

Agenda Item 3

Species Action Plan

Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour  
Porpoises (Jastarnia Plan)

**Document 3.1**

Action Points from the 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
Jastarnia Group

**Action Requested**

- Review
- Adopt

Submitted by

Jastarnia Group



**ACTION POINTS FROM THE 19<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE JASTARNIA GROUP**

*(to be presented to the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee)*

Reference	Action Point (and old reference)	Jastarnia Plan		WBBK Plan		Long-/short-term + Deadline if possible	Priority (High / Medium / Low)
		Applies	Mandate	Applies	Mandate		
JG19/AP1	Parties shall establish or further improve local and national monitoring programmes for Harbour Porpoise abundance and occurrence and to further ensure these are aligned in terms of timing and methodology between countries, in order to complement large-scale international monitoring activities. (JG17/AP1)	X	<b>MON-01:</b> Implement and harmonize long-term continual acoustic Harbour Porpoise monitoring	X	<b>Objective d:</b> Monitoring the status of the population	Long-term	High
JG19/AP2	All Parties, and other countries bordering the Baltic Sea, are strongly encouraged to support SAMBAH-II, specifically in terms of fundraising nationally in order to carry out the monitoring for SAMBAH-II. Countries are also encouraged to support attempts to find funds for analyses of abundance and distribution. (Updated JG18/AP2)	X				Short-term	High
JG19/AP3	Parties are strongly encouraged to continue to undertake and cooperate on the SCANS surveys. (Updated JG18/AP3)			X	<b>Rec.7:</b> Estimate trends in abundance of Harbour Porpoises in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat	Long-term	High
JG19/AP4	Parties are strongly encouraged to use the data provided by the most recent abundance and distribution surveys, national monitoring programmes, acoustic research projects and any other available data, in connection with the establishment and evaluation of MPAs for Harbour Porpoises, as well as with regard to	X	<b>MIT-06:</b> Expand the network of protected areas for Harbour Porpoises, improve its connectivity, and develop and implement appropriate management plans including monitoring schemes for these areas			Long-term	Medium

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	management plans and mitigation measures. (Updated JG18/AP4)						
JG19/AP5	Parties should investigate possible detrimental effects of various types of sound and disturbance on Harbour Porpoises (including pinger signals, noise from vessels, seismic surveys, underwater explosions, wind parks or construction) both on the individual and on a population level. (Updated JG18/AP5)	X	<b>RES-07:</b> Improve knowledge on impact of impulsive and continuous anthropogenic underwater noise on Harbour Porpoises, and development of threshold limits of significant disturbance and GES indicators	X	<b>Objective e:</b> Ensuring habitat quality favourable to the conservation of the Harbour Porpoise	Long-term	Medium
JG19/AP6	Parties should investigate how underwater noise affects the detection of harbour porpoises by PAM equipment.					Short-term	High
JG19/AP7	Parties are encouraged to agree on how to implement the EU MSFD indicators and thresholds for underwater noise in the Baltic Sea Region, taking into account the critically endangered status of the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise as well as relevant regional sound propagation properties and needs for precaution for example concerning levels of noise from leisure crafts. Parties are also encouraged to develop HELCOM-wide coordinated guidelines for noise mitigation, taking into account the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities. (Updated JG18/AP6).	X	<b>MIT-05:</b> Implement regionally harmonized national threshold limits and guidelines for regulation of underwater noise	X	<b>Rec.11:</b> Restore or maintain habitat quality	Medium-term	High
JG19/AP8	Parties are required to establish systems to effectively monitor bycatch covering all sizes of fishing vessels, in line with the HELCOM Roadmap on fisheries data in order to assess incidental bycatch and fisheries impact on benthic biotopes in the Baltic Sea and the ICES	X	<b>MON-03:</b> Monitor and estimate Harbour Porpoise bycatch rates and estimate total annual bycatch	X	<b>Rec.6:</b> Estimate total annual bycatch	Medium-term	High

