

Agenda Item 17.1

Financial and Administrative Issues
Administrative Issues

Document 17.1

Report on Administrative Issues 2022-2023

Action Requested

- Take note
- Comment
- Agree on the way forward regarding UMOJA costs

Submitted by

Secretariat



Note: Delegates are kindly reminded to bring their own document copies to the meeting, if needed.

REPORT ON ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES 2022-2023

1. This document provides an update to the report prepared for the 27th Meeting of the Advisory Committee ([ASCOBANS/AC27/Doc.18.1](#)).

Secretariat Arrangements

2. There have been no changes in the Secretariat arrangements since AC27.

Staff Arrangements

3. There have been no changes in staffing since AC27.
4. During the reporting period, the Secretariat has also received support from interns recruited by the CMS Aquatic Species Unit, namely Ciara Duggan, Mikayla Schwarz, and Xin Kin Lim. They have helped with the national reports, website content, reviewing and drafting workshop reports, and conducting research.

Projects and Initiatives

5. During the current reporting period, the Secretariat has administered the following contracts:
 - Coordination of the ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena L.*) in the North Sea (Sea Watch Foundation);
 - Coordination of the ASCOBANS Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises and the Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise Population in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat (Coalition Clean Baltic and later Ida Carlén);
 - Using fishers' knowledge to understand the use of alternative gears to static gillnets in the ASCOBANS Region (Whale and Dolphin Conservation);
 - Prediction of the cochlear frequency maps of harbour porpoise (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, ITAW/TiHo);
 - Status of the Iberian harbour porpoise (Fiona L. Read);
 - Update and revision of the ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea (Atlantic Technological University);
 - Coordination of the ASCOBANS Species Action Plan for North-East Atlantic Common Dolphin (Sinéad Murphy);
 - Developing guidelines for cetacean-friendly marine spatial planning (Cormac Walsh); and
 - Small cetacean conservation objectives in relation to anthropogenic removals (Sea Watch Foundation).

Other Administrative Issues: Increase of Corporate Initiative Costs (Umoja Costs) for the CMS Family Secretariats

6. This issue was introduced to AC26 ([ASCOBANS/AC26/Doc.16.1](#), paragraphs 8-13). These costs are currently covered by the project support cost (PSC) income allocated to the CMS Family Secretariats. In 2024, each Secretariat starts to pay their apportioned Umoja costs, including ASCOBANS.
7. The Umoja cost is allocated per staff member, and ASCOBANS is to be charged for two staff members. The exact cost for 2024 is not known yet, but is estimated to be ca. \$2,500 per staff member. It is proposed that the Umoja cost in 2024 be taken from the expected positive balance of the Operating Costs in the ASCOBANS core budget.
8. For the next budgetary period of 2025-2028, it will be required to reflect Umoja costs as a part of the operating cost under the ASCOBANS budget proposal, to be covered from the core funds.