

Agenda Item 2.2.1

Implementation of the Harbour Porpoise Action Plans

Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea

Report and Action Points of the North Sea Group

Document 2.2.1.a

**Report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting  
of the North Sea Group**

**Action Requested**

- Take note
- Give guidance

Submitted by

North Sea Group



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



## **Report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the 'Steering Group for the Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise in the North Sea' (ASCOBANS)**

Date: Monday, 19 March 2012, 2:00-6:30 PM (14:00-19:30)

Place: Meeting room, Galway Bay Hotel in Galway, Ireland

Present: Martine Bigan, Anna Cucknell, Marchien de Ruiten, Geneviève Desportes (coordinator), Peter Evans, James Gray, Sami Hassani, Kelly Macleod, Maj Munk, Eunice Pinn (notes), Oliver Schall, Marije Siemensma, Mark Simmonds, Martine van den Heuvel-Greve (chair), Sanne van Sluis, Alison Wood

Apologies: Jan Haelters, Anita Gilles, Yvon Morizur, Sara Königson

---

### **AGENDA**

#### **1) Welcome and announcements**

The chair opened the meeting. Heidrun Frisch of the ASCOBANS secretariat welcomed all participants to the meeting of the North Sea Steering Group (SG). All participants briefly introduced themselves. Eunice Pinn volunteered to take notes, which was highly appreciated by all. A brief report of the main conclusion of the meeting will be presented at the AC19 meeting of ASCOBANS.

#### 20th Anniversary book

2012 marks the 20th anniversary of the ASCOBANS Agreement, and UNEP / ASCOBANS is planning a publication on the whales & dolphins of the Agreement Area, the history of the Agreement, and its achievements & challenges, to commemorate this. The book should be of wide public appeal thus raising awareness generally for the diversity of whales and dolphins inhabiting the region and the conservation threats that they face. It will also cover the various approaches to working within an international agreement including the experiences of the note takers and secretariat. Peter Evans has been asked to put the volume together. There will be lots of illustrations, boxed contributions and text

All contributions for the book are received and are currently being put together into chapters. Illustrations are still being sought – people and places in particular. It was originally proposed to have the book ready for the MoP in 2012 but it may be that the publisher will want a longer lead in. The book should be ready for the publisher by the end of May / beginning of June 2012.

The North Sea Harbour Porpoise Conservation Plan is one element of particular significance within the Agreement Area. Peter therefore invited Genevieve and Martine to write two pages on the NS conservation plan, that could form a separate box within the volume, giving the views on what is seen as the major challenges for the Conservation Plan for the future. The draft text was handed out during the meeting.

**AP2012-01:** All countries to email comments or additions to the draft text for the ASCOBANS 20th Anniversary Volume regarding the NS conservation plan to Geneviève and Martine. Input from countries will be given ultimately March 22, 2012, 6 PM.

#### North Sea Foundation

A review was recently completed of what the Dutch plan could achieve. The discussion mainly involved the fisheries and competency for management versus requirements for management of SACs. The review can be provided if required.

## 2) Minutes and action points of the 2<sup>nd</sup> SG meeting, 4 May 2011, Bonn, Germany

There were no additions or comments to the minutes received from the group

### Action points 2011:

Action point	Action	Status
<u>AP01</u>	relevant organisations for NS SG	This will be discussed under agenda point 6.a.
<u>AP02</u>	RAC secretary invited to send representative	This will be discussed under agenda point 6.a.
<u>AP03</u>	funding possibilities for industry representatives to attend SG meeting	It is uncommon to fund. If the group feels that it is needed it can be proposed to the AC with clear arguments and criteria. It will be decided upon on a case by case situation.
<u>AP04</u>	submit inventory on activities	See activity report of the coordinator
<u>AP05</u>	coordinator to attend NSRAC meeting and present	The coordinator attended the NSRAC meeting and will report back under agenda point 3.b.
<u>AP06</u>	paper on MSFD for NS SG	This was not a priority in the first months. The ICES wg on Marine Mammal Ecology also prepares a document on the MSFD and marine mammals that will be of use for the North Sea plan (pers.comm. Eunice Pinn)
<u>AP07</u>	guidance from the North Sea SG to coordinator to execute AP06	Guidelines have yet to be agreed and provided to the coordinator. See also AP06.
<u>AP08</u>	SG/AC meeting at a venue to facilitate fisheries involvement	We are free to suggest locations and venues to the secretariat, that are appropriate to fisheries involvement.

