

Agenda Item 2

Annual National Reports 2010

Document 2-04 rev.1

Annual National Report France

Action Requested

- Briefly present highlights from reports (max. 5 minutes)
- Take note of the information submitted
- Comment

Submitted by

France



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

Revised Format for the
ASCOBANS Annual National Reports

General Information

Name of Party: FRANCE	Period covered: 2010
	Date of report: April 2010

Report submitted by:	
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Any changes in coordinating authority or appointed member of advisory committee	

Include only organizations on agreement area

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List of national authorities, organizations, research centres and rescue centres active in the field of study and conservation of cetaceans, including contact details

NEW Measures / Action Towards Meeting the Objectives of the Conservation and Management Plan and the Resolutions of the Meeting of Parties

Please feel free to add more rows to tables if the space provided is not sufficient.

A. HABITAT CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

1 Direct Interaction with Fisheries

Investigations of methods to reduce bycatch

A programme called INPECMAM has been funded and agreed between the fishermen, the Iroise sea MPA, the University of Brest, the National Natural History Museum and Oceanopolis to work on the by-catch and the depredation in the Iroise sea. At this state, the sampling protocol is finalized and the work will start this spring.

The fishing Industry has carried out an observer program (Filmancet) dedicated to set nets in the Channel. The aim was to determine the level of by-catch in this area and to test acoustic deterrents (decision of the National Committee of the Fisheries (CNPMM: French industry) and the National Head of the Fisheries (French administration)).

A standardization of a protocol used for all the observation programs (FilManCet, Obsmer..) has been done by the IFREMER and the CRMM/ULR in 2009. All those observation programmes planned by the Fishing Industry, the ministry of Fisheries and Ifremer were implemented during 2009 and 2010.

In the framework of FilManCet, a total of 610 days were observed in areas VIIe and VIId&IVc involving 75 boats. A total of 5 bycatch were reported (3 harbour porpoises, 1 grey seal and a pilot whale).

An analysis of all the data available from 2007 to 2010 concerning the areas VII was also achieved and the bycatch rates were different between ICES divisions. In Western Channel the bycatch of seals which can be greater than porpoise raise the question of the interest of pingers to deter porpoises.

A pinger experiment was attempted in area VIId but it was not conclusive as no bycatch was observed on the standard nets.

A meeting was organised in March with the fishing industry to discuss of the results of studies and to discuss mitigation.

The CRMM/ULR noted during the program FilManCet and on its end that the observers sampling plan was not representative of the entire area. Indeed, in few specific subareas of the VIId are not sufficiently observed while the national stranding network reveals porpoise by-catch rates to nearly 30% of the observed stranding in front of these subareas (east of the Cotentin, Seine Bay, Strait of Dover)

Implementation of methods to reduce bycatch

Modification of practices in pelagic trawling (headline at 5 m depth)

Please provide any other relevant information, including bycatch information from opportunistic sources.

Estimates of by-catch in set net and pelagic trawl fisheries

Similarly to the previous years, France has deployed in 2009 a large program with observers in the application of EC Regulation 812/2004 to monitor the bycatch of cetaceans in fisheries. 731 days at sea were observed during 308 trips for pelagic trawling and 324 days at sea observed during 238 trips for set nets.

Observers for the EC regulation (n° 812/2004) are deployed for vessels greater than 15 meters through pilot studies for vessels less than 15 m. As it is not possible to put observers on boats 8m for security reason, a correction has been used by using a relationship between vessel size and length of nets.

The bycatch species observed were common dolphin in the pelagic trawling in Atlantic sea, striped dolphin and bottlenose dolphins in the Mediterranean sea, harbour porpoises and striped dolphins in the bay of Biscay. All the coefficients of variation (CV) of bycatch obtained for 2009 were lower than 0.60 and largely higher than the target of the Regulation.

