



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
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| Document title | Action points from the 15 th meeting of the ASCOBANS Jastarnia group |
| Code | 3N-14 |
| Category | INF |
| Agenda Item | 3N – Development and implementation of Recommendations |
| Submission date | 15.4.2019 |
| Submitted by | Secretariat |

Background

The ASCOBANS Jastarnia Group held its 15th annual meeting in Finland (JG 15, 18-20 March 2019, Turku). Progress under the ASCOBANS Recovery Plan for the Baltic Harbour Porpoises (Jastarnia Plan) as well as the ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise Population in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat were reviewed. Next steps were outlined through a total of 20 action points (Att.1).

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the JG15 action points and encourage Contracting Parties to implement action points, in synergy with HELCOM mandates.

ACTION POINTS

Jastarnia and WBBK Plans

| Reference | Action Point (old reference) | Jastarnia Plan | | WBBK Plan | |
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| | | App lies | Mandate | App lies | Mandate |
| JG15/AP1 | Parties shall establish or further improve local and national monitoring programmes for Harbour Porpoise occurrence and to further ensure these are aligned in terms of timing and methodology between countries, in order to complement large-scale international monitoring activities. (JG14/AP1) | X | MON-01: Implement and harmonize long-term continual acoustic Harbour Porpoise monitoring | X | Objective d: Monitoring the status of the population |
| JG15/AP2 | Parties are strongly encouraged to support SAMBAH-II, specifically in terms of fundraising, in order for a project proposal to be submitted in 2019 and for the project to start in 2020. Noting that management authorities are required to be formal partners for the SAMBAH-II Life application. (JG14/AP2) | X | | | |
| JG15/AP3 | Parties are strongly encouraged to continue to undertake and cooperate on inter-SCANS surveys of the WBBK Harbour Porpoise population and evaluate trends in population density and abundance. (JG14/AP3/WBBK) | | | X | Rec.7: Estimate trends in abundance of Harbour Porpoises in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat |
| JG15/AP4 | Parties are strongly encouraged to use the data provided by SAMBAH, in particular in connection with the establishment of MPAs for Harbour Porpoises, as well as with regard to management plans and mitigation measures. (JG14/AP4) | X | MIT-06: Expand the network of protected areas for Harbour Porpoises, improve its connectivity, and develop and implement appropriate management plans including monitoring schemes for these areas | | |
| JG15/AP5 | Parties should investigate possible detrimental effects of various types of sound and disturbance on Harbour Porpoises (including pinger signals, noise from vessels, | X | RES-07: Improve knowledge on impact of impulsive and continuous anthropogenic underwater noise on | X | Objective e: Ensuring habitat quality favourable to the conservation of the Harbour Porpoise |

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| | seismic surveys, wind parks or construction). Parties should initiate and support studies on the effect of anthropogenic noise on the Harbour Porpoise both on the individual and on a population level. (JG14/AP6) | | Harbour Porpoises, and development of threshold limits of significant disturbance and GES indicators | | |
| JG15/AP6 | Parties are encouraged to develop and adopt internationally harmonized national regulations on sound emissions associated with anthropogenic activities in the marine environment. Such regulations should set upper limits to sound emissions and be consistent with the relevant Indicators for Good Environmental Status to be developed for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. (JG14/AP7) | X | MIT-05: Implement regionally harmonized national threshold limits and guidelines for regulation of underwater noise | X | |
| JG15/AP7 | Parties should promote research on the consequences of impacts on prey communities for Harbour Porpoises. (JG14/AP7) | | | X | Rec.10: Include monitoring and management of important prey species in national Harbour Porpoise management plans |
| JG15/AP8 | Parties are required to establish systems to effectively monitor bycatch covering all sizes of fishing vessels. (JG14/AP9) | X | MON-03: Monitor and estimate Harbour Porpoise bycatch rates and estimate total annual bycatch | X | Rec.6: Estimate total annual bycatch |
| JG15/AP9 | Parties should consider the recommendations of the October 2015 ASCOBANS Workshop on Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) and implement this technique for bycatch monitoring as appropriate in the national context. (JG14/AP10) | X | RES-03: Improve methods for monitoring and estimation of Harbour Porpoise bycatch | X | |
| JG15/AP10 | Parties are strongly encouraged to carry out spatio-temporal risk-assessments of Harbour Porpoise bycatch using Harbour Porpoise distribution and fishing effort data. (JG15/AP13) | X | RES-04: Carry out a spatio-temporal risk assessment of Harbour Porpoise bycatch | X | |
| JG15/AP11 | Parties should endeavour to develop, in cooperation with stakeholders, fishing gear that | X | RES-05: Further develop and improve fishing gear that is | X | Objective b: Mitigation of bycatch |

