

# Seventh Compilation of Annual National Reports

Bonn, 2003



Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas

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## Preface

This seventh compilation of annual national reports covers the year 2002. As in previous years, it provides an overview of the achievements of seven of the eight Parties in their continued effort to implement ASCOBANS. Moreover, in addition to the reports of the ASCOBANS Parties, it contains those of two non-Party Range States, Estonia and Latvia, provided to ASCOBANS by HELCOM.

In accordance with HELCOM recommendation 17/2 and the decision taken at the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of HELCOM HABITAT and the relevant decisions of ASCOBANS bodies, a harmonized reporting scheme for both ASCOBANS and HELCOM is being used by both organizations. HELCOM Parties not Parties to ASCOBANS report to the Helsinki Convention, which makes the reports available to the ASCOBANS Secretariat<sup>1</sup>. ASCOBANS, in turn, supplies the reports of its Parties to HELCOM.

This year's compilation, therefore, presents an encouraging example of the practical synergies that can be achieved by cooperation between ASCOBANS and other relevant international organizations in the Agreement area, for the benefit of small cetaceans and of the regional marine environment as a whole.

*Rüdiger Stempel*  
*Executive Secretary*

Bonn, 2003

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<sup>1</sup> The ASCOBANS Secretariat would like to thank Dr. Ewa Włodarczyk of the Polish Secretariat for the Helsinki Convention, Gdańsk, for excellent cooperation implementing the joint reporting mechanism.



## A. GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1. Summary of Party and Range States Details

Party	Period Covered	Report Compiler	Coordinating Authority
Belgium	1 January 2002 - 31 December 2002	Jan Haelters MUMM 3e en 23e Linienregimentsplein 8400 Oostende	Dr Thierry Jacques, MUMM* Ministère de la santé publique et de l'Environnement, Gulledulle 110 1200 Bruxelles
Denmark	2002	Maj F. Munk in cooperation with the Danish Institute for Fisheries Research, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fishery, the Fjord & Bælt.	Maj F. Munk Danish Forest and Nature Agency Haraldsgade 53 DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø Denmark
Finland	2002	Penina Blankett	Penina Blankett Ministry of the Environment P.O. Box 380 00131 Helsinki Finland
Federal Republic of Germany	1 January - 31 December 2002	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety	Dr Tilman Pommeranz Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety Postfach 120629 53048 Bonn
Poland	1 January - 31 December 2002	Iwona Kuklik, Krzysztof Skora Hel Marine Station University of Gdańsk P.O. Box 37 84-150 Hel	Andrzej Langowski Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry, Department for Nature Conservation Ul Wawelska 52/54 00-922 Warsaw
Sweden	1 January – 31 December 2002	Christina Rappe	Christina Rappe Swedish Environmental Protection Agency Blekholtsterrassen 36 10648 Stockholm
United Kingdom <sup>2</sup>	1 January - 31 December 2002	Stacey Hughes, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	Duncan Williams Dept. for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Species Conservation Branch Temple Quay House 2 The Square Bristol BS1 6EB

Range States	Period Covered	Report Compiler	Coordinating Authority
Estonia	January 2002 - September 2003	Ivar Jüssi Estonian Ministry of Environment Toompuiestee 24 15172 Tallinn Estonia	
Latvia	2002 - 2003	Vilnis Bernards Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development Environmental Protection Department Peldu iela 25 1494 Riga Latvia	

<sup>2</sup> UK's ratification of ASCOBANS was extended to include the Bailiwick of Jersey on 26 September 2002.

## Institutions and Organisations mentioned in national reports

<i>National</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Pages</i>
<b>Belgium</b>	Management Unit of the North Sea Mathematical Models / Royal Belgium Institute for Natural Sciences (MUMM/RBINS)	3, 20, 29
	The University of Liège	29
<b>Denmark</b>	Danish Institute for Fisheries Research	3, 6
	Danish Outdoor Council	29
	Fisheries and Maritime Museum, Esbjerg	29
	Fjord & Bælt, Kerteminde	3, 6, 7, 12, 25, 28, 30
	GB Bank Foundation	29
	Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fishery	3, 7
	National Forest and Nature Agency	3, 30
<b>Finland</b>	Zoological Museum, Copenhagen	29
	Biological Museum, Turku	30
	Blåmusslan Visitor Centre, Kasnäs	30
	Finnish Museum of Natural History, Helsinki	30
	Ministry of the Environment	3
<b>Germany</b>	The Dolphinarium in Särkänniemi, Tampere	30
	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety	3
	Federal Navy, the Fleet Command, Glücksburg	15, 16
	Federal Research Centre for Fisheries, Hamburg	12
	Foundations for Assessment of Offshore Wind Farms	12
	German Oceanographic Museum, Stralsund	12, 20, 25, 26
	Multimar-Wattforum Tönning	30
	National Park Office, Tönning	12, 13
	National Park Service Schleswig-Holstein	15, 30
	Ruhr University, Bochum	12
	University of Kiel, the Institute for Marine Research	12, 24
	University of Kiel, the Research and Technology Centre, Büsum	12, 20, 25, 28
	University of Rostock	12, 25
<b>Poland</b>	Veterinary Institute for Fish and Fishery Products, Cuxhaven	20
	Department of invertebrate Zoology, University of Gdańsk	26
	Friends of Hel	30, 31
	Hel Marine Station, University of Gdańsk (HMS UG)	3, 26, 30, 31, 39
	Maritime University Szczecin	7
	Medical University of Gdańsk	26
	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Fishery and Scientific Bodies	8
	Ministry of Environment, Department of Nature Protection	3, 7, 8, 31
	Panasonic IMAX Warsaw	31
	Telecommunications Poland (TPSA)	31
<b>Sweden</b>	Voievodship Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in Gdańsk	31
	Geographical Survey of Sweden (SGU)	14
	Geological Department, University of Stockholm	26
	Institution of Population Genetics, University of Stockholm	26
	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	32
<b>UK</b>	Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm	21, 32
	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)	29
	Centre for Marine Awareness North Wales	27, 32
	Cetacean and Turtle Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Group	9



