Agenda Item 7	Introduction to the Advisory Committee Workspace (Training Session)
Document 7	**Quick Guide for the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Workspace**
Action Requested	• Take note
Submitted by	Secretariat

NOTE:
DELEGATES ARE KINDLY REMINDED TO BRING THEIR OWN COPIES OF DOCUMENTS TO THE MEETING

Secretariat's Note

The Advisory Committee Workspace was presented, while still a work in progress, to the 7th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS in October 2012. Parties endorsed the proposal to tailor this system for the needs of the Advisory Committee's and associated working groups' intersessional needs and encouraged the Advisory Committee Members, Advisers and Observers, as well as external working group members, to make full use of the system.

The platform was finalized in January 2013 and the majority of users invited in early February.

Part 1 of this document contains a summary overview of use of the system so far, exported from Google Analytics.

Part 2 contains a User Guide prepared by the Secretariat, which gives step-by-step guidance on using the most important features of the Workspace. All AC Members, Advisers and Observers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the platform and use it frequently.

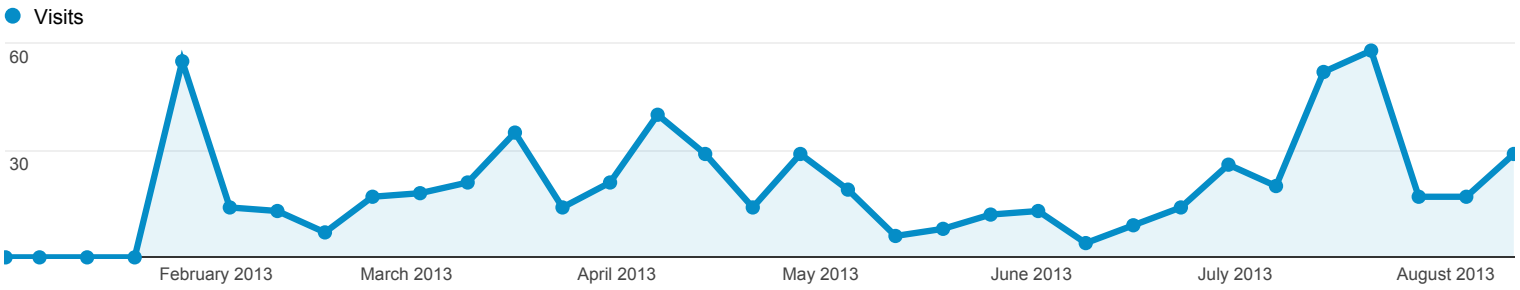
Ascobans Workspace - http://workspace.ascobans.org/
Workspace

Audience Overview

Jan 1, 2013 - Aug 13, 2013

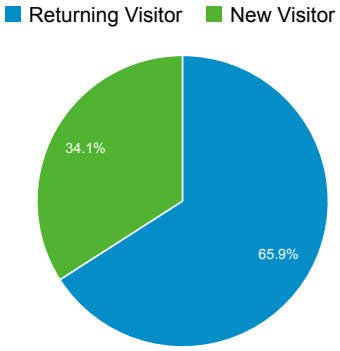
% of visits: 100.00%

Overview



215 people visited this site

Visits	631
Unique Visitors	215
Pageviews	4,832
Pages / Visit	7.66
Avg. Visit Duration	00:06:53
Bounce Rate	30.90%
% New Visits	34.07%



	Country / Territory	Visits	% Visits
1.	Germany	286	45.32%
2.	United Kingdom	51	8.08%
3.	Sweden	49	7.77%
4.	France	38	6.02%
5.	Denmark	36	5.71%
6.	Poland	25	3.96%
7.	Netherlands	21	3.33%
8.	Finland	13	2.06%
9.	Lithuania	13	2.06%
10.	Portugal	11	1.74%

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Quick Guide for the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Workspace

(http://workspace.ascobans.org)

The Advisory Committee Workspace is an electronic working platform designed to assist the Advisory Committee and its working groups to address the numerous mandates for intersessional work and prepare the content for meetings in a collaborative manner. It is a pre-structured discussion forum that follows the ASCOBANS Work Plan as well as the Terms of Reference for the different working groups.

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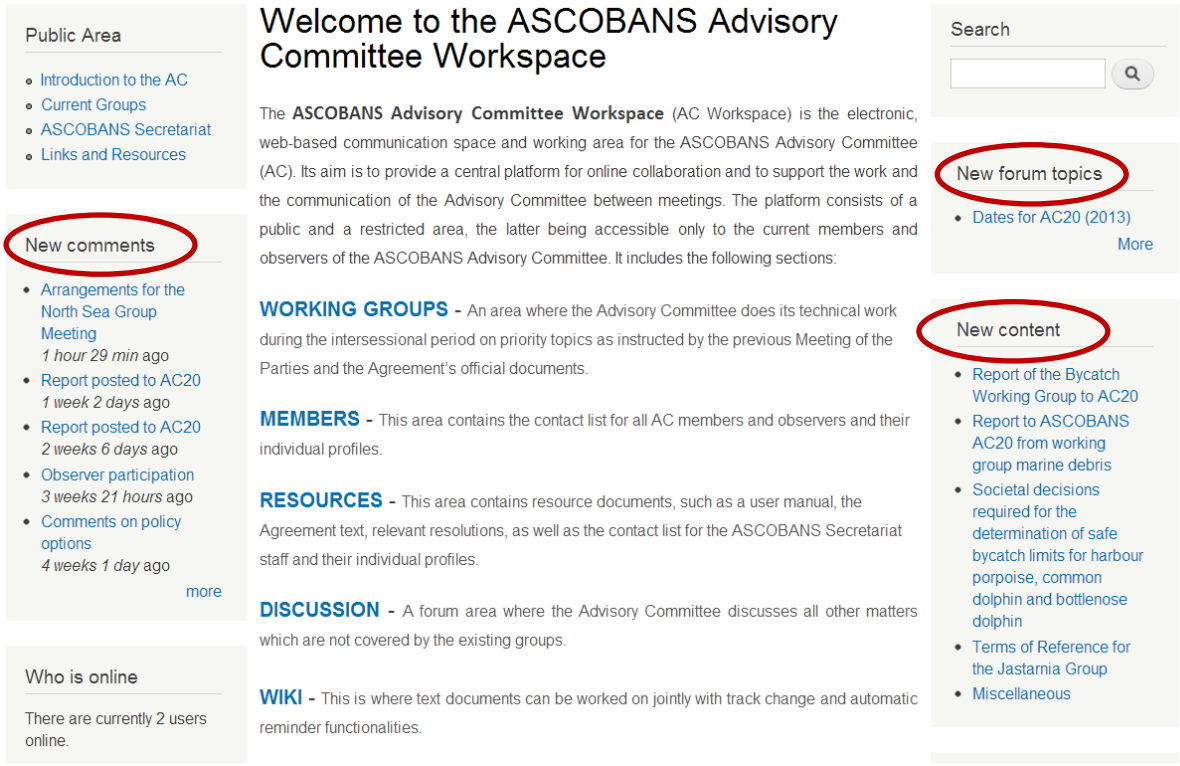
Start Page and Features on All Pages

The start page (Figure 1) gives easy access to all working areas and provides a glimpse of recent activities, which are also visible from throughout the platform.

