UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Supplemental Environmental Assessment for Issuance of Amendments to Scientific Research Permit No. 14097-03 to Add Specific Cetacean Research Activities

LOCATION: Pacific, Southern, Indian, and Arctic Oceans

SUMMARY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes to issue an amendment to Permit No. 14097-03 to authorize harassment during the use of an unmanned aerial system to photograph cetaceans and collect breath samples from gray whales; suction cup tagging of gray whales; and attaching dart/barb tags to 15 bottlenose and 15 Risso's dolphins per year. The purpose of the research is to determine the migration routes and movement patterns, habitat use, diving behavior, vocal patterns, and acoustic environment of cetaceans worldwide. Impacts from these activities would be short-term and minimal to individual animals and negligible to the species. The amended permit would be valid through June 30, 2015.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Donna S. Wieting
Director, Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1315 East-West Highway, Room 13821
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 427-8400

The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact (FONSI) including the supporting supplemental environmental assessment (SEA) is enclosed for your information.

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Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed SEA/FONSI we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the responsible official named above.

Sincerely,

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for Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure