

Agenda Item 2

Review of New Information on Threats and  
Other Issues Relevant to Small Cetaceans

Document NR.6

2021 Annual National Report: Germany

Action Requested

- Take note
- Comment

Submitted by

Germany





## ASCOBANS

# 2021 ASCOBANS National Report

The deadline for the submission of National Reports is **31 March 2022**.

As outlined in ASCOBANS Resolution 8.1 (Rev.MOP9) National Reporting, this form will cover the year 2021 (Year 2 of the cycle), and the following topics included in the Annex to the Resolution, in addition to the standard Sections I (General Information) and VII (Other Matters):

Bycatch (Section II A1)

Resource Depletion (Section II A2)

Marine Debris (Section II C9)

Surveys and Research (Section III A: Biological Information, B: Monitoring Programmes, C: Other Research)

Use of Strandings Records (Section IV A: Stranding Network and Strandings)

The National Reports submitted will inform discussions at the 27th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee in late 2022.

- All questions apply to the reporting period of 1 January - 31 December 2021.

- Region in the tables refers to the sub-regions as defined by the HELCOM and OSPAR, and Areas refers to the sub-areas as defined by ICES. An overview and maps of these can be found in **Annex A**. Species can be chosen from the list provided, based on ASCOBANS species list, see **Annex B**.

- Throughout the form, please include relevant web links where applicable.

Where possible, National Coordinators should consult with, or delegate to, experts for particular topics so as to ease the reporting burden. The Secretariat has provided a list of potential country contacts as a starting point. Once the baseline information is in place, it should become easier to update in the future.

For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat: [ascobans.secretariat@ascobans.org](mailto:ascobans.secretariat@ascobans.org).

## High-level Summary of Key Messages

**In your country, for 2021 (Year 2), what does this report reveal about:**

**The most successful aspects of implementation of the Agreement?(List up to five items)**

- >>> - The support of more or less all ASCOBANS States against the mass killing of over 1400 White sided dolphins at the Faroe islands was a good proof of a joint protection spirit.
- The preparation of an UN convention to avoid and reduce marine plastic garbage in 2021 and before (and adopted at the UNEA in 2022) is an important step to diminish risks for cetaceans too, as autopsies reveal they already suffer considerably by plastic garbage in their maws (stomachs).
- Negotiation of Managementplans for the German marine protected areas (agreed in February 2022).

**The greatest challenges in implementing the Agreement? (List up to five items)**

- >>> Reducing Bycatch and a sufficient noise protection (in particular during the construction of marine wind energy plants) will stay the greatest challenges in German waters.

**The main priorities for future implementation of the Agreement? (List up to five items)**

- >>> Listing the Baltic proper population of the harbour porpoise in CMS Annex I will be one of the major priorities of the ACOBANS parties in the close future and in pursuance the resulting nature protection necessities will be a challenge for the further future.

# I. General Information

## A. Country Information

### Name of Party / Non-Party Range State:

>>> Germany

### Details of the Report Compiler

Name:

>>> Oliver Schall

Function:

>>> German Focal Point of ASCOBANS

Organization:

>>> Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection  
Division N I 4 / International Species Protection

Postal Address:

>>> Robert-Schuman-Platz 3, 53175 Bonn, Germany

Telephone:

>>> +49-22899 3052632

Email:

>>> Oliver.Schall@bmu.bund.de

Does the Report Compiler act as ASCOBANS National Coordinator (i.e. focal point)?

Yes

### Details of contributor(s)

Please provide the following details per contributor:

Topic(s) contributed to, Name, Function, Organization, Postal Address, Telephone, and Email.

>>> Name: Patricia Brtnik

Function: Scientist for technical ASCOBANS issues

Organization: German Oceanographic Museum

Postal Address: Katharinenberg 14-20; 18439 Stralsund; Germany

Telephone: +49 38 301 86 158

Email: Patricia.Brtnik@meeresmuseum.de

Does the Report Compiler act as ASCOBANS National Coordinator (i.e. focal point)?

No  Yes

Topic(s) contributed to:

Name: Prof. Prof. h. c. Dr. Ursula Siebert

Function: Director of Institute

Organization: Institute for Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife Research, University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Foundation

Postal Address: Werftstraße 6, 25761 Büsum

Telephone: +49 511 8568158

Email: Ursula.siebert@tiho-hannover.de

Topic(s) contributed to:

Name: Britta Diederichs

Function:

Organization: National Park Administration Schleswig Holstein Wadden Sea, LKN.SH

Postal Address: Schlossgarten 1, 25832 Tönning, Germany

Telephone: +49 461 61622

Email: britta.diederichs@lkn.landsh.de

Topic(s) contributed to:  
Name: Dr. Swaantje Bennecke  
Function:  
Organization: Schleswig- Holstein Ministry of Energy, Agriculture, the Environment, Nature and Digitalization (MELUND)  
Postal Address: Mercatorstraße 3, 24106 Kiel, Germany  
Telephone: +49 431 9887277  
Email: swaantje.bennecke@melund.landsh.de

Topic(s) contributed to: II 1. Bycatch  
Name: Christian von Dorrien  
Function: Senior Scientist  
Organization: Thünen-Institute of Baltic Sea Fisheries  
Postal Address: Alter Hafen Süd 2  
Telephone: +49-381-66099-106  
Email: christian.dorrien@thuenen.de

Topic(s) contributed to:  
Name: Christian Abel  
Function:  
Organization: National Park Authority Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony  
Postal Address: D-26382 Wilhelmshaven, Virchowstr. 1  
Telephone: +49 (0)4421-911 289  
Email: Christian.abel@nlpww.niedersachsen.de

Topic(s) contributed to:  
Name: Dr. Susanne Zikura  
Function: Veterinary pathologist  
Organization: Lower Saxony State Office for Consumer Protection and Food Safety, Food and Veterinary Institute Oldenburg  
Postal Address: 26133 Oldenburg, Martin-Niemöller-Str. 2  
Telephone: +49 (0)441-9713-751  
Email: Susanne.zikura@laves.niedersachsen.de

Topic(s) contributed to: Section III  
Name: Anja Gallus  
Function: Scientist  
Organization: German Oceanographic Museum  
Postal Address: Katharinenberg 14-20; 18439 Stralsund; Germany  
Telephone: +49 3831 2650 393  
Email: Anja.Gallus@meeresmuseum.de

Topic(s) contributed to: C-9 (Marine Debris)  
Name: Stefanie Werner  
Function: Scientific Officer Marine Protection Unit  
Organization: Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt)  
Postal Address: Wörlitzer Platz 1, 06844 Dessau-Roßlau  
Telephone: + 49-34021032221  
Email: stefanie.werner@uba.de

## II. Habitat Conservation and Management (threats and pressures on cetaceans)

### A. Fisheries-related Threats

#### 1. Bycatch

**AIM:** to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating bycatch of small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 9.2, 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.8, 5.7, 5.5, 3.3

Bycatch, the entanglement of an animal in fishing gear, is identified as a major cause of mortality in small cetaceans. Every effort should be made to reduce bycatch towards zero as quickly as possible. Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed on a number of resolutions that highlight the importance of mitigating bycatch of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area, as available data indicates that levels of bycatch pose a considerable threat to their conservation status. Parties have agreed that modifications of fishing gear and relevant practices shall be applied in order to reduce negative impacts where data indicates unacceptable interaction. The Agreement Area requires improved monitoring, collation of data, and consideration of appropriate mitigation measures, while also taking into account similar work in other areas.

To better understand the extent of the impact of bycatch on small cetaceans, monitoring and mitigation measures in place, and ongoing work in the Agreement Area, countries are requested to provide relevant information.

