

**4th MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO ASCOBANS
Esbjerg, Denmark, 19 - 22 August 2003**

Resolution No. 7

Cetacean Populations in the ASCOBANS Area

Recalling Resolution No. 5 adopted by the 3rd Meeting of the Parties, which called for the completion of planning for an abundance survey of the original Agreement area and for an abundance survey of waters to the west of the Agreement area to be carried out in time for the 4th Meeting of the Parties;

Recalling that the structure of small cetacean populations in the ASCOBANS area may be complex and is not well understood at present;

Noting that lack of information on abundance, spatial and seasonal distribution and population structure remain important limitations on determining the impact of by-catch, noise and other anthropogenic impacts on small cetaceans and in designing effective mitigation measures;

Noting that populations of small cetaceans that enter the ASCOBANS region occur over a wider area,

Recalling that, although some parts of the ASCOBANS area have been surveyed recently, the last comprehensive abundance estimates for small cetaceans in the majority of the original ASCOBANS area were made in 1994/1995 and that no complete estimate has been made in adjacent waters west of the original Agreement area that are likely to be used by small cetaceans from within that area;

Recalling that Council Directive 92/43 EEC requires Member States to establish a system of surveillance of cetaceans in the waters of Member States of the EU and that because small cetaceans move freely across national boundaries through the area, it is important to conduct wide area surveys;

Commending the efforts undertaken since the 3rd Meeting of the Parties to elucidate spatial aspects of the distribution of harbour porpoises in the Baltic Sea;

Noting that preparatory work for a comprehensive survey of the Agreement area and waters to the west of that area (SCANS-II), to be conducted in or beginning in 2005, is nearly complete (MoP4/Doc.32), and *commending* the Parties that have contributed funds towards the preparation and completion of this survey;

Noting the proposal under Resolution No. 4, regarding the extension of ASCOBANS to a broader area in the Atlantic.

The Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS

Agrees that survey activities be extended from the original ASCOBANS area to cover all the adjacent northwest European shelf and waters within European Atlantic fisheries limits, up to 64 degrees North latitude (see attached map), and *recommends* liaison with ACCOBAMS;

Requests that the Advisory Committee continue to contribute to the preparatory work for the projected new abundance survey of the Agreement area and waters to the west of the original Agreement area.

Recommends that Parties, Range States, international organisations and others, provide funds and other resources to support the proposed new abundance survey;

Recommends that Parties and Range States continue to support further work to elucidate temporal and spatial aspects of distribution of small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS area.

Proposed survey area of SCANS-II, which includes the SCANS area and new areas, mainly to the south and west. Continental shelf waters (approximated by the 200m contour) will be surveyed in 2005. Offshore waters (beyond the 200m contour) are to be surveyed in 2006.

