

species of whales and sea lions feed there in large numbers, and are attracting a growing number of cruise boats and tours.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

12. The risks associated with the transit of SSN or SSBN submarines through Dixon Entrance are not identical to those that occur when the same vessels make port calls. The differences lie in risks attributable to marine surroundings, navigation hazards, and the propinquity of human settlements. In all these cases the risks associated with transits are even lower than they are for port visits. While the hazard of submarine entanglement with fishing gear can occur in either case, it relates more to safety than to the environment. Moreover, Canadian conventional submarines also create similar risks in Canadian waters on the East coast, which have been accepted.

13. The following summarizes how the conclusions of the Environmental Assessment of Port Visits by Nuclear Ships (Annex I) apply to concerns identified in respect of transits:

A Acute Safety Risk Associated with Potential Nuclear Accidents (page 5/14) - risks judged not significant

The risks are considered even less significant for Dixon Entrance (DE) than for Port Visits (PV), because the area affected is less heavily populated, and navigation is generally simpler. There is ample depth for navigating submerged throughout its length. The submarines will also be less vulnerable to unauthorized access.

B Effects on Marine Animals of Exposure to Low-Level Radiation (page 9/14) - risks not expected to have negative impact

Levels of radiation in the waters around nuclear-powered submarines have been measured by Canadian and allied scientists over several decades. The total amount of low-level radioactivity released into the environment is insignificant compared to naturally occurring background radiation. Therefore, this would not be expected to have significant impacts on marine mammals.

C Long Term Health Effects on Humans of Exposure to Low Level Radiation (page 10/14) - risks demonstrated to be negligible

Canadian human exposure to radiation in the Dixon Entrance as a result of normal submarine transits will be nil.

D Water Quality and Waste Disposal of Garbage (page 12/14) incremental impact not considered significant.