Note: This section includes bycatch in recreational fisheries.

##### 1.1. How is bycatch assessed/monitored in your country?

For the reporting period, please identify whether the following methods were used and the percentage (by monitoring method, of total bycaught animals, by gear type if applicable):

Dedicated observer schemes

Fisheries observes

Remote Electronic Monitoring

Self-reporting by fishermen

Pathological investigation

Assessment at stranding site

>>> Fisheries observes

Self-reporting by fishermen: (31% of bycaught and supposedly bycaught animals in 2021)

Pathological investigations: (69% of animals in 2021, suspected bycatch based on pathomorphological signs of stranded animals)

Comments:

>>> Lower Saxony (LS): Fisheries in coastal waters of Lower Saxony use beam bottom trawl nets. No bycatch has been reported. Rarely used fyke nets (non commercial fisheries) are equipped with protection grids.

##### 1.2. Which species of small cetaceans were recorded as bycatch by commercial fishing in the reporting period?

Please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

Hold 'Ctrl' to select multiple options.

HP - Harbour Porpoise

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Sec-II A 1.2.xlsx](#)

##### 1.3. Which species of small cetaceans were recorded as bycatch by recreational fishing in the reporting period?

Please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below

Hold 'Ctrl' to select multiple options.

HP - Harbour Porpoise

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Sec-II A 1.3.xlsx](#)

##### 1.4. Has there been any notable incidents/issues related to bycatch during the reporting period in your country?

No

##### 1.5. Are there are mitigation measures in place?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

Yes

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Sec-II\\_A\\_1.5\\_0.xlsx](#)

The following measures are in place:

>>> Gear modification

Closures of gillnets in parts of the coastal area

Obligatory pinger use in nets

Voluntary pinger use in nets

Reduction of net length during summer months on voluntary basis in Schleswig-Holstein coastal gillnet fisheries.

Porpoise Alert Pingers on voluntary basis in Schleswig-Holstein coastal gillnet fisheries.

### **1.6. Have there been changes in fishing effort (for fisheries known to have an impact) in the reporting period?**

Yes

Please provide details:

>>> Baltic Sea: Reduction of fishing effort in gill net and trammel net fisheries targeting cod and herring due to quota reductions

Schleswig Holstein: Detailed information on fishing effort, especially on small-scale gillnet fisheries, is not available for Schleswig-Holstein. However, there is a general downward trend in the gillnet fishing fleet and fishing effort in Germany. For example, the small scale coastal fleet < 10m has been reduced from 1766 vessels (year 2009) to 631 vessels (year 2020).

Lower Saxony: changes in fishing effort on brown shrimp and flatfish which took place in the last years (but may not be relevant as no bycatch reported for years in coastal fisheries in Lower Saxony)

### **1.7. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on bycatch in your country.**

List initiatives/projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information.

>>> Kratzer I (2021) Gillnet modifications to reduce bycatch of harbor porpoises. DTU Aqua National Institute of Aquatic Resources, 172 p, Lyngby, Techn Univ of Denmark, Section for Ecosystem Based Marine Management, PhD Thesis

Kratzer I, Brooks ME, Bilgin S, Ozdemir S, Kindt-Larsen L, Larsen F, Stepputtis D (2021) Using acoustically visible gillnets to reduce bycatch of a small cetacean: first pilot trials in a commercial fishery. Fish Res 243:106088, DOI:10.1016/j.fishres.2021.106088

Barz F, Eckardt J, Meyer S, Kraak SBM, Strehlow HV (2020) "Boats don't fish, people do"- how fishers' agency can inform fisheries-management on bycatch mitigation of marine mammals and sea birds. Mar Policy 122:104268, DOI:10.1016/j.marpol.2020.104268

Kratzer I, Schäfer I, Stoltenberg A, Chladek J-C, Kindt-Larsen L, Larsen F, Stepputtis D (2020) Determination of optimal acoustic passive reflectors to reduce bycatch of odontocetes in gillnets. Front Mar Sci 7:539, DOI:10.3389/fmars.2020.0053

Chladek J-C, Culik B, Kindt-Larsen L, Moesgaard Albertsen C, Dorrien C von (2020) Synthetic harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) communication signals emitted by acoustic alerting device (Porpoise ALert, PAL) significantly reduce their bycatch in western Baltic gillnet fisheries. Fish Res 232:105732, DOI:10.1016/j.fishres.2020.105732

Gill net fisheries: Development of alternative management approaches (STELLA)

<https://www.thuenen.de/en/of/projects/fisheries-environment-baltic-sea/gill-net-fisheries-development-of-alternative-management-approaches-stella/>

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

[Chladek J-C. et al. \(2020\) Synthetic harbour porpoise \(\*Phocoena phocoena\*\) communication signals emitted by acoustic alerting device \(Porpoise ALert, PAL\) significantly reduce their bycatch in western Baltic gillnet fisheries. Fish Res 232:105732.](#)

[Kratzer I, et al. \(2020\) Determination of optimal acoustic passive reflectors to reduce bycatch of odontocetes in gillnets. Front Mar Sci 7:539](#)

[Barz F. et al. \(2020\) "Boats don't fish, people do"- how fishers' agency can inform fisheries-management on bycatch mitigation of marine mammals and sea birds. Mar Policy 122:104268](#)

[Kratzer I. et al. \(2021\) Using acoustically visible gillnets to reduce bycatch of a small cetacean: first pilot trials in a commercial fishery](#)

### **1.8. Is the perceived level of pressure from bycatch in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?**

Unknown

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable.

>>> Lower Saxony: not applicable - no bycatch reported. Based on observer data (zero bycatch) and decreasing fishing effort a decrease is assumed

Schleswig-Holstein: staying the same. Self-reporting by fishermen, Pathological investigations indicate no changes.

Mecklenburg Western Pomerania: Unknown

In general: based on the decreasing fishing effort due to the cod ban, a decrease in bycatch is assumed; No systematic assessments of bycatch is conducted

## **2. Resource Depletion**

**AIM:** to determine areas where, and to what extent, depletion of fish stocks have occurred during the reporting period. In addition; identify ongoing mitigation efforts regarding detrimental implications for small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 8.3, 7.1, 6.1

Depletion in fish stocks due to overfishing and other factors generates pressure on the favourable conservation status of small cetaceans (through possible food shortage). More integrated management and reductions in fishing effort (also prompted by concern about fish stock depletion or other ecosystem considerations) have been encouraged, especially in areas of known risk. Further research, effective fishery regulations and innovation within certain fishing methods are considered to be helpful steps towards mitigating this pressure.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed on a number of resolutions that (1) determine the impact of the depletion of fish stocks on small cetaceans, (2) encourage fishing effort reductions and (3) review new information on these depletions to make recommendations. Resource depletion in the Agreement Area requires improved monitoring, collation of data, and consideration of appropriate mitigation measures, while also taking into account similar work in other areas.

It is of particular interest to ASCOBANS to understand the extent of prey depletions, any related ongoing work, monitoring and mitigation measures in the Agreement Area. Countries are requested to provide relevant information.

### **2.1. Based on the latest stock assessments, are there any notable depletions of fish species which would be a concern for small cetaceans?**

Yes

Please provide details:

>>> Western Baltic: Spawning stock biomasses as well as reproduction rates of spring spawning herring and cod are on low levels;

Lower Saxony: no notable depletions

### **2.2. Where are these depletions in national water occurring?**

Please choose the sub-Regions from Annex A as defined by OSPAR & HELCOM.

Hold 'Ctrl' to select multiple options.

H Belt Sea

Please choose the sub-Areas from Annex A as defined by ICES.