## 3) Coordinator North Sea Plan

### Introduction

Geneviève Desportes introduced herself as the new coordinator of the North Sea conservation plan for harbour porpoises. Work started in September 2011 on a review of the plan and implementation to date. Besides this, links have also been made with fisheries organisations.

### Activity report of the progress of the coordinator

As part of the review, an inventory on progress of all countries bordering the North Sea was requested. The quality and quantity of information provided varied by country. The national reports for some countries produced for this AC also included a lot of information that would have been helpful for the inventory. It would be helpful to have a single point of contact for the North Sea. The review document will be re-circulated for update by the countries. The various tables need to be revised by all countries.

National legislation/regulations information were provided. Some are very recent e.g. all of the marine legislation has been moved to a single federal department in Germany. France has introduced a voluntary request to report on bycatch. This is for scientific purposes and not for control/regulation. Some fishermen have indicated an interest in bringing in carcasses for science.

The main goal is to develop links with the fishermen. 3 cases of porpoise bycatch in France have already been reported in 2012.

The NSRAC was attended in October 2011 by the coordinator although no formal presentation was given. Many informal contacts were made. The Dogger Bank SACs were discussed. The NSRAC have issues with every country dealing with the SACs separately – they were expecting a joint management approach. The NSRAC have the impression that the bycatch issue has decreased due to a reduction in static net use. They felt it was important that fisheries from smaller vessels were also targeted. An evidence base is required for any changes to be made. It was also suggested that if we want to propose new fisheries regulations through the CFP that we discuss these with them first.

Coastal fisheries were initially targeted through existing work e.g. that is on-going in France and the Netherlands. A group is being developed in Denmark for the inner Danish waters in relation to bycatch issues where awareness has been raised. The Ministry of Fisheries are going to deal with this (rather than Department of Environment). ASCOBANS has a separate working group on bycatch. There has been a joint NAMMCO/ICES workshop. Some simple, evidence based information is required that can be used in a variety of these fora.

It was decided not to review and update the North Sea Conservation plan for the Meeting of Parties (MoP) in October 2012, as there is not enough time to do this in a decent way. The next review and update of the plan will be done for the next MoP in 2015. However, we will already mark things that may need a change or update to facilitate the review later on:

- Review of the title of action 4 of plan: only relevant fisheries should be included here.

**Recommendation:** To evaluate and update the North Sea conservation plan for harbour porpoises for the next triennium (2015).

Links were proposed to the various relevant groups within ICES e.g. WGBYC and WGMME. Work undertaken elsewhere should not be duplicated by this group.

#### Work modus coordinator and SG

It was agreed by the group that the coordinator can contact experts directly, that were identified by the focal points of a country. The coordinator will CC any communication to experts to the identified focal point of a country.

**AP2012-02:** All countries to identify the appropriate contact people/persons within the country, check the activity report of the coordinator, and give additions and editions as required, especially with regards to appendices 2, 3 and 5. Input from countries will be given ultimately 30 April 2012.

**AP2012-03:** All countries to respond promptly to more detailed request for (detailed) information by the coordinator. Countries can respond whether this information can be found in the annual national report or whether additional, more detailed information will be send to the coordinator.

#### **4) Dutch Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises**

##### Presentation of the Dutch conservation plan

Sanne van Sluis, responsible for the implementation of the Dutch conservation plan, presented the Dutch conservation plan for harbour porpoises (2011) focusing on development and how implementation is intended over the coming year. In recent years, the number of porpoise strandings have been increasing along the Dutch coast, with a variety of different causes of death. The plan was developed by Marije Siemensma and Kees Camphuysen through a combination of scientific knowledge and input from stakeholders. An Advisory Committee was developed to help formulate the plan. This Committee included government representatives as well as NGOs and fisheries stakeholders. The plan will be implemented with an aim of achieving a favourable FCS for harbour porpoises. The highest priorities were to develop a research commission to collate and

coordinate the national research that is (currently) being undertaken. Other priorities were research on noise and by catch and the potential development of measures (particular for by catch). It is suggested that it is better to make measures that apply to the wider waters and not site based (i.e. SACs).

