

Agenda Item 4.1

Priorities in the Implementation of the
Triennium Work Plan (2010-2012)
ASCOBANS Baltic Recovery Plan
(Jastarnia Plan)

Document 4-02

**Action Points of the 8th Meeting of the
ASCOBANS Jastarnia Group**

Action Requested

- Take note of the Action Points agreed
- Comment
- Endorse the Action Points

Submitted by

Jastarnia Group



NOTE:
IN THE INTERESTS OF ECONOMY, DELEGATES ARE KINDLY REMINDED TO BRING THEIR
OWN COPIES OF DOCUMENTS TO THE MEETING

Secretariat's Note

The full report of the 8th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Jastarnia Group, held at the UN Campus, Bonn, Germany, on 31 January - 2 February 2012, will be made available as AC19/Doc.4-02 Addendum.

ACTION POINTS OF THE 8TH JASTARNIA GROUP MEETING

BYCATCH REDUCTION

- 1) A small drafting group should develop briefing notes on ASCOBANS positions regarding bycatch. If and to the extent appropriate, these could be based on any drafts that the North Sea Coordinator may prepare for fora in that area. These briefing notes should be used by anyone representing ASCOBANS at Baltic Sea RACs and other meetings of relevant EU and Baltic Sea bodies in order to maintain a consistent and appropriate approach.
- 2) A small drafting group should develop briefing notes on ASCOBANS positions regarding bycatch, if possible based on any drafts that the North Sea Coordinator may prepare for fora in this area. These should be used by anyone representing ASCOBANS at Baltic RACs and other meetings of relevant EU and Baltic Sea bodies in order to maintain a consistent and appropriate approach.
- 3) Given the positive experiences in the Danish fishery, Parties should implement video surveillance widely in order to document bycatch of porpoises and identify and implement effective mitigation measures, and at the same time reduce discards of fish. Currently video surveillance is the most accurate measure for bycatch estimates and total documentation of the fishery, applicable also to small vessels, and meets the requirements of Article 12 of the Habitats Directive.
- 4) Noting the successful application of cod pots in Sweden, Parties should undertake or continue efforts to test and implement pots, traps and other porpoise-friendly gear.
- 5) With respect to recreational fisheries, Parties should work towards banning those types of gear known to pose a threat to harbour porpoises.
- 6) Noting that Regulation 812/2004 in its current form does not protect harbour porpoises in the Baltic Sea sufficiently and that according to EC Communication (2011) 578, a revision is not foreseen in the near future and that bycatch mitigation measures will probably in future be addressed in the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), Baltic Sea Range States are urged to implement comprehensively and without delay the bycatch mitigation measures laid down in Recommendations 1-4 of the Jastarnia Plan.
- 7) Given that the Jastarnia Group has the most specific expertise related to harbour porpoise conservation in the Baltic Sea area and in light of the specific problems and situation in the Baltic Sea, the Secretariat should address the European Commission to urge it to seek the Group's advice when the technical measures framework (TMF) and data collection framework (DCF) of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) are being drafted. Parties should also convey the same message to appropriate fora.
- 8) Since the preparation of measures to be taken under the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) will take time, the Secretariat will also include in the communication to the European Commission the Jastarnia Group's strong call for an urgent amendment of Regulation 812/2004 to address the specific problems in the Baltic Sea.
- 9) The AC Chair and the Secretariat should continue approaching the European Commission to draw attention to the need to address the bycatch problem in the Baltic.

RESEARCH AND MONITORING

- 10) Parties are invited to commission research on whether pingers cause habitat exclusion and habituation.
- 11) Germany recently issued recommendations on the reduction of sound emissions associated with construction of offshore wind farms and set an upper limit for pile driving operations. This good example and the results of current studies should be reflected both in the national legislation of Parties and in the relevant indicators for Good Environmental Status to be developed for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
- 12) By 1 March 2012 Parties should inform the HELCOM Secretariat that ASCOBANS is to be nominated to participate in the reference group for the BALTFIMPA project. The 19th Advisory Committee Meeting should nominate the ASCOBANS representative.
- 13) Denmark, Germany and Sweden are strongly encouraged to collaborate in order to survey the Western Baltic (gap area) harbour porpoise population and evaluate trends in population density and abundance.
- 14) Parties are encouraged to analyse available data on the occurrence of derelict fishing gear in order to quantify the problem. They should report their findings to the next meeting.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

- 15) Parties, Range States and NGOs seeking to develop management plans for SACs and MPAs designated for the harbour porpoise are encouraged to make use of the expertise available within the Jastarnia Group.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

- 16) Information on the impacts of anthropogenic pressures (bycatch, noise, pollution, disturbance etc.) on cetaceans, specifically geared to relevant professional groups, should be made available on the ASCOBANS website. The information should be compiled and updated by the Secretariat with continuous input from the relevant Working Groups.
- 17) All Parties and Range States should establish sighting campaigns and related databases similar to those established by GSM in Germany, the Finnish Ministry of the Environment and the Swedish Museum of Natural History. The websites should be interlinked. The data should be submitted to HELCOM regularly.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER BODIES

- 18) Parties should designate focal points dealing with the Baltic Harbour Porpoise Database operated by HELCOM. The Secretariat should remind Parties to provide the details of these focal points to the Secretariats of ASCOBANS and HELCOM.

COVERAGE OF THE WESTERN BALTIC, BELT SEAS AND KATTEGAT

- 19) Parties should undertake national consultations with stakeholders, in particular the fishing sector, to give them the opportunity to provide comments before the draft Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the Western Baltic, Belt Seas and Kattegat is finalized. If possible, Parties are invited to undertake these consultations prior to the 19th Meeting of the Advisory Committee to inform that meeting's deliberation of the Plan.
- 20) The 19th Meeting of the Advisory Committee should review and as appropriate amend the draft Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the Western Baltic, Belt Seas and Kattegat, with a view to the Plan being adopted at the 7th Meeting of the Parties.

OTHER

- 21) The Secretariat should collaborate with HELCOM SEAL to obtain data on harbour porpoise strandings in the Russian territories of the Baltic Sea.
- 22) The Secretariat should prepare an overview of all recommendations of Jastarnia Group Meetings and the status of their implementation as reflected in available reports, based on the template drafted by the Group.