Hold 'Ctrl' to select multiple options.

27.3.c.22 - Belt Sea

27.3.d.24 - Baltic West of Bornholm

### **2.3. What measures are being taken to manage pressures on depleted fish stocks, including relevant regulations/guidelines (current/planned/year of implementation)?**

Per measure, please provide timeframe information and relevant driver.

>>> Measure: Quota reductions for western Baltic cod and spring spawning herring

Timeframe information: Quota reductions in 2021, no directed fishery on cod (all gears) and herring (trawls) in 2022

Relevant driver: Environmental conditions, fishing mortality

### **2.4. Is there any evidence within your country's national waters that resource depletion may**

**be impacting small cetaceans (e.g. evidence of starvation)?**

No

**2.5. Are there any national efforts to evaluate cetacean body condition at sea (e.g. surveys)?**

No

**2.6. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on resource depletion in your country.**

List initiatives/project (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information.

>>> No new research or work in 2021

**2.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from resource depletion in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?**

Unknown

Not Applicable. Comments:

>>> no data

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable:

>>> Staying the same: Lower Saxony: Personal perception, Fish Monitoring Programs, ICES Stock survey

**B. Disturbance (incl. potential physical impacts)**

**3. Noise (impulsive i.e. piling and continuous/ambient i.e. shipping)**

**AIM:** to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating negative effects on small cetaceans from underwater noise during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 9.2, 9.1, 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.6, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, 6.2, 6.1

Small cetaceans are especially susceptible to underwater noise due to their high responsiveness to sound and wide hearing range. Good environmental status, as defined by the European Union, suggests that the introduction of energy, including underwater noise, is at levels that do not adversely affect the marine environment. Anthropogenic noise pollution has generally increased in recent times and generates a broad range of frequencies due to a wide variety of human activities. Impulsive and continuous noise present different impacts on small cetaceans, which include communicative masking, behavioural response and physiological injury. Noise in marine environments potentially impedes communication, affects distribution and hence feeding and reproduction of small cetaceans. Studies show that not only cetaceans but also fish and other marine life may be negatively impacted by anthropogenic noise.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed on implementation of measures through a number of resolutions that (1) highlight the potential impact that noise pollution may have on small cetaceans in the Agreement Area and (2) commit to reduce the pressure presented by underwater noise. The Agreement Area requires improved monitoring, collation of data, and consideration of appropriate mitigation measures.

To better understand the extent to which noise negatively impacts the health of small cetaceans, and to learn about new work relevant to the topic, countries are requested to provide related information.

**3.1. To which noise registers/databases has your country contributed to date?**

ICES Impulsive Noise Register (for HELCOM and OSPAR Parties)

Yes

National Registry

Yes, please specify (e.g. JNCC noise registry):

>>> German Noise Registry at BSH, Available under: <https://marinears.bsh.de>

Contact: [marinears@bsh.de](mailto:marinears@bsh.de)

Other

No

**3.2. Any instances/issues in the reporting period including information on planned or completed significant developments/activities, including the details of monitoring in place before, during and after the project.**

If you selected 'Yes', please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

Yes. Please provide details in the table.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

**3.5. Is the perceived level of pressure from underwater noise in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?**

- Increasing
- Decreasing

**4. Ocean Energy**

**AIM:** to understand the extent and development of current and planned ocean energy projects, and progress in monitoring and mitigation of their negative effects on small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.6, 8.3, 6.2

Renewable energy is a necessary component of the efforts to supply the energy needs of human populations while combatting climate change. Efforts to harness renewable energy sources, however, should be conducted in a way that does not have a harmful impact on biological diversity and the marine environment. There are potential adverse effects of ocean energy on small cetaceans from such energy projects. In regard to small cetaceans, this can include potential lethal interactions or injury, negative behavioural impacts from displacement and changes in fecundity, calf survival and juvenile and adult mortality. There remains uncertainty regarding quantifying the (magnitude of the) pressure from ocean energy production on small cetaceans.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed to introduce precautionary measures and procedures for activities surrounding the development of renewable energy in marine environments in order to minimise and mitigate possible effects on small cetaceans, by following best practices. Parties have committed to investigating such pressures and robustly monitoring and mitigating them through environmental impact assessments. Addressing all aspects relevant to the conservation of protected species in regard to ocean energy and collaboration with other organizations working on or potentially interested in the issue is to the benefit of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area.

It is of particular interest to ASCOBANS to understand current and ongoing renewable energy projects in the Agreement Area, mitigation measures and procedures in use and other work relevant to the topic. Countries are requested to provide information relevant to their activities.

**4.1. Were there any new wind energy farms in development/construction during the reporting period?**

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue link button below.

- No

**4.2. Were there any new wave power installations in development/construction during the reporting period?**

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

- No

**4.3. Were there any new tidal energy installations in development/construction during the reporting period?**

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

- No

**4.4. Were there any new tidal lagoon/barrage installations in development/construction during the reporting period?**

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

- No

**4.5. Has there been any other instances/issues related to ocean energy during the reporting period in your country?**

- No

**4.8. Mark the perceived level of pressure from ocean energy in your country in the table below.**

For example, active construction of new developments could increase the pressure, while decommissioning or addition of mitigation measures to pre-existing projects could decrease the pressure.

	1. Status relative to previous years [Increasing, Decreasing, Staying the same, Unknown, Not Applicable]	2. Nature of the evidence
Tidal lagoon/barrage	Not Applicable	
Tidal energy	Not Applicable	
Wave power	Not Applicable	
Wind energy	decreasing	BSH (decreasing) No construction works in 2020 SH: (Increasing) Due to the (generally) increasing number of activities and ongoing pressures

## 5. Cetacean Watching Industry

**AIM:** to determine if the developing cetacean watching industry poses a threat to small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 6.1, 5.4

Whale and dolphin watching is a global industry that can provide socio-economic benefits to local communities by attracting tourism, as well as strengthening public awareness of conservation needs. However, it also has the potential of being harmful when it interferes with the behaviour of animals in their natural environment and may even lead to injury or death. As the cetacean watching industry is still scarcely developed in some countries, collecting this data now allows tracking the development of the industry.

It is of particular importance to ASCOBANS to obtain an overview of the current scale of the activities and to monitor the development of the industry in the future. This is done by quantifying the number and locations of operators, reporting negative interactions and providing information on the development and implementation of any guidelines regarding cetacean watching.

Filling out this section accurately and completely will help to detect any indications of potential threats, allow timely mitigation action and enable Parties and Non-Party Range States to work towards a coordinated approach regarding the development of cetacean watching guidelines in the Agreement Area. Note: We are only addressing commercial cetacean watching activities which take place from vessels and include viewing of small cetacean species. Operators are defined as those offering trips with a **primary focus:** they advertise specifically with the aim to see small cetaceans, or a **secondary focus:** they advertise either for other taxa, such as birds or seals, or large cetaceans, or more general for wildlife, but mention the opportunity to see small cetaceans.

### 5.1. Do you have any commercial small cetacean watching industry operation in your country?

No. Go to Question 5.3.

### 5.3. Does your country have a definition of the term 'harassment' in general and/or as it relates to the Cetacean Watching Industry?

For example, the US Marine Mammal Protection Act uses the term harassment, and defines two levels: Level A harassment means any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance that has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild. Level B harassment refers to acts that have the potential to disturb (but not injure) a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by disrupting behavioural patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.

Yes

Provide definition:

>>> cf previous reports

### 5.4. Have there been any incidents of harassment towards small cetaceans in the context of commercial cetacean watching reported to authorities during the reporting period?

