

ASCOBANS Jastarnia Group 22

IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW

- GERMANY -

ASCOBANS JG-22; 15. - 16.04.2026; ONLINE

1. Increase involvement, awareness and cooperation

- What has been done in terms of raising public awareness, by authorities, NGOs and other organisations?
 - What has been done to engage stakeholders in dialogue?
 - What has been done to increase cooperation between authorities and stakeholders (incl. fishers)? Have any reference groups or similar been established?
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➤ Baltic Harbour Porpoise Day

- Public Event at the German Oceanographic Museum

➤ Baltic Sea Day

- Infos regarding harbour porpoise

➤ Cetacean Sightings Programm

- App: OstSeeTiere
- <https://www.deutsches-meeresmuseum.de/en/science-research/news/map-of-sightings>

➤ Involvement of fishermen in Projects Stella 2 and PAL-CE (completed in 2025)

➤ CIBRINA

2. Monitor and estimate abundance and distribution

- Are there any new results from national monitoring programmes or large-scale surveys?
 - What is being planned for the near future?
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➤ National monitoring program

- ✓ Aerial Surveys: (Summer 2025) (Belt Sea Area every 2nd year)
- ✓ Acoustic Monitoring: all year

➤ HABITATWal – Habitat choice and population dynamics of harbour porpoises in the ecosystem in the German North and Baltic Sea (2022 - 2026; TiHo-ITAW, funding BfN)

- Habitat selection of harbour porpoises in the North and Baltic Sea, with focus on possible causes of decline
- Influence of anthropogenic disturbance factors on the population dynamics of hp
- Visual surveys of marine mammals in the German North Sea and Baltic Sea

➤ HaMoNa (DMM funded by BfN 2022 – 2026)

- Development of novel methods to acoustically determine the group size of harbour porpoises and the presence of calves
- Complement long-term acoustic data series
- Trend Analyses

➤ CUMBIAH

2. Monitor and estimate abundance and distribution

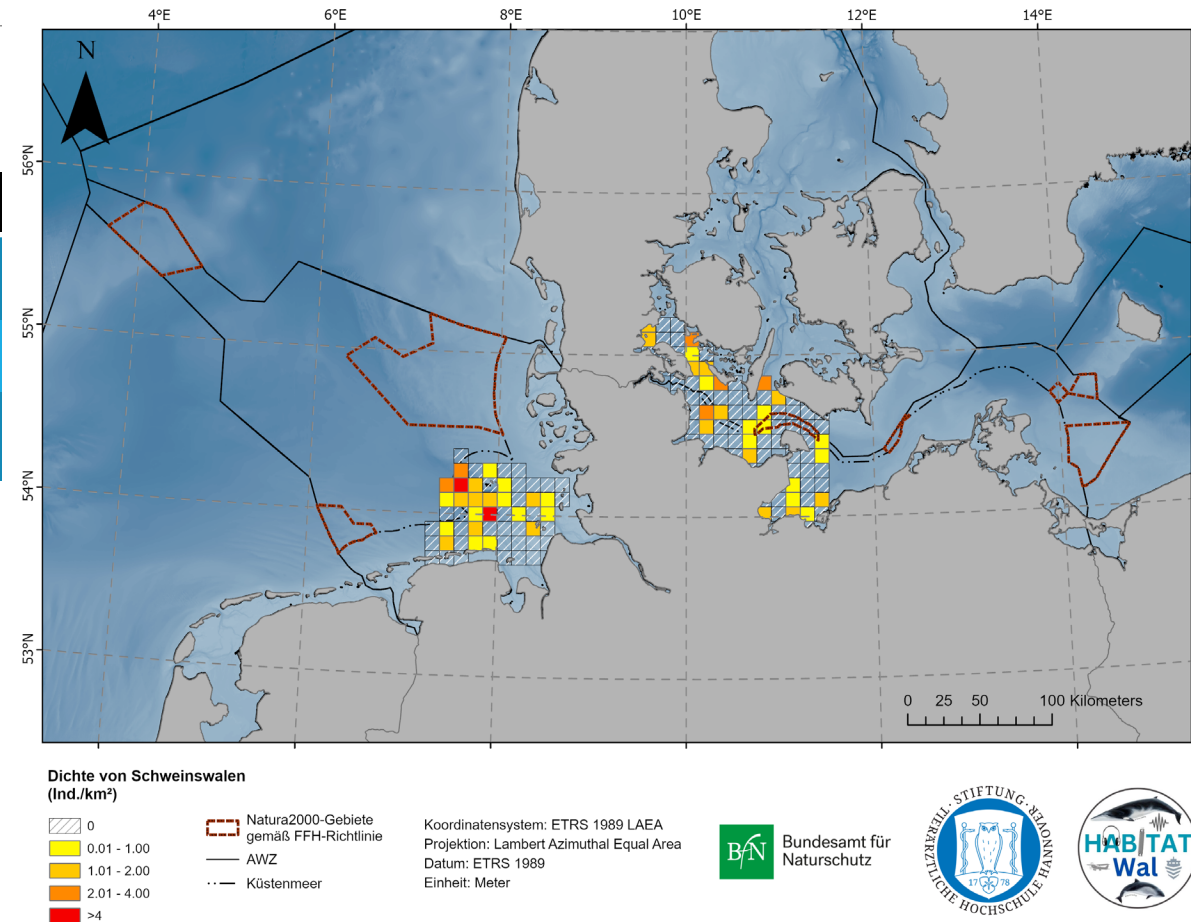
Results:

