

the person knows, or in the exercise of due care should have known, was taken in violation of this chapter.

**(c) Exception for emergencies**

No act described in subsection (a)(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (7), (12), or (13) or in subsection (b) shall be unlawful if the person committing the act reasonably believed that the act was committed under emergency circumstances involving the safety of human life or of ships, aircraft, or equipment or facilities of high value, or the protection of the environment.

(Pub. L. 95-541, §4, Oct. 28, 1978, 92 Stat. 2049; Pub. L. 104-227, title I, §103, Oct. 2, 1996, 110 Stat. 3036.)

**Editorial Notes**

**REFERENCES IN TEXT**

The Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships, referred to in subsecs. (a)(5) and (b)(1), is Pub. L. 96-478, Oct. 21, 1980, 94 Stat. 2297, which is classified principally to chapter 33 (§1901 et seq.) of Title 33, Navigation and Navigable Waters. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1901 of Title 33 and Tables.

**AMENDMENTS**

1996—Pub. L. 104-227 reenacted section catchline without change and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, text consisted of subsec. (a) “In General”, which set forth unlawful acts in pars. (1) to (4) and provided that such acts would not be unlawful if committed under emergency circumstances to prevent the loss of human life, and subsec. (b) “Exception”, which provided that subsec. (a) would not apply with respect to any native mammal, native bird, or native plant held in captivity or to any offspring of such mammal, bird, or plant.

**§ 2403a. Environmental impact assessment**

**(a) Federal activities**

(1)(A) The obligations of the United States under Article 8 of and Annex I to the Protocol shall be implemented by applying the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) to proposals for Federal agency activities in Antarctica, as specified in this section.

(B) The obligations contained in section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)) shall apply to all proposals for Federal agency activities occurring in Antarctica and affecting the quality of the human environment in Antarctica or dependent or associated ecosystems, only as specified in this section. For purposes of the application of such section 102(2)(C) under this subsection, the term “significantly affecting the quality of the human environment” shall have the same meaning as the term “more than a minor or transitory impact”.

(2)(A) Unless an agency which proposes to conduct a Federal activity in Antarctica determines that the activity will have less than a minor or transitory impact, or unless a comprehensive environmental evaluation is being prepared in accordance with subparagraph (C), the agency shall prepare an initial environmental evaluation in accordance with Article 2 of Annex I to the Protocol.

(B) If the agency determines, through the preparation of the initial environmental evalua-

tion, that the proposed Federal activity is likely to have no more than a minor or transitory impact, the activity may proceed if appropriate procedures are put in place to assess and verify the impact of the activity.

(C) If the agency determines, through the preparation of the initial environmental evaluation or otherwise, that a proposed Federal activity is likely to have more than a minor or transitory impact, the agency shall prepare and circulate a comprehensive environmental evaluation in accordance with Article 3 of Annex I to the Protocol, and shall make such comprehensive environmental evaluation publicly available for comment.

(3) Any agency decision under this section on whether a proposed Federal activity, to which paragraph (2)(C) applies, should proceed, and, if so, whether in its original or in a modified form, shall be based on the comprehensive environmental evaluation as well as other considerations which the agency, in the exercise of its discretion, considers relevant.

(4) For the purposes of this section, the term “Federal activity” includes all activities conducted under a Federal agency research program in Antarctica, whether or not conducted by a Federal agency.

**(b) Federal activities carried out jointly with foreign governments**

(1) For the purposes of this subsection, the term “Antarctic joint activity” means any Federal activity in Antarctica which is proposed to be conducted, or which is conducted, jointly or in cooperation with one or more foreign governments. Such term shall be defined in regulations promulgated by such agencies as the President may designate.

(2) Where the Secretary of State, in cooperation with the lead United States agency planning an Antarctic joint activity, determines that—

(A) the major part of the joint activity is being contributed by a government or governments other than the United States;

(B) one such government is coordinating the implementation of environmental impact assessment procedures for that activity; and

(C) such government has signed, ratified, or acceded to the Protocol,

the requirements of subsection (a) of this section shall not apply with respect to that activity.

(3) In all cases of Antarctic joint activity other than those described in paragraph (2), the requirements of subsection (a) of this section shall apply with respect to that activity, except as provided in paragraph (4).

(4) Determinations described in paragraph (2), and agency actions and decisions in connection with assessments of impacts of Antarctic joint activities, shall not be subject to judicial review.

