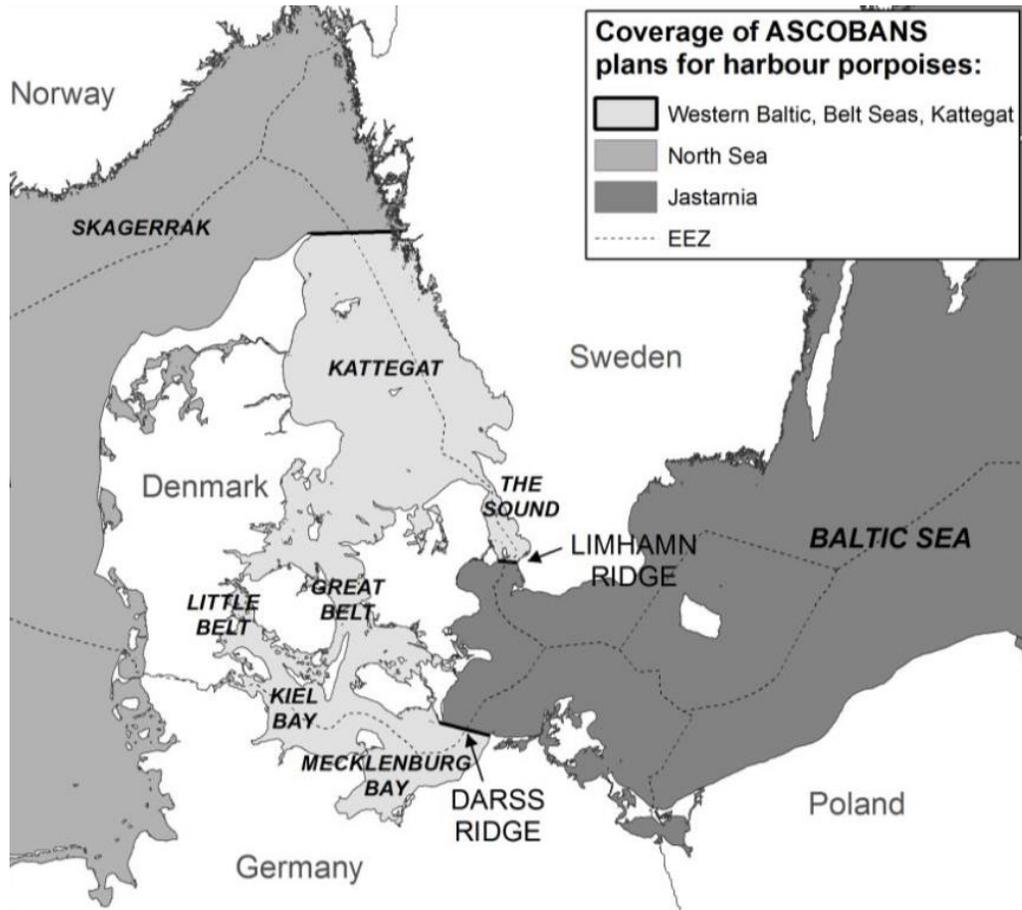


The WBBK Plan

Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise Population in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat



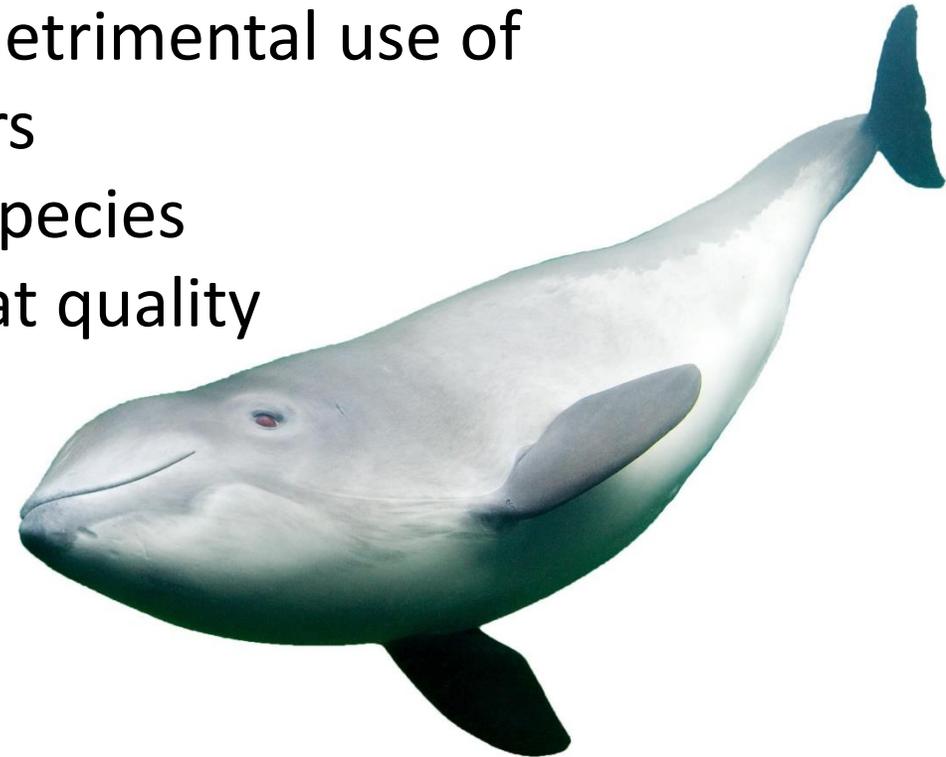
- Conservation plan proposed in 2011
- Previously called the “gap area”
- Plan finally adopted at MOP7 in 2012