An action plan is now under development based on the conservation plan, which will outline the approach and actions to be taken. It is hoped that an international approach can be taken for much of the work. Although the Research Commission has not yet been set up, work has already started on noise in relation to wind farm developments. There is also additional work on population size and diet, with funding for PME on stranded porpoises. Related developments for porpoises include work on the MSFD which will be aligned to the plan. Management conservation plans will be developed for the N2K sites but this will be combined for Dutch waters and not individually developed by site.

One research area that Peter Evans felt was important to tackle with regards to the conservation of harbour porpoises is what are the animals doing in these various areas where they are sighted. If feeding, what are they feeding on? Are there nursery areas? The context for use of a particular area is required regarding the long term implications of windfarms, bycatch etc.

**AP2012-04:** All North Sea countries interested in a printed copy of the Dutch Conservation Plan for harbour porpoises (in English) to send postal details to Sanne van Sluis. A copy of the report will then be sent. Also, any details of missing information for the Dutch report, particularly related research, to be sent to Sanne van Sluis and Marije Siemensma.

#### Status of plans in other North Sea countries

The UK congratulated the Dutch on the development of the plan. In the UK there is a raft of measures already in place. The review by Geneviève contained much of the information on on-going work but some edits/additions are required.

France is focusing on implementing regulations and actions regarding porpoises, rather than developing a species specific plan. New sites are being proposed and current sites updated. Stranding network has been in place for 30 years. A genetics study is on-going for which samples from all around the North Sea are very welcome.

Sweden and Denmark also have action plans. Originally it was the plan to revise the Danish Action Plan in 2010, but this did not happen so far as there was no perceived need to revise the plan at the time. The Danish are not focusing strongly on the North Sea compared to the Baltic Sea and Inner Danish Waters. CCTV is being implemented on some vessels – the project is currently voluntary. It seems very promising. In the project four cameras are looking at the net prior to the catch being taken on board. 10-15m vessels are involved and it is now implemented on 6 vessels. The video is assessed onshore and was found to include some porpoises caught in the net but that fell out prior to being taken on board.

Germany, Belgium and Sweden were not present during this agenda point to provide a report. Geneviève provided a summary of the information provided. Sweden has been investigating the use of alternative gears such as fish pots to reduce by catch.

Implementation of any plan requires cooperation of the various Ministries, stakeholders etc. Accurate information on the fishery involved and the actual by catch levels in relation to the population are essential.

#### **5) Implementation status of the North Sea conservation plan for harbour porpoises**

A table was developed by the coordinator for each of the actions in the conservation plan which summarises what has been achieved to date was presented (see table 1 in the attached Excel file). This table will be used to report back at the AC19 ASCOBANS on the progress made so far. The

table was reviewed and revised in light of comments provided by the North Sea countries present. Additional rows were added to clarify the summary.

Issues were raised regarding the presentation of some of the data in a table summarising actual by-catch information and a worst case scenario, especially with regards to the numbers as presented for Danish wreck fisheries.

Additional comments or discussions on the (contents of the) table:

Action 2-6 of the North Sea conservation plan:

Geneviève outlined some of the projects that were being undertaken and summarised the work of ICES WGBYC. Much of the bycatch occurs in fisheries not covered by Regulation 812/2004 to which many MS restrict their monitoring. It was also highlighted that many MS were not implementing Article 12 of the Habitats Directive.

It was recognised that there is a gap in knowledge regarding much of the fleet <15m in the North Sea. Only patchy information is currently available on bycatch from smaller vessels (<15 m) and bigger vessels that are currently not monitored. Data from a Norwegian study (Bjørge et al. 2011) shows that bycatch from vessels (<15 m) may be substantial. It was suggested that for the next meeting a summary of the outputs of WGBYC would be provided and ASCOBANS support provided were appropriate.