	Cetacean Surveys in Wales / Training and use of Volunteer Observers (Sea Watch Foundation)	19, 32
	Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)	17, 19, 22, 26, 32
	DEAL Data Registry for UK Offshore Oil and Gas (UKDEAL)	16
	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	3, 21, 22
	Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)	16, 17
	European Cetacean Society	29
	Friends of Cardigan Bay	27
	Institute of Zoology (IoZ)	21, 22, 29
	Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)	9, 14, 16, 18, 19
	La Société Jersiaise	22, 33
	Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) Partnership	27
	Marine Environment Education for Cardigan Bay and environs (Sea Watch Foundation)	32
	Marine Wildlife Centre	32
	Natural History Museum (NHM), England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man	21, 32
	Scottish Agricultural College (SAC)	21, 22, 29
	Sea Mammal Research Unit (SMRU)	18, 19, 22, 32
	Sea Watch Foundation, UK	19, 32
	University of St. Andrews (SMRU)	18, 32
	Welsh Assembly Government	22
	Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society	27
<b><i>International /Supranational organizations</i></b>	African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA)	36
	Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS)	36
	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)	36
	European Commission	18
	European Community	9
	Helsinki Commission (HELCOM)	1

**B. NEW MEASURES/ACTION TOWARDS MEETING THE RESOLUTIONS OF  
THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES**

**1. Direct interaction of small cetaceans with fisheries**

**a. Investigations of methods to reduce bycatch**

***Belgium***

No new information.

***Denmark***

The research project NAPER, “New Alternatives to Porpoise Entanglement Reduction”, funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers, was initiated by Fjord&Bælt (Denmark), Kolmårdens Djurpark (Sweden) and the Danish Fisheries Research Institute (Denmark) in 2001 and continued in 2002. The NAPER project further investigates, both in enclosed condition at Fjord&Bælt (2001) and in the wild (2002), an interactive type “pinger”, where the deterrent sound is triggered by the porpoises’ own sonar. The interactive pinger is an interesting alternative to the beacon mode pinger since the deterrent sounds are only transmitted when they are necessary, i.e. when a porpoise is swimming toward a net. As a consequence, the sound emitted to the environment is reduced and the unpredictability of the deterrent signal will delay habituation. Preliminary results from the 2002 field trials can be summarized as follows: - 1) overall, the porpoises reacted by increasing their distance to the pinger after a single emission of a deterrent sound; - 2) the effect of the interactive pinger was strongest at closer distance; and - 3) the effect was reduced already in the dive following the emission of the deterrent sound. Since the purpose of a pinger is to keep the animals at a safe distance from nets and not to scare them off, the interactive pinger seemed to work as intended. However more interactions between porpoises and the activated system were needed for safe conclusions and data collection continued in 2003.

***Finland***

No new information.

***Federal Republic of Germany***

No new information.

### ***Poland***

A preliminary agreement between the Ministry of the Environment and Maritime University Szczecin is being negotiated on the study of threats posed by lost nets (“ghost nets”) in the Polish Baltic waters.

### ***Sweden***

Pingers have proven effective in reducing harbour porpoise bycatch, but may have some negative side-effects. “Interactive” pingers, which are triggered by porpoise sonar clicks, address some of these side effects, e.g. reducing “noise pollution” and delaying habituation.

Trials using interactive pingers were carried out at Fjord&Bælt (Denmark), on two harbour porpoises held in a sea pen and acclimatized to captivity.

### ***United Kingdom***

The UK has been developing and testing an exclusion grid for use in the pair trawl fishery for bass that operates in the English Channel mainly in March. A prototype device was designed in Norway, built and tested as a model in the Seafish flume tank in Hull, and deployed in the bass fishery in March/April 2002. Underwater video monitoring was used to determine fish behaviour in relation to the grid. The device appears to work with respect to the target species (bass), and there was no observed dolphin bycatch in the experimental period; however, this is difficult to interpret as overall bycatch rates of dolphins in the 2002 season were only 30% of those in the 2001 season.

