

Support for the Proposal to expand the geographical range of the listing of White-beaked dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus albirostris*) on Appendix II of CMS to cover its entire range.

In line with the recommendations from two previous ASCOBANS workshops, we are seeking the support of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee - by way of a written statement of support – to expand the range of the listing of white-beaked dolphins on Appendix II to cover its entire range.

**Experts on the species have already developed a draft proposal that we attach as an annex to this document.*

Background

White-beaked dolphins (*Lagenorhynchus albirostris*) are an endemic species to the North Atlantic, with the majority of its core distribution areas within the NE around Western Europe and Scandinavia. Until recently, very little was known regarding the species life history, abundance, distribution, population dynamics and ecology.

The white beaked dolphin was adopted as species of concern by ASCOBANS and to date, two ASCOBANS workshops have been conducted - the first, a joint white beaked and Atlantic white-sided dolphin workshop was held as part of the 24th Annual Conference of the European Cetacean Society (ECS, Stralsund, Germany, 2010), the second, “Towards a Conservation Strategy for White-beaked Dolphins in the NE Atlantic” a joint ECS/ASCOBANS/WDC white-beaked dolphin species workshop was held as part of the 27th Annual ECS Conference (ECS, Setubal, Portugal, 2013). Primarily the aim of the workshops was to address the legislation, threats and current status of the species all of which inform the necessary policy underlying its present conservation.

As a result of the ECS/ASCOBANS workshops on the species it was recommended that enough evidence is available for a reassessment of the species Conservation Status across its range, in particular related to ever increasing threats of climatic change, pollution, prey depletion and habitat degradation.

Under CMS the white-beaked dolphin is currently listed as Annex II for that population(s) occurring in the North and Baltic Seas, however, due to the workshops’ findings ([AC17/Doc.5-08](#); [AC20_4.1.c](#)) concerning regional changes in the status and distribution of the species possibly in response to climatic change, it was determined that the favourable conservation status of the species could be severely impacted throughout its North Atlantic range and **an expansion of the listing to cover the entire range of the species was recommended.**

We therefore seek the support of the ASCOBANS AC by asking member states to speak in favour of an expansion of the listing under CMS to cover the entire range of the species and by submitting a statement of support to the CMS Scientific Council.