- The WBBK area is included in the discussions of the Jastarnia Group
- Coordinator in place since 2018

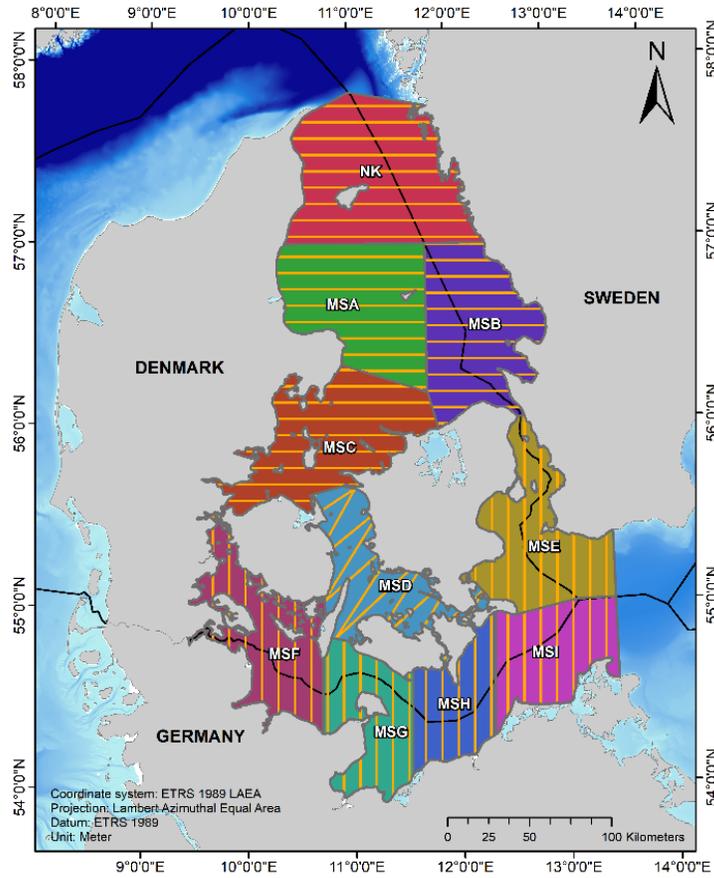
Revision of borders between Jastarnia and WBBK plan areas?

11 recommendations

- Involve fishermen to reduce bycatch
- Cooperate with and inform relevant bodies
- Minimizing bycatch in key habitats
- Implement pinger use
- Alternative gear
- Estimate total annual bycatch
- Estimate trends in abundance
- Monitor population health status
- Non-detrimental use of pingers
- Prey species
- Habitat quality