Experimental work has continued on examining the effects of various twine types on porpoise bycatch rates in gillnet fisheries. This work has yet to be fully analysed.

#### **b. Implementation of methods to reduce bycatch**

### ***Belgium***

New legislation concerning the limitation of bottom set gill nets in recreational use to above the low water mark came into force (publication in the Official Journal on 14 February 2002; see previous annual report).

### ***Denmark***

In 2000 The Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fishery issued a ministerial order on compulsory application of “pingers” in certain types of gill-net fishery for cod in the North Sea in the period 1 August to 31 October.

### ***Finland***

No new information.

### ***Federal Republic of Germany***

No new information.

### ***Poland***

A meeting with participation of the Ministry of the Environment (Department of Nature Protection), the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Department of Fishery) and scientific bodies was organized in December 2002 and May 2003 aimed at the discussion of the possibilities of bycatch reduction in Polish fishery. Fishery authorities presented the present status and available knowledge about porpoises in the Baltic and Polish waters as well as about the threat which fisheries pose to porpoises.

### ***Sweden***

Pingers were introduced on some salmon drift nets in the Baltic in a pilot study during 2002. If there are few negative effects, pingers will be introduced on all Swedish salmon drift nets in the Baltic during 2003.

From 2003 pingers are used in the Swedish mackerel driftnet fishery on a voluntary basis.

### ***United Kingdom***

In February 2002, UK Fisheries Minister Elliot Morley wrote to EU Commissioner Franz Fischler, drawing to his attention the evidence the UK had of the high levels of small cetacean bycatch in the offshore bass fishery off South West England, and to UK trials of separator grids taking place during monitoring work in the bass fishery. He urged the Commission to set up its own observer programme to broaden the information available and stressed that urgent action is needed at EU level. A video of progress achieved during the separator grid trial was also passed to the Commissioner.

In August 2002, in its response to the Commission's Communication setting out a Community Action Plan to integrate Environmental Protection Requirements into the Common Fisheries Policy, the UK stressed the importance of protecting cetaceans from the effects of fishing. The UK underlined the need to meet obligations under regional agreements such as ASCOBANS to promote measures for the protection of cetaceans.

Development of the Government's 'UK Small Cetacean Bycatch Response Strategy' continued. The Strategy identifies what measures can be taken to work towards reducing small cetacean bycatch to below the target set by the ASCOBANS Meeting of the Parties in 2000. It is intended that its application will extend to all UK waters and UK fishing vessels operating in

the waters of other Member States of the European Community. Using available data, it recommends a suite of measures, including the implementation of practical bycatch mitigation methods, monitoring and further research. The Strategy was launched in March 2003, and is subject to a 3-month public consultation.

The Cetacean and Turtle Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Group, comprising representatives from Government, nature conservation agencies, and non-Governmental organisations, met in December 2002 to discuss the progress of the cetacean and turtle species action plans. The focus of the meeting was on the summary reporting round for 2002.

Reporting on species is the responsibility of lead partners as part of a 3-year BAP reporting cycle and aims to give an assessment of the progress made towards achieving each target within the action plans. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), as lead partner for the cetacean action plans, submitted concise reports on their progress which can be found on the UK Biodiversity website at: [www.ukbap.org.uk](http://www.ukbap.org.uk).

c. Estimates of bycatch in set net and pelagic trawl fisheries

***Belgium***

None were reported in 2002.

Estimates of bycatch in set net and pelagic trawl fisheries:			
Species	Estimated number of bycaught animals	Area (ICES area or more detailed)	Notes (type of fishery, effort, seasonal variations etc.)
-	0	-	-

## Denmark

Estimates of bycatch in set net and pelagic trawl fisheries:			
Species	Estimated number of bycaught animals	Area (ICES area or more detailed)	Notes (type of fishery, effort, seasonal variations etc.)
Harbour porpoise	approx. 2,900 – 3,900 <sup>3</sup> per year (2002 estimates according to method). The information will currently be updated as part of an ongoing monitoring programme on bycatch.	IV b (mainly in coastal and off-shore waters along the West Coast of Jutland III a, b and c The monitoring programme on bycatch includes the Inner Danish Waters.	Set-net fishery for cod, hake, plaice and turbot mainly in late summer and fall.
Other species	Few, but the exact number and species involved unknown.		

## Finland

No new information.

## Federal Republic of Germany

An investigation is underway (since 1 November 2002) to estimate the bycatch of small cetaceans in German gill net fisheries in the North Sea.

Estimates of bycatch in set net and pelagic trawl fisheries			
Species	Estimated number of bycaught animals	Area (ICES area or more detailed)	Notes (type of fishery, effort, seasonal variations, etc.)
Harbour porpoise	Few	37F8 and 38F8	Unknown

## Poland

Due to insufficient data on fishing effort and population abundance of harbour porpoises in the Baltic Sea, only an absolute figure for bycatch is available from Polish waters.