Figure 1 - Start Page

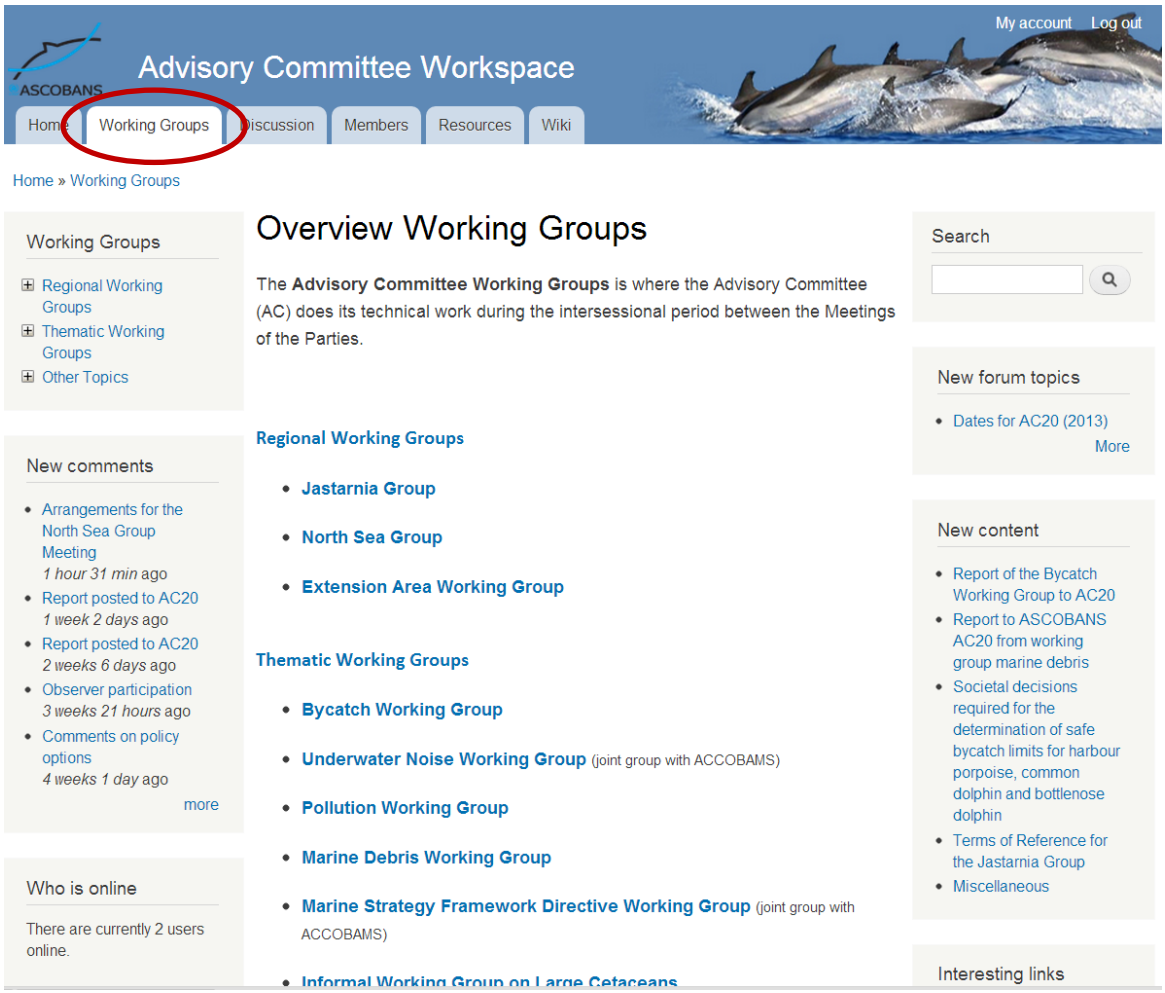


New comments (on the left) are the most recent contributions made to any discussion. *New content* (on the right) refers to newly created discussion threads or new Wikis for collaborative editing of documents. *New forum topics* shows which general discussion threads (i.e. those not relating to the topics covered by any of the thematic or regional discussions, but of interest to the entire Advisory Committee) have recently been started. All can be directly accessed by clicking on the links.

Tab: Working Groups

Working Groups (Figure 2) is the main working area for users of the Workspace. This area is structured by the officially established regional or thematic working groups of the Advisory Committee, as well as other topics appearing in the Work Plan for the Agreement.

Figure 2 - Working Groups



Regional Working Groups are structured as shown in the menu on the left, reproduced in Figure 3. *Thematic Working Groups* are shown in Figure 4.

The ASCOBANS Work Plan, as contained in Resolution 7.2, requires the Advisory Committee also to work on *Other Topics* not covered by a specific Working Group. Discussion threads have been prepared for these, too, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 3 -
Regional Working Groups

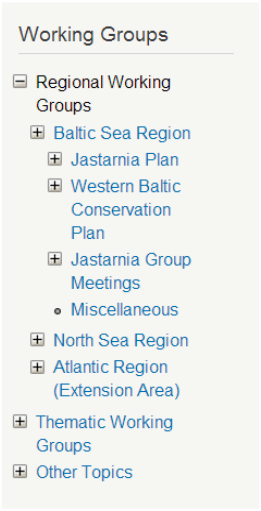


Figure 4 -
Thematic Working Groups

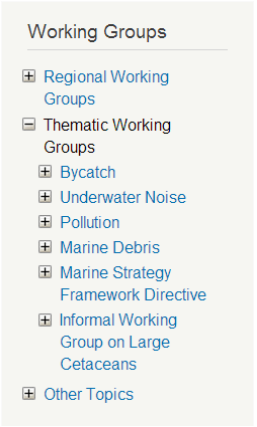
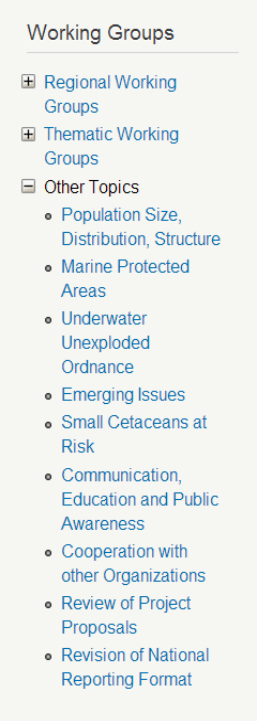
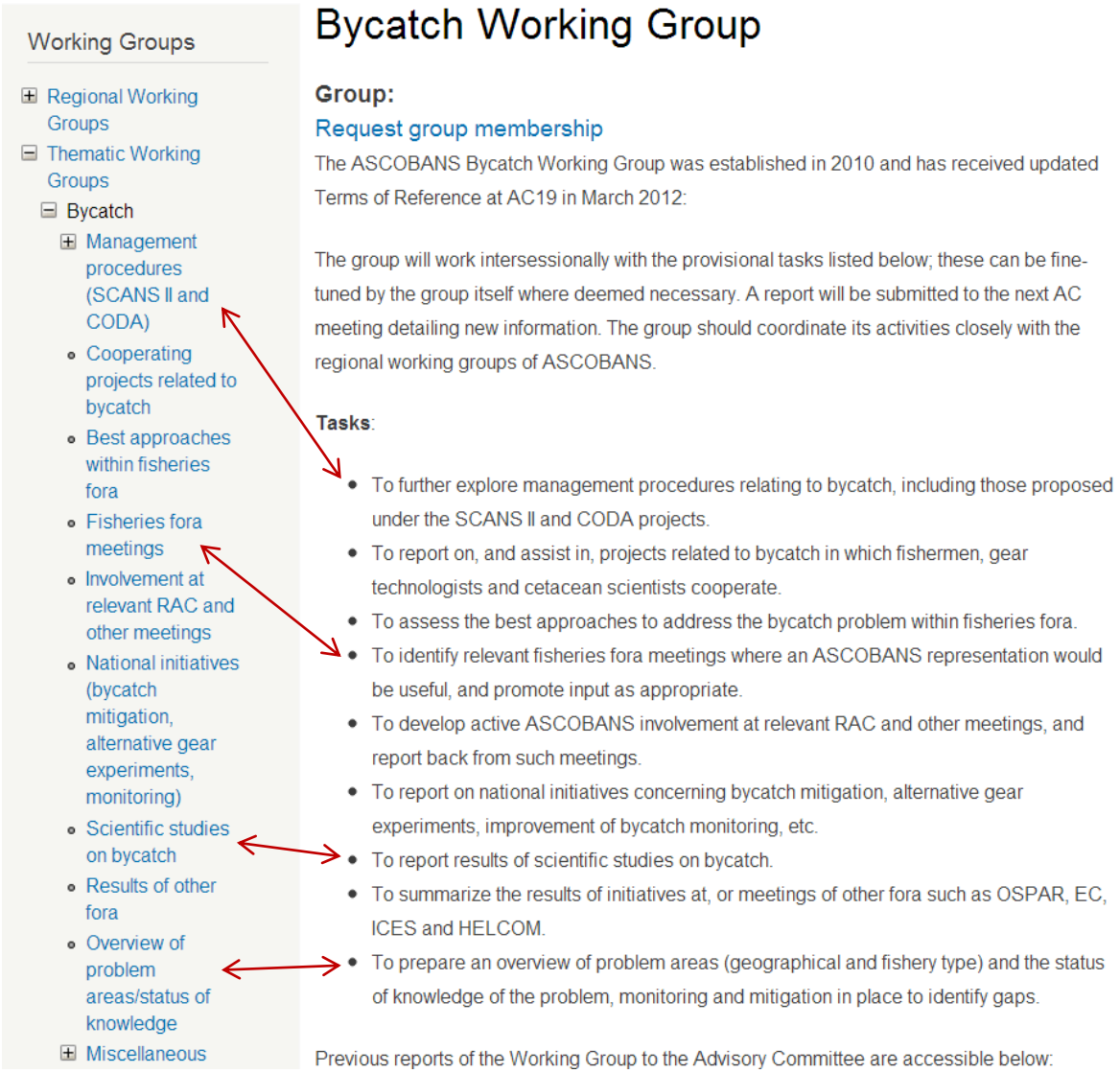