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	Special Request Advice on emergency measures to prevent bycatch of common dolphin and Baltic Proper harbour porpoise in the Northeast Atlantic. (JG17/AP7)						
JG19/AP9	Parties are strongly encouraged to carry out spatio-temporal risk-assessments of Harbour Porpoise bycatch using Harbour Porpoise distribution and fishing effort data. (JG17/AP8)	X	<b>RES-04:</b> Carry out a spatio-temporal risk assessment of Harbour Porpoise bycatch	X		Medium-term	High
JG19/AP10	Parties should implement and where needed further develop, in cooperation with stakeholders, any available fishing gear that does not cause, or is shown to significantly reduce, harbour porpoise bycatch, and strive to replace static nets with such alternative gear, especially in MPAs, as soon as possible. (JG17/AP9)	X	<b>RES-05:</b> Further develop and improve fishing gear that is commercially viable with no Harbour Porpoise bycatch <b>MIT-01:</b> Implement the use of fishing gear that is commercially viable with no Harbour Porpoise bycatch	X	<b>Objective b:</b> Mitigation of bycatch	Long-term	High
JG19/AP11	When alternative gear is not sufficient to eliminate harbour porpoise bycatch, Parties should promote the use and further development of pingers not audible to seals and alerting devices other than pingers. (Updated JG17/AP10)	X	<b>RES-05:</b> Further develop and improve fishing gear that is commercially viable with no Harbour Porpoise bycatch	X	<b>Objective b:</b> Mitigation of bycatch	Long-term	High
JG19/AP12	Parties should monitor the use and functioning of dedicated harbour porpoise deterrent and alerting devices, including studies to assess their effect on bycatch reduction and on harbour porpoise behaviour and distribution. (Updated JG18/AP11)	X	<b>MIT-03:</b> Continue or implement the use of acoustic deterrent devices (pingers) and acoustic alerting devices proven to be successful when and where deemed appropriate <b>RES-06:</b> Improve the knowledge on potential population-level effects of the use of pingers, and develop	X	<b>Rec. 9:</b> Ensure a non-detrimental use of pingers by examining habitat exclusion and long-term effects of pingers	Long-term	High

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			acoustic devices for bycatch mitigation further				
JG19/AP13	Parties should liaise with and provide information to the national military forces in relation to the possible interference of pingers with military underwater acoustic activities.					Short-term	High
JG19/AP14	Parties should liaise with and provide information to the national military forces in relation to the possible security concerns of using passive acoustic devices.					Short-term	High
JG19/AP15	With respect to recreational fisheries, Parties should work towards banning or limiting the use of those types of gear known to pose a threat to harbour porpoises, or introduce effective mitigation measures shown to significantly reduce or eliminate bycatch. (JG17/AP12)	X	<b>MIT-02:</b> Reduce or eliminate fishing effort with gillnets or other gear known to cause porpoise bycatch in areas with higher Harbour Porpoise density or occurrence, and/or in areas with higher risk of Harbour Porpoise bycatch, according to spatio-temporal risk assessments	X	<b>Rec.3:</b> Protect Harbour Porpoises in their key habitats in minimizing bycatch as far as possible <b>Rec.5:</b> Where possible replace gillnet fisheries known to be associated with high porpoise bycatch with alternative fishing gear known to be less harmful	Long-term	High
JG19/AP16	Parties are encouraged to coordinate and standardize monitoring of stranded and bycaught animals, determining the appropriate number of animals to be necropsied in each country, ensuring that health, contaminant load, life-history parameters and cause of death is examined in a coherent manner, and that tissue samples are collected from all carcasses from the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise distribution range. All necropsies and sampling should be carried out in accordance with the ASCOBANS-ACCOBAMS <i>Best practice on cetacean post-</i>	X	<b>MON-04:</b> Collect dead specimens and assess health status, contaminant levels, cause of mortality and life-history parameters of Harbour Porpoises	X	<b>Rec.8:</b> Monitor population health status, contaminant load and causes of mortality	Long-term	Medium