The bycatch in 2002 has been reported from salmon set net coastal fishery and trawl nets.

Species	Estimated number of bycaught animals	Area (ICES area or more detailed)	Notes (type of fishery, effort, seasonal variations, etc.)
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	2	ICES/IIId – Polish central coast and the Gulf of Gdańsk	salmon set net and trawl net

<sup>3</sup> Vinther and Larsen (2002): 'Updated estimates of harbour porpoise bycatch in the Danish bottom set gillnet fishery' (paper presented at the Scientific Committee at the annual IWC meeting 2002).

### ***Sweden***

An interview study of bycatches, sampling 10 % of the Swedish fishing effort, was made for the year 2001. From this study the bycatches in the Skagerrak and Kattegatt were approximately 20 and 80 respectively. The decrease compared to earlier estimates is due to a marked reduction of the cod gillnet fishery. For 2002 the estimates of bycatch are the same as for 2001.

In the Kattegatt most of the bycatches are made in gillnets and trammel nets and a few in pelagic trawls. In the Skagerrak bottom trawls are the major gear causing bycatch.

Species	Estimated number of bycaught animals	Area (ICES area or more detailed)	Notes (type of fishery, effort, seasonal variations etc.)
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	About 20 per year	III a, in the Swedish part of Skagerrak.	Bottom trawls
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	About 80 per year	IIIa, Swedish Kattegat Sea	Gillnets and trammel nets and pelagic trawls

### ***United Kingdom***

The latest estimates for bycatch for harbour porpoises relate to the year 2000. There are as yet no reliable estimates of bycatch of dolphins in the bass pair trawl fishery, but applying observed bycatch rates in 2001 and 2002 to effort data for the year 2000 yields an order of magnitude estimate for the bass fishery in that year.

No bycatch has been reported in Jersey waters. Fishing techniques within Jersey Territorial Waters do not include methods in which cetaceans are susceptible to getting trapped or caught in, such as set nets or pair trawling for bass.

Species	Estimated number of bycaught animals	Area (ICES area or more detailed)	Notes (type of fishery, effort, seasonal variations, etc.)
Harbour porpoise	531 (463-774)	IV (in 2000)	All gillnet fisheries
Harbour porpoise	64 (42-102)	VIa (in 2000)	All gillnet fisheries
Common dolphin	ca 113	VIIeh	Bass pair trawl fishery

## **2. Reduction of disturbance to small cetaceans**

- a. Information on levels of disturbance (e.g. seismic surveys, new high-speed ferry routes, studies about acoustic impacts on cetaceans etc.)

### ***Belgium***

The fast ferry link between Ostend and Dover has been discontinued.

### ***Denmark***

Very limited information is available on disturbance from various sources. The impacts on harbour porpoises and other small cetaceans from high-speed ferries are not known. However, the operations with that type of vessel are strictly regulated as new routes cannot be established without a proper EIA procedure including considerations on the disturbance to sea birds and marine mammals.

A project investigating the hearing sensitivity of harbour porpoises has been initiated at the Fjord&Bælt by the Ruhr University, Bochum (Germany) to examine the effect of man-made noise on harbour porpoise hearing, especially offshore windmill construction works, and to provide guidelines for safe intensity level for sound emissions during underwater operations.

### ***Finland***

There are no new high-speed ferry routes, only new high-speed ferries in the route between Helsinki – Tallinn.

### ***Federal Republic of Germany***

#### **Offshore wind farms**

In 2002 the research project MINOS (Marine Warm-blooded Animals in the North and Baltic Seas: Foundations for Assessment of Offshore Wind Farms) was started. It is carried out by the German Oceanographic Museum (Stralsund) in cooperation with the University of Rostock, the Research and Technology Centre (Büsum) of the University of Kiel, the Federal Research Centre for Fisheries (Hamburg), the Institute for Marine Research at the University of Kiel, the Ruhr University (Bochum) and the National Park Office (Tönning). The project focuses on two items:

1. Preferential habitats and migratory routes of animals in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
2. Sense of hearing of porpoises and seals and its sensitivity.



The project is intended to contribute to the greatest extent possible to reduction of acoustic disturbance by wind farms.

#### Seismic investigations

In the Wadden Sea of the Federal State of Schleswig-Holstein seismic investigations were carried out in the area of the Meldorf Bight in 2001 for two months. The corresponding report published in 2002 indicates that marine mammals did not seem to be distinctly impaired. Harbour porpoises were observed relatively close to the air guns. Escape movements could not be recognised.

A comprehensive report to ASCOBANS on the German seismic investigations during 1997 - 2002 is under preparation.

#### High speed ferries

On the North Sea coast of Schleswig-Holstein there is only one high-speed ferry in the off-shore area. It has a maximum speed of 44 nm/h and connects Helgoland with Amrum, Sylt and Büsum. Within the area of the National Park the speed is restricted to 16 nm/h. There is another high speed ferry in the inshore area with certain exemptions from the speed restrictions. In the navigable waters a maximum of 24 nm/h is permitted, in the protection zones only 12nm/h.