No

### 5.5. Does your country have any operators that offer swimming with dolphins (or other small cetaceans)?

In some parts of the world, this has become an important tourism industry with potential impacts for both small cetaceans and swimmers. Although scarcely developed, it has occurred within the ASCOBANS Agreement Area, and requires at least background monitoring. Sometimes incidents occur and can lead to harm for small cetaceans and/or swimmers.

No

### **5.7. Are there any solitary sociable dolphin interactions in your country?**

Occasionally, individual solitary dolphins may associate with humans, resulting in increased interactions between the two which may lead to impacts upon either. Sometimes incidents occur and can lead to harm for small cetaceans and/or swimmers.

Please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue link button below.

Select "Yes" when you have attached the table.

No. Go to Question 5.10.

### **5.8. Does your country have any mitigation measures (codes of conduct/guidelines) in place in the event of disturbance or harassment in the context of commercial cetacean watching, swimming with cetaceans, and interactions with solitary sociable dolphins?**

Yes. Please provide information below.

Per measure (may include regional measures), please include: date of implementation, application region (Annex A), whether the measure has been effective (include comments), and other relevant information.

>>> cf- previous reports

### **5.11. Have there been any other instances/issues related to the cetacean watching industry during the reporting period in your country?**

No

### **5.12. Is the perceived level of pressure from commercial small cetacean watching in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?**

Not Applicable. Comments:

>>> no commercial activities

## **6. Recreational Sea Use**

**AIM:** to determine whether recreational sea use is detrimental to small cetaceans and, if so, to identify types of activity and areas of concern.

Relevant Resolutions: **8.9, 8.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.4**

Recreational use of the sea by humans includes a wide variety of activities, some of which are known to have a potential negative impact on small cetaceans. This includes the use of RIBs (rigid-hulled inflatable boats), hard-hulled boats exceeding 10 knots in speed, yachts and personal watercrafts such as jet skis, kayaks and surfboards; and excludes recreational fishing and sea-angling.

Interactions can cause animals to change behaviour and move away, but can also have more serious impacts, such as injury or even death due to collision. ASCOBANS has agreed on a number of resolutions that highlight the importance to review all available information on recreational use of the sea. Obtaining an overview of best practices and guidelines will enable comparisons to be made across the Agreement Area, and ultimately may lead to the provision of overall, consistent guidelines that might be developed at a regional or national level. In this section we strive to obtain an overview of potential risk areas and national sources that have data on incidents with small cetaceans related to recreational sea use.

### **6.1. Are data on recreational sea use available for your country?**

No. Go to Question 6.3.

### **6.3. Were there any incidents of disturbance or harassment to small cetaceans in relation to recreational sea use in your country?**

Unknown

### **6.4. Does your country have any mitigation measures (codes of conduct/guidelines/laws/rules) in place in the event of disturbance or harassment of small cetaceans through recreational sea use?**

Yes. Please provide information below.

### **6.6. Have there been any other instances/issues related to recreational sea use in your country during the reporting period?**

No

### **6.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from recreational sea use in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?**

Unknown

## 7. Other Sources of Disturbance

**AIM:** to identify new sources of disturbance that could be a threat to small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 6.1

Overlap of small cetacean and human habitat use is not covered by the questions above, while human activities in the seas are increasing, particularly in the coastal zone. Human activities can, for example, cause a small cetacean to change behaviour, or it can cause physical harm or death. This section aims to identify new sources of disturbance that could be a threat to small cetaceans. The issue of noise is covered under section B3.

### 7.1. Have there been any incidents of disturbance to small cetaceans in your country during the reporting period, not covered in the items above?

Any incidents of disturbance to small cetaceans not covered in Sections B5 or B6.

Unknown

## C. Habitat Change and Degradation (incl. potential physical impacts)

### 8. Unexploded Ordnance

**AIM:** to provide information on the mitigation, management and potential negative impacts of unexploded ordnance on small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.8, 8.3

Unexploded chemical and conventional munitions present a threat to small cetaceans. Hazards exist from unexploded munitions, which release chronic contaminants, and upon detonation, which is physically hazardous from extreme underwater noise and a sudden release of toxic substances. Unexploded ordnance is a notable threat in many areas, such as the Baltic Sea, where the quantity is unknown, though estimates are high. Information on disposal, state of corrosion and quantities of dumped munition is limited, as are meaningful data on the measured environmental impacts. The significance of this pressure's impact on small cetaceans requires further quantification. However, it is clear that mitigation measures are necessary to support alternatives to detonations, and when no alternative is feasible, to reduce negative impacts on small cetaceans.

In the ASCOBANS Area, millions of tons of unexploded ordnance are present in the marine environment and thousands of sea users, such as fishermen, encounter such munitions every year. Parties have agreed on resolutions to support (1) research investigating the pressure on marine animals and habitat and (2) mitigation measures regarding effects of disintegrating submerged munitions on the marine environment. Parties are to strive towards providing relevant information to required bodies and supporting efforts to address the negative implications from this pressure in other regional and international organizations and waters.

### 8.1. To which registers/databases covering conventional and chemical munitions has your country contributed to date?

Respondents may select multiple options.

OSPAR

HELCOM

Other, please state:

>>>  Other, please state:

[https://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/UXO/Partner/partner\\_Meldestelle.html](https://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/UXO/Partner/partner_Meldestelle.html);

<https://underwaternoise.ices.dk/impulsive/webservices.asp>

### 8.3. Have there been any other instances/issues related to the issue of unexploded ordnance during the reporting period in your country?

Yes

### 8.6. Is the perceived level of pressure from unexploded ordnance in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same, or unknown?

Not Applicable. Comments:

>>> Comments: As a result of the corona crisis, less blastings were carried out in 2020 in the territorial waters of Schleswig-Holstein.

ITAW points out that the pressure increases in relation to the whole area which comprises both the German territorial waters and the EEZ

## 9. Marine Debris (ingestion and entanglement)

**AIM:** to illustrate progress, during the reporting period, on understanding, monitoring and mitigating

impacts of marine debris on small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.8, 8.3, 6.1

Marine debris, such as macroplastics and discarded fishing gear, poses a threat to small cetaceans due to the potential for these materials to be ingested or to cause entanglement. Commercial fishing operations, recreational fishing and cargo shipping are notable sources of this material, of which the majority is plastic and ghost nets. However, it is assumed that most of the marine litter worldwide comes from land, although this differs per region. Even small amounts of macroplastics that have been ingested may present serious effects on small cetaceans, such as detrimental influence on the gastrointestinal tract or leaching pollutants into the body, potentially leading to mortality or reduced body condition. Entanglement is well-established as a threat to small cetaceans as plastic debris continues to accumulate in aquatic environments, and may cause physical injuries, reduced survival or drowning.

To better understand the impact of marine debris on small cetaceans and measures in place to mitigate these effects, countries are requested to provide relevant information.

Note: Includes macroplastics and discarded fishing gear. Microplastics are covered under Section C 10 Pollution and Hazardous Substances.

### **9.1. Does your country have monitoring in place to assess levels of marine debris?**

Yes. Please provide information below.

Include parameters provided through monitoring (e.g. type of litter (size, shape, material), amount, impacts on species, geographical location, etc.).

>>> According to the Commission Decision (2017/848/EC) which is specifying the requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, 2008/56/EC) following criteria need to be monitored for Descriptor 10 on Marine Litter: Macro litter on beaches, in the water column and the seafloor, micro litter in the sediments and the water column, ingestion of and entanglement in litter by marine species as well as other negative impacts on marine organisms and habitats. So far Germany has established long-term monitoring for beach litter, seafloor litter and for the North Sea in addition for plastic particles in the stomachs of Northern fulmars. For beach litter and litter in fulmar stomachs threshold values have been defined on EU level (max. 20 litter items/100 m coastline) and in OSPAR (less than 10% of dead found Northern fulmars should have more than 0.1g plastics in their stomachs).

