

Agenda Item 14.3.4

Implementation of the ASCOBANS Triennial  
Work Plan (2007-2009)

Review of New Information on Bycatch and  
Other Causes of Mortality

Other Information

Document 46

**Executive Summary:  
Report of the Study Group for Bycatch  
of Protected Species (SGBYC)**

**Action Requested**

- take note of the information submitted
- comment

Submitted by

Secretariat



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

### **Secretariat's Note**

The attached Executive Summary of the Report of the ICES Study Group on Bycatch (SGBYC) was forwarded to the Secretariat through Mark Tasker (UK) for the meeting's information. The full report can be downloaded at:

[http://www.ices.dk/reports/ACOM/2008/SGBYC/SGBYC\\_2008.pdf](http://www.ices.dk/reports/ACOM/2008/SGBYC/SGBYC_2008.pdf)

## **SGBYC Executive summary**

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The Study Group meet for the first time in Copenhagen in January 2008. There were six terms of reference, but one, relating to Council Regulation 812/2004 on cetacean bycatch dominated the work of the Study Group.

The Study Group compiled a preliminary list of methods and technologies that have been used to minimise bycatches of species of concern, and spent time reviewing the problems associated with the application of pingers (acoustic deterrent devices) in static gear as a cetacean bycatch mitigation measure. Although mandated in the US and EU, pinger deployment has proven difficult to implement for a variety of reasons. In reviewing these reasons, the Study Group proposed a framework for the development and implementation of future mitigation measures.

The Study Group reviewed various criteria that are widely used to define potential bycatch limits, and applied these to recent abundance estimates for certain small cetacean populations.

The Study Group had only a brief discussion on allocating take limits of protected species between and among fisheries, and deferred further discussion of this topic until next year.

The European Commission had asked ICES whether it could review the National Progress report by EU member states of work carried out under EC Regulation 812/2004 on cetacean bycatch. The Study Group noted that there is a wide variety of report structures and was able to propose a standardised reporting format for next years' reports. The study group made a number of recommendations concerning the implementation and possible revision of the 812/2004 regulation.

Using the National Reports under 812/2004, together with additional information from Norway and the USA, the Study Group compiled recent data on estimates of protected species bycatch in European and US Atlantic fishing fleets.

The Study Group reviewed ongoing experimental work directed at protected species bycatch mitigation in Europe and North America.