Further information on German high speed ferries is annually given to ASCOBANS by means of the Secretariat's questionnaire.

### ***Poland***

#### Wind power stations:

6 new wind farms (wind power station) with a capacity of 2733-3635 MW are planned to be built offshore in Polish waters. 4 farms (capacity 2390 MW) are to be situated in the Polish Economical Zone of the Baltic Sea, in the Oder Bank region (Pomeranian Bay), where a relatively high density of porpoises was found during a German aerial survey in 2002 (Scheidat et al. 2002). 2 others (245 MW) are planned in the central coast area in Polish territorial waters – Bia³ogóra and Jastrzêbia Góra. To date, one positive opinion was given by the relevant authorities for the station in Jastrzêbia Góra.

There are valid reasons, however, for the occurrence of porpoises in the area to be considered in the study of habitat use and to constitute an important issue in biological expertises for future wind power stations in the region of the Oder Bank.

#### Seismic activity:

Seismic investigations are carried out in Polish waters for oil and natural gas deposit prospecting. Basic method of generating the acoustic waves and registering the reflected ones is used.

Acoustic methods are used in geological study of the Baltic sea bottom. Side scan sonars with a frequency range 307 kHz and sounds with a frequency range 455 kHz are used for these investigations.

There is no data confirming the disturbance for porpoises caused by the seismic activity in Polish waters and further investigations are needed to analyse the potential threat for porpoises.

#### High-speed ferry routes:

For high-speed ferry routes and timetable, see annex 1 (table and map).

There are several seasonal routes in the Gulf of Gdańsk where the most frequent occurrence of porpoises has been reported, mainly as bycatch.

It is planned to use the ferries as platforms of opportunity to deploy porpoise click detectors and collect information for a porpoise habitat use study.

#### ***Sweden***

- No seismic surveys using large seismic (oil-seismic) equipment were carried out in Sweden during 2002.
- SGU carried out a survey using a small Slevegund (10cu inch) on the Swedish continental shelf in the Åland Sea and the southern part of the Bothnian Bay (from the shore out to the EEZ).
- SGU carried out a survey with a 20 cu inch air gun in an area outside Gävle.
- The geological department at the University of Stockholm carried out a survey using a 20 cu inch Air gun in an area between Stockholm and Estonia and in Hanö Bay and in an area between the county of Skåne and Rügen in Germany.

#### Fast Ferries

<u>Name/type of craft</u>	<u>Route (return)</u>
HSS Stena Carisma	Gothenburg-Fredrikshavn
HSC Gotland	Nynäshamn-Visby
HSC Delphin	Trelleborg-Rostock
HSC Villum Clausen	Ystad-Rönne

#### ***United Kingdom***

A progress report has been submitted separately by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) on behalf of the UK on the implementation of Resolution 4 (e) to develop a monitoring system that will enable adaptive management of seismic survey activities.

No seismic surveys or larger scale abstraction undertaken in Jersey's waters. No directed trips to view cetaceans occur that are known to the authorities.

- b. Implementation of guidelines, new legislation etc. to reduce disturbance

***Belgium***

See National report 2001.

***Denmark***

Within some nature and wildlife reserves, e.g. the Wadden Sea, general measures (speed limits) are taken to reduce disturbance to marine mammals. No special guidelines and legislation are implemented.

***Finland***

No new information.

***Federal Republic of Germany***

Reductions of disturbance

In 2002, no surface or submarine exercises were carried out within the specified protection areas of the North and Baltic Seas by the Federal Army or by the Federal Navy respectively. These areas were not navigated by fleet units.

Increase of the low-level flight limits above the National Park of the Schleswig-Holstein wadden sea

In October 2002 the minimum altitudes permitted for aircraft in coastal areas of Schleswig-Holstein were elevated. Instead of 150 m, propeller planes are now required to observe 600 m and helicopters 300 m, while the minimum altitude for jet planes continues to be 900 m.

For distress at sea missions and for search and rescue missions by the Federal Navy there are of course no fixed limits for the distance from the ground.

Removal of exercises from the Whale Protection Area in the North Sea off the islands of Sylt and Amrum (Schleswig-Holstein)

An exercise for testing self-defence equipment of the Federal Navy, which until then had usually taken place in intervals off the island of Sylt, was moved to the Hohwacht Bight in the Baltic due to the Whale Protection Area in the North Sea. The Hohwacht Bight has already for a long time been a prohibited military area and serves as a security zone for two adjacent training areas.

### Rules of conduct for marine mammal protection

For the protection of marine mammals and habitats, the Federal Navy observes the following rules in the ASCOBANS area since 1997:

- Sightings of small cetaceans by navy units are to be reported to the Fleet Command. If possible acoustic characteristics should be recorded.
- Prior to submarine blasting an area with a radius of 1 nm around the planned detonation has to be inspected optically for small cetaceans. If indicated, deterrent sonar pulses are to be applied.
- 15, 10 and 5 minutes ahead of the blast deterrent submarine acoustic signals are to be given as a precaution.