Figure 5 -
Other Topics



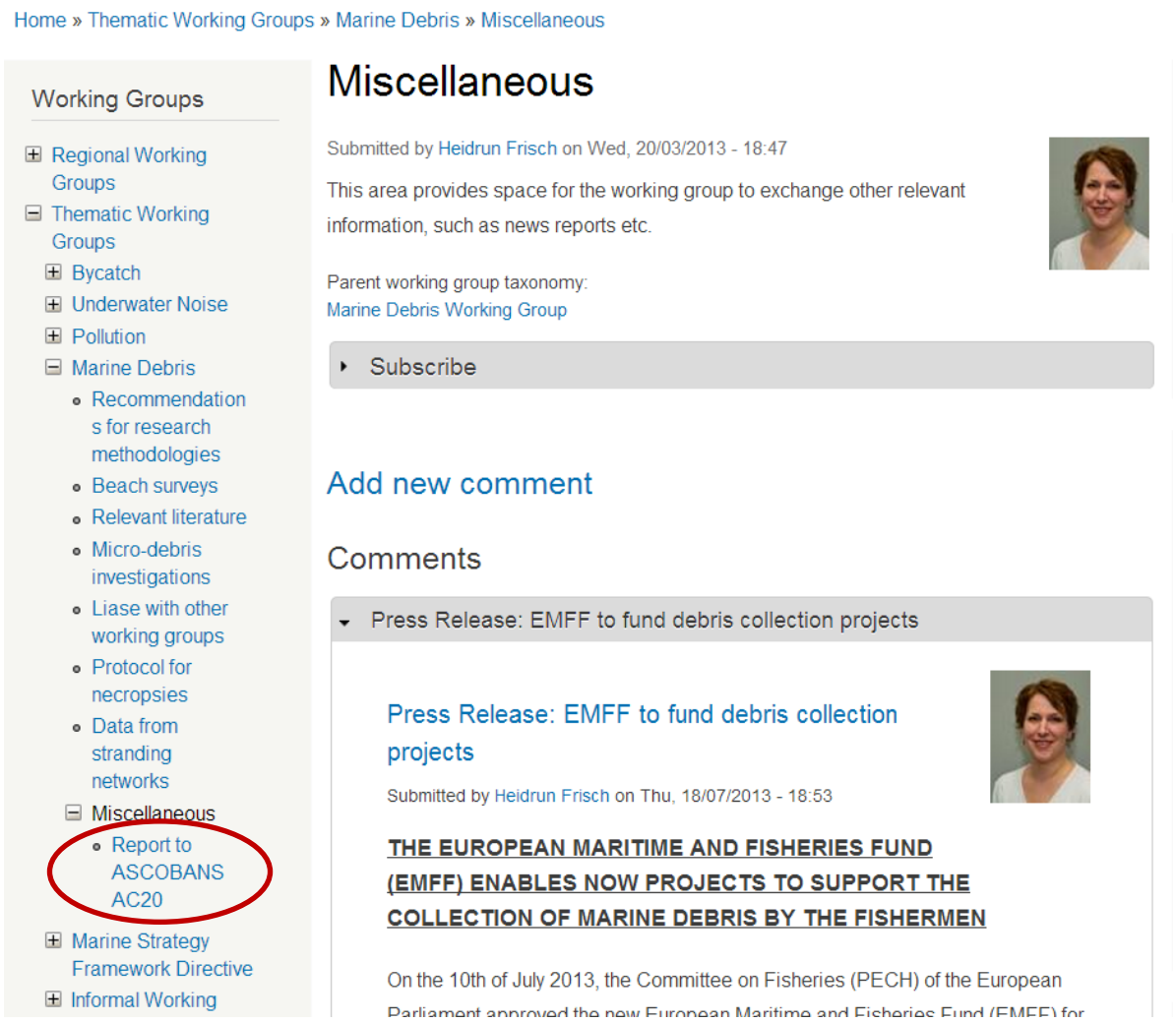
For each of the official Working Groups, terms of reference have been agreed by the Advisory Committee. Accordingly, all points a Group should address in its intersessional work and the reports to the Advisory Committee are listed as separate discussion threads, allowing users to go straight to the topic they are interested in. As an example, the structure in Figure 6 has been prepared for the Bycatch Working Group.

Figure 6 - Tasks of the Bycatch Working Group



Each of the topics listed in the menu gives users the opportunity to post comments, links etc. relating to that issue in the discussion thread. Also, further resources, such as Wikis (see below), can be linked up through the menu. In the example in Figure 7, a document made available for comments by the Working Group has been added.

Figure 7 - Example Discussion Thread and Related Wiki



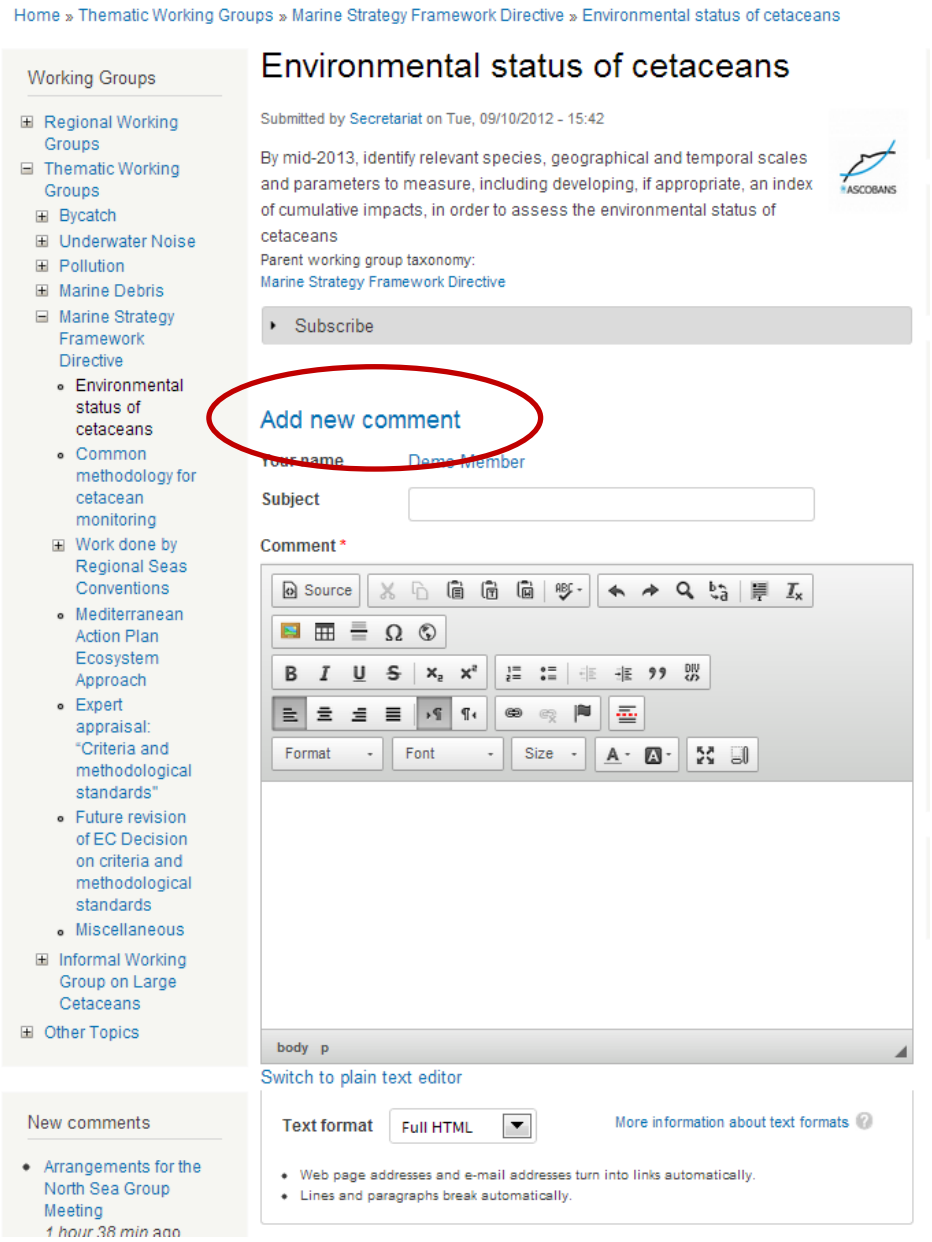
Feature: Adding a Comment

To add a comment on a discussion thread, go to the appropriate item in the menu on the left and click *Add new comment*. A box with standard text editing options will appear (see Figure 8).