In addition, by means of various r&d-projects new monitoring approaches and methods have been developed and tested for:

- Beach micro and meso litter
- Remote sensing of floating litter
- Plastic material and entanglement in seabirds breeding colonies
- Lost angling gear
- Microplastics in feces and rectum of marine mammals
- Plastic fragments and particles in fish and mussels
- Sampling of microplastics in the water column

The final reports will be available shortly at the website of the Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt):

- Assessment and implementation of long-term monitoring of pollution of diverse marine compartments and biota with marine litter. Project number: FKZ 3717252250 (in publication)
- Coherent monitoring of the pollution of German marine and coastal waters with litter and of the ecological consequences with a further focus on in-depth identification of sources. Project number FKZ 371325220 (in publication)

During regularly conducted necropsies entanglement and ingestion of marine debris is recorded. Furthermore, associated lesions are noted and recorded if they can be clearly assigned.

Within the framework of the project "Fishing for Litter" - a cooperative project between Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, NABU and Fishermen, the collected waste is sorted and documented to collect important information on the composition and origin of the waste.

Several further scientific publications with results of these r&d-projects:

According to the Commission Decision (2017/848/EC) which is specifying the requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, 2008/56/EC) following criteria need to be monitored for Descriptor 10 on Marine Litter: Macro litter on beaches, in the water column and the seafloor, micro litter in the sediments and the water column, ingestion of and entanglement in litter by marine species as well as other negative impacts on marine organisms and habitats. So far Germany has established long-term monitoring for beach litter, seafloor litter and for the North Sea in addition for plastic particles in the stomachs of Northern fulmars. For beach litter and litter in fulmar stomachs threshold values have been defined on EU level (max. 20 litter items/100 m coastline) and in OSPAR (less than 10% of dead found Northern fulmars should have more than 0.1g plastics in their stomachs).

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Within the framework of the project "Fishing for Litter" - a cooperative project between Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, NABU and Fishermen, the collected waste is sorted and documented to collect important information on the composition and origin of the waste.

Several further scientific publications with results of these r&d-projects:

Schernewski, G., A. Balciunas, D. Gräwe, U. Gräwe, K. Klesse, M. Schulz, S. Wesnigk, D. Fleet, M. Haseler, N. Möllman and S. Werner (2018). Beach macro-litter monitoring on southern Baltic beaches: results, experiences and recommendations. *J. Coast. Conserv.* 22: 5-25, doi: 10.1007/s11852-016-0489-x  
 Haseler, M., G. Schernewski, A. Balciunas and V. Sabaliauskaite (2018). Monitoring methods for large micro- and meso-litter and applications at Baltic beaches. *J. Coast. Conserv.* 22: 27-50, doi: 10.1007/s11852-017-0497-5

Unger, B., Herr, H., Viquerat, S., Gilles, A., Burkhardt-Holm, P., & Siebert, U. (2021). Opportunistically collected data from aerial surveys reveal spatio-temporal distribution patterns of marine debris in German waters. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 28(3), 2893-2903.

Philipp, C., Unger, B., & Siebert, U. (2022). Occurrence of Microplastics in Harbour Seals (*Phoca vitulina*) and Grey Seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) from German Waters. *Animals*, 12(5), 551.

Additional useful scientific publications:

Meyerjürgens, J., Schöneich-Argent, R. I., & Badewien, T. H. (2022). An exploratory analysis of seabed litter dynamics in the SE German Bight. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 177, 113515.

Roscher, L., Fehres, A., Reisel, L., Halbach, M., Scholz-Böttcher, B., Gerriets, M., ... & Gerdts, G. (2021).

Microplastic pollution in the Weser estuary and the German North Sea. *Environmental Pollution*, 288, 117681.

Gräwe, D., Haseler, M., & Schernewski, G. (2022). Meeresmüll an deutschen Ostseeestränden. In *Wasser, Energie und Umwelt* (pp. 567-577). Springer Vieweg, Wiesbaden.

## 9.2. Are these data publicly available?

Please provide web link.

No

## 9.3. What species of small cetaceans were found to have been impacted by marine debris? Please provide details in the table.

Please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

>>> In 2021 no cetaceans were found being impacted by marine debris

## 9.4. Are there any mitigation measures in place?

Mitigation measures might include changes in gear to prevent loss, entanglement response, adoption of measures to reduce land-based/boat-based sources of marine debris, etc.

Yes. Please provide information below.

Per measure, please provide: date of implementation, Region (Annex A), identify whether the measure has been effective and provide comments, and other relevant information.

>>> Measure: OSPAR Recommendations on:

1) Fishing for litter (2010/19)

2) Reduction of plastic pellet loss into the marine environment (2021/06)

3) Sustainable Education Programmes for Fishers (2019/01)

Date of implementation: Since 2010, 2019, 2021 Region: OII Southern North Sea

Has the measure been effective?  No.  Yes. Comments:

Other information: <https://www.ospar.org/convention/agreements/page2>

Measure: Ongoing implementation of following Directives:

1. Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC)
2. Directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment (Single Use Plastics Directive – 2019/904/EC)
3. Directive on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste (2019/883/EC)

Date of implementation: Ongoing Region: Choose an item.

Has the measure been effective?  No.  Yes. Comments:

1. The MSFD is the main instrument to achieve a Good Environmental Status of EU marine waters by applying an integrated approach to address all major anthropogenic pressures - see also 9.5

2. This EU Directive has been set up to tackle the 10 single-use plastic items most commonly found on Europe's beaches, and is promoting sustainable alternatives.

3. This Directive has been revised in 2019 and requires now, among other provisions, a 100% indirect fee system in ports including fishing harbours where regular waste disposal is entirely included in the harbour fee

Other information: /

Measure: Fishing for litter

Date of implementation: Since 2004 Region: OII Southern North Sea

Has the measure been effective?  No.  Yes. Comments:

Other information: <https://www.nabu.de/natur-und-landschaft/aktionen-und-projekte/meere-ohne-plastik/fishing-for-litter/index.html>

“Fishing for litter”: Fishing for litter is an environmental initiative, internationally coordinated by KIMO and OSPAR, aiming to reduce the amount of litter in the sea and to highlight the problem of marine litter among the public and the fishing sector. In Germany, where the initiative is coordinated by the NGO NABU, the composition of a subsample of the litter is assessed each year according to the OSPAR beach litter sampling protocol (see sub-chapter 2.1 of the QSR 2017)

“Strandmüll-Sammelaktionen”

Coastal Cleanup Day

Project “Dolly ROPe Suspension (DropS)”

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

[OSPAR Recommendations](#)

## 9.6. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on marine debris in your country.

List initiatives/projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information (e.g. link to OSPAR reports).