The Federal Navy reports the sightings of small cetaceans, i.e. the numbers and positions, to the Fleet Command at Glücksburg. This is also true for the sightings acquired during the flights carried out by the Federal Navy for surveillance of oil pollution. The records are available to civilian authorities on demand.

### ***Poland***

No new implementation in 2002.

### ***Sweden***

No new information.

### ***United Kingdom***

With the implementation of The Offshore Petroleum Activities (Conservation of Habitats) Regulations 2001, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) introduced a new requirement for consent for oil and gas seismic surveys which, with the assistance of JNCC, considers effects on cetaceans. Guidance notes were completed in October 2002 and can be found on the DTI's website at: [www.dti.gov.uk](http://www.dti.gov.uk). Mechanisms continue to be developed through the consent process to fulfill reporting requests on seismic surveys to ASCOBANS as well as collating data to map the pattern of cumulative seismic activity. When complete, both datasets will be accessible through a Geographical Information System (GIS) using the DTI-supported forum UKDEAL (<http://www.ukdeal.co.uk/>).

JNCC have been consulting on a revision of the UK guidelines on the conduct of seismic surveys; it is anticipated that revised guidelines will be issued early in 2003 prior to start of the summer seismic season. A consultation will also be undertaken on standards of training for

marine mammal observers. Two reports on cetaceans observed during seismic surveys were produced by JNCC.

In a separate initiative, the DTI is looking for the best way to fund research to identify significant sources of noise that may affect marine mammals arising from oil and gas activity and expects the work to commence in 2003.

The Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and partners began drafting a Pembrokeshire Marine Code of Conduct, aimed principally at commercial and recreational boat operators, to minimise disturbance to cetaceans, seals and seabirds. The Code will be published in 2003.

### **3. Protected areas for small cetaceans**

#### **a. Measures taken to identify, implement and manage protected areas**

##### ***Belgium***

No new information.

##### ***Denmark***

The Danish implementation of the EU Habitat Directive includes the designation of several sites that are considered important for harbour porpoises. A list of Danish designated Habitat Directive sites important for harbour porpoises was included in the National Report 1998.

##### ***Finland***

No new information.

##### ***Federal Republic of Germany***

The Whale Protection Area in the North Sea off the islands of Sylt and Amrum (Schleswig-Holstein), established in 1999, is a preferential habitat and important nursery area of harbour porpoises. According to German law, fisheries liable to cause bycatch of small cetaceans are prohibited there, and a speed limit for vessels shall be established. The implementation of the national provisions into European regulations is still pending.

##### ***Poland***

No new protected areas were established in Polish Baltic waters in 2002.

The procedure of including the Puck Bay, considered as a porpoise “hot spot” in the Polish Baltic, into the system of protected areas of NATURA 2000 is ongoing.

## ***Sweden***

No area has been identified as a protected area for harbour porpoises in the Baltic. In the Skagerrak, three Natura 2000 sites have been identified for harbour porpoises. Management plans have not yet been produced.

The sites are:

Vrångöskärgården (SE0520001)

Koster(SE0520133)

Väderöarna (SE0520143)

## ***United Kingdom***

As a result of a UK court judgment in 1999, the UK Government is currently taking steps to implement both the Wild Birds and the Habitats Directives beyond its territorial waters where it exercises sovereign rights. During 2002 the JNCC published a report ([www.jncc.gov.uk/Publications/JNCC325](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/Publications/JNCC325)) which provided information and recommendations on identification and selection of areas in the UK offshore area that may qualify as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protected Areas (SPAs). The Regulations to extend the Directives' application will be consulted on later this year, with the aim of putting forward the first possible offshore Natura 2000 site, the Darwin Mounds, to the European Commission by the end of 2003.

A European Seminar was held in Gatwick in June, which considered the implementation of the EC Habitats and Birds Directives in UK offshore waters including the identification of marine SACs and SPAs. Representatives from the European Commission, European Topic Centre, Member States, candidate countries and non-Governmental organisations participated in the discussions. The JNCC Report, its conclusions and recommendations were welcomed at the Gatwick Seminar as a rational and scientific approach to the issues of site identification and selection in UK offshore waters. A number of key observations were made by seminar participants, amongst these:

- a. that Member States should seek to use common methodologies and datasets in a consistent way wherever possible in developing proposals for offshore designations
- b. any list of sites proposed for offshore waters needs to complement the existing inshore site series;
- c. that where sites cannot be identified, or in addition to site identification, further special measures will be necessary to ensure the conservation of the species; and
- d. satisfactory methods for determination of site boundaries for mobile species in the marine environment need to be determined.

JNCC contracted the University of St Andrews (SMRU) in collaboration with Dr Mark Bravington to examine sightings rates of harbour porpoises from platform of opportunity data

in order to determine whether such data suggest any areas of especially high porpoise density that might be proposed as candidate SACs. The results of this analysis were not conclusive, but some areas such as the southern Irish Sea and the Northeast of Scotland appeared to have higher densities than elsewhere. More detailed analysis was recommended.

