

Agenda Item 2

Annual National Reports 2011

Document 2-08

**Annual National Report
Poland**

Action Requested

- Briefly present highlights from reports (max. 5 minutes)
- Take note of the information submitted
- Comment

Submitted by

Poland



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

Revised Format for the
ASCOBANS Annual National Reports

General Information

Name of Party:	Period covered:2011
Republic of Poland	Date of report: 15.02.2012.

Report submitted by:	
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Any changes in coordinating authority or appointed member of advisory committee: No	

List of national authorities, organizations, research centres and rescue centres active in the field of study and conservation of cetaceans, including contact details

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Telefon : (48 22) 57 92 366, Fax: (48 22) 57 92 730

e-mail: departament.ochrony.przyrody@mos.gov.pl

2) Hel Marine Station of the IOUG (Institute of Oceanography of the University of Gdańsk)

PL - 84-150 Hel, Morska 2, tel +48 58 6750 836, fax +48 58 6750 420,

Contact person: Iwona Pawliczka, e-mail iwona.pvp@ug.edu.pl , tel : +48 58 67 51 316

NEW Measures / Action Towards Meeting the Objectives of the Conservation and Management Plan and the Resolutions of the Meeting of Parties

Please feel free to add more rows to tables if the space provided is not sufficient.

A. HABITAT CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

1 Direct Interaction with Fisheries

Investigations of methods to reduce bycatch

In December 2011, in the Puck Bay, the project on “Active Protection of Harbour Porpoises against Bycatch” was terminated. At the line connecting Gdynia and Hel harbours, a linear barrier was constructed equipped with pingers to stop the porpoises from entering the an area where there is a high density of bottom gillnets and an anchored surface gillnet (GNS)

The project was carried out by the Hel Marine Station of the IOUG, financed by the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management and by the University of Gdańsk. Before launching the project the area has been monitored for the distribution of fishermen gear and by use of POD gear for the harbour porpoises presence.

The project implementers provide following information:

(1) The Puck Bay is an important area for traditional boat fishing where anchored bottom gillnets are broadly used. The total number of fishermen gear used (counted on the basis of fishermen navigation marking) and its distribution was changeable during the year in dependence of fishing conditions from none when the bay is covered by ice to 1200 in the autumn season.

(2) The use of passive hydroacoustic monitoring during the project with the use of POD (Porpoise Detector) on the line Hel – Gdynia allowed to register numerous sound impulses generated by porpoises. In the data base of the project during 1156 days of its duration 98 PPD (Positive Porpoise Day) was recorded includnig 854 PPM (Positive Porpoise Minutes) and 2746 Click Trains. Most of hydroacoustic recordings was made during the winter and spring season.

(3) The experimental use of pingers demonstrated that they prove to be more effective in the Puck Bay when installed on the sea bottom rather than on the fishermen gear. The acoustic signal emitted by pingers effectively stopped porpoises against entering the areas of intensive use of gillnets in the bay.

The same unit started pilot project with the aim to test in the Puck Bay the use of traps “Cod-pot” type as the alternative for gillnets in the cod fishing.

Implementation of methods to reduce bycatch

In December 2011 a one-year pilot project “Ghost nets retrieval from the Baltic Sea” was terminated. In was financed by the Baltic Sea 2020 foundation and carried out by WWF Poland in co-operation with experts from the Marine Academy in Szczecin, Marine Institute

in Gdańsk and Marine Fishing Inspectorate in Szczecin as well as with fishermen and professional divers. In the course of project the amount of ghost nets on ship wrecks within the Polish marine zone was estimated at 150–450 tons and the number of nets lost in Baltic in 2005-2008 was estimated at 5500–10 000 pieces. Research shows that lost nets keep their fishing capacities up to 20 percent during the first three months and up to 6 percent after 27 months. Fishing capacity of ghost nets lost in the Baltic was estimated at 20,8 tons during 27 months. In the course of project more than 4 tons of ghost nets from the sea bottom and 1,8 tons of nests from two ship wrecks was extracted.

The project was supported by the Ministry of Environment , Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Ministry of Infrastructure.

The final report was send to ASCOBANS Secretariat together with the national report.

Another project concerning ghost nets is carried out by the IOUG Marine Station. It is consisting in appealing to fishermen for not to get rid of old nets in the way threatening natural environment and for better supervision of the use of nets on fisheries. The unit since 2 years collects the used nets from fishermen and seeks for their secondary use or utilization. During the project 4 ton of used nets were collected and half of this amount was secondary used.