>>> Round Table Marine Litter: <https://muell-im-meer.de/ergebnisse/produkte>

FONA – Plastics in the Environment: <https://www.fona.de/de/massnahmen/foerdermassnahmen/plastik-in-der-umwelt.php>

Information webpage including education material from EUCC (in German) - The Coastal Union Germany e. V. (EUCC-D) German representation of the Coastal and Marine Union (EUCC):

<https://www.litterexplorer.org/mulfakten>

Information brochure regarding marine debris in the Baltic Sea (in German) “Weniger Müll – Mehr Strand - Eine Meeresmüllbroschüre für die Ostsee“ [https://www.lung.mv-regierung.de/dateien/meeresmuell\\_broschuere\\_web.pdf](https://www.lung.mv-regierung.de/dateien/meeresmuell_broschuere_web.pdf)

Tekman, Mine B., Walther, Bruno A., Peter, Corina, Gutow, Lars, & Bergmann, Melanie. (2022). Impacts of plastic pollution in the oceans on marine species, biodiversity and ecosystems. In *Impacts of plastic pollution in the oceans on marine species, biodiversity and ecosystems* (pp. 1-221). WWF Germany.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5898684>

Unger, B., Herr, H., Viquerat, S., Gilles, A., Burkhardt-Holm, P., & Siebert, U. (2021). Opportunistically collected data from aerial surveys reveal spatio-temporal distribution patterns of marine debris in German waters. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 28(3), 2893-2903.

Meyerjürgens, J., Schöneich-Argent, R. I., & Badewien, T. H. (2022). An exploratory analysis of seabed litter dynamics in the SE German Bight. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 177, 113515.

Philipp, C., Unger, B., & Siebert, U. (2022). Occurrence of Microplastics in Harbour Seals (*Phoca vitulina*) and Grey Seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) from German Waters. *Animals*, 12(5), 551.

Roscher, L., Fehres, A., Reisel, L., Halbach, M., Scholz-Böttcher, B., Gerriets, M., ... & Gerdts, G. (2021).

Microplastic pollution in the Weser estuary and the German North Sea. *Environmental Pollution*, 288, 117681.

Gräwe, D., Haseler, M., & Schernewski, G. (2022). Meeresmüll an deutschen Ostseestränden. In *Wasser, Energie und Umwelt* (pp. 567-577). Springer Vieweg, Wiesbaden.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

[http://](#)

[FONA – Plastics in the Environment](#)

[Round Table Marine Litter](#)

[Marine Debris Working Group](#)

## 9.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from marine debris in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same, or unknown?

Unknown

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable:  
>>> Please compare results of Unger, B., Herr, H., Benke, H., Böhmert, M., Burkhardt-Holm, P., Dähne, M., Hillmann, M., Wolff-Schmidt, K., Wohlsein, P. and Siebert, U. (2017). Marine debris in harbour porpoises and seals from German waters. *Marine Environmental Research* 130

## **D. Management of Cumulative Impacts**

### **15. Marine Spatial Planning**

**AIM:** to provide information on existing and proposed marine spatial plans and processes during the reporting period that may impact small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions 9.1, 8.9, 8.6, 8.3

A growing demand for use of maritime space increases pressure on ecosystems and marine resources. Marine ecosystems with good environmental status provide notable benefits to a number of economic outputs. Implementation of an integrated spatial planning and management approach can better mitigate negative impacts from maritime activities on marine environments. Spatial planning can support sustainable marine development through coordinated, coherent and transparent decision-making and the encouragement and identification of multi-purpose uses in relevant projects. Marine spatial planning is essential when selecting the most appropriate siting for marine-based projects. Particular attention should be given to critical habitat and relevant species, such as small cetaceans, in order to achieve good environmental status.

ASCOBANS Parties have agreed on a number of resolutions that support the integration of marine spatial planning into development processes. Small cetaceans benefit from good marine spatial planning and this is highlighted in the resolutions. Countries are requested to provide information relevant to their country in this regard.

#### **15.1. Please provide information in regard to current and foreseen marine spatial planning.**

National plan(s) and processes in force:

>>> 1. Maritime Spatial Planning of the EEZ (North- and Baltic Seas) – periodic update, consultation phase started 2020

2. Federal State of Schleswig-Holstein:

Landesentwicklungsplan Schleswig-Holstein (being reviewed) will contain a section about coastal waters, the National Park Wadden Sea SH is part of the areas of priority for nature protection.

Landesentwicklungsplan Schleswig-Holstein (being reviewed) transfers the determination of more areas of priority for nature protection (for example SACs and SPAs) to the regional planning level (Regionalpläne).

[http://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/L/landesplanung\\_raumordnung/raumordnungsplaene/landesentwicklungsplan/neue\\_r\\_landesentwicklungsplan.html](http://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/L/landesplanung_raumordnung/raumordnungsplaene/landesentwicklungsplan/neue_r_landesentwicklungsplan.html)

3. State Development Plan Mecklenburg Vorpommern (2016) : <http://www.regierung-mv.de/Landesregierung/em/Raumordnung/Landesraumentwicklungsprogramm>

4. State Development Niedersachsen (2017):

[http://www.ml.niedersachsen.de/themen/raumordnung\\_landesplanung/landesraumordnungsprogramm/landes-raumordnungsprogramm-niedersachsen-5062.html](http://www.ml.niedersachsen.de/themen/raumordnung_landesplanung/landesraumordnungsprogramm/landes-raumordnungsprogramm-niedersachsen-5062.html)

Further information regarding national plans, including links to online resources and maps where available:

>>> The first periodic update of the Maritime Spatial Planning (ROP) of the German EEZ in the North and Baltic (2009) started consultation of a draft plan in 2020. The final update is scheduled for 2021. Results of the Strategic Environmental Assessment are included in the Environmental Report, which is also part of the consultation procedure.

[https://www.bsh.de/EN/TOPICS/Offshore/Maritime\\_spatial\\_planning/maritime\\_spatial\\_planning\\_node.html](https://www.bsh.de/EN/TOPICS/Offshore/Maritime_spatial_planning/maritime_spatial_planning_node.html)

In 2020 a periodic update of the Site Development Plan for offshore Wind Energy in the German EEZ of the North and Baltic Sea was published:

[https://www.bsh.de/EN/TOPICS/Offshore/Sectoral\\_planning/sectoral\\_planning\\_node.html](https://www.bsh.de/EN/TOPICS/Offshore/Sectoral_planning/sectoral_planning_node.html)

Federal States:

<https://www.bolapla-sh.de/verfahren/bf4796a7-f729-11ea-a85e-0050569710bc/public/detail#procedureDetailsDocumentlist>

[http://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/L/landesplanung\\_raumordnung/raumordnungsplaene/landesentwicklungsplan/neue\\_r\\_landesentwicklungsplan.html](http://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/L/landesplanung_raumordnung/raumordnungsplaene/landesentwicklungsplan/neue_r_landesentwicklungsplan.html)

Within the 12sm zone, the Federal State of Lower Saxony is competent for spatial planning and the “Landes-Raumordnungsprogramm(LROP)” applies (also includes regulation on cable corridors within the Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park). For further information:

[https://www.ml.niedersachsen.de/startseite/themen/raumordnung\\_landesplanung/landes\\_raumordnungsprogramm/neubekanntmachung-der-lrop-verordnung-2017-158596.html](https://www.ml.niedersachsen.de/startseite/themen/raumordnung_landesplanung/landes_raumordnungsprogramm/neubekanntmachung-der-lrop-verordnung-2017-158596.html)  
State Development Plan Mecklenburg Vorpommern (2016) : <http://www.regierung-mv.de/Landesregierung/em/Raumordnung/Landesraumentwicklungsprogramm>  
State Development Niedersachsen (2017):  
[http://www.ml.niedersachsen.de/themen/raumordnung\\_landesplanung/landesraumordnungsprogramm/landesraumordnungsprogramm-niedersachsen-5062.html](http://www.ml.niedersachsen.de/themen/raumordnung_landesplanung/landesraumordnungsprogramm/landesraumordnungsprogramm-niedersachsen-5062.html)  
[http://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/L/landesplanung\\_raumordnung/raumordnungsplaene/landesentwicklungsplan/neuer\\_landesentwicklungsplan.html](http://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/L/landesplanung_raumordnung/raumordnungsplaene/landesentwicklungsplan/neuer_landesentwicklungsplan.html)