Similarly, CCW commissioned the Sea Watch Foundation to analyse harbour porpoise sightings data from the Joint Cetacean Database, using sequential scaling GIS methods. Criteria were set with a view to identifying:

- areas important for the continuous or regular presence of the harbour porpoise (subject to seasonal variation);
- areas of high population density (in relation to neighbouring areas);
- areas with high calf:adult ratio.

Along with the SMRU report, the Sea Watch Foundation report forms part of a review of potential methods to identifying potential SACs for the species. Both reports will be independently refereed, and may then be published.

On 17 October 2002 the Scottish Executive announced the launch of a £250K project – the Scottish Sustainable Marine Environment Project. It will produce recommendations to ensure the sustainable use of marine resources and will develop a framework to involve local communities in piloting new approaches. This will include research to identify possible management options for sustainable development and change through legislative and non-legislative measures. It will include consideration of the potential problems and potential benefits associated with adopting existing criteria and approaches for protection of the terrestrial and coastal environment for the marine environment, and in particular for wide-ranging species such as dolphins and harbour porpoises.

The Moray Firth SACs Management Scheme was revised in 2002 to improve and update the strategy for bottlenose dolphins and incorporate a new qualifying interest feature. The aim of the Scheme is to help to establish and maintain the dolphin population and its habitat and to avoid any significant damage or disturbance to the dolphins.

Work began in 2002 on the development of agreed protocols for the monitoring of cetaceans (bottlenose dolphin/harbour porpoise) in Wales by CCW. Methods for monitoring and testing monitoring protocols continue to be developed (with an ongoing monitoring programme in 2002 and 2003). This involved a joint survey of the whole of Cardigan Bay over a few days as a collaborative effort from the different groups involved in cetacean surveys, to give a snapshot of numbers and distribution of cetaceans. There is a significant amount of land-based cetacean data that is collected by volunteers and methods will be reviewed and recommendations made to ensure a degree of standardisation. Disturbance is an important factor in the management of Annex II sites and the monitoring methods and strategies for it will also need to be addressed. The report is due later this year. These protocols will meet standards being developed by JNCC for common UK-wide monitoring of SACs holding bottlenose dolphins.

#### **4. Further research on small cetaceans**

##### **a. Implementation of schemes to use and gain information from stranded cetaceans**

##### ***Belgium***

See National report 2001. MUMM/RBINS funded a research project concerning the causes of death of stranded seabirds and marine mammals (MARIN/2002/sec15).

##### ***Denmark***

A Danish contingency plan concerning marine mammals includes guidelines for handling stranded cetaceans. As many stranded harbour porpoises as possible are collected for analyses in order to improve the knowledge on population structure, age and sex ratio, nutritional status, general health and the levels of contaminants in tissues and organs.

During 2002 the following observations of stranded cetaceans were recorded:

- White-beaked dolphin: 14
- Common dolphin: 1
- Minke whale: 1 (live stranding)
- Harbour porpoise: about 107 (some are probably discarded bycaught animals)
- Pilot whale 1

##### ***Finland***

See 5 below.

##### ***Federal Republic of Germany***

A stranding network for cetaceans is in force since the 1950s for the coast of the Federal State of West Pomerania in the Baltic Sea and since 1990 for the coast of Schleswig-Holstein in the Baltic Sea and North Sea. The coast of Lower Saxony in the North Sea is covered too.

Necropsies of all stranded and bycaught cetaceans were carried out by the Research and Technology Centre (Büsum), the Veterinary Institute for Fish and Fishery Products (Cuxhaven) and the German Oceanographic Museum (Stralsund).

In 2002, 31 stranded harbour porpoises and 1 white beaked dolphin were studied in Niedersachsen (North Sea), 53 stranded and 1 bycaught harbour porpoise in Schleswig-Holstein (26 from the North Sea, 21 from the Baltic, 7 of unknown origin), and 23 stranded and 3 bycaught harbour porpoises in West Pomerania (Baltic). No unusual illnesses or particular epidemics were found.



## ***Poland***

No new implementation.

## ***Sweden***

Post mortem investigations are carried out on all small cetaceans bycaught or found stranded in the Baltic. The animals have to be brought fresh to the Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm where the investigations are conducted. From harbour porpoises from the Swedish west coast a piece of tissues from the dorsal fin is sampled. For further detail see prior information sent to ASCOBANS.

## ***United Kingdom***

### UK

During 2002, under the Defra-funded UK Cetacean Strandings Programme, a total of 649 cetacean strandings comprising 14 species were reported to the Natural History Museum (NHM) from England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man (see Annex 1). During the latter half of 2002 the European phocine distemper virus (PDV) epidemic affected UK seals (particularly in the Wash area). The IOZ, in partnership with a number of other organisations, was responsible for coordinating an investigation (funded by Defra) into the impact of PDV on UK seals. Despite these extra commitments, IOZ were still able to conduct 125 cetacean postmortem examinations during 2003 which is the highest total since the start of the UK Government-funded stranded cetacean research programme in 1990. A high level of cetacean postmortem examinations, compared to previous years, was also maintained in Scotland during 2003. It is therefore unlikely that the PDV epidemic had a significant negative impact on the continuation of stranded cetacean investigations in the UK.

