114 Appeal for global prevention of propeller-inflicted deaths on endangered species

RECOGNISING the increasing threats to endangered migratory species caused by marine vessel propeller blades, which have been linked to the injury and death of numerous marine species, including whales, dolphins, sea turtles, dugongs and sharks;

RECALLING *Resolution 7.113 Restoring a peaceful and quiet ocean (Marseille, 2020),* which affirms that anthropogenic underwater noise can disrupt vital life functions of many marine species, with implications for global food security, and that propeller design and guards could have unintended consequences such as increased noise;

ACKNOWLEDGING studies indicating that over 50% of whale sharks in Qatar waters have visible propeller scars, highlighting the severity and increasing prevalence of this issue;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING the need to work with Indigenous peoples in support of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*;

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING the critical role of global collaboration in addressing marine ecological challenges and the necessity of robust, targeted actions to prevent further harm to marine life;

CONSIDERING that improving propeller design, alongside limiting vessel speeds, would further help reduce the risk of propeller-inflicted injuries, mortality and auditory disturbances to endangered migratory species and lead to better marine conservation outcomes; and

EMPHASISING the urgent need for innovative and effective measures to protect vulnerable marine species in important sensitive areas, such as seasonal feeding aggregation sites, breeding sites and other important sites, from marine vessel-related injuries and excessive noise.

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, at its session in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates:

1. CALLS ON the Director General to:

a. advocate for the development of international guidelines on mitigation and protective measures, such as Areas-To-Be-Avoided, shipping lanes with reduced speed, propeller guards, and design considerations that limit noise and other unintended consequences, to mitigate the threat posed to migratory endangered species by open-bladed vessel propellers and excessive noise in sensitive marine areas, including feeding and nursery grounds, and marine protected areas; and

b. urge IUCN State Members to adopt mitigation measures, to protect endangered species in important sensitive areas from harm by propeller blades and excessive noise; and

2. ENCOURAGES IUCN Commissions and Members to:

a. raise awareness about the dangers of open-bladed propellers and excessive noise, and the benefits of noise-limiting propeller protection devices, emphasising the urgent need for global action; and

b. promote research into the impacts of ship propulsion systems on marine species and support the development of new technologies that minimise harm to marine life.