Areal Survey:

Area	Area Size [km ²]	Abundanz (95% CI)	Density (95% CI)
I	3.116	1.720 (744 -3075)	0,55 (0,24 -0,99)
J	3.575	1.140 (657 -1790)	0,32 (0,18 -0,5)
Total	6.691	2.860 (1742 -4505)	0,43 (0,26 -0,67)

Passiv Acoustic Monitoring:

➤ **Presentation:** “German Passive Acoustic Monitoring in the Baltic Sea” (Tom Bär)



3. Monitor, estimate and reduce bycatch

- What is being done in terms of bycatch monitoring? Pilot studies, research, monitoring programmes etc., and are there any results to present?
- Have any bycatch estimates been calculated for either population, nationally or in ICES or any other forums?
- What measures are in place to reduce bycatch?
- Any ongoing projects and trials of alternative gear? Any results on alternative gear effectiveness etc. to present?

➤ **CIBRINA**

➤ **CUMBIAH**

Completed in 2025:

➤ **“Stella 2”**

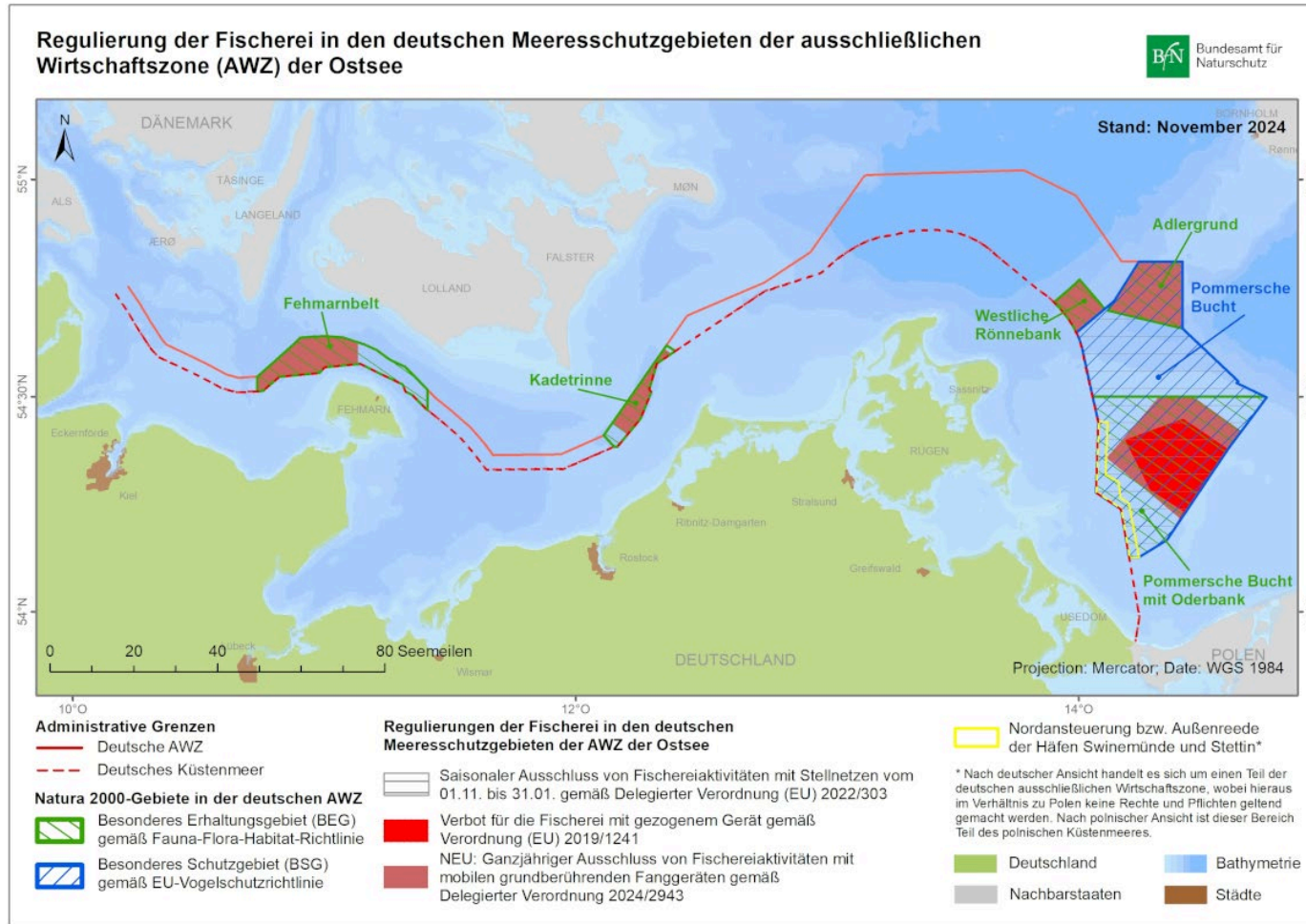
- Berzosa SÁ et al. (2025) From semi-controlled environment to field trials: Testing pot entrance designs for Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*). Fish Res 288:107470, [DOI:10.1016/j.fishres.2025.107470](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fishres.2025.107470)
- Kindt-Larsen L, et al. (2024) Pearls are not just for girls: Plastic spheres do not interfere with target catches in a set net fishery. Fish Res 276:107032, [DOI:10.1016/j.fishres.2024.107032](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fishres.2024.107032)
- Milanelli et al. 2026: PearlNet performance: Catch efficiency and practicality of a potential odontocete bycatch reduction tool in set net fisheries. Fish Res 296:107702 [DOI:10.1016/j.fishres.2026.107702](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fishres.2026.107702)