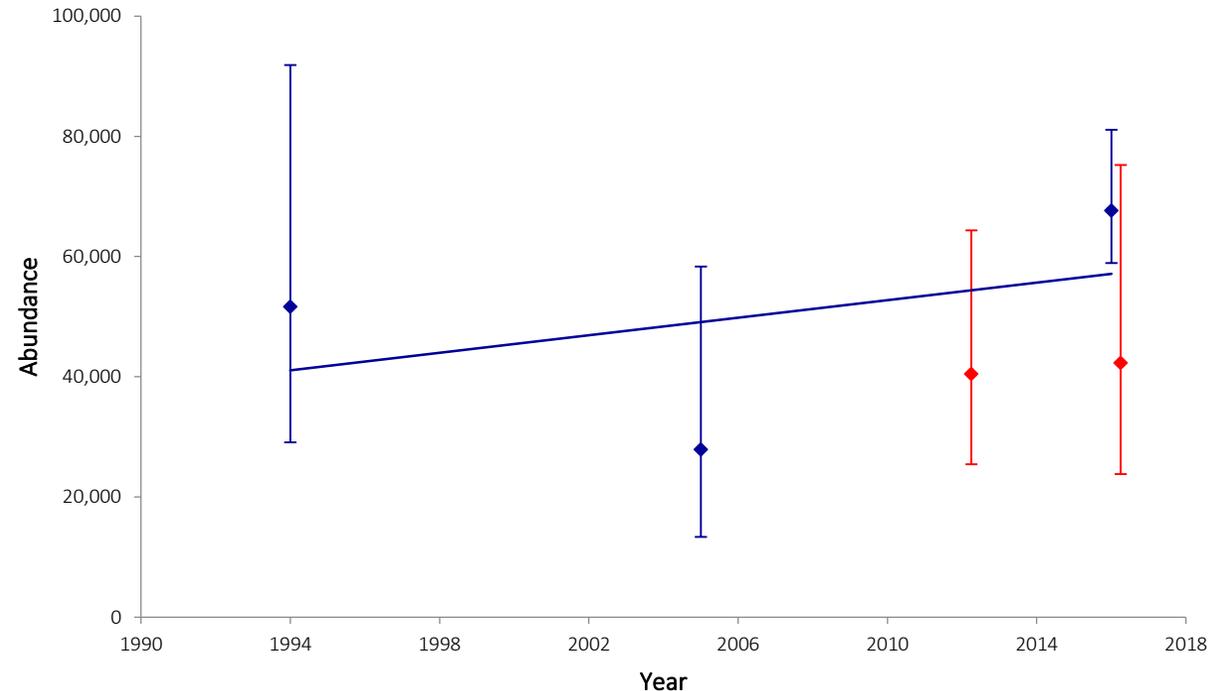


Abundance and distribution - population-wide surveys



- Mini-SCANS II carried out July 2020
- MMANA/SCANS IV being planned

Harbour porpoise - Skagerrak / Kattegat / Belt Seas



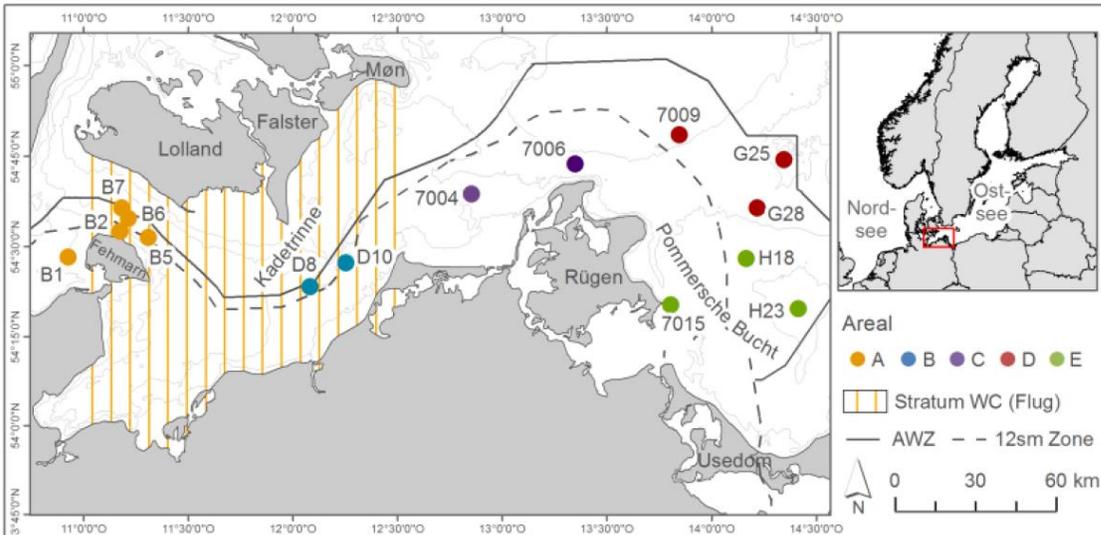
 MiniSCANS II transects
 MiniSCANS II stratum borders
 Countries
 Exclusive Economic Zone



