

NEW ZEALAND MARINE SCIENCES SOCIETY

TE HUNGA MĀTAI MOANA O AOTEAROA



EEZ regulations consultation
eezregulations@mfe.govt.nz

30 January 2014

Submission on Draft Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects - Non-Notified Activities) Regulations 2013

This submission is made on behalf of the membership of the New Zealand Marine Sciences Society (NZMSS).

The submission is made in good faith in my role as President of NZMSS and in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Rules of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Please contact me at the email address provided below for any further information regarding this submission.

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1. The New Zealand Marine Sciences Society

The New Zealand Marine Sciences Society, known as “NZMSS”, was formed in 1960 as a constituent the Royal Society of New Zealand, to encourage and assist marine science and related research across a wide range of disciplines in New Zealand and to foster communication among those with an interest in marine science

NZMSS is a professional science body and a non-profit organization that provides access to and within the marine science community. We identify emerging issues through annual conferences, annual reviews, a listserv and our website www.nzmss.org. NZMSS membership covers all aspects of scientific interest in the marine environment and extends to the uptake of science in marine policy, resource management, conservation and the marine business sector. We speak for members of the society on matters of interest on marine research in New Zealand and we engage with other scientific societies as appropriate.

Our submission is consistent with the Royal Society of New Zealand Code of Ethics and Rules, in particular principals 2.1 Integrity and professionalism, 4.1 Compliance with the law and relevant standards, and 10.1 Protection of the environment (www.royalsociety.org.nz/organisation/about/code).

2. Submission

Our submission is brief, and expresses two concerns that we have regarding the proposed regulations:

1. NZMSS is aware that there is strong public interest in exploratory oil and gas drilling and therefore considers that all marine consents covered by this regulation should be publicly notified as a minimum requirement in a democratic society;
2. The marine science community is aware and concerned that the adequacy of the evidence base for environmental impact assessment and environmental risk assessment for exploratory oil and gas drilling as well as sea-bed mining, is, in many instances, be very limited. This is an important issue that the public needs to be aware of and can only be highlighted through public notification and open consultation. NZMSS contends that these exploratory activities warrant public consultation.

NZMSS submits that the proposed regulation proposal to classify exploratory drilling for oil and gas as a non-notified discretionary activity be amended so that the public are indeed notified and have the right to submit comment on such activities. NZMSS contends that an open and transparent process can only benefit the fledgling EPA decision-making body and industry in the long-run.