

Agenda Item 7

Relations with other Bodies

Document 7-03

**Invitation for submission of data on  
Harbour Porpoise sightings, by-  
catches and strandings**

**Action Requested**

- Take note of the request by HELCOM

Submitted by

HELCOM Secretariat



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

## **Secretariat's Note**

1. The attached request for submission of data was sent to the members of the ASCOBANS Jastarnia Group by the HELCOM Secretariat on 18 March 2010.
2. Details on the agreement between ASCOBANS and HELCOM for the “Development of a coordinated reporting system and HELCOM/ASCOBANS database on Baltic Sea harbour porpoise sightings, by-catches and strandings” can be found in AC17/Doc.6-01.



17 March 2010

## Invitation for submission of data on Harbour Porpoise sightings, by-catches and strandings

### JOINT ASCOBANS-HELCOM INITIATIVE

The Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention, have agreed in the Baltic Sea Action Plan by 2010 to develop a reporting system and database on Baltic harbour porpoise sightings, by-catches and strandings in co-operation with ASCOBANS. A small scale funding agreement, between UNEP/ASCOBANS and HELCOM has been signed for a project starting in March and with an implementation period of 3 months.

The HELCOM Secretariat is to up-date the existing ASCOBANS database hosted by the German Forschungs- und Technologiezentrum Westküste der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel (FTZ) and to further develop the database to cover the whole HELCOM marine area (including the Baltic Sea and Kattegat). The data hosted by HELCOM will be made available for down-loading on a web-based map service created specifically for the purpose.

Dr. Ursula Siebert working in the FTZ has submitted to HELCOM, the ASCOBANS data on the opportunistic harbour porpoise sightings, by-catches and strandings. The Jastarnia Group in their 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting in Hel Poland (2010) was informed of the joint UNEP/ASCOBANS - HELCOM project. The Meeting appreciated the planned actions and considered the project useful.

I would therefore like to request the members of the Jastarnia Group to circulate this invitation to the national experts or responsible institutes on Harbour Porpoise issues, for data submission. Alternatively names and contact details for such persons/institutes can be provided to the HELCOM Secretariat for further distribution (Ms. Reetta Ljungberg, [reetta.ljungberg@helcom.fi](mailto:reetta.ljungberg@helcom.fi)).

The existing data on Baltic Sea Harbour Porpoise is included in the attached country-specific Excel datasheets with instructions on how to report new data. The updated information is requested to be submitted to Ms. Reetta Ljungberg, by 9 April 2010. Ms. Ljungberg is working for the HELCOM Secretariat in this ASCOBANS supported short-term project from March until the end of May.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Christine Brusendorff  
Executive Secretary

**For National experts recognised by the Jastarnia Group after their 6th Meeting in Hel Poland**  
**Request to provide data on the HELCOM/ASCOBANS Harbour Porpoise Database**

*Instructions to fill up the data on Excel sheet, please read before filling-up:*

1. Every HELCOM country is requested to fill up harbour porpoise data which is available:
  - Both from territorial and international waters, or from territorial waters of another country if available (these will be cross-checked to ensure no overlap occurs)
  - Anybody having an access to data other than from territorial waters are requested to fill up Baltic Sea data also on the worksheet "Other databases"
2. Each worksheet holds five type of information or harbour porpoise sightings:
  - Strandings
  - Incidental sightings
  - Effort sightings
  - Hunted/Killed
  - Bycatch
3. Datasheets also include all the old records from the existing ASCOBANS database (delivered by the German Forschungs- und Technologiezentrum Westküste der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel (FTZ)). These data are in hidden cells, only 3-5 latest data entries shown.
4. Each new record should include details on;
  - Day, month & year
  - Latitude & longitude (please indicate, if using other than WGS84 projection)
  - Position Description (e.g. sea area, direction and distance from nearest islands)
  - Data reference (it is very important to indicate clearly so that cross-check on possible data overlap from national reports can be ensured)
  - ID of origin
  - Time of recording and/or time description
  - Size, age & sex of the individual
  - Country (of the record holder)
  - Any additional information, e.g. flock size or other information of interest
5. Insert the data by adding new rows where indicated "*Please add data here*"