Abundance and distribution – national monitoring

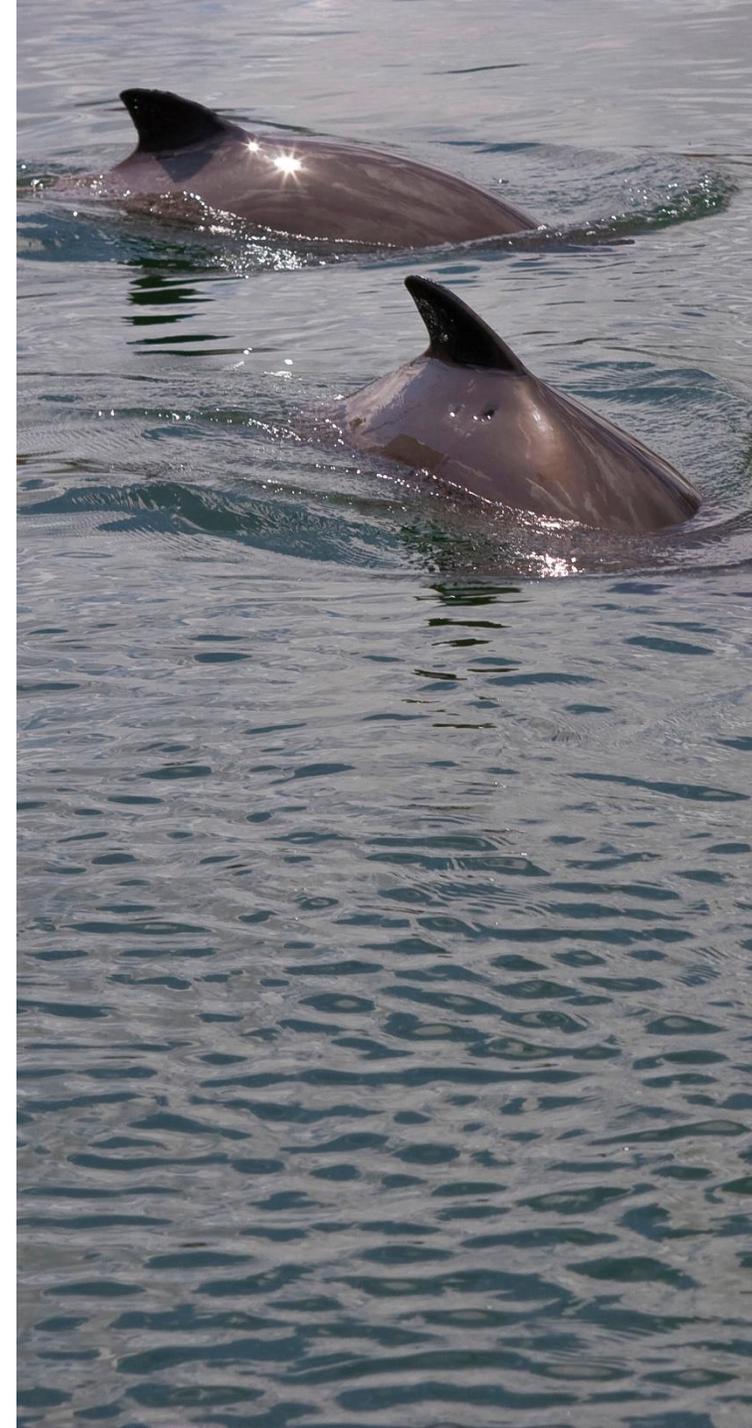


- Sweden 14 stations in MPAs since 2019
- Germany long-standing PAM program
- Denmark rotating between MPAs



Bycatch

- No countries in the WBBK area has fisheries regulations in place in their MPAs
- Trials with modified gillnets to increase reflectivity
- Studies on REM ongoing in Sweden and Denmark
- Pinger studies ongoing, looking at seal damage as well as porpoise movement around nets
- Alternative gear such as traps and pots are being developed, tested and implemented in active fisheries
- Bycatch risk maps developed in HELCOM ACTION project
- Assessment by NAMMCO & IMR 2018 positive



