

Agenda Item 4.1: ASCOBANS Baltic Recovery Plan ("Jastarnia Plan") Implementation

Updated Implementation Plan for the Jastarnia Plan

Submitted by: Secretariat



ASCOBANS

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

Secretariat's Note

The Secretariat was asked to present an updated implementation plan for the Jastarnia Plan to the 10th Meeting of the Advisory Committee. The following plan is based on the implementation plan developed by the 9th Meeting of the Advisory Committee (Hindås, Sweden, 10 - 12 June 2002), which identified steps to be taken in order of importance.

Implementation of the Jastarnia Plan

(in order of importance¹)

<p>***1. Establish an Advisory Group to oversee the process of identifying high-risk areas for bycatch mitigation. This group will have responsibility for further development of the Terms of Reference for needed studies, choosing consultants (or other individuals) to carry out the studies, and generally to carry forward the relevant recommendations in the Recovery Plan.</p> <p>1a. Collation of data on the distribution and timing of porpoise bycatches in the Baltic, and on the distribution and timing of porpoise observations (including strandings) in the Baltic, over approximately the past 50 years.</p> <p>It was agreed that this work should be conducted by a cetacean expert who is familiar with the Baltic literature. Preferably, this should be a scientist who is sponsored by an agency in one of the ASCOBANS Parties. Estimated time required : 1 month.</p> <p>1b. Collation of data on fishing effort, following the terms of reference and example data sheet in the Recovery Plan.</p> <p>It was agreed that this work should be conducted by someone with an intimate knowledge of Baltic fisheries and with a high degree of competence in dealing with fishery statistics. As part of this project, a steering group should be identified consisting of one contact person in each Baltic Range State who can help direct the contractor to relevant sources of data. Estimated time required: 4-6 months. Cost: up to 70,000 Euros.</p>	<p>Advisory Group is currently being established.</p> <p>Report has been commissioned. The author, Iwona Kuklik, will present a progress report to AC 10. Report will be finalized by <u>15 June 2003</u>.</p> <p>Funding for this project is not yet in place. The Secretariat has contacted one of the Baltic parties about the possibility of providing a voluntary contribution to finance this study. Decision pending Report to be commissioned immediately upon provision of funds. Envisioned date of finalization: <u>31 December 2003</u>.</p>
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¹ *** Top priority/immediate implementation

** high priority/implement without delay

* to be implemented as soon as feasible

<p>***2. Model pinger function in Baltic conditions. The simple modelling exercise called for in the Recovery Plan should be conducted to determine whether hydrographic conditions in the Baltic are sufficiently different to dramatically compromise pinger efficacy. It was agreed that Håkan Westerberg and Peter Evans would take responsibility for ensuring that this exercise is carried out independently in Sweden and the UK, with Peter first obtaining necessary hydrographic data from Håkan. Cost: none foreseen.</p>	<p>Work in progress. Finalization expected by <u>30 June 2003</u></p>
<p>***3. Send the Recovery Plan (and this "implementation plan") to IBSFC, HELCOM, and other relevant bodies, with an appropriate cover letter outlining what is expected from them. It is particularly urgent that the transmittal to IBSFC take place without delay, and that every effort be made to ensure that the Recovery Plan is on the agenda of IBSFC s September meeting this year and that a representative of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee is present at the meeting to present the Plan in person. The responsibility for ensuring that this item is carried out should jointly fall upon the Secretariat and the Chairman-Vice-Chairman.</p>	<p>Done.</p> <p>In addition, a fully briefed ASCOBANS observer, Karl-Hermann Kock, attended the IBSFC Meeting in September 2002, where the plan was presented and discussed. The Chairman of the AC represented ASCOBANS in a scientific sub-group of the European Commission's STECF group that advises on relevant regulations and the Chairman is in contact with the European Commission's DG Fisheries on their bycatch reduction proposals.</p>
<p>***4. Initiate a review of all experiments to date with alternative gear and fishing practices that might be used to replace the current use of driftnets and bottom-set gillnets in the Baltic. The objective of this review will be to identify promising gear for further development and testing.</p> <p>It was agreed that this work would take about 2-3 months to complete, at a cost of about 30,000 Euros. Håkan Westerberg and Finn Larsen will be responsible for ensuring that an appropriate person is identified and engaged to do this work. Funding and implementation could be provided through partnership with one or more NGOs, but with the Terms of Reference developed by Håkan Westerberg and Finn Larsen on behalf of the Advisory Committee.</p>	<p>In progress. Finalization contingent on availability of funds.</p>

<p>**5. Initiate communication with competent fishery authorities to ensure that there is consistency between what is envisaged in the Baltic Recovery Plan with regard to changes in fishing gear and practices, and any measures that are being considered or taken by those authorities. This work is the joint responsibility of the Secretariat and the Chairman/Vice-Chairman. It should be completed at no cost.</p>	<p>Action to be taken upon formal approval of the Jastarnia Plan by the 4th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS (18 - 22 August 2003) i.e. no earlier than <u>September 2003</u>.</p>
<p>**6. Develop and implement a strategy for getting fishermen to support bycatch mitigation measures.</p> <p>A key element of any pinger implementation will be educating fishermen on how to use them properly.</p>	<p>Action to be taken upon formal approval of the Jastarnia Plan by the 4th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS (18 - 22 August 2003), i.e. no earlier than <u>September 2003</u>.</p>
<p>*7. Improve effort and protocols for data collection from stranded or incidentally caught harbour porpoises in the Baltic.</p> <p>Concerted efforts should be made to locate such animals and to perform comprehensive necropsies on them. Data and samples are particularly needed to expand work on stock identification, contaminant levels, diet, and reproduction.</p>	<p>No concrete time line to date.</p>
<p>*8. Once sufficient data are available from items 1 and 2, an analysis should be initiated for the Baltic similar to that reported for the North Sea in 2000 by Hansen and Larsen. The aim will be to evaluate the potential for habitat exclusion caused by pinger use in the Baltic.</p>	<p>Action to be taken upon completion of 1. and 2. above, i.e. not before the <u>second half of 2003</u>.</p>