The table below brings the 2009 bycatch estimates available for pelagic trawl fisheries and set nets observed under the Reg 812/2004 (national report delivered in 2010)

Metier	Zone de pêche	Principales espèces cibles	Espèces de cétacés dans les captures	Nombre d'incidents	Nombre d'individus capturés par espèce		Taux de captures accidentelles		Capacité estimée
					avec pingings	sans pingings	avec pingings	sans pingings	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
GNS>R; VIII; >=15m	VIII	hake	Stenella coeruleoalba	2		3		0.033	300
GTR&GNS; VIII; <15m	VIII	sole, baudroie	Phocoena phocoena	4		4		0.0172; 0.0195	300
PTM; hiver; tous navires	VII	bar	Delphinus delphis	4		6		0.0458	300
PTM; hiver; tous navires	VIII	bar	Delphinus delphis	6		21		0.4773	300
PTM; été; tous navires	VII	bar	Delphinus delphis	1		2		0.0253	300
PTM; été; tous navires	VIII	thons	Delphinus delphis	10		115		0.4934	300
OTM ; été; <15m	VIII	divers	Delphinus delphis	1		1		0.0294	300
OTM ; année; tous navires	medit	merlu, anchois, (sardine)	Stenella coeruleoalba	4		5		0.0072	300
OTM ; année; tous navires	medit	anchois	Tursiops truncatus	1		1		0.0014	300

In this table, an extrapolation was made with 2008 fishing effort data, In a second step, another extrapolation was made with 2009 fishing effort data (number of trips) for pelagic fleets. The 2009 effort was lower than the effort of 2008 specifically for the tuna fishery. The global amount of common dolphin bycatch was found around one thousand animals.

In the pelagic trawling the bycatch rate is higher than in the previous years suggesting that several years are required to get an estimate of the average bycatch. Most of the bycatch of common dolphin were observed in the ICES area VIII in the winter sea bass fishery and also in the summer tuna fishery. In this fishery, the main dolphin bycatch occurred in august when the tuna were difficult to find. A great part (94 %) of the bycatch in the tuna fishery was observed in two pairs and in two trips. Difficulties to find tuna may have increased some risk of by-catch

As a conclusion, for the fleets concerned for assessment by the regulation, the estimates of by-catch for 2009 are around 1000 common dolphins in ICES area VII-VIII, 300 porpoises in the area VIII, a quantity not well estimated of striped dolphins in area VIII, 70 striped dolphins and 10 bottlenose dolphins in the Mediterranean sea.

A study named FilManCet started at the end of 2008 to assess the bycatch rate in set nets in two parts of the Channel coasts. The final report of this study should occur in 2011.

The national stranding network examined 390 stranded carcasses of cetaceans with a rate of by-catch evidence considered by nearly 29% (112 individuals were diagnosed with incidental capture by the standards of Kuiken and Hartmann, 1992).

The specific distribution of these by-catches: Among small cetaceans: 55 common dolphins, 31 porpoises, 9 striped dolphin, 5 bottlenose dolphin, a white-sided dolphins, a Risso's dolphin and 4 dolphins undetermined due to major damage during release from net. Among large whale, a juvenile fin whale was found dead in an abandoned fishing gear. Finally, in pinnipeds group, 4 harbor seal and a grey seal.

2 Reduction of Disturbance

2.1 Anthropogenic Noise

Please reference and briefly summarise any studies undertaken

The pinger (CETASAVER) directional pinger which was experimented on fishing trawls is now commercialized by Sodden. There is no regulation to enforce the use of the device.

An update of the IFREMER bibliography synthesis (presently stopped at 2009) about acoustic risks for MMs is planned for mid-2011.

A new acoustic deterrent device prototype using wideband signals at moderate levels with random frequency content and devoted to seismic surveys has been developed by Ifremer and installed for tests on an oceanographic vessel. Limited trials have been conducted, with significant results on common dolphins.

IFREMER now applies on his seismic surveys mitigation measures, based on the classical international recommendations (preliminary studies for risk evaluation, MMOs onboard, amplitude ramp-up for airgun arrays); the modelling for risk evaluation has been improved. The details of the mitigation procedure have been formalized and made available to scientists applying for oceanographic cruises on Ifremer vessels. Several seismic cruises have been conducted since the procedure has been put into service.

The development and installation of an experimental PAM system on IFREMER oceanographic vessels has been achieved (based on a three-hydrophone array, a dedicated receiving chain, and post-processing by freeware *PamGuard*), and put to use on

two cruises; the practical applicability of PAM in complement of the current mitigation measures is being studied.

