



## ECS-ASCOBANS WORKSHOP:

### TOWARDS MEANINGFUL CONSERVATION ACTION FOR RISSO'S DOLPHINS IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC

*Unicorn Suite, Apex City Quay Hotel & Spa*

*Monday 20 April 2026, 14:00-18:00*

#### Programme

Time	Item	Presenter
13:30	<i>Registration open on site (sign in)</i>	
14:00	<b>Opening of the Workshop</b> Welcome, aims of the workshop, tour-de-table introductions	Jenny Renell Mark Simmonds
14:15	<b>Synthesise current knowledge</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genetics &amp; population structure</li> <li>• Life history &amp; behaviour</li> <li>• Distribution &amp; abundance, ecology</li> <li>• Acoustics</li> <li>• Contaminants</li> <li>• Underwater noise</li> <li>• Disturbance</li> <li>• Bycatch</li> <li>• Prey</li> <li>• Habitat loss &amp; degradation</li> <li>• Other threats (e.g. hunting, climate change, emerging threats)</li> </ul>	<i>Chair: Mark Simmonds</i> Nicola Hodgins Oihane Olhasque, Karin Hartmann Peter Evans Thomas Webber Mark Simmonds Nienke van Geel Peter Evans Peter Evans Peter Evans Nicola Hodgins Mark Simmonds, Nicola Hodgins
16:15	<i>Break 30min</i>	
16:45	<b>Developing a Conservation Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASCOBANS Guidelines</li> <li>• Species action plan structure</li> </ul>	<i>Chair: Nicola Hodgins</i> Jenny Renell Peter Evans
17:15	<b>Potential priority actions to include in a Conservation Plan</b>	<i>Chair: Mark Simmonds</i>
17:50	<b>Next steps</b>	Jenny Renell
18:00	<b>Close of the Workshop</b>	



*Description of the Workshop:*

*Risso's dolphins (*Grampus griseus*) are widely distributed across the North Atlantic, yet their population status, ecological requirements, and vulnerability to human pressures remain poorly understood. Recent large-scale surveys, data compilations (including strandings data) and long-term photo-identification studies highlight regional hotspots around the British Isles, Ireland, France and the Azores, while genetic analyses reveal significant population differentiation between European Atlantic waters and the Mediterranean. Despite these advances, conservation challenges persist, including fisheries interactions, prey availability, chemical pollution, acoustic and anthropogenic disturbance, and coastal development.*

*This half-day workshop aims to synthesise current knowledge, identify priority actions, and the key components of an ASCOBANS conservation plan for the species. By fostering dialogue across disciplines and jurisdictions, the workshop aims to translate research findings into meaningful conservation actions, ensuring that Risso's dolphins receive the targeted protection necessary to safeguard their future in the North Atlantic.*