#### Transboundary plan(s) and processes in force:

>>> The BSH has been a partner in European projects on maritime spatial planning since 2009. The projects in both maritime regions are aiming at better coordination and harmonization of maritime planning processes. The main topics are energy, shipping and the environment.  
In the North Sea region, with the exception of Denmark, all neighbouring countries have already prepared and approved maritime spatial plans - with varying degrees of detail, focus or legal obligation. In the Baltic Sea region, Lithuania, in addition to Germany, has so far established a valid spatial planning plan which also covers the maritime areas. Other countries are at different stages of the planning process.  
Within the European Union the member states have the competence for spatial planning, therefore appropriate measures for cross-border maritime spatial planning is an issue of the member states too. They are supported in this by the expert group on maritime spatial planning of all member states, which regularly exchanges information, and, furthermore, by the so-called MSP platform on the Internet.  
With the Helsinki Commission Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM) and the Oslo-Paris Convention (OSPAR), there are, in addition to the competent national authorities, intergovernmental structures that pursue objectives for the entire Baltic Sea and North Sea that require cross-border coordination. HELCOM, an intergovernmental institution for the protection of the marine environment in the Baltic Sea region, aims to further expand cross-sectoral cooperation in areas such as maritime transport, maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management by 2020 and to further promote the implementation of the ecosystem approach.  
[https://www.bsh.de/EN/TOPICS/Offshore/Maritime\\_spatial\\_planning/International\\_spatial\\_planning/international\\_spatial\\_planning\\_node.html](https://www.bsh.de/EN/TOPICS/Offshore/Maritime_spatial_planning/International_spatial_planning/international_spatial_planning_node.html)

#### Transboundary plan(s) and processes in preparation:

>>> /

Further information regarding transboundary plans, including links to online resources and maps where available:

>>> A number of projects focussing on transboundary cooperation on maritime spatial planning with participation of BSH are listed below:

Interreg-Projekt Baltic LINes  
(Duration January 2016 to February 2019)  
Interreg-Projekt NorthSEE  
(Duration January 2016 to July 2019)  
DG Mare Projekt PanBaltic SCOPE  
(Duration January 2018 to December 2019)  
DG Mare Projekt SEANSE  
(Laufzeit Februar 2018 bis Februar 2020)  
BaltSeaPlan  
(Duration 2009 to 2012)  
PartiSEApate  
(Duration 2012 to 2014)  
Baltic SCOPE  
(Duration 2015 to 2017)

### **15.2. Have there been any other instances/issues in your country regarding marine spatial planning during the reporting period.**

Yes

Provide provide details:

Provide provide details:

>>> In 2020 a great effort took place on the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the periodic update of MSP for the German EEZ. Both drafts of MSP-plan and Environmental Report have been open to consultation. The

first consultation phase was finished in December 2020.

### **15.3. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on marine spatial planning in your country.**

List initiatives/projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information.

>>> Nachtsheim, D. A., Viquerat, S., Unger, B., Ramírez-Martínez, N. C., Siebert, U., & Gilles, A. (2020). "Small cetacean in a human high-use area: Trends in harbour porpoise abundance in the North Sea over two decades," *Frontiers in Marine Science* 7: 1135. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2020.606609>

BfN 2020: Naturschutzfachlicher Planungsbeitrag des Bundesamtes für Naturschutz zur Fortschreibung der Raumordnungspläne für die deutsche Ausschließliche Wirtschaftszone in der Nord- und Ostsee  
[https://www.bfn.de/fileadmin/BfN/meeresundkuestenschutz/Dokumente/2020-08-14\\_Naturschutzfachlicher-Planungsbeitrag-Fortschreibung.pdf](https://www.bfn.de/fileadmin/BfN/meeresundkuestenschutz/Dokumente/2020-08-14_Naturschutzfachlicher-Planungsbeitrag-Fortschreibung.pdf)

### III. Surveys and Research

#### A. Biological Information (per species)

##### 1. Abundance Estimates

**AIM:** to provide new information on abundance and life history parameters of small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7, 5.5, 4.7, 3.5, 3.3

Abundance estimates and information on life history are of critical importance for the determination of broader species attributes such as populations levels, health and overall status. These parameters can contribute towards determination of GES and provide a reference for mortality events. Abundance and life history parameters are typically assessed from monitoring programmes. Fluctuations in these parameters can provide insight into trends in populations. Information on abundance and life history parameters can inform the need for mitigation measures, and regional assessment of these parameters allows for a more spatially targeted and concentrated response to support national assessments.

In the ASCOBANS Area, small cetacean abundance and life history should be monitored in response to a number of ASCOBANS resolutions. Continued monitoring of these parameters is essential to understanding current status and trends.

##### 1.1. Did your country conduct national dedicated surveys on abundance and distribution during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below. Attach maps separately, clearly marking which survey they apply to.

Note: Information relevant to SCANS-III is to be provided in Questions 1.2.

Yes. Please provide details in table.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Sec-III A 1.1.xlsx](#)

##### 1.2. Other relevant new research/work/collaboration on abundance estimates in regard to small cetaceans in your country during the reporting period.

List initiatives/projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study and information relevant to SCANS-III; web links to other relevant information.

>>> Nachtsheim, D.A., Viquerat, S., Ramírez-Martínez, N.C., Unger, B., Siebert, U. and Gilles, A. (2021). Small cetacean in a human high-use area: Trends in harbour porpoise abundance in the North Sea over two decades. *Frontiers in Marine Science* 7: 1135

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

[Nachtsheim, D.A., et al. \(2021\). Small cetacean in a human high-use area: Trends in harbour porpoise abundance in the North Sea over two decades. Frontiers in Marine Science 7: 1135](#)

##### 1.3. Is the abundance of species in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same, or unknown?

Decreasing

#### 2. New Information on Life History Parameters

##### 2.1. Is there new information on the following life history parameters in the reporting period?

For each life history parameters, please identify the species and provide web links and details where applicable.

	1. Yes / No	2. Describe per species
Other relevant factors	No	
Age and sex structure	No	
Diet	yes	Stomach content analyses of 61 harbour porpoises
Longevity	No	
Potential reproductive span/capacity	No	

Calf and adult mortality rates	No	
Inter-birth intervals	No	
Age of sexual and physical maturity	yes	Species HP Harbour porpoise: 58 investigated carcasses Age: unknown: 8; adult: 20; juvenile: 29; newborn: 6 fetus; 1 Sex: male:29 ; female: 27; Unknown: 8

## B. Monitoring Programmes

### 3. Overview of Current Monitoring and Survey Schemes

**AIM:** to provide information on the progress of monitoring programmes, relevant methodologies and aims thereof, and status of small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.8, 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7 Monitoring programmes provide important data on biological and environmental attributes, such as population status, abundance and spatial-temporal distribution. They create opportunities for new research and development, including potential improvements to methodology for monitoring in terms of accuracy, practicality and cost efficiency.

In the ASCOBANS Area, application of coherent monitoring programmes focused on small cetaceans, which collect and provide objective, robust and comparable data, is a key component in understanding and improving the conservation status of small cetaceans through appropriate management. Parties have agreed to design, implement and support relevant monitoring programmes through a number of resolutions. Such efforts are also supported by legislation from a number of bodies which identify monitoring as a requirement in management systems. Additionally, Parties have been encouraged to coordinate their monitoring programmes, which promotes international cooperation and synergies. Parties have also been encouraged to review such monitoring programmes and propose improvements for the betterment of conservation efforts.

