

# CONSERVATION PLAN

for

**THE SHORT-BEAKED  
COMMON DOLPHIN**



Threat matrix for common dolphin: Northeast Atlantic		Greater North Sea	Celtic Seas	Biscay & Iberia	Macaronesia	
Pollution & other chemical changes	Contaminants	M	M	M	M	
	Nutrient enrichment	L	L	L	L	
Physical loss	Habitat loss		L	L	L	
Physical damage	Habitat degradation	L	L	L	L	
Other physical pressures	Litter (inc. microplastics and discarded fishing gear)	L	L	L	L	
	Underwater noise changes	Military Sonar	M	M	L	L
		Seismic surveys	M	M	M	M
		Pile-driving	M	M		
		Shipping	M	M	L	M
	Barrier to movement (offshore wind-farm, wave or tidal device arrays)		L	L	L	
	Death or injury by collision	with ships	M	M	L	L
with tidal devices						
Biological pressures	Introduction of microbial pathogens	L	L	L	L	
	Prey depletion	M	L	L	L	
	Marine mammal bycatch	H	H	H	M	
	Disturbance (e.g. Whale watching)	L	L	L	L	
	Deliberate killing + hunting			L		

**ACTION 1:** Instigate the Species Action Plan and ensure its effectiveness

**ACTION 2:** Further our understanding on population structure by assessing and developing suitable techniques for these highly mobile small delphinids, e.g. analysis using SNPs, ecological markers showing an integration of tens of years (i.e., a few generations)

**ACTION 3:** Improve understanding of inter-seasonal and inter-annual variation in movements and densities in relation to important prey species and climate change, and areas that overlap with anthropogenic activities likely to impact population/management unit(s). Monitor important prey species of common dolphins and identify spatial areas of concern for fisheries management measures

**ACTION 4:** Implement a conservation management framework procedure involving all relevant stakeholders

**ACTION 5:** Improve estimates of bycatch rates in the region in order to support conservation efforts, including by providing data to ICES and the European Commission

**ACTION 6:** Identify the priority bycatch issues and take action to address these in order to meet ASCOBANS's objectives

**ACTION 7:** Implement and assess gear modifications and mitigation measures to reduce bycatch

**ACTION 8:** Monitor health and nutritional status, diet, life history parameters, and causes of mortality in the North east Atlantic

**ACTION 9:** Continue screening and assessment of the occurrence and effects of hazardous substances, and exposure to marine debris (including microdebris)

**ACTION 10:** Assess the risks from anthropogenic sound, and improve mitigation measures that are specific to the common dolphin

**ACTION 11:** Maintain a watching brief on range shifts in the species in the North east Atlantic due to the impacts of climate change

**ACTION 12:** Maintain a watching brief on potential increases in anthropogenic activities that lead to incidences of death, injury or adverse health effects including ship/boat strikes, ecotourism, and changes (deterioration) in habitat quality

**ACTION 13:** Develop approaches to take cumulative impacts into account in conservation actions