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	<i>mortem investigation and tissue sampling.</i> (Updated JG17/AP13)						
JG19/AP17	All Parties and Range States should establish programmes for recording bycatch, strandings and opportunistic sightings for inclusion in a national database, and report annually to the ASCOBANS/HELCOM harbour porpoise database. (Updated JG18/CP14)	X	<b>PACB-01:</b> Improve communication and education for increased public awareness and collection of live observations and dead specimens of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise	X	<b>Objective d:</b> Monitoring the status of the population	Long-term	Medium
JG19/AP18	ASCOBANS should join efforts with HELCOM to liaise with the European Commission and other relevant bodies to improve the implementation by Member States of the EU Technical Measures Regulation and the Data Collection Framework to better incorporate and tackle bycatch concerns. (JG17/AP16)	X	<b>COOP-02:</b> Strive for close cooperation between ASCOBANS and other international bodies	X	<b>Rec.2:</b> Cooperate with and inform other relevant bodies about the Conservation Plan	Long-term	Medium
JG19/AP19	Parties should ensure that Belt Sea and Baltic Proper populations of harbour porpoises are assessed and managed as separate populations, e.g. in management plans and national redlists. (Updated JG18/AP16)	X	<b>Other</b>	X	<b>Other</b>	Long-term	Medium
JG19/AP20	Countries are urged to, without delay, prepare a BALTFISH Joint Recommendation that includes effective bycatch mitigation measures outside MPAs, in areas of high and medium importance for harbour porpoises according to the map prepared by experts for HELCOM <a href="#">HOLAS 3</a> , noting that coastal habitats are also of high importance for harbour porpoises. (Updated JG18/AP19)	X	<b>Objective:</b> Monitor, estimate and reduce bycatch			Short-term	High
JG19/AP20	Countries are also urged to prepare a BALTFISH Joint Recommendation that includes effective bycatch mitigation measures outside MPAs, in areas of low harbour porpoise		<b>Objective:</b> Monitor, estimate and reduce bycatch			Short-term	High

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	occurrence. It is noted that the real-time closures/moving-on procedures as discussed by BALTFISH has strong limitations to prevent or mitigate harbour porpoise bycatch. Despite this, if real-time closures/moving-on procedures are implemented, this should not prevent or delay the application of effective mitigation measures. (Updated JG18/AP19)						
JG19/AP21	Parties are urged to ensure a proposal to list the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise in CMS Appendix I is brought to CMS COP14 in 2023. (JG17/AP21)	X	<b>Other</b>			Short-term	Medium
JG19/AP22	It was agreed that the delimitation between the North Sea and WBBK harbour porpoise plans should be the management unit border identified by Sveegaard et al 2015 in Kattegat at 56.95°N. The area for the WBBK should have its eastern delimitation at the management unit border identified by Sveegaard et al 2015 at 13.5°E, while the Jastarnia plan area should be east of 13.0°E, according to the ICES scientific advice of May 2020. The overlap of the WBBK and Jastarnia plans areas will be considered in the Jastarnia Group's discussions of the plans. (JG17/AP22)	X	<b>Other</b>	X	<b>Other</b>	Short-term	Medium
JG19/AP23	Parties are strongly encouraged to carry out spatio-temporal risk-assessments of Harbour Porpoise bycatch using recent Harbour Porpoise distribution and fishing effort data for the entire Baltic Sea Region to determine additional areas for bycatch mitigation for the Baltic Proper population. In the absence of pinger use, the only immediate mitigation measure possible to protect harbour porpoises	X	<b>RES-04:</b> Carry out a spatio-temporal risk assessment of Harbour Porpoise bycatch  <b>Objective:</b> Monitor, estimate and reduce bycatch			Long-term	High

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	is further closures of static net fisheries in areas of importance to harbour porpoises. In these areas, gear types known to not cause bycatch of harbour porpoises (such as pots, traps, and long lines) can be used. (Updated JG18/AP22)						
JG19/ AP24	It is recommended that a representative from the Jastarnia Group as well as relevant experts be invited to the workshop(s) agreed by ASCOBANS AC26 to consider navies' mitigation practice in the use of military sonar and management of other activities that can contribute to potentially harmful underwater noise, including the removal and/or detonation of UXO. (Updated JG18/AP24)	X	<b>Action MIT-05:</b> Implement regionally harmonized national threshold limits and guidelines for regulation of underwater noise		<b>Rec.11:</b> Restore or maintain habitat quality	Short-term	Medium
JG19/ AP25	Jastarnia Group to send a letter (signed by the Chair) to all Baltic Proper Range States and their national navies, raising concern of the effect of underwater explosions to harbour porpoises, and to inform them about effective mitigation measures. (JG18/AP25)	X	<b>Action MIT-05:</b> Implement regionally harmonized national threshold limits and guidelines for regulation of underwater noise			Short-term	Medium
JG19/ AP26	AC28 is requested to make funding available for a consultant to do the revision of the <i>Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise Population in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat</i> , so that the document is ready by MOP10 in 2024. (Updated JG18/AP28)			X	<b>Other</b>	Short-term	Medium