

Agenda Item 2

Annual National Reports 2009

Document 2-05

**Annual National Report Germany**

**Action Requested**

- Briefly present highlights from reports (max. 5 minutes)
- Take note of the information submitted
- Comment

Submitted by

Germany



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



**Revised Format for the  
ASCOBANS Annual National Reports**

**General Information**

Name of Party: Germany	Period covered: 2009
	Date of report: 16 <sup>th</sup> February 2010

Report submitted by:	
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<i>Any changes in coordinating authority or appointed member of advisory committee</i>	

**NEW Measures / Action Towards Meeting the Objectives of the Conservation and Management Plan and the Resolutions of the Meeting of Parties**

A new Federal Nature Protection Law ("BNatSchG"=Bundesnaturschutzgesetz) was decided 29.7.2009, which contains a new chapter on "marine nature protection" (chapter 6). This legislation will become valid from 1.3.2010 onwards.

**A. HABITAT CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT**

**1 Direct Interaction with Fisheries**

<i>Investigations of methods to reduce bycatch</i>
<i>Implementation of methods to reduce bycatch</i>
Together, three NGOs (GSM, GRD and NABU) prepared a paper on "by-catch of harbour porpoises ( <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> ) in the Baltic coastal waters of Angeln and Schwansen (Schleswig-Holstein, Germany)" (Koschinski & Pfander 2009, AC16/Doc.60). as well as a literature study on "strategies to prevent by-catch of harbour porpoises and seabirds in the German Baltic Sea", mainly focusing on alternative fishing methods (funded by 'BINGO!

Lotto'). [Koschinski]

In addition to the GSM's public awareness project "Sailors on the Look-out for Harbour Porpoises", members of the public are increasingly reporting strandings (inc. bycatch). The data are automatically forwarded to the authorities and to the stranding network. If possible, the location of a stranding is – with some delay due to logistics – also registered and published in the sightings map of BfN/GSM. [Deimer]

**In addition, please attach or provide link to your country's Report under EC Regulation 812/2004.**

## **2 Reduction of Disturbance**

### **2.1 Anthropogenic Noise**

Following the instructions for the German Navy on the protection of marine mammals and maritime habitats that were enacted in September 2007, marine mammal sightings are collected continuously by the German fleet and recorded in a data base to improve knowledge about the distribution and habitat use of abundant species. This information is taken into account for the planning of the use of sonar systems during trials. ....To reduce the risk for marine mammals during explosions (disposal of ammunition in the Baltic Sea), the effect of an air bubble curtain for the attenuation of shock waves was examined. [Velte, Federal Ministry of Defence]

Together, three NGOs (GSM, GRD and NABU) cooperated with the Schleswig-Holstein Ministry of the Interior regarding detonations of WW II mines in Kiel Bight. Originally, their public awareness campaign initiated a bubble curtain study by the Ministry of the Interior using detonations of 350 kg mines. Noise measurements have been undertaken by the Navy's Technical Center for Ships and Naval Weapons (WTD 71/FWG). [Koschinski]

Spatial and temporal responses of harbour porpoises to pile-driving were investigated during the construction of two large wind farms in the North Sea using passive acoustic monitoring (T-PODs). One wind farm consisting of 91 mono-piles is located in the Danish North Sea, approximately 30km west of Esbjerg in water depths of 15m. Construction took place from May to October 2008. The other wind farm is located in the German North Sea, 90km north of the island Borkum in water depths of 30m. This wind farm consists of six tripod and six jacket founded turbines. Construction lasted from April to August 2009. In both areas a clear negative effect of the pile-driving procedure on the presence of harbour porpoises could be proven with a clear gradient along distance to the pile-driving location. At the Danish site, porpoise activity and possibly density was reduced near the construction site over the entire five months period that pile driving occurred. [Diederichs, Brandt et al., BioConsult SH]

In order to avoid any physical damage in porpoises and seals the use of seal scarers during offshore windfarm construction is mandatory in German waters. However, little information exists as to how far deterring effects of seal scarers on harbour porpoises reach and existing knowledge is ambiguous. Spatial and temporal effect of a seal scarer (Lofitech) on the acoustic activity of harbour porpoises were investigated. [Brandt, Diederichs et al., BioConsult SH]

Offshore wind farms: A research project funded by the Federal Agency for Shipping and Hydrography (BSH) has been continued to investigate effects of the construction in the first German Offshore test-field for windfarms "Alpha Ventus" close to Borkum Reef, Germany. Visual surveys by airplane and ship, as well as acoustic surveys with towed hydrophone and stationary acoustic monitoring using C-PODS are carried out.