➤ **Project: „PAL-CE“**

- Final report and publications in preparation
- Dissertation Thaya Dinkel (<https://ediss.sub.uni-hamburg.de/handle/ediss/11713>)

3. Monitor, estimate and reduce bycatch

Measures:



4. Monitor and mitigate impact of underwater noise

- What projects or research or monitoring is in place to monitor underwater noise and its impact on harbour porpoises?
 - Are there any results to present?
 - Are there any measures in place or planned to mitigate the impact of underwater noise?
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New Projects:

1. **NEUSE** (Naturschutzfachliche Einordnung von Unterwasserschalleffekten) Assessment of underwater noise effects from a conservation perspective

Aims:

- Analysis of existing data (data logs, AMAR recorders, other acoustic data)
- Acoustic measurements of OWP service vessels at various speeds – development of limit values
- Development of assessment concepts and derivation of limit values for various sound sources (including new ones, e.g. airguns, USBLs, rocket launches, etc.)
- Development of an underwater sound strategy for the German North and Baltic Sea
- Testing of measures within the framework of environmentally compatible blasting – effectiveness of deterrence concepts and blast craters

4. Monitor and mitigate impact of underwater noise

New Projects:

2. **ICU-Noise** (Effects of marine intermittent and continuous underwater noise and development of an assessment framework)

Aims:

- Assessment of the potential harmfulness of various intermittent noise sources (literature review)
- Collection of reliable data to assess the effects of intermittent sound sources, e.g. USBLs, sonars, sparkers, ultrasonic antifouling...
- Organisation of an international expert workshop to develop assessment frameworks for ship-borne and stationary intermittent sources
- Development of assessment concepts

4. Monitor and mitigate impact of underwater noise

New Projects:

3. FaunaGuard (Verification of the deterrent effect of the FaunaGuard porpoise module)

Aims:

- Planning and conducting a field trial to assess the deterrent efficiency of the FaunaGuard (independent of construction site activities)
- Evaluating the deterrent efficiency of the FaunaGuard

4. WS-GrüMe (Workshop on Alternative Foundation Technologies and Noise Mitigation Measures – Steps Towards the State of the Art) (internal)

- Overview of the current state of development and identification of steps for implementation.
- Based on the workshop results, the study “Noise mitigation for the construction of increasingly large offshore wind turbines – Technical options for complying with noise limits” (Koschinski, Lüdemann 2020; BfN) will be updated

4. Monitor and mitigate impact of underwater noise

Measures:

- **Sound protection concept** (Windfarm constructions) of North Sea – applied also in Baltic Sea
- **Guidelines** for the legal and technical nature conservation requirements for the clearance of explosive ordnance in the German North Sea and Baltic Sea (in process)
- “Round Table shipping and underwater noise”

5. Monitor and assess population health status

- What is the status of collection of animals found dead, (approximately) how many animals have been sampled and necropsied?
 - Any specific interesting cases to mention (for example bycatch or strandings in the Baltic Proper population range)?
 - Any results to present?
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➤ **Stranding Networks established:**