CFP is being reviewed. It has been suggested that EU Regulation 812/2004 will be incorporated into the CFP. There have been a number of issues raised regarding reporting and estimations of bycatch. The VMS regulations have already been altered to include vessels between 12 and 15m.

The group felt that the target "annual bycatch levels of harbour porpoises should be reduced to below 1.7 % of the best population estimate", which was endorsed by ASCOBANS, may need further discussion. The target is now also embraced by other international agreements (OSPAR EcoQO) and may be used by countries as target for the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Additionally, the 1.7% target seems to be translated to other marine mammal species as well. However, there is no scientific proof that if the bycatch (and all other anthropogenic effects) in the North Sea is reduced to this level, the population will be able to recover to at least 80 % of the ecosystem's long-term carrying capacity for this species. More work needs to be done to develop a better and scientifically more sound target. This point was also addressed within the ASCOBANS WG-Bycatch and ICES WG-BYC.

**Knowledge gap:** A good estimate of bycatch of harbour porpoises in the NS, especially by vessels smaller than 15 m in length, but also fishery not covered by the EU regulation 812/2004.

**Recommendation:** To require monitoring of HP bycatch for smaller vessels (<15 m) and recreational fisheries as part of the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy.

Action 6 of the North Sea conservation plan:

Ideally a regional management procedure should be developed for the North Sea – this work has been progressed through the SCANS II project. However, the exact tuning for the algorithms developed needs to be defined. Such decisions are societal rather than scientific.

Some information and shapefiles of SACs in North Sea countries have been received and mapped. However, currently there is no clear idea of which SACs have been proposed (including grading).

**AP2012-05:** All North Sea countries to update the information provided on SACs in the North Sea, including the conservation objectives specific to the species/site and state of implementation.

#### Action 7-8 of the North Sea conservation plan:

No large scale monitoring (i.e. another SCANS) has been undertaken, but initial discussions have become for another survey planned for 2015. This was considered an important knowledge gap. JCP was mentioned as way of assessing trends over time including seasonal changes. It was suggested that SCANS in itself every decade would be sufficient; whilst others felt that additional regional level monitoring was required. Stock structure sampling is based on opportunistic sampling of strandings or bycatch rather than systematically through biopsy (which is impractical for the species).

The JCP will provide some indication of seasonal movements. Further international surveys such as that conducted in the southern North Sea by Germany, the Netherlands, UK and Denmark in August 2011. France is implementing monitoring in the Channel (covering UK waters too).

Denmark also assesses seasonal movement using tagged harbour porpoises. The group however felt it is difficult to tag porpoises in open sea. Perhaps life bycatch can be used to tag animals after recovery before they are released back into the sea.

**Knowledge gap:** A good and recent estimate of harbour porpoise abundance and distribution in the North Sea, both static and dynamic (seasonal).

**Recommendation:** To underline the necessity and promote a follow up of the SCANS II project in order to have a good and recent (static) estimate of harbour porpoise abundance and distribution in the NS, and a better idea on trends (based on 3 points 1995, 2005 and 2015?).

**Recommendation:** To promote the synergy between current national monitoring programmes on harbour porpoise distribution and abundance between North Sea countries.

**Recommendation:** To stress the need for EC funding for monitoring population size and necropsy of stranded animals.

**AP2012-06:** The coordinator will prepare a document to investigate whether further coordination and possibly standardising of national monitoring of abundance and trends is feasible between CP. The coordinator will summarise progress and options. This document will be available for the next meeting of the North Sea Steering Group.

#### Action 9 of the North Sea conservation plan:

Denmark is implementing an annual PME of 25 porpoises. Some are also undertaken in Sweden. In Germany the number of PMEs has reduced in some areas due to a political change. The Netherlands, France and UK are implementing such work.

### **6) Composition of the North Sea SG**

Although not all North Sea countries were present at the current meeting, all North Sea countries that are member of ASCOBANS are involved in the North Sea SG. The SG was pleased to see the results of the Norwegian studies on bycatch monitoring in Norwegian coastal fisheries in vessels <15 m, and would like to invite Norway to participate in the SG, possibly in the person of Arne Bjørge. It was also suggested that the chair of ICES WGBYC could also be invited or as CC member of the group.