Pile driving: A research project aiming at the development and testing of an efficient, cheap

and easy-to-use air bubble curtain has been started. The system shall reduce the noise emissions from impact pile driving during the installation of monopiles in offshore areas. Funding is provided by the EU and the state of Schleswig-Holstein.  
 TTS in harbour porpoises: A research project has been started to verify the TTS level for impulsive noise (airgun signals) measured in a harbour porpoise (Lucke et al., 2009). Measurements will be conducted on a captive as well as on free-ranging animals.  
 [Siebert, Forschungs- und Technologiezentrum Westkueste]

## 2.2 Ship Strike Incidents

Please list all known incidents and for each, provide the following information:

Date	Species	Type of injury	Fatal injury (Yes / No)	Type of vessel (length, tonnage and speed)	Location (coordinates)	More information: (Name / Email)
		None reported				

## 2.3 Major Incidents Affecting Significant Numbers\* of Cetaceans

Date	Location	Type of incident	Further Information
		None reported	

\*Two or more animals

## 2.4 Pollution and Hazardous Substances

Please report on main types of pollution and hazardous substances (including source, location and observed effects on cetaceans). Please provide information on any new measures taken to reduce pollution likely to have an impact.

## 2.5 Other Forms of Disturbance

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## 3 Marine Protected Areas for Small Cetaceans

In June 2009, UNESCO declared the Wadden Sea as World Heritage site. Knowledge on distribution, abundance and habitat use of harbour porpoises in the Wadden Sea area is restricted to the offshore areas, especially west of the islands Sylt and Amrum. Due to its importance as a breeding area, it was designated as a 'whale sanctuary' in 1999. However, little is known about harbour porpoises in the water of the Inner Wadden Sea. The Inner Wadden Sea is characterised by a complex system of channels and streams alternates with

exposed mudflats and sand banks. A four-month study on the occurrence of harbour porpoises was conducted within one tidal system in the Inner Wadden Sea area east of Sylt using static acoustic monitoring (SAM). Three C-PODs were deployed at different locations within a channel in the Lister basin since August 2009. All C-POD's regularly detected numerous harbour porpoise clicks and thus provided detailed information with a high temporal resolution on harbour porpoise presence in the tideways. This is the first evidence of regular harbour porpoises presence in tideways more than 20km away from the open sea. [Hoeschle, Brandt et al., BioConsult SH]

<http://www.bfn.de/habitatmare/de/schutzgebiete-uebersicht.php>  
(only in German)

## **B. SURVEYS AND RESEARCH**

### **4.1 Overview of Research on Abundance, Distribution and Population Structure**

New data for a marine mammal data base (containing sightings, strandings, worldwide maps of occurrence and characteristics of 126 species) were integrated from freely available and provided sources. For the use within the German Fleet prototypes of identification tables of marine mammals were prepared, containing information on species characteristics, behaviour, abundance and distribution. [Velte, Federal Ministry of Defence]

A combined effort of the county of Wesermarsch and the Society for Dolphin Conservation Germany to detect harbour porpoises passing the river Weser by PODs is ongoing. See: <http://www.delphinschutz.org/projekte/weser/index.htm>  
[Czeck, National Park Administration Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony]

### **4.2 New Technological Developments**

*Please provide a brief summary of any relevant information*

### **4.3 Other Relevant Research**

A pilot study about the classification of marine mammal signatures with methods of speech recognition (e.g. Hidden Markov Models) was conducted. The study will be continued for the next two years. [Velte, Federal Ministry of Defence]

Collecting information about incidental strandings and sightings-by-chance is continued (see [http://www.nationalparkwattenmeer.niedersachsen.de/master/C43559691\\_N28553490\\_L20\\_D0\\_I5912119.html](http://www.nationalparkwattenmeer.niedersachsen.de/master/C43559691_N28553490_L20_D0_I5912119.html))  
[Czeck, National Park Administration Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony]

**C. USE OF BY-CATCHES AND STRANDINGS**

**5 Post-Mortem Research Schemes**

<p>Contact details of research institutions / focal point</p>	<p>Lower Saxony: LAVES-Institute for Fish &amp; Fishery Products Schleusenstr. 1, D-27472 Cuxhaven [Dr Ramdohr]</p> <p>Schleswig-Holstein: Forschungs- und Technologiezentrum Westküste (FTZ) Werftstr. 6, 25761 Büsum [Dr Siebert]</p>
<p>Methodology used (reference, e.g. publication, protocol)</p>	<p>Basic biological and anatomical data were collected and registered so far. Necropsy is postponed due to laboratory capacity. [Ramdohr, LAVES] Post mortem examination were performed according to the Proceedings of the First ECS Workshop on Cetacean Pathology (Kuiken and Hartmann, 1993, Siebert et al. 2001, 2006). Measurement were taken in metric system. [Siebert, FTZ]</p>
<p>Collection of samples (type, preservation method)</p>	<p>Pathological samples will be collected and examined during necropsy if required. [Ramdohr, LAVES] All organ systems were examined macroscopically and samples of lesions and different organ systems, including lungs, trachea, stomach (1st, 2nd, and 4th compartment), intestine, esophagus, liver, pancreas, thyroid gland, adrenal gland, kidney, urinary bladder, testis, uterus, ovary, spleen, thymus, pulmonary and intestinal lymph nodes, retropharyngeal lymph nodes, heart, aorta, skeletal muscles, rete mirabilis of the intercostal musculature, skin, blubber, brain, spinal cord, eye, bone, bone marrow, and tissue of the aural peribullar cavity, blood, urine etc. Formalin, alcohol, other special fixation, frozen at -20-30°C or 70-80°C, OCT etc. [Siebert, FTZ]</p>
<p>Database (Number of data sets by species, years covered, software used, online access)</p>	<p>Data were collected and registered for administrative purpose so far. Scientific analysis is postponed. [Ramdohr, LAVES] MySQL, Postgresql, Access, Excel Between 1990 and 2009 the following number of data sets has been collected per species (data recorded until 04.02.10): Phocoena phocoena: 2647 Delphinus delphis: 5 Lagenorhynchus albirostris: 25 Lagenorhynchus acutus: 1 Stenella caeruleoalba: 1 Delphinapterus leucas: 1 Delphinapterus ampullatus: 1 Physeter macrocephalus: 6 Balaenoptera acutorostrata: 6 Balaenoptera physalus: 6 Globicephala melaena: 3 Tursiops truncatus: 1 Mesoplodon bidens: 1 [Siebert, FTZ]</p>
<p>Additional Information (e.g. website addresses, intellectual property rights, possibility of a central database)</p>	<p>Look at: Collecting information about incidental strandings and sightings-by-chance is continued (see <a href="http://www.nationalparkwattenmeer.niedersachsen.de/master/C43559691_N28553490_L20_D0_I5912119.html">http://www.nationalparkwattenmeer.niedersachsen.de/master/C43559691_N28553490_L20_D0_I5912119.html</a>) [Czeck, National Park Administration Wadden Sea of Lower</p>