The Regulation 812/2004 obliges Poland to use pingers on fishing vessels of the length 12 m or more operating in the ICES 24 (the Pomeranian Bay) area. In order to fulfil this commitments 500 pingers were purchased in 2009 by the Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and distributed among fishermen. 36 % of the pingers are in the possession of the owners of ships in the region where the use of deterrent devices is obligatory (the Pomeranian Bay), 20 % were distributed among fishermen from neighbourhood of ICES 24 area, other were distributed in central and eastern part of the Polish seacoast. The use of pingers in the Pomeranian Bay is controlled by the Marine Fisheries Inspectorate in Szczecin which in 2010 purchased two pinger detectors.

Please provide any other relevant information, including bycatch information from opportunistic sources.

In pursuance of the regulation 812/2004 the National Marine Fisheries Research Institute in Gdynia was continuing in 2011 the Monitoring Incidental Catch of Cetaceans Scheme.

In 2011 neither incidental bycatch was recorded nor harbour porpoises were observed by the National Marine Fisheries Research Institute during their research. No such cases were reported also by the Polish fishermen.

Just two dead porpoise individuals washed offshore were recorded. The source of information on bycatch and individuals of harbour porpoise found dead is the website of Hel Marine Station, University of Gdansk: www.morswin.pl.

In addition, please attach or provide link to your country's Report under EC Regulation 812/2004.

Polish reports from Monitoring Incidental Catch of Cetaceans Scheme are published on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development at the folder: BIP/informacje branżowe/rybołówstwo/rybołówstwomorskie (<http://www.bip.minrol.gov.pl>). The report for

2011 will be published at the website of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, no later than in March 2012. The term of final acceptance of the report is determined by the need of inclusion of fisheries data from the period covering entire year 2011. Based on the data available so far it could be stated that in 2011 the observations were led on 13 vessels operating from 9 harbours, including 6 vessels of length over 15 m. Other vessels had length from 5,8 to 7,2 m. All those vessels were operating under the Polish flag and were fishing in the ICSE areas: III a, b, c and III d south of 59°N. For fishing OTM nets were used or (on the waters east of 24 ICES subarea) GNS nets of eyes equal of larger than 80 mm.

Observations were led by the National Marine Fisheries Research Institute employees which were trained and become acquainted with the methodology of monitoring of incidental catch of cetaceans. In 2011 the observers spend 110 days on the sea, including 66 days on vessels using OTM nets and 44 days on vessels using gill nets. In the great extend the observations were led in the Puck Bay which is recognized as the area where porpoises are most frequently occur and which is treated as priority area according to the point 6 of introduction to the Regulation 812/2004.

During none of 110 monitored fishing days any incidental catch of any cetacean or other marine mammal was recorded.

The report for the year 2011 will be send do the European Commission in the term envisaged in the Regulation (WE) 812/2004

2 Reduction of Disturbance

2.1 Anthropogenic Noise

Please reference and briefly summarise any studies undertaken

The impact of acoustic disturbances on cetaceans has not been a subject of any research Project within the Polish zone of the Baltic Sea.

2.2 Ship Strike Incidents

In the Polish EEZ no collision of any cetaceans with any vessel was registered.

Please list all known incidents and for each, provide the following information:

Date	Species	Type of injury	Fatal injury (Yes / No)	Type of vessel (length, tonnage and speed)	Location (coordinates)	More information: (Name / Email)

2.3 Major Incidents Affecting Significant Numbers* of Cetaceans

Date	Location	Type of incident	Further Information

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**Two or more animals*

2.4 Pollution and Hazardous Substances

Please report on main types of pollution and hazardous substances (including source, location and observed effects on cetaceans). Please provide information on any new measures taken to reduce pollution likely to have an impact.

The tasks undertaken in order to limit water pollution result from the EU legislation and from Helsinki Convention signed by Poland; they are reported to the European Commission and to the relevant HELCOM bodies on a regular basis.

2.5 Other Forms of Disturbance

Please provide any other relevant information, e.g. relating to recreational activities affecting cetaceans.

No data

3 Marine Protected Areas for Small Cetaceans

Please provide any relevant information on measures taken to identify, implement and manage protected areas for cetaceans, including MPAs designated under the Habitats Directive and MPAs planned or established within the framework of OSPAR or HELCOM.

For the last two years there are 9 marine areas protected under the Baltic Sea Protected Areas – HELCOM BSPAs in Poland. All of them are included in Natura 2000 network.

At least three of them, namely the Pomeranian Bay, the Puck Bay and the Słowińska Refugee, are of significance for the protection of porpoises. Those areas do not have so far respective management plans which would take into account the protection of small cetaceans. Such plans are presently under development which will be finished till 2014.

Please indicate where GIS data of the boundaries (and zoning, if applicable) can be obtained (contact email / website).

Detailed borders of all areas mentioned above are available at the General Directorate of Environmental Protection in Warsaw, Poland

(<http://www.gdos.gov.pl/Articles/view/1889/Kontakt>).