Better engagement with fishermen will need to be based on evidence. The Portuguese have gone to particular fisheries communities and engaged at the local level – this is very resource intensive. Currently there is no need for a fisheries representative at the SG meeting. A precautionary argument could be constructed – bycatch is happening and therefore >0%. However, to change fishing practices evidence of an issue is required. There is always an issue of individual fisherman's

experience versus the actual population level impact such "individual" bycatch may have. It would be helpful to share best practice for implementing cooperative work with fishermen.

It would be useful to have the scientific discussion prior to involving the political/administrative side of thing. The steering group tries to coordinate more whilst a working group deals with the science. So far the group has been a bit of both. There is a lot of knowledge from the current attendees. A suggestion that the agenda makes it clear in future what will be discussed so that North Sea countries can make sure the right people attend the meeting. Everybody is welcome that feels they could contribute.

## **7) Priorities of the Coordinator Work Plan**

Geneviève developed a table for this listing the actions as described for the coordinator and the priorities and progress to date (see table 2 in the attached Excel file).

First of all the activity report needs to be updated and completed as soon as possible (see **AP2012-02**).

It is currently too early to engage the NS RAC or actively promote results of the implementation of the North Sea plan at the NS RAC. Also, the main fisheries (<15 m) that may be an issue with regards to harbour porpoise bycatch are not part of the RAC. We need to identify the main contacts for addressing the issue in the smaller inshore fisheries. It however would be valuable to attend at least one NS RAC meeting per year. The most important stakeholder to address is the European Commission, however, it is probably not the role of the coordinator to implement this.

**Recommendation:** To allow for the coordinator of the North Sea plan attending at least one NSRAC meeting per year to get further acquainted with the network and be able promote more in general the North Sea conservation plan.

The SG agreed that it would be helpful if the coordinator were included on the mailing list of all relevant working groups within ASCOBANS e.g. bycatch and noise to retrieve information relevant for the North Sea conservation plan and not duplicate work

**Recommendation:** To have the coordinator of the North Sea plan as an observer of all relevant working groups (bycatch and noise) within ASCOBANS to prevent duplication of work and exchange information between the working groups and NS plan. The secretariat is asked to arrange for the coordinator to be included in the mailing list of all relevant working groups within ASCOBANS e.g. bycatch and noise. A similar working relation can be established with the ICES working groups (WG-BYC and WG-MME).

With regards to a conservation fund, there is a potential for the group to assess the various projects submitted annually for funding by ASCOBANS, identifying those most relevant for the plan. Are additional funds needed for implementing the activities of the plan at this time (e.g. attending the NSRAC)?

The issue of continuation of the coordinator's role was raised. Funds need to be found for this. The uncertainty of the post was recognised from the outset, but consideration is needed on ways to make the post more permanent.

**Recommendation:** To continue the position of coordinator of the North Sea plan after 2012 to be able to proceed efficiently on activity 8 of Triennium work plan 2010-2012 and activity 9 of the Triennium work plan 2013-2015: "Evaluate progress in the implementation of the Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea, establish further implementation priorities, carry out the periodic review of the Plan and promote the implementation of the Plan".

Geneviève introduced a summary table she started compiling on the type of fisheries that are or are not allowed in particular areas/zones in the North Sea, as well as the likely by catch pressure from each fisheries. It was felt that this would be useful for North Sea countries to help complete.

**AP2012-07:** The coordinator will further work on a draft summary table on the type of fisheries that are or are not allowed in particular areas/zones focusing on types of fisheries that are most likely to have harbour porpoise bycatch. North Sea countries will assist in completing this table. This document will be available for the next meeting of the North Sea Steering Group.

#### **8) Next SG meeting**

It was proposed to convene directly after the 7th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS (22-24 October 2012, Brighton, United Kingdom). If it turns out that this date is not achievable in the end, the next meeting will be organised adjacent to the 20<sup>th</sup> AC meeting in 2013.

#### **9) Closure**

All participants were thanked for their presence and valuable contributions.

