



The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Chairman,
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies,
Committee on Appropriations,
United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen,
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies,
Committee on Appropriations,
United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510

28 June 2017

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Shaheen,

I write on the behalf of the European Cetacean Society (ECS), which is a scientific body that aims to promote and advance the science and conservation that relate to marine mammals. The members of the ECS are gravely concerned by reports that the MMC might be eliminated in the 2018 Presidential Budget Request. The work of the MMC is held in the highest regard by the scientific community throughout Europe and its work in science and conservation is truly world-class, providing collaboration, expert advice and example to many outside of the United States.

It has been some forty-five years since the Marine Mammal Protection Act was passed by U.S. Congress to conserve whales, dolphins, porpoises, seals, sea lions, manatees, sea otters, polar bears, and walrus. The MMC was established by this Act to oversee marine mammal science, management, and conservation as an independent federal agency. The progress of this independent agency from this time has provided an example to the rest of the world of how the conservation of marine mammals balanced against marine economic activities, may be best achieved.

We believe that the loss of the MMC would likely have severe and irreversible consequences for marine mammals in the U.S. and beyond, and therefore write to respectfully encourage its continued funding. We hope that during your deliberations, you may take into account that the exemplary work of the MMC has had major positive effects in other regions of the world.

In our experience, the workshops and reports of the MMC have provided valuable scientific information on the global status of marine mammals and their meetings offer a forum for scientists to share information, not only with the MMC's commissioners and staff but to help inform research and conservation needs around the world. The input of the MMC has been invaluable in positively shaping global policy. We hope that this will long remain the case.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mario Acquarone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Mario Acquarone Chair of the European Cetacean Society
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