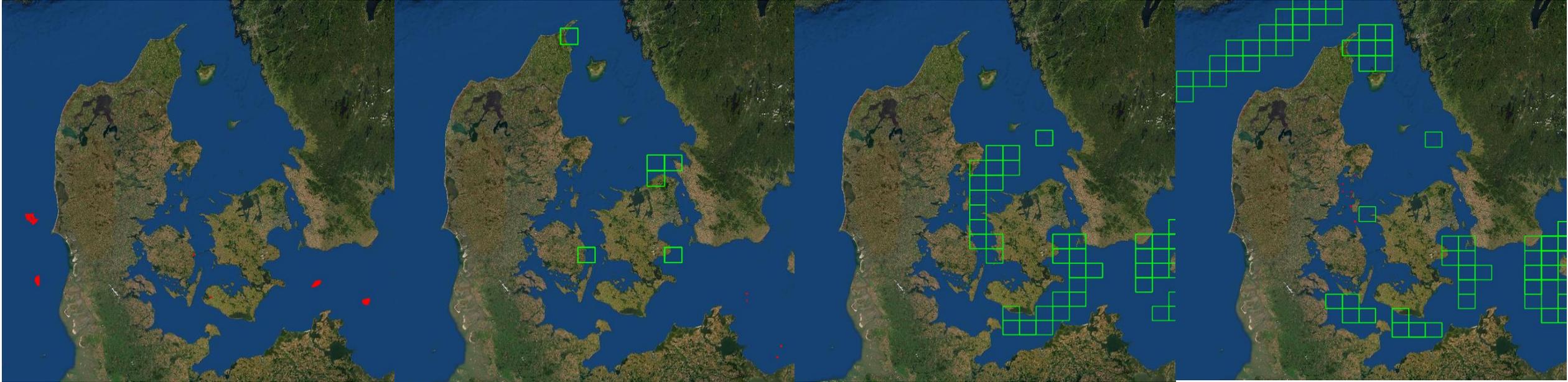
Underwater noise – impulsive noise

Pile driving

Explosions

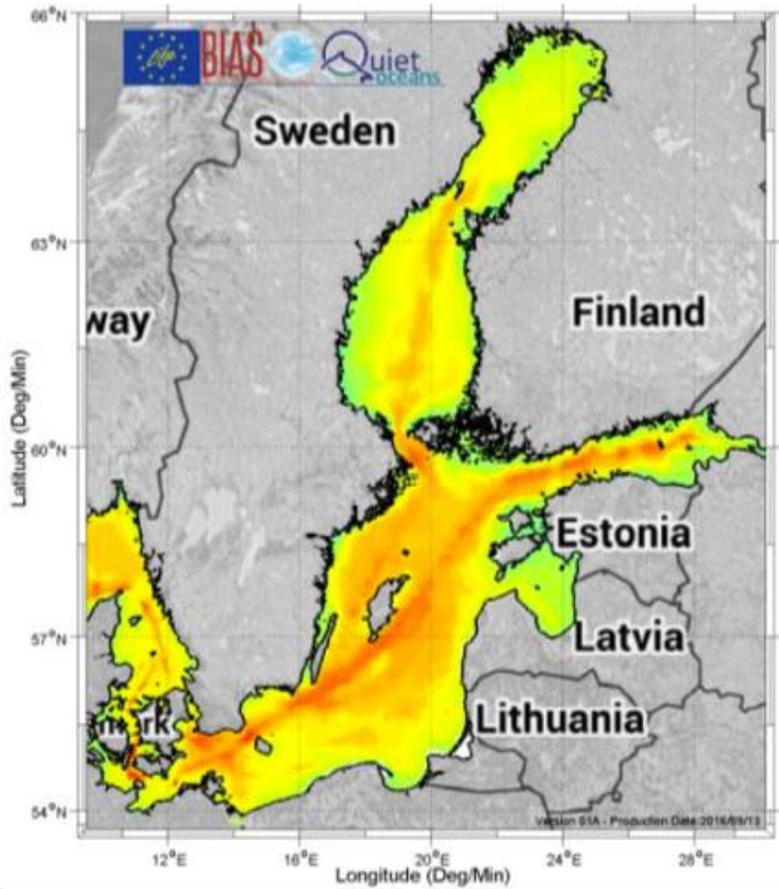
Sonar + ADDs

Airgun arrays

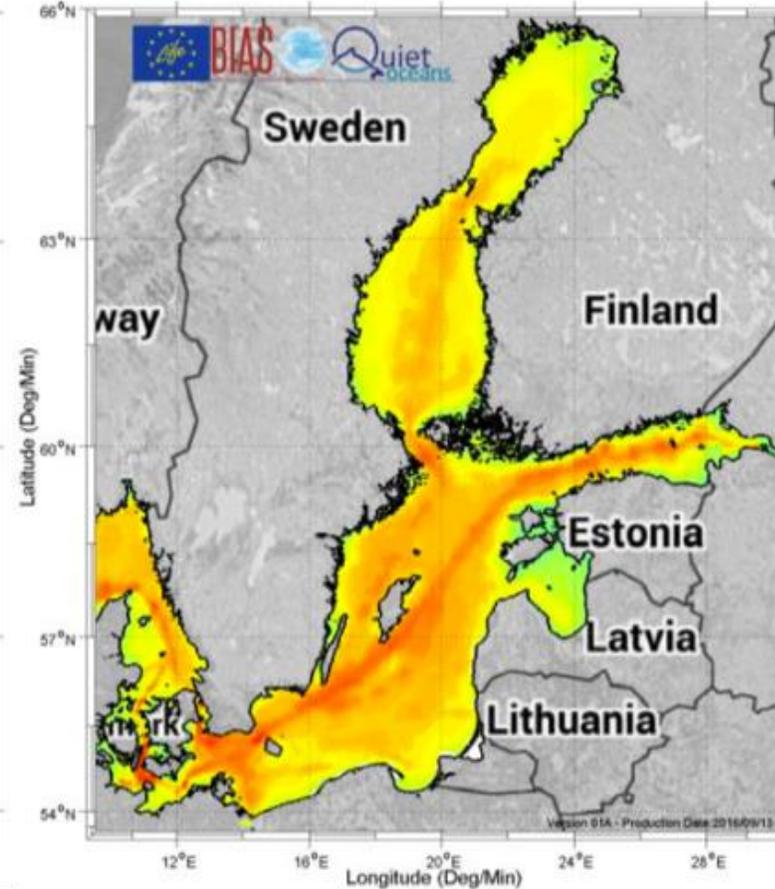


Underwater noise – continuous noise

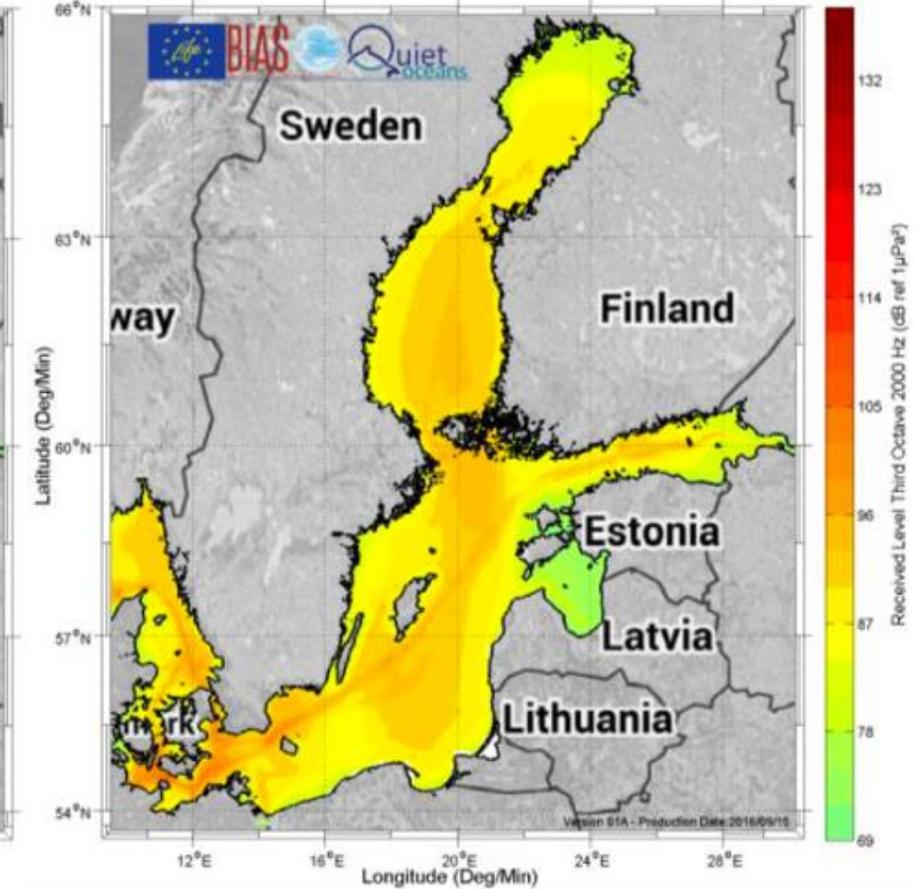
63 Hz



125 Hz