### **Summary of the main results:**

#### **Main knowledge gaps related to the implementation of the North Sea plan:**

1. A good and recent estimate of harbour porpoise abundance and distribution in the North Sea, both static and dynamic (seasonal).
2. A good estimate of bycatch of harbour porpoises in the NS, especially by vessels smaller than 15 m in length (monitoring of bycatch is not required by EC legislation for these vessels whereas studies have shown that bycatch does occur in this fleet).

### **Remarks**

The SG was pleased to see the results of the Norwegian studies on bycatch monitoring in Norwegian coastal fisheries in vessels <15 m, and would like to invite Norway to participate in the SG.

#### **Recommendations of the North Sea SG to the AC19 ASCOBANS:**

1. To evaluate and update the North Sea conservation plan for harbour porpoises for the next triennium (2015).
2. To require monitoring of HP bycatch for smaller vessels (<15 m) and recreational fisheries as part of the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy.
3. To underline the necessity and promote a follow up of the SCANS II project in order to have a good and recent (static) estimate of harbour porpoise abundance and distribution in the NS.
4. To promote the synergy between current national monitoring programmes on harbour porpoise distribution and abundance between range states of the NS.
5. To stress the need for EC funding for monitoring population size and necropsy of stranded animals.
6. To let the coordinator of the North Sea plan attend at least one NSRAC meeting per year to get further acquainted with the network and be able to promote the work of the NS conservation plan.
7. To have the coordinator of the North Sea plan as an observer of all relevant working groups (bycatch and noise) within ASCOBANS to prevent duplication of work and exchange information between the working groups and NS plan. The secretariat is asked to arrange for the coordinator to be included in the mailing list of all relevant working groups within ASCOBANS e.g. bycatch and noise. A similar working relation can be established with the ICES working groups (bycatch and Marine mammal ecology).
8. To continue the position of coordinator of the North Sea plan after 2012 to be able to proceed efficiently on activity 8 (Triennium work plan 2010-2012) and 9 (Triennium work plan 2013-2015): Evaluate progress in the implementation of the Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea, establish further implementation priorities, carry out the periodic review of the Plan and promote the implementation of the Plan

**Action points for the participating countries of the North Sea Steering Group:**

<b>Action points 2012</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
AP2012-01	All countries to email comments or additions to the draft text for the ASCOBANS 20th Anniversary Volume regarding the NS conservation plan to Geneviève and Martine.	March 22, 2012, 6 PM
AP2012-02	All countries to identify the appropriate contact people/persons within the country, check the activity report of the coordinator, and give additions and editions as required, especially with regards to appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5.	30 April 2012
AP2012-03	All countries to respond promptly to more detailed request for (detailed) information by the coordinator. Countries can respond whether this information can be found in the annual national report or whether additional, more detailed information will be send to the coordinator.	As requested by the coordinator
AP2012-04	All North Sea countries interested in a printed copy of the Dutch Conservation Plan for harbour porpoises (in English) to send postal details to Sanne van Sluis. A copy of the report will then be sent. Also, any details of missing information for the Dutch report, particularly related research, to be sent to Sanne van Sluis and Marije Siemensma.	N.a.
AP2012-05	All North Sea countries to update the information provided on SACs in the North Sea, including the conservation objectives specific to the species/site and state of implementation.	30 April 2012

**Action points for the coordinator of the NS plan:**

<b>Action point 2012</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
	The actions as described in the ToR for the coordinator of the NS plan as prioritised at the 3 <sup>rd</sup> meeting of the SG. See table 2 in the attached Excel file	
AP2012-06	The coordinator will prepare a document to investigate whether further coordination and possibly standardising of national monitoring of abundance and trends is feasible between North Sea countries. The coordinator will summarise progress and options.	Next meeting
AP2012-07	The coordinator will further work on a draft summary table on the type of fisheries that are or are not allowed in particular areas/zones focusing on types of fisheries that are most likely to have harbour porpoise bycatch. North Sea countries will assist in completing this table.	Next meeting

**Contact information of members present at the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the North Sea SG**

Martine Bigan, martine.bigane@ecologie.gouv.fr / martine.bigane@developpement-durable.gouv.fr