Please choose a meaningful subject line, as this is what will appear in the box *New comments* visible on all pages. This way, you will allow other users to see easily whether the comment relates to a subject they are interested in. If you leave the subject line empty, the first few words of your comment will be used by the system.

The text box allows a variety of editing and formatting options, pasting from other sources, insertion of tables and pictures, as well as hyperlinks.

Figure 8 - Commenting



When you have inserted your comment, you have the following options:

Choose *Save as draft* if you are not yet finished writing or editing your comment, and would like to keep it to continue working on it at a later time. You can then access your draft at any time through *My account* on the top right of the screen (see Figure 9), and then under the tab *My drafts*.

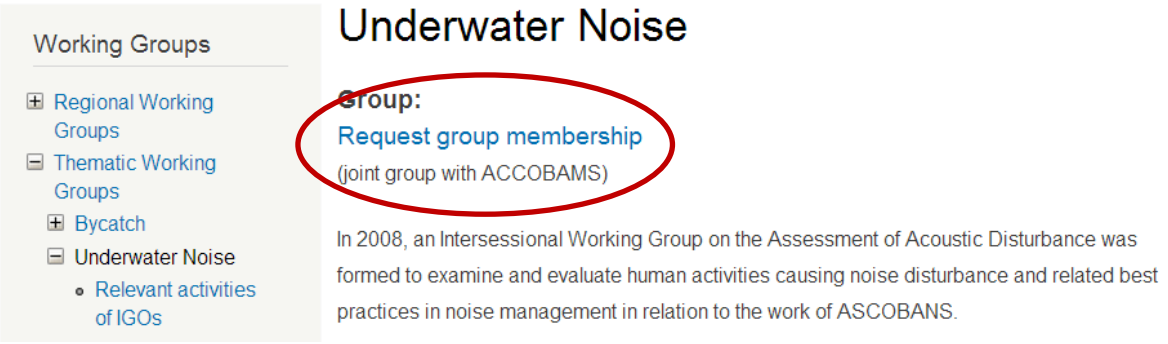
Figure 9 - How to Find "My Account"

If you choose *Publish*, the comment will become visible to all users, and those subscribed to the Working Group's content will receive an email notification. You can also preview your comment before publishing to avoid the need for multiple revisions due to formatting problems etc.

Feature: Subscription

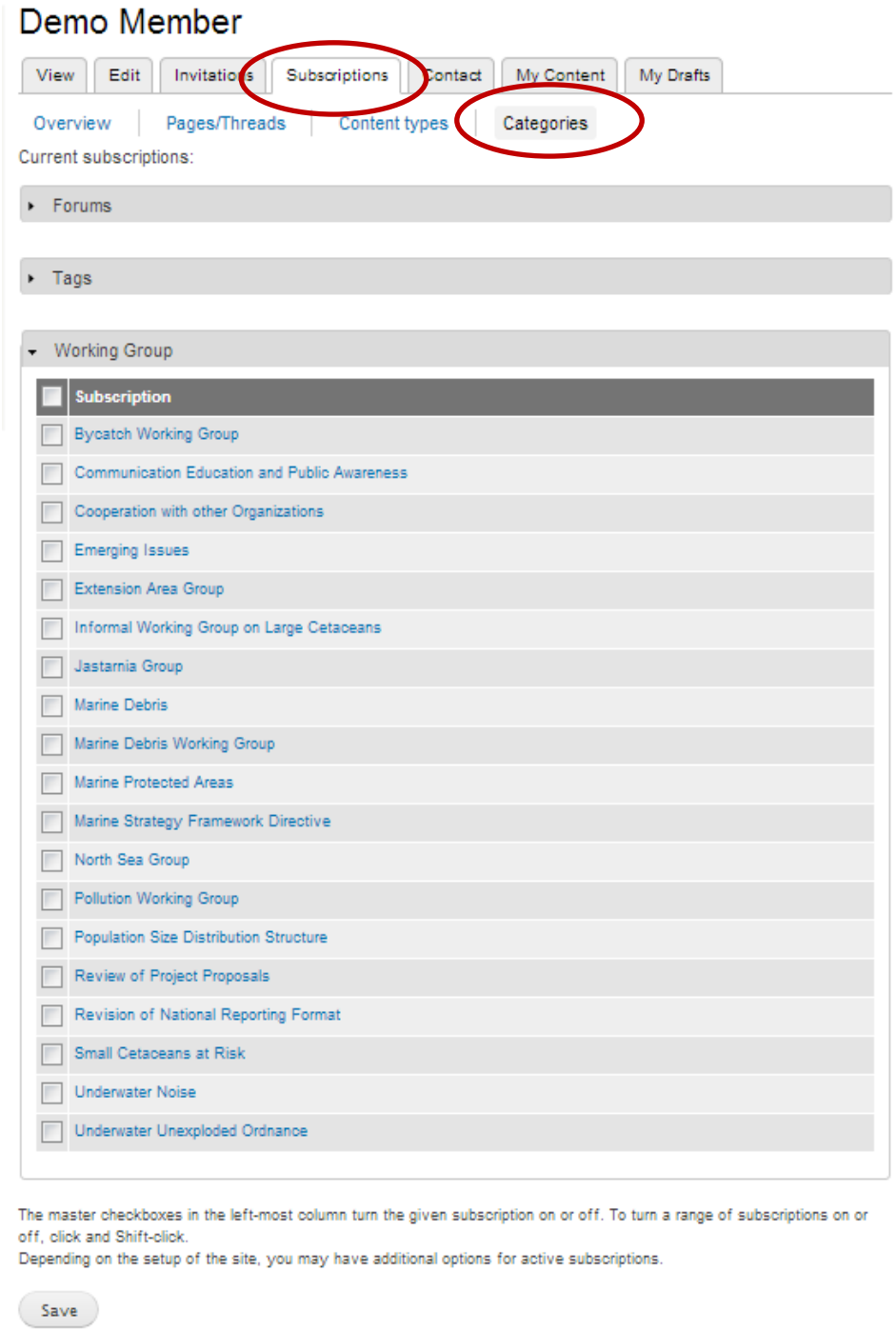
To appear on the membership list of a Working Group, you need to click on *Request group membership* toward the top of the group's start page (see Figure 10). However, this is not necessary in order to comment and follow discussions.

