAGC members ensured that the IAGC comment letter was comprehensive, informative and timely