

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222–226).

The applicant requests authority to study 31 cetacean species including blue (*Balaenoptera musculus*), fin (*Balaenoptera physalus*), and humpback (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) whales. The purpose of the research is to improve baseline data on marine mammal status, abundance, stock structure, life history, seasonal distribution, and acoustic communication and behavior of non-ESA and ESA listed species. Activities include photo-identification, biopsy, suction-cup tagging, and fecal sampling. Research would be conducted in the Pacific Ocean off the west coast of the United States and around the Hawaiian Islands. No mortality of animals is requested. The permit would be issued for five years.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of this application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: April 26, 2007.

**P. Michael Payne,**

*Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. E7–8398 Filed 5–2–07; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510–22–S**

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 042607B]

**Endangered Species; File No. 1557**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice; receipt of application for modification

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that Molly Lutcavage, Department of Zoology, 177 A Spaulding Hall, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824–2617, has requested a modification to scientific research Permit No. 1557.

**DATES:** Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before June 4, 2007.

**ADDRESSES:** The modification request and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s):

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713–2289; fax (301)427–2521; and Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Ave South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701; phone (727)824–5312; fax (727)824–5309.

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this request should be submitted to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Those individuals requesting a hearing should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this particular modification request would be appropriate.

Comments may also be submitted by facsimile at (301)427–2521, provided the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy submitted by mail and postmarked no later than the closing date of the comment period.

Comments may also be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing e-mail comments is *NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov*. Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: File No. 1557.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Patrick Opay or Kate Swails, (301)713–2289.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The subject modification to Permit No. 1557, issued on June 21, 2006 (71 FR 36520) is requested under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222–226).

Permit No. 1557 authorizes the permit holder to investigate leatherback sea turtle regional behavior and movements in near-shore waters off the eastern United States and to identify their dispersal in relation to oceanographic conditions and fishing activities. The research will also help establish baseline health assessments, genetic identities, sex ratios, and stable isotope composition of leatherback sea turtle tissues and prey. Researchers are authorized to conduct research on up to 12 leatherback sea turtles annually that have been disentangled from fishing

gear by the stranding network or that researchers have captured using a breakaway hoop net. Turtles are measured, weighed, photographed and video taped, flipper and passive integrated transponder (PIT) tagged, blood sampled, cloacal swabbed, nasal swabbed, skin sampled, tagged with electronic instruments, and released. The research permit was issued for 5 years. The permit holder currently requests authorization to take an additional eight leatherbacks per year. Turtles would be measured, weighed, photographed and video taped, flipper and PIT tagged, blood sampled, cloacal swabbed, nasal swabbed, skin sampled. The researchers propose to attach satellite-linked data recorders to the turtle's carapace and to feed stomach temperature pills to the animals. These pills would record stomach temperatures and transmit them to the satellite-linked data recorder for transmission to the researchers. This research would help researchers better understand where, when, and under what environmental conditions leatherback sea turtles forage so as to better predict their movements. This information would be used to help predict leatherback movements and potential interactions with fisheries and other human activities to allow resource managers to design management strategies to protect this species.

Dated: April 26, 2007.

**P. Michael Payne,**

*Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. E7–8399 Filed 5–2–07; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510–22–S**

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**Patent and Trademark Office**

**Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request**

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

*Agency:* United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

*Title:* Secrecy and License to Export.  
*Form Number(s):* N/A.

*Agency Approval Number:* 0651–0034.

*Type of Request:* Extension of a currently approved collection.

*Burden:* 1,310 hours annually.

*Number of Respondents:* 1,669 responses per year.

*Avg. Hours per Response:* It is estimated to take between 30 minutes (0.5 hours) and 4.0 hours for the public to gather, prepare and submit the various petitions in this collection.

*Needs and Uses:* In the interest of national security, patent laws and rules place certain limitations on the disclosure of information contained in patents and patent applications and on the filing of applications for patents in foreign countries. When an invention is determined to be detrimental to national security, the Director of the USPTO must issue a secrecy order and withhold the grant of a patent for such period as the national interest requires. The USPTO collects information to determine whether the patent laws and rules have been complied with, and to grant or revoke licenses to file abroad when appropriate. This collection is required by 35 U.S.C. 181–188 and administered through 37 CFR 5.1–5.33. There are no forms associated with this collection of information.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households; business or other for-profit; and not-for-profit institutions.