Figure 10 - Becoming a Group Member



If you wish to receive email notifications for comments posted in a Group of interest to you, please go to *My account* (see Figure 9 above) and select the tab *Subscriptions* (see Figure 11). Under *Categories*, you can manage your subscriptions to any of the Groups in the Workspace. Once subscribed, you will receive an email which includes the new content whenever something is added, easily keeping you abreast of the discussion. Please note that you can also subscribe to discussions even if you are not a member of the Group. You can subscribe to as many Groups as you like.

Figure 11 - Subscribing for Email Notifications of New Content



Tab: Wiki

The Wiki function allows multiple users to work on the same online document. It allows full version control and comparison of any version with any other (as in Wikipedia). As such, it is ideal for the collaborative preparation of reports and for gathering comments on draft documents.

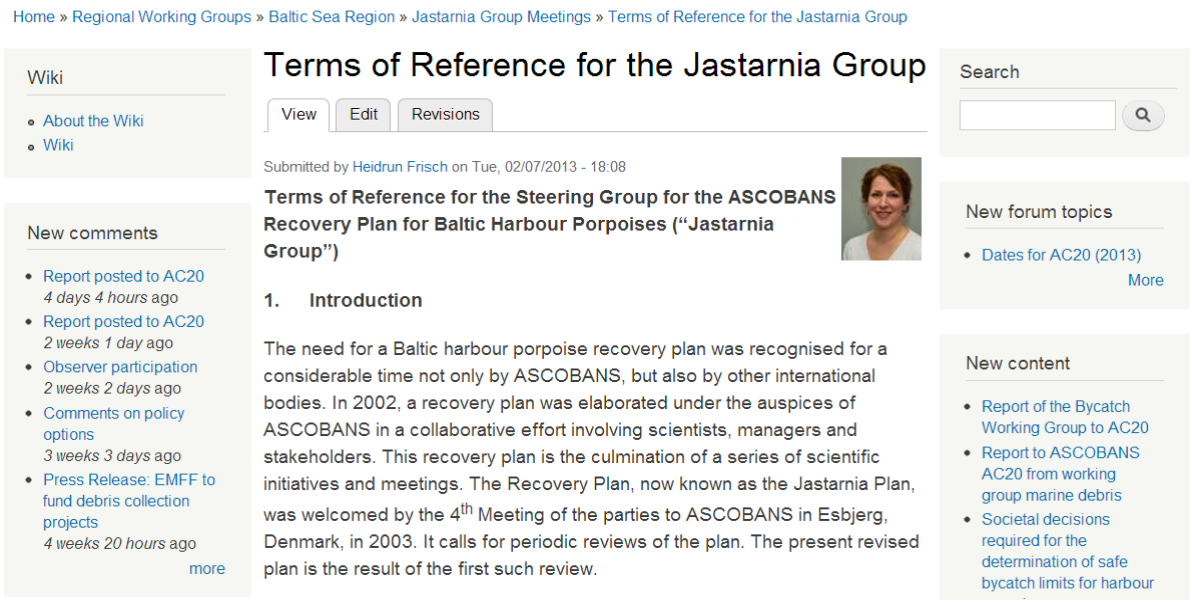
A key advantage of using a Wiki instead of asking for comments on a Word document is that there is no need to combine multiple versions back into one, with all the time investment this takes, in particular if comments are contradictory. Wikis can be set up to allow comments, too, therefore enabling the users working on the document to have the necessary discussions directly with each other even if they are not yet ready to suggest specific text.

Wikis that are of relevance to all users can be accessed through the main menu (see Figure 12).

Figure 12 - the Wiki Function

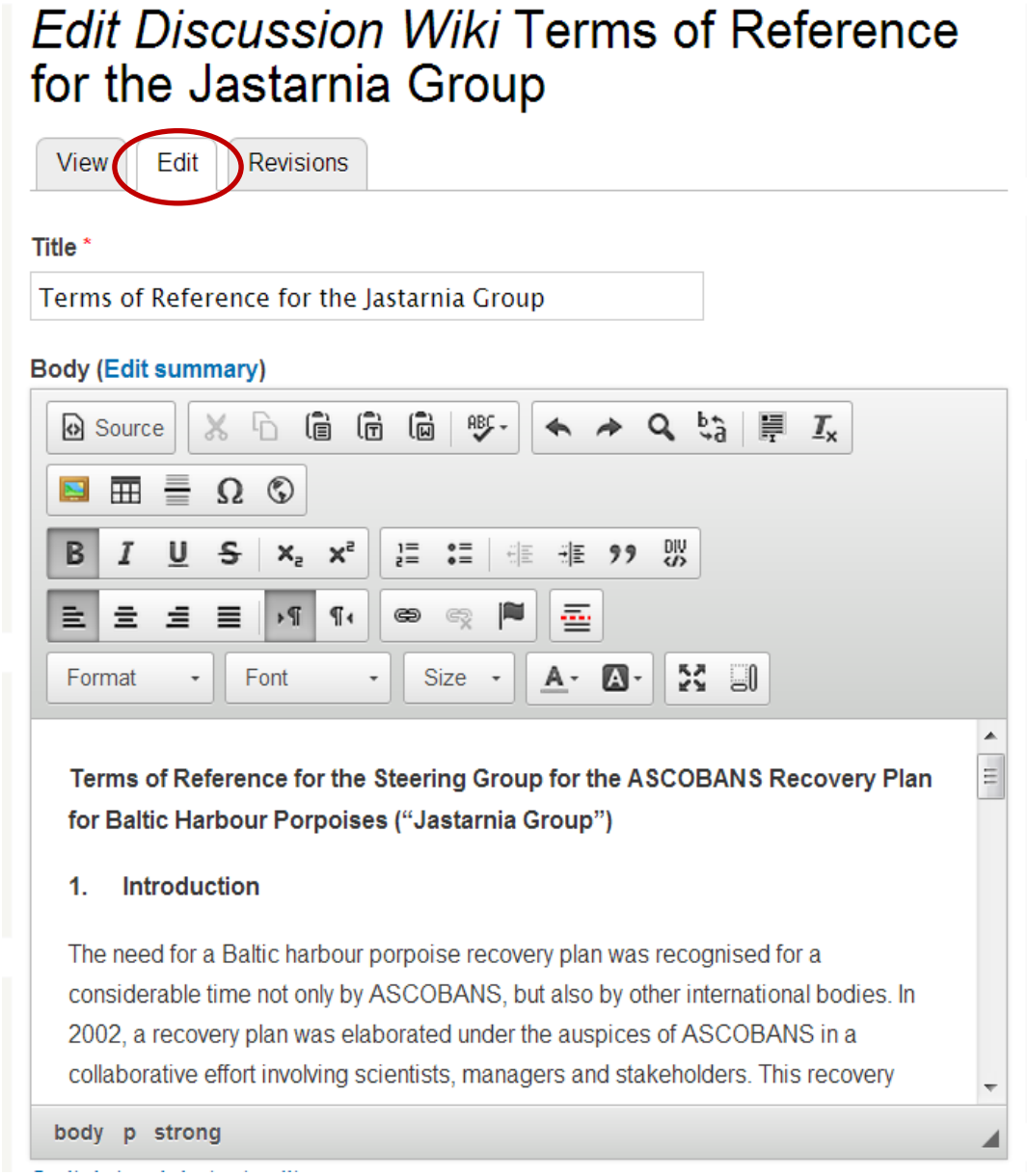
Wikis can also be associated with a specific Working Group. In this case, they do not appear in the general Wiki list, but a menu link can be placed in an appropriate place in the Working Group's topic list. The View page of the Wiki, which you will always access first, shows the latest version of the document (see Figure 13).