Sonar disturbances on marine mammals

The French army is developing a series of studies in order to mitigate sonar disturbances during military operations at sea.

These ongoing studies are involved in assessing marine mammals behaviour when affected by sonar emissions, evaluating acoustic risks using a simulation, developing post-processing algorithms for detection and classification of acoustic emissions of beaked whales, setting up a MM sightings data base.

An important study on MM distribution and behaviour, simulation of historical MM strandings and a new concept in assessing acoustical effects, is now achieved. These results will be used to improve French Navy mitigation procedures.

Thales Underwater Systems (TUS) in charge of the military low-frequency active sonar development has commissioned the CRMM/ULR and KRM (Klymene Recherche Marine, Antibes) for Defining and implementing a visual and acoustic monitoring program in order to reduce the risk against cetaceans (the test of a sound source of high power and low frequency (1-2 kHz) in the Bay of Biscay). Sea trials were held in March 2010 and the implementation of mitigation protocol has given convincing results, Further new trials at sea are planned for spring 2011

2.2 Ship Strike Incidents

Among the 10 dead whales identified during 2010, 3 were adrift at sea, these animals are suspected as cases of mortality attributed to vessel strike, however these carcasses could not be examined and no necropsy report has been produced in these cases. In fact, we can not certify that these animals have died from the collision with a ship or were struck after death.

Please list all known incidents and for each, provide the following information:

Date	Species	Type of injury	Fatal injury (Yes / No)	Type of vessel (length, tonnage and speed)	Location (coordinates)	More information: (Name / Email)
18/07/2010	Unidentified whale	fractured spine	Yes	not determined	English channel area (49,8498W/ - 2,604247N)	crmm@univ-lr.fr
26/06/2010	Unidentified whale	fractured spine	Yes	not determined	Bay of biscay area (46,48333W/ -4,75N)	crmm@univ-lr.fr
08/07/2010	Unidentified whale	fractured spine	Yes	not determined	west of Brittany 48.418640W, -4.832983N)	crmm@univ-lr.fr

2.3 Major Incidents Affecting Significant Numbers* of Cetaceans

NONE

Date	Location	Type of incident	Further Information

*Two or more animals

2.4 Pollution and Hazardous Substances

Please report on main types of pollution and hazardous substances (including source, location and observed effects on cetaceans). Please provide information on any new measures taken to reduce pollution likely to have an impact.

Transfer and bioaccumulation of heavy metals (mainly mercury and cadmium) in cetaceans (LIENs/ULR)

Work in partnership with the Marine Protected Area of the Iroise Sea, the University of Brest and Océanopolis and pollutants (TBT, lindane, fluorenten, indenopyren and BCB 153 has started)

2.5 Other Forms of Disturbance

Please provide any other relevant information, e.g. relating to recreational activities affecting cetaceans.

3 Marine Protected Areas for Small Cetaceans

Please provide any relevant information on measures taken to identify, implement and manage protected areas for cetaceans, including MPAs designated under the Habitats Directive and MPAs planned or established within the framework of OSPAR or HELCOM.

Between October 2008 and september 2010, 96 marine Natura 2000 sites have been designated by France.

Among all existing Natura 2000 sites in the ASCOBANS area, Bottlenose dolphin is present in 39 and Harbour porpoise in 38, both on the Channel and Atlantic coast. Management Plan of the Marine Protected Area in Iroise Sea (West Brittany) has been adopted. This plan is applicable to the Natura 2000 sea site of the archipelago of Molene and Ouessant Island.