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| | does not cause Harbour Porpoise bycatch, and strive to replace gillnets with such alternative gear, especially in MPAs.. (JG14/AP16, JG14/AP13) | | commercially viable with no Harbour Porpoise bycatch MIT-01: Implement the use of fishing gear that is commercially viable with no Harbour Porpoise bycatch | | |
| JG15/AP12 | Parties should promote the development of pingers not audible to seals and alerting devices other than pingers. (JG14/AP14) | X | RES-05: Further develop and improve fishing gear that is commercially viable with no Harbour Porpoise bycatch | X | |
| JG15/AP13 | Parties should monitor the use and functioning of deterrent and alerting devices. (JG14/AP15) | X | MIT-03: Continue or implement the use of acoustic deterrent devices (pingers) and acoustic alerting devices proven to be successful when and where deemed appropriate | X | |
| JG15/AP14 | With respect to recreational fisheries, Parties should work towards banning or limiting the use of those types of gear known to pose a threat to Harbour Porpoises. (JG14/AP17) | X | MIT-02: Reduce or eliminate fishing effort with gillnets or other gear known to cause porpoise bycatch in areas with higher Harbour Porpoise density or occurrence, and/or in areas with higher risk of Harbour Porpoise bycatch, according to spatio-temporal risk assessments | X | Rec.3: Protect Harbour Porpoises in their key habitats in minimizing bycatch as far as possible Rec.5: Where possible replace gillnet fisheries known to be associated with high porpoise bycatch with alternative fishing gear known to be less harmful |
| JG15/AP15 | Parties are encouraged to coordinate and standardize monitoring of stranded and bycaught animals, determining the appropriate number of animals to be necropsied in each country, and ensuring that health, contaminant load, life-history parameters and cause of death is examined in a similar manner, and that tissue samples | X | MON-04: Collect dead specimens and assess health status, contaminant levels, cause of mortality and life-history parameters of Harbour Porpoises | X | Rec.8: Monitor population health status, contaminant load and causes of mortality |

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| | are collected for future needs. (JG14/AP18, JG14/AP19) | | | | |
| JG15/AP16 | All Parties and range states should establish programmes for recording, bycatch, strandings and opportunistic sightings for inclusion in a national database, and report annually to the ASCOBANS/HELCOM database. (JG14/AP20) | X | PACB-01: Improve communication and education for increased public awareness and collection of live observations and dead specimens of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise | X | Objective d: Monitoring the status of the population |
| JG15/AP17 | The Jastarnia Group promotes further cooperation with HELCOM EG MAMA and will strive to cooperate with the HELCOM Fish Group. The Jastarnia Group should invite HELCOM to its meetings. (JG14/AP22) | X | COOP-02: Strive for close cooperation between ASCOBANS and other international bodies | X | Rec.2: Cooperate with and inform other relevant bodies about the Conservation Plan |
| JG15/AP18 | ASCOBANS should join efforts with HELCOM to liaise with the European Commission and other relevant bodies to influence the implementation by Member States of the EU Technical Measures Regulation and the Data Collection Framework to better incorporate and tackle bycatch concerns. (JG14/AP23) . | X | | X | |
| JG15/AP19 | Coordinating Authorities of the countries hosting the Group's meetings are asked to ensure the attendance of an expert on the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) at the respective meetings of the Group. The Secretariat should recall this recommendation to the Coordinating Authority of the host country in good time before the meeting. (JG14/AP24) | X | Other | X | Other |
| JG15/AP20 | Parties should ensure that Belt Sea and Baltic Sea populations of harbour porpoises are assessed and managed as separate populations, e.g. in management plans and national redlists. | X | Other | X | Other |