They are also displayed at the website:

<http://natura2000.gdos.gov.pl/natura2000/pl/proste.php>

B. SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

4.1 Overview of Research on Abundance, Distribution and Population Structure

Please provide a brief summary of (and reference to) any national work.

The project on “Active Protection of Harbour Porpoises against Bycatch” in the Puck Bay was terminated. The preliminary results of hydroacoustic research with the use of POD devices showed that the Puck Bay is the area where porpoises are abundant, mostly in winter and spring months.

Moreover, Poland participates in the SAMBAH (Static Acoustic Monitoring of the Baltic Sea Harbour Porpoise) Project which is implemented on the Polish side by the Chief Inspectorate of Environmental Protection, the Marine Division of the Institute of Meteorology and Water Management and the Hel Marine Station. The termination of the project is scheduled in 2014.

Under way is a 4-year project (2009–2012) “Support for Restoration and Protection of Baltic Mammals” carried out by WWF Poland. In the frame of the project a year-round monitoring of the coastal area is conducted with participation of volunteers trained by the Hel Marine Station (so called “Blue Patrol”), as well as the educational action concerning the methods of porpoises and seals conservation. The project is co-financed by the programme “Infrastructure and Environment”. The structural partners of the project are the Hel Marine Station and the Foundation of Development of the University of Gdańsk.

4.2 New Technological Developments

Please provide a brief summary of any relevant information

In the course of research on monitoring of porpoise presence by use of POD devices under the Hel Marine Station project “Active Protection of Harbour Porpoises against Bycatch” the special software named HEL1 Classifier was created. The software is improving data analysis process and shortenig the time used by experts for the evaluation of visual picture of hydroacoustic detections. The software was created on the basis of data gathered under the project. The software is especially useful in the areas where the density of individuals and the number of positive detection are low and where each false detection is reducing the value of results. The new software was developed by a multinational team: Nick Tregenza (UK), Daniel Wennerberg (Sweden), Cinthia Ljungqvist (Sweden), Sophie Hansen (Germany), Kathrin Krügel (Germany), Radomił Koza (Poland) and Monika Kosecka (Poland).

<http://www.chelonia.co.uk/downloads/CPOD.exe>

4.3 Other Relevant Research

Please provide a brief summary of any relevant information

No other research

C. USE OF BY-CATCHES AND STRANDINGS

5 Post-Mortem Research Schemes

Contact details of research institutions / focal point	Hel Marine Station, Institute of Oceanography, University of Gdańsk Iwona Pawliczka, iwona.pvp@ug.edu.pl
Methodology used (reference, e.g. publication, protocol)	Post-mortem analyses are being conducted according to procedures described in: Kuiken, T. and Hartmann, M.G. (1993). Dissection techniques and tissue sampling. Proceedings of the ECS Workshop, Leiden.
Collection of samples (type, preservation method)	The Hel Marine Station, Institute of Oceanography, University of Gdańsk collects, as part of its statutory activity, data on dead porpoises and dolphins from either bycatch or stranded onshore. The dead specimens, upon their arrival at the Station, are being subject to analyses within the scope limited by the status of the remains. The standard scope of sampling covers: -Species determination; -Localization of deadly event; -Establishing factual and supposed cause of death; - Ascertaining of the body length and mass; -Sex ascertaining; -Fat tissue sampling for genetic examination; -Teeth sampling for age determination; -A full post-mortem analysis and storage of biological samples according to Kuiken &Hartmann, 1993.
Database (Number of data sets by species, years covered, software used, online access)	Data have been entered into the standard Access database since 1988. There is no on-line access to this base.
Additional Information (e.g. website addresses, intellectual property rights, possibility of a central database)	

5.1 Number of Necropsies Carried out in Reporting Period:

Species	Recorded cause of death
None	

Please provide any other relevant information on post-mortem / stranding schemes.

In 2011, under the Project on “Support for Restoration and Protection of Baltic Mammals” the WWF Poland and the Marine Station IOUG have been patrolling the whole Polish Baltic coast on a temporary basis and gathering the reports. The information on two cases of

porpoises found onshore has been acquired.

Datum	Length	Sex	Place of finding	Sample depositing
June 10 2011	160 cm 70 cm	Female with advanced pregnancy Fetus - female	Niechorze	Hel Marine Station of the Institute of Oceanography of the University of Gdańsk
October 16 2011	Not determined because of advanced state of decomposition	Not determined because of advanced state of decomposition	Jantar	Hel Marine Station of the Institute of Oceanography of the University of Gdańsk

D. LEGISLATION

6.1 Relevant New Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Please provide any relevant information.

On 7 December 2011 four of fishermen organizations, including the Kołobrzeg Group of Fish Producers, the Darłowo Group of Fish Producers and Fishermen Boats Shipowners, the National Chamber of Fish Producers from Ustka and the Władysławowo Fish Producers Organization, signed the Polish Codex of Responsible Fishing. The marine fishermen Association declared signing of the Codex in the nearest future. Together, all mentioned organizations unite the owners of 274 fishermen vessels.