Figure 13 – Wiki View Page



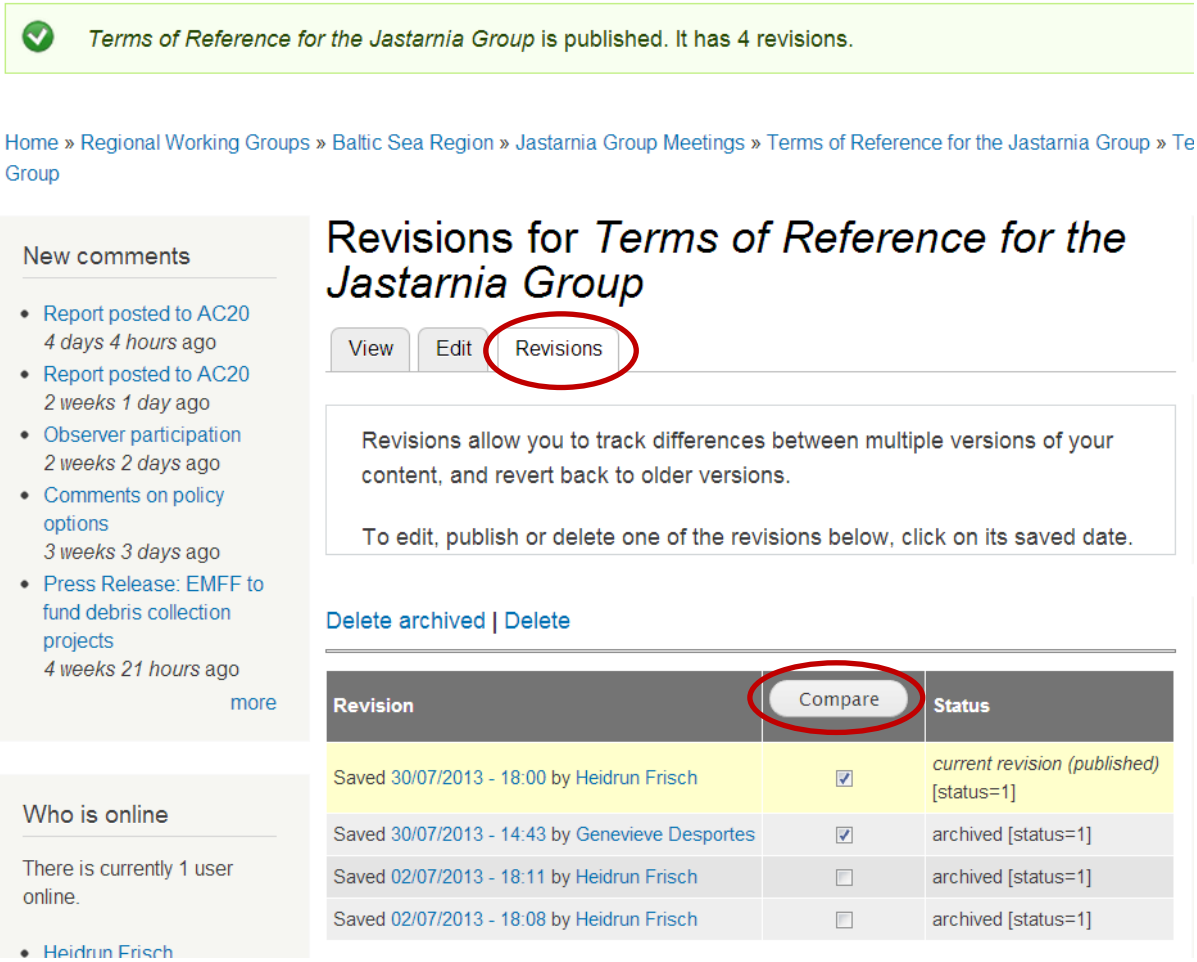
In order to make changes to the text, please click on the *Edit* tab above the text and then insert your changes in the body of the text (see Figure 14). Don't forget to save your changes when you have finished. All people subscribed to the Working Group's content or this Wiki will then be notified by email.