*Frequency:* On occasion.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Required to obtain or retain benefits.

*OMB Desk Officer:* David Rostker, (202) 395–3897.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by any of the following:

• *E-mail:*

Susan.Fawcett@uspto.gov. Include "0651–0034 copy request" in the subject line of the message.

• *Fax:* 571–273–0112, marked to the attention of Susan K. Fawcett.

• *Mail:* Susan K. Fawcett, Records Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Customer Information Services Group, Public Information Services Division, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313–1450.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent on or before June 4, 2007 to David Rostker, OMB Desk Officer, Room 10202, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

Dated: April 26, 2007.

**Susan K. Fawcett,**

*Records Officer, USPTO, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Customer Information Services Group, Public Information Services Division.*

[FR Doc. E7–8456 Filed 5–2–07; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510–16–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No. PTO–C–2007–0018]

#### Request for Comments on International Efforts To Harmonize Substantive Requirements of Patent Laws

**AGENCY:** United States Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of request for public comments.

**SUMMARY:** The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is seeking comments to obtain the views of the public on international efforts to harmonize substantive requirements of patent laws, and any potential subsequent changes to United States law and practice. Comments may be offered on any aspect of these efforts.

**DATES:** Comments will be accepted on a continuous basis until June 22, 2007. See discussion of "Text" in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below.

**ADDRESSES:** Persons wishing to offer written comments by mail should address those comments to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Office of International Relations, Madison West Building, Tenth Floor, 600 Dulany Street, Alexandria, VA 22313, marked to the attention of Mr. Jon P. Santamauro. Comments may also be submitted to Mr. Santamauro by facsimile transmission to (571) 273–0085 or by electronic mail through the Internet at [plharmonization@uspto.gov](mailto:plharmonization@uspto.gov).

The comments will be available for public inspection via the USPTO's Internet Web site (address: <http://www.uspto.gov>). Because comments will be made available for public inspection, information that is not desired to be made public, such as an address or phone number, should not be included in the comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Jon P. Santamauro by telephone at (571) 272–9300, by fax at (571) 273–0085 or by mail marked to his attention and addressed to United States Patent and Trademark Office, Office of International Relations, 600 Dulany Street, Madison West Building, Tenth Floor, Alexandria, VA 22313.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### 1. Background

The United States has been involved in efforts to harmonize the substantive patent laws in the different countries of the world for many years. Recent efforts have been made to streamline this

process by limiting the number of topics for consideration in this exercise with the aim of achieving a meaningful near-term agreement. These efforts were initiated in proposals before the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP), meeting under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), but more recently consensus has not been reached on a particular work plan in that body. Since early 2005, a group of countries, sometimes referred to as the "Alexandria Process" or the "Group B+," has been meeting informally to advance discussions on patent law harmonization in WIPO in the categories of: (1) Definition of prior art, (2) grace period, (3) novelty, and (4) inventive step or non-obviousness. Each of these items relates to applicability of "prior art." These four categories are commonly referred to as the "limited package." These are core elements in patent examination in countries around the world. The "B+" countries include the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, the Members of the European Union and the Members of the European Patent Convention. It has been recognized that the items under discussion provide the best chance for achieving a meaningful near-term agreement on patent law harmonization.

Upon conclusion, an agreement on these elements would provide a harmonized system on global applicability of these prior art-related principles. This would allow for more uniform treatment of patent applications and patent grants, improve patent quality and reduce costs for patent owners in obtaining and preserving their rights for inventions in many countries of the world. Meetings of "Group B+" and consultations relating to the WIPO SCP are expected to be convened in 2007. The USPTO is interested in obtaining comprehensive comments regarding these efforts.

##### 2. Issues for Public Comment

The purpose of this notice is to identify and briefly outline important issues that have arisen and are likely to arise during meetings of the "Group B+" and WIPO SCP on patent law harmonization. A brief summary of some of these issues is provided below. Any comments provided with regard to the particular items identified below should be numbered in correspondence with the numbering of these items as shown. Comments on any aspects of these topics are welcome. This would include comments relating to what practices described may constitute "best practices" in an internationally