

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA AND SCHEDULE

Day 1 – Tuesday, 12 March 2024

09:00-18:00 CET

Time	Agenda Item	Presenter / Lead	Docs / Comments
08:30	<i>Registration: pre-registered participants are requested to sign for their meeting badges at the registration desk, in the meeting room.</i>		<i>Venue: Thalassa Beach, Boulevard Barnaart, Strandafgang 18, Zandvoort.</i>
09:00	1. Opening of the Meeting		
	1.1. Welcome and announcements Short welcoming remarks and housekeeping information.	Secretariat	
	1.2. Adoption of the Agenda Members will be requested to review and adopt the Provisional Agenda and Provisional Annotated Agenda and Schedule. Late items and topics to be discussed under item 9 (Any other business) may be suggested. Rules of Procedure for the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee apply to the North Sea Group.	Chair	Doc.1.2a Provisional Agenda Doc.1.2b Provisional Annotated Agenda and Schedule
09:20	2. Implementation review: Bycatch		
	2.1. Implementation of existing regulations on bycatch of cetaceans (Action 2) The target of this Action is to ensure that existing regulations with respect to bycatch reduction measures are being effectively implemented and to collect data on their efficacy in reducing bycatch. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.	Members	
	2.2. Establishment of bycatch observation programmes (Action 3) The target of this Action is to further develop methods to observe and mitigate bycatch (including implementation monitoring) in small vessel fisheries. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.	Members	

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10:30	Coffee break 30min		
11:00	<p>2.3. Regular evaluation of all fisheries with respect to extent of harbour porpoise bycatch (Action 4)</p> <p>The target of this Action is to estimate levels of bycatch of harbour porpoises in the North Sea at regular intervals to enable mitigation measures to be reviewed and if necessary modified. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.</p>	Members	
	<p>2.4. Review of current pingers, development of alternative pingers and gear modifications (Action 5)</p> <p>The target of this Action is more universal acceptance by all stakeholders (and hence better implementation) of mitigation measures to reduce harbour porpoise bycatch. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.</p>	Members	
	<p>2.5. Finalize a management procedure approach for determining maximum allowable bycatch limits in the region (Action 6)</p> <p>The target of this Action is to progress towards finalising a population dynamics modelling framework for evaluating the effect of bycatches (and other anthropogenic activities) on harbour porpoises in the North Sea that anthropogenic activities do not prevent agreed conservation goals being met. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.</p>	Members	
13:00	Lunch break 1h		
14:00	3. Implementation Review: Research		
	<p>3.1. Monitoring trends in distribution and abundance of harbour porpoises in the region (Action 7)</p> <p>The target of this Action is to provide regular information on the abundance and distribution of harbour porpoises in the region as input into the management procedure approach discussed under Action 6, to provide information relevant to evaluating mitigation measures including a comparison of the relative distribution of animals with anthropogenic activity. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.</p>	Members	<p>Inf.3.1a Information from Belgium</p> <p>Inf.3.1b Seasonal distribution of harbour porpoises and offshore wind farms</p>
	<p>3.2. Review of the stock structure of harbour porpoises in the region (Action 8)</p>	Members	

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	The target of this Action is to provide information on the stock structure and movements of harbour porpoises in the region that can be used in the management procedure. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.		
	3.3. Collection of incidental porpoise catch data through stranding networks (Action 9) The target of this Action is to provide qualitative information on bycatch occurrence and an assessment of minimum number of annually bycaught porpoises. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.	Members	
	3.4. Investigation of the health, nutritional status and diet of harbour porpoises (Action 10) The target of this Action is to obtain good quality data on health parameters and the diet of porpoise populations in the area of application of the Conservation Plan. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.	Members	
15:30	Coffee break 30min		
16:00	3.5. Investigation of the effects of anthropogenic sounds on harbour porpoises (Action 11) The target of this Action is to obtain good quality data on the acoustic capabilities of harbour porpoises and relate this to a) the acoustic properties of anthropogenic sounds (also see Action 12), and b) the most relevant information on the effects of noise on porpoises. Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.	Members	
	3.6. Collection and archiving of data on anthropogenic activities and development of a GIS (Action 12) The target of this Action is to obtain data on relevant anthropogenic activities in the North Sea over time in a format suitable for incorporating into a GIS (along with data from Action 7). Members of the NSG to report, as appropriate.	Members	
	4. Other activities contributing to the conservation of the harbour porpoise in the North Sea		
18:00	End of Day 1		

Day 2 - Wednesday, 13 March 2024

09:00-18:00 CET

Time	Agenda Item	Presenter / Lead	Docs / Comments
09:00	<p>5. Overall progress in the implementation of the Conservation Plan (Action 1) In the Conservation Plan, Action 1 refers to appointment of a Coordinator and a Steering Group. Since those are completed, the Meeting is invited to discuss the overall progress. The Coordinator of the North Sea Plan will give a presentation reflecting the progress under the conservation plan. Members will be invited to comment and fill any gaps in the relevant parts of the Progress Report.</p>	Peter Evans	<p>Progress Report North Sea Plan 2023 Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea</p>
10:30	Coffee break 30min		
11:00	5. Overall progress in the implementation of the Conservation Plan - <i>continued</i>		
	<p>6. Liaison with other organisations The Coordinator of the North Sea Plan will give an update on the liaison with other relevant Working Groups and organisations.</p>	Peter Evans	
	7. Update on the review of the Conservation Plan	Secretariat	Draft Revision (Aug 2023)
	<p>8. Review of Recommendations from the North Sea Group Participants will be invited to review Recommendations from NSG11 and develop new ones from the current meeting, as needed.</p>	Chair	Recommendations from NSG11
	9. Any other business		
	<p>10. Next Meeting of the North Sea Group Members will be invited to discuss the timing of the next North Sea Group meeting.</p>	Secretariat	
13:00	11. Close of the Meeting		
	Lunch		

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Joint session with the ASCOBANS Jastarnia Group			
14:00	Welcome and opening of the Joint Session		
14:05	CMS COP14 & ASCOBANS MOP10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant outcomes of the 14th Session of the Conference of the Parties to CMS • Planning for the 10th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS 	Jenny Renell / Secretariat	
14:20	Population assignment of harbour porpoises in North and Baltic Sea using whole genome data	Ralph Tiedemann / University of Potsdam	
14:45	Discussion about conservation measures across the three regions regarding:		
	Bycatch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on CIBBRiNA • Endangered, Threatened and Protected species in the new MSC Fisheries Standard • Drones as a research tool in nature conservation: behaviour, acoustics, nutrition and bycatch trials • The PearlNet: Application of acoustic reflectors in set nets to reduce bycatch of harbour porpoises and other odontocetes while keeping fish catches high • Discussion 	Jip Vrooman / WUR Shaun McLennan / MSC Michael Daehne / BfN Thomas Noack / Thünen Institute of Baltic Sea Fisheries	
15:30	Coffee break 30min		
16:00	Bycatch - <i>continued</i>		
16:30	Offshore renewable energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence for the impacts of offshore wind energy on harbour porpoise • Discussion 	Rowana Walton / UNEP-WCMC	



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17:00	Underwater noise <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion on what regulations each country has regarding underwater noise and any mitigation actions they apply, both inside and outside MPAs. As a start to this discussion, we invite national presentations on current measures, both within and outside MPAs.	Members	
18:00	Close of the joint session		