According to the Codex the fishermen organizations oblige to follow fishery law, respect the resources and their natural environment and co-operate with the other signatories in the area of introducing the optimal methods of fishery management, enrichment of the knowledge of resources, full transparency of their activities and ensuring the best quality of catch delivered to the consumers.

Under the Project “Support for Restoration and Protection of Baltic Mammals” the work on updating of the action plan of porpoise conservation and elaboration of the action plan of grey seal conservation was initiated with the participation of all stakeholders. Both plans shall be completed by the end of 2012.

In September 2011 the European Commission presented the second report on

implementation of 812/2004 Regulation by EU Member States. Report says that during 6 years since the regulation is in power the main goal, namely the protection of cetaceans against incidental bycatch, was not reached. In relation to this there is a need to integrate improved prevention measures into the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy. It will allow to define the extent of general and detailed goals and measures connected with the bycatch of cetaceans and therefore to give the Member States the possibility of using specified remedial measures in particular areas, more proper and effective than those envisaged under the Regulation (WE) 812/2004.

The Polish Presidency introduced into the October 27-28 2011 meeting of the Working Party on Internal and External Fisheries Policy a new agenda item concerning the discussion on the mentioned above EC report. Member States supported the report and expressed the need for more detailed information and review of data on the areas where cetaceans are abundant. Member States appealed also for avoiding unnecessary administrative burden.

At the HELCOM HABITAT 24–27 May 2011 meeting in Copenhagen Poland proposed to change (update) the HELCOM 17/2 Recommendation on porpoise. The same proposal was presented by the Polish representative at the HELCOM SEAL 20-21 September meeting in Tallinn and it was accepted by experts participating in this group. The new Recommendation proposal will be presented for final endorsement at the next HELCOM HABITAT 14/2012 meeting in May 2012.

E. INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

7.1 Public Awareness and Education

Please report on any public awareness and education activities to implement or promote the Agreement to the general public and to fishermen.

On March 23 2011 Krzysztof E. Skóra was awarded by European Cetacean Society Conservation Award for consequent promotion of knowledge, research and action for the Baltic mammals protection.

On May 15 2011 at the ASCOBANS International Day of the Baltic Porpoise, the Hel Marine Station and the Foundation of Development of the University of Gdańsk together with the LOTOS S.A. Group organized an information stand by the porpoise monument in Gdynia as well as educational event for children [http://www.hel.ug.edu.pl/aktu/2011/mdbm_2011.html]

On May 29 2011 in Gdynia, in the frame of the IX Baltic Festival of Science, a scientific picnic was organized. The stand of the Hel Marine Station was dedicated to dissemination of knowledge on the new research techniques use in porpoise protection.
[http://www.hel.ug.edu.pl/aktu/2011/BFN_2011.html]

Between May 31 and June 2 2011 in Gdańsk a subsequent edition of International Fair of Fish Processing and Fish Products POLFISH 2011 was held. The educational stand of the Hel Marine Station was dedicated to the protection of marine mammals in fishery.
[http://www.hel.ug.edu.pl/aktu/2011/Polfish_2011.html]

In the documental film „Baltic Coast II” produced by the ARTE Television and emitted on June 13 2011, the reportage on porpoise protection actions in the Puck Bay was included.

[<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY7Y4B-4bq4>]

On June 11-20 2011, in the frame of educational project “The Blue School”, the Hel Marine Station, on the commission of the NIVEA concern organized the educational cruise of the sailing ship “Zawisza Czarny” on the route: Szczecin (Poland) – Stralsund (Germany) – Kerteminde (Denmark) – Hel (Poland). The aim of the cruise was to make young sailors familiar with the biology, ecology and threats to the Baltic porpoise population and conservation of this species in the Baltic according to the obligations connected with the ASCOBANS agreement. During the cruise young sailors were taught how to watch porpoises in the sea and they have also visited the porpoise research centre Fjord&Belt Centre in Kerteminde (Denmark).

[http://fokarium.pl/aktu/2011/BSz_na_falach_Baltyku.html]

On December 12 2011 the conference summarized a pilot project “Ghost nets retrieval from the Baltic Sea” was carried out. The conference was attended by scientists, local and central administration and fishermen representatives. By this occasion a brochure with de description of the project was published in Polish and English version.

The Hel Marine Station keep running a website dedicated to porpoise: www.morswin.pl

On March 2011 the Ministry of Environment supported the Hel Marine Station application for creating of “The Porpoise House” – a center for dissemination of knowledge on porpoise biology and ecology. The project will be financed by the funds provided by the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management. The construction of the center will start in 2012.

POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT

Please provide any relevant information.

None

Please return this form, preferably by e-mail, to:

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