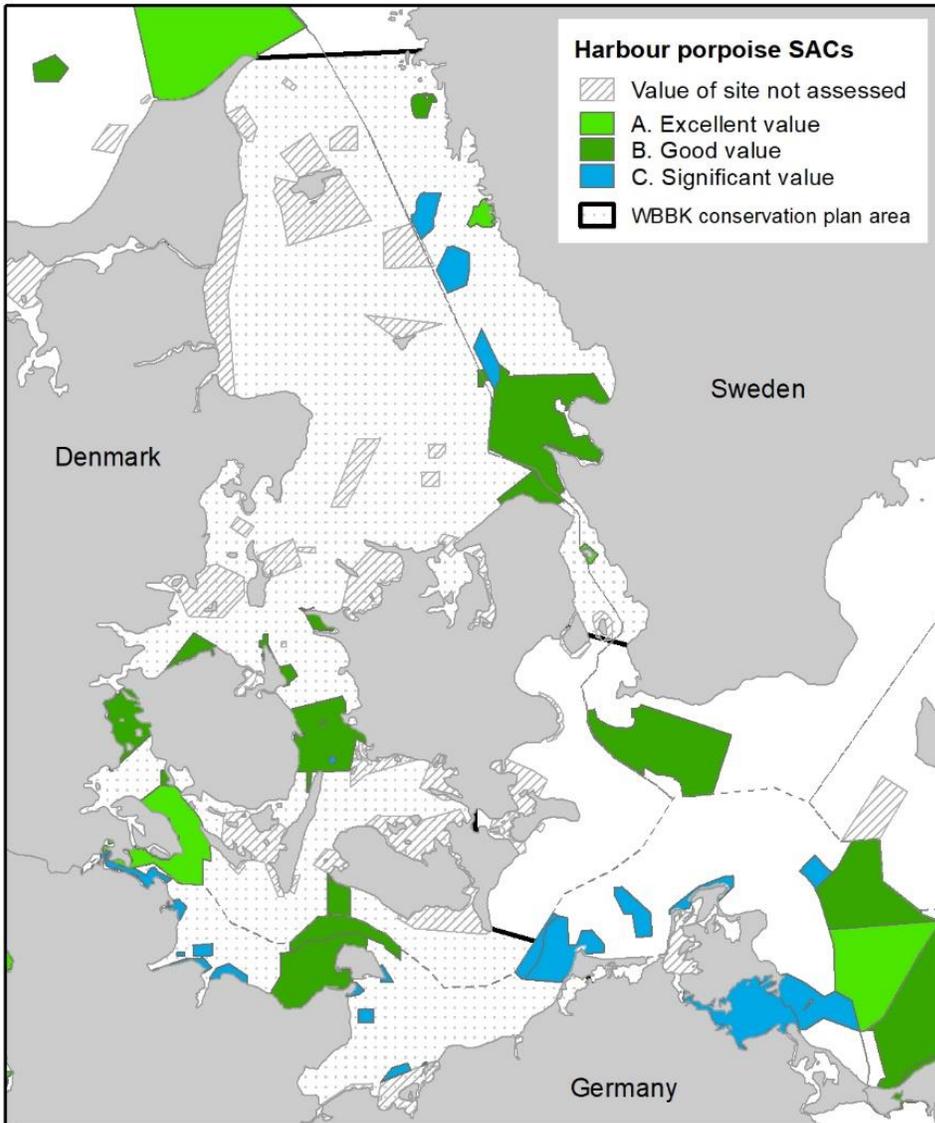


2 kHz



Annual median noise maps for the full water column for the 63 Hz third-octave (left), the 125 Hz third-octave (middle), and the 2kHz third-octave (right) (Source: Folegot *et al.*, 2016).

Protected areas



- German management plans were just out for consultation
- Swedish fisheries regulations expected for consultation this year
- Denmark has no measures in place

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continued trials with alternative gear
- Large-scale implementation of REM monitoring
- Develop thresholds and guidelines for mitigation of underwater noise
- Continued research on impact of noise