The ministry of ecology has delegated the operational implementation of a knowledge programme concerning seabirds and marine mammals (Bottlenose dolphin and harbour porpoise) to the french agency of marine protected area, for the management of the french MPA already designated and for future offshore Natura 2000 designation:

- 1) dedicated aerial surveys (summer 2011-winter 2012-13): these surveys will cover the entire EEZ and will be divided into several layers including a coastal layer encompassing the majoritiy of the Natura 2000 sites.
- 2) Observations on platforms of opportunity (on fisheries surveys conducted by Ifremer)
- 3) electronic tagging of Yelkouan and Cory's Shearwater in Mediterranean coast and Manx Shearwater in Brittany (spring 2011- winter 2012)
- 4) Acoustic detection of Harbour porpoises (experimentation in 2011- operational implementation in 2012)

National Agency for the Marine Protected Areas (Brest): work in progress for the creation of

others MPA, through a national strategy

Please indicate where GIS data of the boundaries (and zoning, if applicable) can be obtained (contact email / website).

Agence des aires marines protégées

Directeur : Olivier LAROUSSINIE

Adresse du siège et contact :

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Téléphone

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B. SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

4.1 Overview of Research on Abundance, Distribution and Population Structure

Please provide an brief summary of (and reference to) any national work.

Monitoring of the coastal group of bottlenose dolphins (Oceanopolis Brest in Iroise Sea), photo-identification, home range, population structure...

Photo identification of bottlenose dolphins of the Bay of Mont Saint Michel and Cotentin (GECC, GMN, AL Lark)

Boat surveys on cetaceans in the southern Bay of Biscay (GEFMA); relationship between cetacean populations and climate change (MNHN in the framework of a regional programme on the marine environment).

Data collection of opportunistic sightings (CRMM/ULR, GECC, GEFMA, Oceanopolis Brest).

Systematic boat survey of cetaceans in relation to oceanographic, planktonic and pelagic fish patterns in the Bay of Biscay (

PELGAS Program, Ifremer, CRMM/ULR : PELGAS spring survey carried out yearly on the continental shelf of the bay of Biscay: Pelagic fish, plankton, physical parameters and top predators are recorded simultaneously IBTS Program, Ifremer, CRMM/ULR: IBTS winter survey carried out yearly on the english channel area: Pelagic fish, plankton, physical

parameters and top predators are recorded simultaneously
EVOHE: Program Ifremer, CRMM/ULR: EVOHE fall scientific fishing sampling carried out yearly on the bay of Biscay with top predators recorded on line transect.

Ferry observer surveys between Roscoff and Cork, Portsmouth and Santander (Oceanopolis Brest/Orca), using a standardized protocole.

Genetic study on harbour porpoise (collaboration between the university of Brest and Oceanopolis Brest). A PHD student is now involved.

Cetacean distributions and relative abundances were surveyed over the shelf of the Bay of Biscay (May) and English Channel (January) by CRMM/ULR in order to determine relative abundances, preferential habitats and relationships with distribution of small pelagic fish as determined by simultaneous acoustic survey carried out by Ifremer/ Instituto Español de Oceanografía (IEO) research vessel Thalassa. This survey followed a standardized protocol in use since 2003 in Bay of Biscay area (PELGAS survey) and since 2007 in the English Channel (IBTS survey) and since 2009 in the bay of Biscay in fall. In 2007 and 2008, collaboration between CRMM/ULR and the Centro Oceanográfico de Vigo (IEO) allowed data on cetacean distribution to be collected by using standardized protocol and same research vessel during April and September pelagic fish survey in the south of the Bay of Biscay (PELACUS survey).

Aerial surveys carried out by Oceanopolis Brest/ Iroise Sea MPA using line transect protocol to estimate the abundance and the seasonality of small cetaceans in Iroise sea (west Brittany)

Boats survey in the Nord Pas de Calais area in the framework of FilManCet study to get an estimate of the abundance of harbor porpoise.

The CRMM/ULR with input from national stranding network partners, has produced a synthesis of the spatial distribution for the bottlenose dolphin and harbor porpoise on the French coasts.

4.2 New Technological Developments

Please provide a brief summary of any relevant information

Trials of a passive acoustic monitoring in the archipelago of Molene on the resident group of bottlenose dolphins (Iroise Sea MPA/ENSIETA/Oceanopolis). The goal is to implement a permanent acoustic monitoring in addition to the line transects and the photo-identification.

