

Agenda Item 6.3.2: Publicity/PR Issues: Secretariat

**Secretariat's bi-annual report on public information and
educational activities**

Submitted by: Secretariat



NOTE:
**IN THE INTERESTS OF ECONOMY, DELEGATES ARE KINDLY REMINDED TO BRING
THEIR OWN COPIES OF THESE DOCUMENTS TO THE MEETING**

ASCOBANS AC 7 and AC 8 as well as MOP 3 acknowledged that more intensive PR work was needed to increase public awareness of the Agreement and the issues it deals with. Considerable efforts have been made in this field.

PR work was steadily stepped up during the third triennium. This was possible, among other reasons, due to the German voluntary contributions for the years 1999 – 2003, which were allocated to a large extent to outreach and promotional activities.

MOP 4 again stressed the importance of efficient and targeted PR work. The meeting also supported the Secretariat's suggestion that ASCOBANS information material should be made available in languages other than English. The United Kingdom has informed the Secretariat of its intention to provide financial support for the translation of ASCOBANS brochures and other material.

The following educational and promotional activities were undertaken by the ASCOBANS Secretariat since MOP 4:

- The ASCOBANS website was modified to increase its user-friendliness and to reflect the new ASCOBANS logo. Additional documents can now be downloaded and draft documents for AC 11 were made available via the website;
- A Power Point presentation on the Jastarnia Plan has been produced and will be translated into the languages of Baltic Parties and Range States;
- In addition to the joint exhibition on the Bonn Convention and its regional agreements produced in cooperation with the Secretariats of CMS and the other CMS-related agreements, ASCOBANS has now produced its own 8 panel exhibition on the Agreement and its activities. Two copies of this exhibition were produced, of which one is a "flexibition" which is particularly light and easy to transport. These two exhibitions complement the older ASCOBANS exhibition "Harbour Porpoise in Distress", produced in 1999, has been displayed throughout the Agreement area and which focuses on harbour porpoises rather than on the Agreement as such.
- "Fact Sheet No. 1", concerning the Jastarnia Plan, which can also be downloaded from the ASCOBANS website, has been translated into Danish, Estonian, German, Latvian, Polish and Swedish. Lithuanian and Russian versions are under preparation; all versions will be posted on the ASCOBANS website shortly; further fact sheets are under preparation ;

- The ASCOBANS brochure, initially available only in English and German, has been translated into French, Polish, Latvian and Spanish. The Polish version has already been printed and distributed, all other versions should be available by the middle of 2004;
- A new poster, designed specifically for the Baltic region is under preparation and should be available in time for the 2nd International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise (cf. below);
- The second International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise (IDBHP), as suggested by the public awareness working group of the Jastarnia workshop, will be observed on 16 May 2004. Special events are planned in cooperation with the Zoological Museum Alexander Koenig (Bonn, FRG), Hel Marine Station (Hel, Poland), the Lithuanian Sea Museum (Klaipeda, Lithuania), and the Latvian Nature Museum (Riga, Latvia). In addition, at least two NGOs plan to take note of this year's IDBHP (GSM, Germany, Protect Whales and Dolphins, Sweden)
- An email advisory group intended to provide guidance to the Secretariat on specific activities aimed at the fisheries sector (as recommended in the Jastarnia Plan) is being established;
- The Executive Secretary made a presentation on the Jastarnia Plan at the Marine Baltic Mammal Workshop held in Kolmården, Sweden, in conjunction with the ECS Annual Conference (1 April 2004)

In addition to these activities, the Secretariat continues to actively seek and maintain contacts with relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations throughout the Agreement area. The Executive Secretary meets with Members of Parliament, representatives of governmental and non-governmental institutions, the media and representatives of international organizations and the diplomatic corps in the host country. The ASCOBANS Secretariat also maintains a dialogue with the general public in the Bonn region, in particular by participating in the annual UN Day celebrations and the "Festival of Nations" taking place annually in Bonn's largest park. The Secretariat's press releases draw the attention of regional and other media to ASCOBANS meetings.