- Schleswig-Holstein (SH): ITAW <https://www.tiho-hannover.de/itaw/uebers-itaw/schweinswalsichtung>
- Mecklenburg Vorpommern (MV): DMM <https://www.deutsches-meeresmuseum.de/en/science-research/news/report-stranded-marine-mammals>
 - Investigation of cause of death, health, nutritional status and diet of harbour porpoises

➤ **HaMoNa:**

- Conduction of digestion experiments to analyze the role of harbour porpoises in the ecosystem and especially in food webs (DMM funded by BfN 2022 – 2026)
 - ❖ **Presentation:** Analyses of stomach content of harbour porpoises (Lisa Klemens)

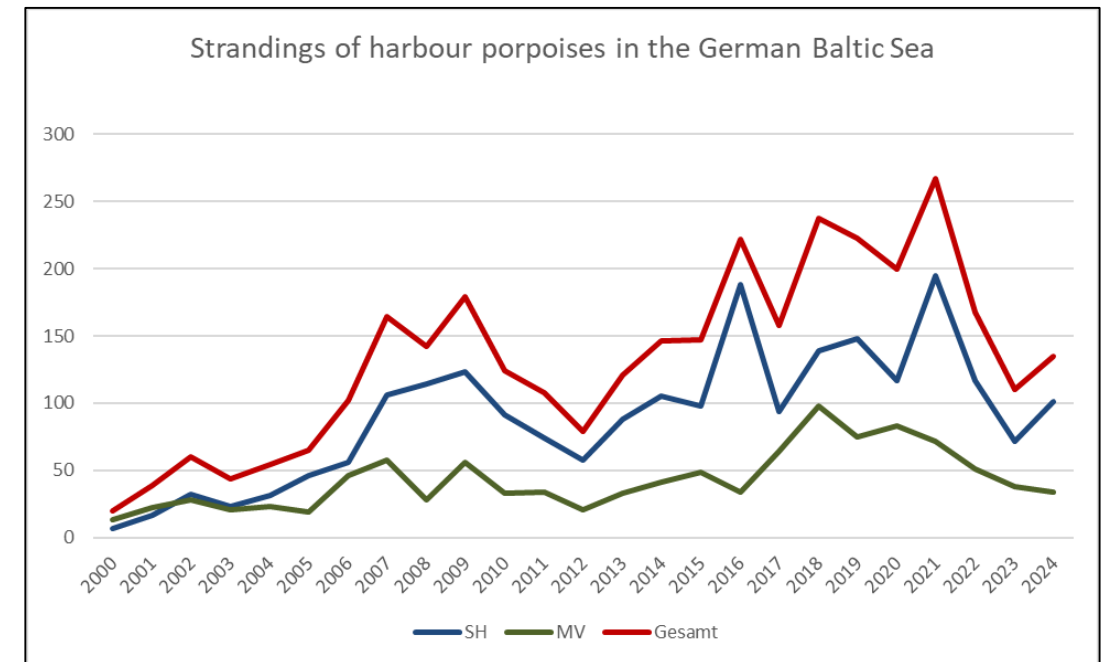
➤ **CREATE 2:**

- Development of indicators for the health of marine mammals and their further development for the assessment of anthropogenic impacts (Dec. 2024 – Nov. 2027) (ITAW + Consortium)

5. Monitor and assess population health status

Results:

- **Presentation:** Analyses of stomach content of harbour porpoises (Lisa Klemens)
- **Presentation:** Genetic findings on the Baltic harbour porpoise (Maxi Tomowski, Ralph Tiedemann)
- **Standing of 1 humpback whale**



Sources: DMM/ITAW

6. Investigate habitat use and protect important areas

- Are there any projects or other research ongoing on porpoise distribution or habitat use? Any “new” important areas identified?
- Are there any new protected areas designated for harbour porpoises?
- Any conservation measures and/or management plans in place for existing areas?

➤ 3 New Protected Areas in coastal areas of Schleswig Holstein

- No take areas
- Regulations for shipping in planning
- Further fishery measures (no take) for 3 existing N2K areas to be implemented



➤ **HABITATWal** – Habitat choice and population dynamics of harbour porpoises in the ecosystem in the German North and Baltic Sea

➤ **Presentation:** "Update on species distribution modelling for harbour porpoises in the North Sea and Belt Seas" (Anita Gilles)

6. Investigate habitat use and protect important areas

Protected Areas and Measures in place:

Managementplans for Natura 2000 sides in the German EEZ entered into force February 2022

- ✓ Regulations for towed gear: EU 2019/1241 (dark red)
- ✓ **Regulations for mobile bottom-contacting gears: EU 2024/2943 (light red)**
- Regulations for passive gears (gillnets and entangling nets): Delegated Act EU 2022/303
- further measures are under negotiations (gillnets and strictly protection)