Figure 14 - Editing a Wiki



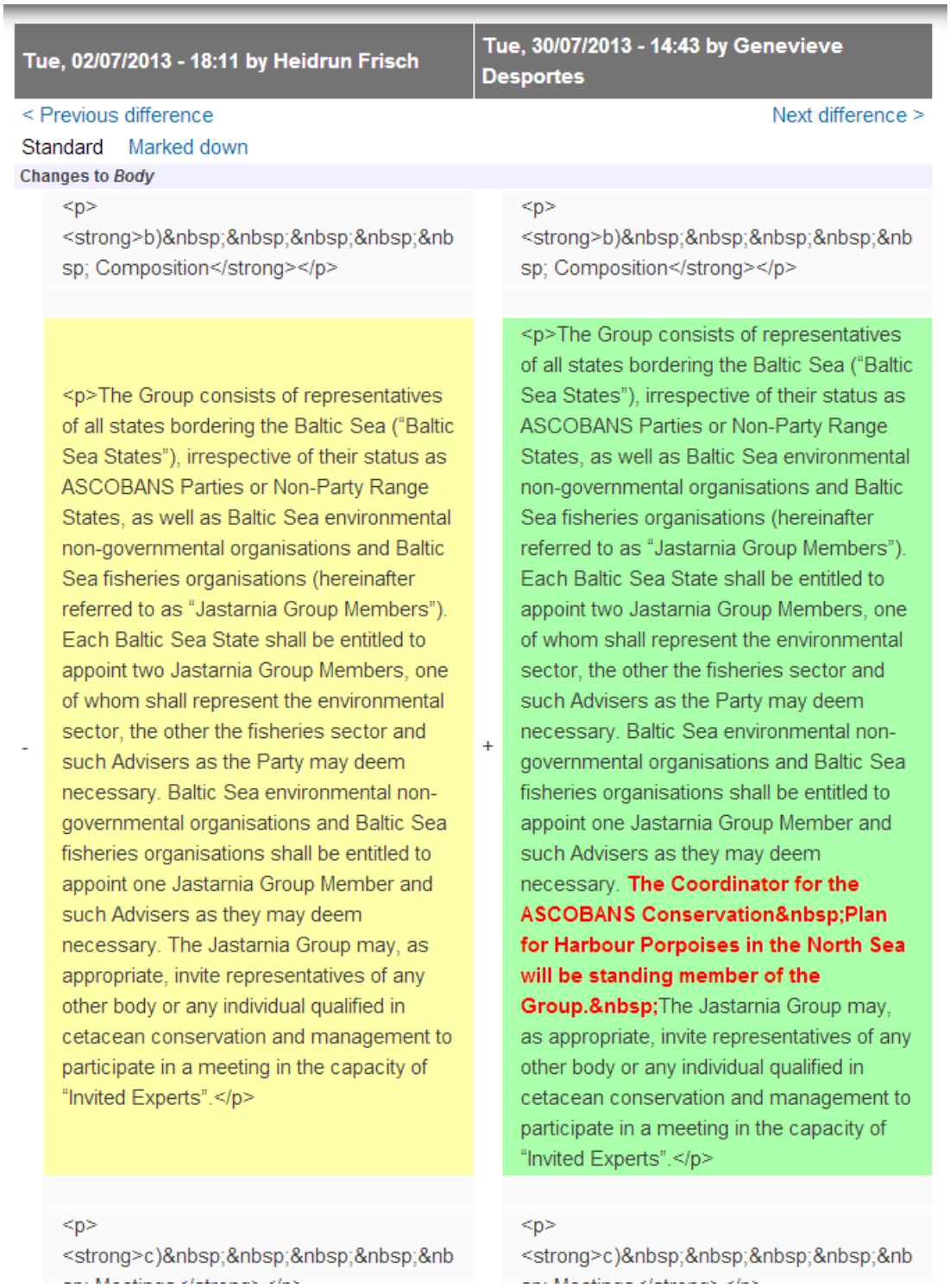
In order to compare revisions, please click on the *Revisions* tab. You will find a list similar to the one shown in Figure 15, which allows you to see how many revisions were made, by whom, and when.

Figure 15 - Wiki Revisions List



You can compare any two versions with each other to see which changes were introduced (see for example Figure 16).

Figure 16 - Comparison of Wiki Revisions



Tue, 02/07/2013 - 18:11 by Heidrun Frisch	Tue, 30/07/2013 - 14:43 by Genevieve Desportes
< Previous difference	Next difference >
Standard Marked down	
Changes to *Body*	
b) Composition	b) Composition
- The Group consists of representatives of all states bordering the Baltic Sea ("Baltic Sea States"), irrespective of their status as ASCOBANS Parties or Non-Party Range States, as well as Baltic Sea environmental non-governmental organisations and Baltic Sea fisheries organisations (hereinafter referred to as "Jastarnia Group Members"). Each Baltic Sea State shall be entitled to appoint two Jastarnia Group Members, one of whom shall represent the environmental sector, the other the fisheries sector and such Advisers as the Party may deem necessary. Baltic Sea environmental non-governmental organisations and Baltic Sea fisheries organisations shall be entitled to appoint one Jastarnia Group Member and such Advisers as they may deem necessary. The Jastarnia Group may, as appropriate, invite representatives of any other body or any individual qualified in cetacean conservation and management to participate in a meeting in the capacity of "Invited Experts".	+ The Group consists of representatives of all states bordering the Baltic Sea ("Baltic Sea States"), irrespective of their status as ASCOBANS Parties or Non-Party Range States, as well as Baltic Sea environmental non-governmental organisations and Baltic Sea fisheries organisations (hereinafter referred to as "Jastarnia Group Members"). Each Baltic Sea State shall be entitled to appoint two Jastarnia Group Members, one of whom shall represent the environmental sector, the other the fisheries sector and such Advisers as the Party may deem necessary. Baltic Sea environmental non-governmental organisations and Baltic Sea fisheries organisations shall be entitled to appoint one Jastarnia Group Member and such Advisers as they may deem necessary. **The Coordinator for the ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea will be standing member of the Group. **The Jastarnia Group may, as appropriate, invite representatives of any other body or any individual qualified in cetacean conservation and management to participate in a meeting in the capacity of "Invited Experts".
c) &nb	c) &nb

Concluding Remarks

Please be aware that since this is still a new working platform, you may encounter occasional technical difficulties, broken links or similar functional problems. Please report those to the ASCOBANS Secretariat through the appropriate forum under the tab *Discussion* to help us improve the system and ensure a smooth working environment for the Advisory Committee.

We are confident that this new tool will greatly enhance the Advisory Committee's capacity for effective, transparent intersessional collaboration, and we are looking forward to constructive and lively discussions on the many important topics we are working on!