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21 February 2025

Dr. Anuscheh Nawaz
University of Washington - Applied Physics Laboratory
Ocean Engineering Department

Dear Dr. Nawaz,

On behalf of Sofar Ocean Technologies (Sofar), it is our pleasure to provide this letter in support of your proposal titled “Renewable Ocean Power to Enable Long Term Spatially Resolved Environmental Monitoring Using Ocean Thermal Energy Harvesting.” This technology could potentially be beneficial for ocean sensor manufacturers like us in the future, and we look forward to learning the results of your work.

To provide some context on Sofar Ocean: We design, manufacture, and deploy a compact smart buoy called “Spotter,” which is why this project is of interest to us. Spotter is presently powered by solar panels. However, during periods of darkness or when the panels become covered in ice, energy production is reduced. A technology that produces mWs of energy could potentially be incorporated to support buoy operations in Arctic climes.

Sofar’s team of engineers, ocean scientists, and business professionals is based in San Francisco, California. We are dedicated to connecting the world's oceans to power a more sustainable future by unlocking ocean data at scale. We deployed hundreds of Spotter buoys globally to create the world’s largest privately-owned network of ocean sensors that collects 1.5 million real-time observations daily. We also equip researchers, operators, and innovators with our devices and data to power marine research and sustainable commercial solutions. Customers access data from our global sensor network and deploy our extensible Spotter platform to collect real-time surface and subsurface observations. All Spotters are equipped with a Bristlemouth interface that enables modularity in sensing payloads. Bristlemouth is an open-source marine connectivity standard.

We have had productive working relationships with you and your team on utilizing Bristlemouth to integrate novel sensing solutions and we are interested in collaborating on future projects such as this STTR. The Sofar Spotter buoy, and other maritime sensing platforms, might be an appropriate commercialization pathway for this technology, particularly if it ultimately is designed as a Bristlemouth-capable node that can fit into any Bristlemouth-enabled system.

Beyond offering our knowledge of the smart buoy market and commercialization pathways, we would like to strongly endorse the University of Washington team in terms of scientific skills and technical acumen. Having reviewed the details of your proposal, and discussed the topic with your team, we are confident in your ability to deliver the discussed capability. Sofar is proud to provide this letter of support for your continued work in this area. Good luck!

Sincerely,

Evan Shapiro
co-founder and CTO, Sofar Ocean

Sofar Ocean
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