It is the interest of ASCOBANS to understand the current monitoring programmes utilised, their outputs, and future activities in the Agreement Area. Countries are requested to provide information relevant to their activities as well as potential improvements to such programmes and efforts.

#### 3.1. Did your country have national monitoring programmes that enabled assessment of the Conservation Status of small cetaceans in your waters (i.e. provides abundance estimates and/or life history parameters and information on pressures) during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

Yes. Please provide details in the table.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Sec-III\\_B\\_3.1.xlsx](#)

#### 3.2. Please provide the relevant information regarding aerial surveying activities.

Provide the number of surveys, area covered, relevant species, and timeframe of the survey.

>>> Number of surveys: 6

Area Covered: German EEZ of the North Sea and Baltic Sea

Species: HP Harbour porpoise

Timeframe of survey: March-August

#### 3.3. Please provide the relevant information regarding Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM).

Provide the location of moored instruments, timeframe of the survey, the relevant species, and the make and model of instruments used.

>>> see attached table

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Sec-II\\_B\\_3.3\\_Information\\_PAM.xlsx](#)

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

[Positions PAM Baltic Sea](#)

#### 3.4. Are any of these programmes carried out in collaboration with other countries?

No

#### 3.5. Please provide details on any planned activities relevant to monitoring programmes.

Provide web links if available.

>>> National monitoring program (surveys and acoustic monitoring) are continuing  
SCANS IV survey is planned for July 2022 (coordinated by Institute for Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife Research (ITAW), Germany)

### **3.6. Relevant outputs/findings from monitoring programmes to note.**

Per species, please identify the relevant outputs.

Provide web links if available.

>>> Results of Areal Surveys and Passiv Acoustic Monitoring Programs:

<https://geodienste.bfn.de/c-pod?lang=de>

<https://geodienste.bfn.de/schweinswalmonitoring?lang=de>

<https://geodienste.bfn.de/schweinswalverbreitung?lang=de>

<https://www.deutsches-meeresmuseum.de/wissenschaft/sichtungen/sichtungskarte/>

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

[Results Survey](#)

[Sightings Maps Balt Sea](#)

[Results PAM](#)

### **C. Other Research (not mentioned elsewhere in Section II, II, or IV)**

**Please provide relevant information in regard to other research (not mentioned elsewhere in Sections II, III, IV).**

Per project, please provide the institution, duration, aim(s)/objective(s), and the method.

>>> Project name: Mini SCANS

Institutions: ITAW, Aarhus University (DK), Naturhistoriska riksmuseet (SWE)

Duration: Between 24 June 2020 and 10 July 2020

Aim(s) / Objective(s): Assessment of Belt Sea population of harbour porpoise

Method: line-transect distance sampling methodology

Results: 20210913\_Report\_MiniSCANSII\_2020\_revised.pdf (tiho-hannover.de)

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

[MiniSCANS-II: Aerial survey for harbour porpoises in the western Baltic Sea, Belt Sea, the Sound and Kattegat in 2020](#)

## IV. Use of Strandings Records

### A. Stranding Network and Strandings

**AIM:** to provide information on stranding events and demonstrate progress of stranding networks in understanding, monitoring and mitigating strandings of small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: **8.10 (Rev.MOP9)**, 8.7, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.4, 7.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7

Stranding of cetaceans is an ever-present occurrence and analysis through necropsy and sampling can provide indications of reason for injury and death. Stranding numbers also provide information on population status, abundance and distribution. Effective response to strandings contributes to the maintenance of favourable conservation status of small cetaceans and also has implications for animal welfare. Comprehensive stranding networks are a critical asset in managing small cetacean strandings and have resulted in large numbers of animals rescued and returned to sea. These networks also have the capacity to guide the public on animal welfare, human health and safety considerations during stranding events.

In the effort to mitigate the anthropogenic causes of these occurrences, Parties have agreed to measures through a number of resolutions. Continued monitoring of stranding causation and further developing guidance for best practices in stranding response and necropsies was identified by Parties as important tasks to pursue, as was setting up stranding response networks. This information is to align with appropriate sampling practices and countries should ensure that the data is available for researchers.

Additionally, development and support of international strandings databases and regular reporting is conducted through relevant research institutes and stranding schemes. ASCOBANS Secretariat encourages the ongoing funding and support of engagement with organizations for further development of guidelines, best practices and maintaining dataflow for capacity building across stranding networks.

To better understand the extent to which stranding events occur and how these events are managed, it is the interest of ASCOBANS for countries to provide the relevant information on these occurrences within the Agreement Area, procedures undertaken in response to stranding events, necropsies and information on stranding networks.

#### 1.1. Is there a national stranding network in place?

Yes

#### 1.2. Does the national stranding network cover the whole, or part of the reporting country's coastline?

Whole coastline

#### 1.3. Are necropsies carried out to determine cause of death?

Yes

#### 1.4. Is there a database of strandings?

Yes. Continue to Question 1.5.

#### 1.5. Is there data available online or downloadable on request?

Yes

#### 1.6. Provide details for any new institution(s) responsible for a stranding database, responding to live-strandings, collection of carcasses, and for conducting necropsies.

Please identify the new responsible institution(s) and provide their: responsibility (responding to live-strandings, collection of carcasses, necropsies, stranding database), phone number, email, and website.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Sec-IV A 1.6 Institutions stranding database.xlsx](#)

#### 1.7. Were cases photographed, measured or sampled even if not collected for necropsy during the reporting period?

Yes

#### 1.8. Were there recorded stranding events in your country during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in **this table** - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below. Provide details relevant for recorded stranding events during the reporting period.

Yes

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Sec-IV\\_A\\_1.8\\_0.xlsx](#)

**1.9. Were any necropsies conducted during the reporting period?**

Yes. Provide information below.

Per necropsy, please provide: the protocol used for dissection/methodologies/collection of samples etc., number of carcasses necropsied, what causes of death were identified (add percentage if available), and any additional comments.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Sec-IV\\_A\\_1.9\\_Necropsies.xlsx](#)

## V. Legislation

### A. Overview of Legislative Framework

**AIM:** to provide information on national, regional and international legislation and guidelines relevant to small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.10 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.8, 8.6, 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, 6.2, 6.1, 5.7, 5.4

Legislation and guidelines are a key component of efforts to support favourable conservation status of small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area. A number of existing legislation and guidelines bear relevance to conservation efforts for small cetaceans on national, regional and international scales. Regular updating and adaptation of guidelines and legislation (where applicable) can ensure ongoing prevention, minimization and reduction of negative impacts of marine activities on small cetaceans. In addition, these actions support transparent and reliable management.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed to support the requisition, development and the implementation of legislation and guidelines to assess, minimize and mitigate pressures on favourable conservation status of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area. Parties have committed to these actions through a number of resolutions regarding pressures known to be detrimental to small cetaceans. It is in the interest of ASCOBANS for countries to provide information on current and foreseen national, regional and international legislation and guidelines relevant to small cetaceans in the Agreement Area.

#### **1.1. Please provide the applicable information regarding legislation and guidelines relevant to small cetaceans below.**

Are national guidelines relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?

No

Is national legislation relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?

No

## **VII. Other Matters**

### **A. Other information or comments important for the Agreement.**

Opportunity to include other information relevant to the topics covered in this form but which are missing.

>>> After federal elections at the end of the year 2021 a new German Government was established. -  
The new Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) is under the lead of Minister Steffi Lemke, who had shown already in her former parliamentary period a special interest in marine conservation issues including cetaceans / harbour porpoises.

### **B. Difficulties in implementing the Agreement.**

>>> No difficulties.

### **C. Burning Issues.**

>>> No burning issues