**(c) Nongovernmental activities**

(1) The Administrator shall, within 2 years after October 2, 1996, promulgate regulations to provide for—

(A) the environmental impact assessment of nongovernmental activities, including tour-

ism, for which the United States is required to give advance notice under paragraph 5 of Article VII of the Treaty; and

(B) coordination of the review of information regarding environmental impact assessment received from other Parties under the Protocol.

(2) Such regulations shall be consistent with Annex I to the Protocol.

**(d) Decision to proceed**

(1) No decision shall be taken to proceed with an activity for which a comprehensive environmental evaluation is prepared under this section unless there has been an opportunity for consideration of the draft comprehensive environmental evaluation at an Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting, except that no decision to proceed with a proposed activity shall be delayed through the operation of this paragraph for more than 15 months from the date of circulation of the draft comprehensive environmental evaluation pursuant to Article 3(3) of Annex I to the Protocol.

(2) The Secretary of State shall circulate the final comprehensive environmental evaluation, in accordance with Article 3(6) of Annex I to the Protocol, at least 60 days before the commencement of the activity in Antarctica.

**(e) Cases of emergency**

The requirements of this section, and of regulations promulgated under this section, shall not apply in cases of emergency relating to the safety of human life or of ships, aircraft, or equipment and facilities of high value, or the protection of the environment, which require an activity to be undertaken without fulfilling those requirements.

**(f) Exclusive mechanism**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the requirements of this section shall constitute the sole and exclusive statutory obligations of the Federal agencies with regard to assessing the environmental impacts of proposed Federal activities occurring in Antarctica.

**(g) Decisions on permit applications**

The provisions of this section requiring environmental impact assessments (including initial environmental evaluations and comprehensive environmental evaluations) shall not apply to Federal actions with respect to issuing permits under section 2404 of this title.

**(h) Publication of notices**

Whenever the Secretary of State makes a determination under paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of this section, or receives a draft comprehensive environmental evaluation in accordance with Annex I, Article 3(3) to the Protocol, the Secretary of State shall cause timely notice thereof to be published in the Federal Register.

(Pub. L. 95-541, §4A, as added Pub. L. 104-227, title I, §104, Oct. 2, 1996, 110 Stat. 3038.)

**Editorial Notes**

**REFERENCES IN TEXT**

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, referred to in subsec. (a)(1)(A), is Pub. L. 91-190, Jan. 1,

1970, 83 Stat. 852, which is classified generally to chapter 55 (§4321 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 4321 of Title 42 and Tables.

**§ 2404. Permits**

**(a) In general**

The Director may issue permits which authorize acts otherwise prohibited by section 2403(b) of this title.

**(b) Applications for permits**

(1) Applications for permits under this section shall be made in such manner and form, and shall contain such information, as the Director shall by regulation prescribe.

(2) The Director shall publish notice in the Federal Register of each application which is made for a permit under this section. The notice shall invite the submission by interested parties, within 30 days after the date of publication of the notice, of written data, comments, or views with respect to the application. Information received by the Director as a part of any application shall be available to the public as a matter of public record.

**(c) Action by appropriate Secretaries on certain permit applications**

(1) If the Director receives an application for a permit under this section requesting authority to undertake any action with respect to—

(A) any native mammal which is a marine mammal within the meaning of section 1362(5)<sup>1</sup> of this title;

(B) any native mammal, native bird, or native plant which is an endangered species or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); or

(C) any native bird which is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 701 et seq.);

the Director shall submit a copy of the application to the Secretary of Commerce or to the Secretary of the Interior, as appropriate (hereinafter in this subsection referred to respectively as the “appropriate Secretary”).

(2) After receiving a copy of any application from the Director under paragraph (1) the appropriate Secretary shall promptly determine, and notify the Director, whether or not any action proposed in the application also requires a permit or other authorization under any law administered by the appropriate Secretary.

(3) If the appropriate Secretary notifies the Director that any action proposed in the application requires a permit or other authorization under any law administered by the appropriate Secretary, the Director may not issue a permit under this section with respect to such action unless such other required permit or authorization is issued by the appropriate Secretary and a copy thereof is submitted to the Director. The issuance of any permit or other authorization by the appropriate Secretary for the carrying out of any action with respect to any native mammal, native bird, or native plant shall not be deemed to entitle the applicant concerned to the

<sup>1</sup> See References in Text note below.