Anna Cucknell, acucknell@mcr-team.co.uk

Marchien de Ruyter, m.deruyter@noordzee.nl

Geneviève Desportes, genevieve@gdnatur.dk

Peter Evans, peter.evans@bangor.ac.uk

James Gray, James.Gray@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Sami Hassani, Sami.hassani@oceanopolis.com

Kelly Macleod, km53@st-andrews.ac.uk

Maj Munk, MFM@nst.dk

Eunice Pinn, eunice.pinn@jncc.gov.uk

Oliver Schall, oliver.schall@bmu.bund.de

Marije Siemensma, m.siemensma@msandc.nl

Mark Simmonds, mark.simmonds@wdcs.org

Martine van den Heuvel-Greve, martine.vandenheuvel-greve@wur.nl

Sanne van Sluis, S.vansluis@mineleni.nl

Alison Wood, alison.wood@wdcs.org

## Qualitative Assessment of Progress in the implementation of the ASCOBANS North Sea Conservation Plan (CP) for HP

Except for Action 2, pinger use, 0 = no progress, 1 = progress made, regardless of level; remarks or specification; na = non applicable

Actions form the North Sea Conservation Plan for HP		Priority CP		SE	DK	D	NL	BE	FR	UK	NO
1	Implementation of the CP: co-ordinator and Steering Committee	High				1					
2	Implementation of existing regulations on bycatch of cetaceans - e.g. EC 812/2004 & Habitat Directive (HD) (* Table 1ab, ICES WGBYC 2012 draft)	High	*No. vessels w. pingers requ.	yes	28	yes	0	0	117	22	na
			* % vessels using pingers	0	100	yes	na	na	0	67-100	
			Observer prog	0	?	?	na	na	1	1	
			HD	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
3	Establishment of BYC observation programmes on vessel smaller than 15m long, professional (Prof.) and recreational fisheries	High	Prof.: regular	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	?
			Prof.: experiment	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
			Recreational	0	0	0	0	0	1	na	
4	Regular evaluation of all fisheries with respect to extent of HP BYC  None of the states monitors all fisheries. Some deemed not relevant  Progress for several fisheries, a.o. >15 m vessels	High		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
				1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
5	Review of current pingers, dev. of altern.pingers and gear modif.	High		1	1	1	1	na	1	1	na
6	Finalise a management procedure approach for determining maximum allowable bycatch limits in the region	High		General progress made through SCANS II							0
7	Monitoring trends in distribution and abundance of HP in NS	High	Large scale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			Regional	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
8	Review of the stock structure of HP in NS	High		0	1	0	0	0	1	0	?
9	Collection of incidental HP data through stranding networks	Medium		?	1	1?	1	1	1	1	0
10	Investigation of the health, nutritional status and diet of HP in NS	Medium		0	1	1?	1	1	1	1	?
11	Investigation of the effects of anthropogenic sounds on HP	Medium		?	1	1	1	1	0	1	?
12	Collection and archiving of data on anthropogenic activities and development of a GIS	Medium		0	0	1	1	1	0	0	

Progress in the implementation of the ASCOBANS NS AP for HP - coordinators

Tasks given to coordinator (s)		Priority				
		given	Progress May 2001	given	Progress March 2012	given March 2012
1	Document and collate existing regulations and guidelines	1		1		
	international		yes		yes	
	national		no		yes	
	provide collation to all stakeholders		no		some	
2	To promote and explain the Conservation Plan to stakeholders:	1	some, incl. NSRAC	1	some, incl. NSRAC	1
3	To develop mechanisms to ensure that the Actions given in the Conservation Plan are implemented including the organisation of scientific workshops				no	
4	To make a recommendation for the evolution of some EU fishery regulations	1	yes		no	
5	To co-ordinate the collection of and collation of appropriate data on anthropogenic activities in a format that will facilitate its use in a GIS context	1	no		no	
6	To manage the Conservation Plan Fund				?	
7	To develop progress reports on the implementation	1	yes	1	yes	
8	To arrange for periodic reviews of the Conservation Plan				no	
	Data collection on fishing effort	1	no		some	