	<p>Saxony]</p> <p>Data should be put in an international data base after publication. Use and interpretation of data sets should be restricted. Exchange and comparison of all data collected in different countries. This will give a more precise picture of the different subpopulations of harbour porpoise. [Siebert, FTZ]</p>
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**5.1 Number of Necropsies Carried out in Reporting Period:**

Species	Recorded cause of death
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: Phocoena phocoena: 52	Recorded strandings and bycatch, only partially necropsied [Dähne, German Oceanographic Museum]
Lower Saxony: Phocoena phocoena: 56 Mesoplodon bidens: 1 (not collected)	Recorded strandings, only partially to be necropsied (necropsies are postponed) [Ramdohr, LAVES-Institute for Fish & Fishery Products]
Schleswig-Holstein: Phocoena phocoena Mesoplodon bidens	262 (data recorded until 04.02.10) 1 [Siebert, FTZ]

*Please provide any other relevant information on post-mortem / stranding schemes.*

**D. LEGISLATION**

**6.1 Relevant New Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines**

*Please provide any relevant information.*

**E. INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

**7.1 Public Awareness and Education**

In the light of spreading information about the occurrence and biology of harbour porpoises some minor projects can be mentioned:

In 2009 for the first time the effort of a 'whale watching tour by foot' was offered by the National Park Information Centre in Wilhelmshaven. Even if this is more to be seen as an additional event with unpredictable results, harbour porpoises were frequently observed in the last years passing the shoreline near Wilhelmshaven during spring and an informational plate about the local situation was designed and will be put up in spring 2010.

At the National Park Information Centre on Norderney the project 'Meereslauschen' has ended. A hydrophone collects underwater sounds (also sounds from harbour porpoises), the results were transmitted into the information centre.

[Czeck, National Park Administration Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony]

GRD's sightings project of harbour porpoises in the Weser river was successfully continued in 2009. We received a number of sightings published under [www.weserwale.de](http://www.weserwale.de). For 2010 we plan the deployment of 2 C-PODs to receive additional information on this riverine occurrence of porpoises. [Koschinski, Society for Dolphin Conservation Germany]

Several press releases by three NGOs (GSM, GRD and NABU) together on underwater detonations, boat/ship noise and pile-driving noise were published in the course of the year and interviews were given to media upon request.

A diving association's speed boat contest ("4 Elements Challenge") was opposed. For this reason press releases were prepared as well as an on-line petition to the German parliament. As a result of strong media interest, authorities felt obliged to limit the speed of the rigid-hull inflatable boats to 16 knots inside SACs and in the inner Kiel Fjord and Eckernförde Bight and to 24 knots in the outer Kiel Bight (from 35 knots originally intended). [Koschinski]

Several press releases were published in the course of the year and interviews were given to media upon request. The sightings project (since 2002) is well-respected and known to a wide public, especially along the cost of the Baltic Sea region. It increasingly provides interesting information, such as reports on the appearance of a white harbour porpoise in the Western Baltic in the winter of 2008/9 (photos available).

The sightings data are posted on-line, and BfN is regularly publishing the map with the data put together by GSM staff. The sightings map is interactive, i.e.all information can be accessed by a simple click. Lectures were held to school classes and other interested groups, and information was distributed during the international fair "Hanseboot".

On the occasion of the IDHP 2009, GSM organised a meeting with members, media and other interested people in "Hohe Düne" (Marina of Warnemuende) with several interesting lectures about harbour porpoises and harbour seals. This event was, of course, accompanied by a press release. [Deimer]

### ***POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT***

None

Please return this form, preferably by e-mail, to:

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