4.3 Other Relevant Research

Please provide a brief summary of any relevant information

The French stranding network is nationally coordinated by CRMM/ULR (Centre de Recherche sur les Mammifères Marins, Université de La Rochelle) under an agreement with the Ministry in charge of the Environment. Local voluntary observers, generally under local supervision by various institutions or NGOs (Oceanopolis, GEFMA, GECC, GMN, OCEAM, CMNS, Picardie Nature, ONCFS...), have been trained to process stranded cetaceans under a common standardized protocol. An annual synthesis of all strandings reported in France is produced by CRMM/ULR. Statistics of stranding for the coast of France in 2009 indicate more than 662 cetaceans reported (2010 compilation available) concerning 2010

statistic of stranding for the coast of France in 2010 revealed 495 marine mammals reported (2010 compilation not yet ready) data input in progress (CRMM/ULR and all National Stranding Scheme field correspondents). Stranding data provides information on mortality causes, demographic structure (age and reproductive status), diet (stomach content), trophic levels (stable isotopes) and subpopulation structure or movement pattern (stable isotopes, heavy metals and contaminants).

C. USE OF BY-CATCHES AND STRANDINGS

5 Post-Mortem Research Schemes

Contact details of research institutions / focal point	Centre de Recherche sur les Mammifères Marins, Université de La Rochelle, La Rochelle CRMM/ULR willy.dabin@univ-lr.fr
Methodology used (reference, e.g. publication, protocol)	Standardized protocol derived from ECS necropsy workshop 2005 (Jauniaux, T. Beans, C; and Dabin W. 2005. Stranding, Necropsy and sampling: Collection data, sampling level and techniques)
Collection of samples (type, preservation method)	Biodemographics samples : gonads (formalin) and teeth (frozen) Diet and feeding ecology: stomach contents (frozen) and blubber fatty acids and stable isotope (frozen) Genetics : skin and kidney (frozen and alcohol) Toxicologic : heavy metal and POP's analysis on muscle, liver and kidney (frozen with specific packaging) Parasitology (alcohol) Histopathology (formalin) Bacteriology and virology (frozen)
Database (Number of data sets by species, years covered, software used, online access)	Access 2000 data base since 1972 with 16776 strandings recorded with 3188 individuals sampled
Additional Information (e.g. website addresses, intellectual property rights, possibility of a central database)	http://crmm.univ-lr.fr/ with interactive stranding maps

5.1 Number of Necropsies Carried out in Reporting Period 2010 (n=175):

Species	Recorded cause of death
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	75 necropsies
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	39
<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	21
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	12
<i>Grampus griseus</i>	2
<i>Globicephala melas</i>	5
<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	11
<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	4
<i>Phoca groenlandica</i>	1
<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>	1

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Balaenoptera physalus	1
Balaenoptera acutorostrata	3
Please provide any other relevant information on post-mortem / stranding schemes.	

LEGISLATION

6.1 Relevant New Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Please provide any relevant information.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

7.1 Public Awareness and Education

Please report on any public awareness and education activities to implement or promote the Agreement to the general public and to fishermen.

Public conferences (Oceanopolis-Brest and CRMM/ULR)

National stranding network: training for volunteers and national meeting (CRMM/ULR)
Observer training in the frame of fishing observation scheme, council regulation 812/04 (CRMM/ULR)
Annual Symposium of French stranding network, annual stranding report, research with biological samples from stranding, network scheme animation.

Regional stranding network: training for volunteers and annual meeting (LEMM/Océanopolis)

New educational workshops on cetaceans implemented for schools by the Education Department/ Oceanopolis

A marine mammal necropsy workshop is organized annually by the Department of Veterinary Pathology (University of Liege), the Laboratory of Applied Bioacoustics LAB (Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya) and the Marine Mammal Research Center (University of La Rochelle – CRMM/ULR). The aim of the workshop is to improve the participants' proficiency in (1) dissection and sampling procedures on marine mammals mostly cetaceans, as well as their anatomy and pathology; (2) skull morphology, extraction and fixation of the cetacean inner ear. Movie on cetaceans and ferries survey produced by Brittany Ferries and Oceanopolis broadcasted onboard the ferries+ conference on board

New exhibition on cetaceans: National Museum Paris, partnership Oceanopolis. An itinerant version circulate in Europe.

POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT

Please provide any relevant information.