The NHM has continued to gather information on all cetacean strandings (also bycaught cetaceans and those seen floating dead at sea). Carcasses from England and Wales considered suitable for post-mortem investigation are taken to the Institute of Zoology (IoZ) for examination by veterinary pathologists. The resultant information on species, sex, length, place and date of stranding is combined with that from Scotland provided by the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) and recorded on the NHM's National Cetacean Strandings database. Samples of teeth, parasites and stomach contents from cetaceans continue to be studied at the NHM to provide information on the ages and biology of dead stranded cetaceans.

As part of this research the IOZ is continuing to investigate diseases, causes of death and potential relationships between health and chronic exposure to environmental pollutants (particularly organochlorines and heavy metals) in cetaceans stranded in England and Wales. Pathological and other data from strandings investigations conducted in England and Wales,

together with strandings data from Scotland, continues to be archived centrally in the Poseidon database held at the Institute of Zoology.

### England and Wales

In 2002 the IOZ conducted 125 necropsies of stranded cetaceans in England and Wales, and a further five necropsies of harbour porpoise bycatches retrieved from fishing vessels (mainly as part of observer-based research conducted by the Sea Mammal Research Unit. Of the stranded cetaceans examined in England and Wales during 2002, bycatch was identified as the cause of death of 20 (26%) of the harbour porpoises and 28 (68.3%) of the common dolphins. The number of stranded harbour porpoises diagnosed as bycatches in England and Wales has declined in recent years since their peak in the mid-1990s. Most harbour porpoise bycatches continue to exhibit injuries consistent with entanglement in monofilament gillnet-type gear, whereas the common dolphin bycatches have different external lesions more consistent with smaller-mesh trawl-type gear. The number and proportion of common dolphins diagnosed as bycatches are similar to previous years, demonstrating a strongly spatio-temporal distribution during the winter in the south-west of England (mainly Cornwall and Devon).

In addition, 15 harbour porpoises were diagnosed as fatally attacked by bottlenose dolphins within the west Wales area. This represents an increasingly observed phenomenon within this region compared to data from previous years. Eight harbour porpoises died due to pneumonias caused by combinations of parasitic, bacterial and mycotic infections and three porpoises had fatal generalised bacterial infections.

The IoZ carried out necropsies on five harbour porpoise carcasses during 2002 that were retrieved directly from fishing vessels as part of observer-based bycatch research conducted by SMRU.

In addition to the strandings co-ordinators funded by Defra, the Welsh Assembly Government continues its funding of the Welsh Strandings Co-ordinator in conjunction with CCW.

### Jersey

There is ongoing voluntary sector support from the Zoological Section of the Société Jersiaise to record and report stranded cetaceans. In February and March 2002, 7 cetaceans were reported as having stranded: 5 common dolphins; 1 harbour porpoise and 1 unidentified species of dolphin. Cetacean carcasses were either too badly decomposed for a cause of death to be accurately established or, on fresher individuals, to be definitively ascribed.

### Scotland

The SAC continues to investigate diseases, causes of death and potential relationships between health and chronic exposure to environmental pollutants (particularly organochlorines and heavy metals) in cetaceans stranded in Scotland. In 2002, SAC conducted 59 necropsies of stranded cetaceans in Scotland. Of the stranded cetaceans examined in Scotland during 2002 bycatch was identified as the cause of death of 3 (8%) of the harbour porpoises and entanglement was identified at the cause of death of 2 of the three minke whales examined.

Nine harbour porpoises were diagnosed as fatally attacked by bottlenose dolphins within the Moray Firth area. This represents a marked decline compared to previous years and may be due to lower numbers of bottlenose dolphins in their traditional areas in the Moray Firth.

Thirteen harbour porpoises died due to pneumonia caused by combinations of parasitic and bacterial infection. One of these had a secondary bacterial meningo-encephalitis. *Brucella* was isolated from two porpoises; one of the bycatch cases had a *Brucella* discospondylitis lesion and a heavy growth of *Brucella* was recovered from the lung of a porpoise with parasitic pneumonia.

There were two further cases of *Brucella* meningitis in juvenile striped dolphins leading to death from live stranding.

b. Research on abundance, population structure etc.

***Belgium***

In 2002, 14 harbour porpoises stranded at the Belgian coast. Four of these stranded alive: three in winter, and 1 newborn calf in late spring. All of these died during or shortly after the transport to the delphinary of Harderwijk, NL. Of the 10 corpses that washed ashore dead, five were newborn calves.

Sightings were reported of:

- Common dolphins *Delphinus delphis*: solitary animal at Koksijde (February 2002); solitary animal in the River Scheldt (NL), up to Antwerp (B) (January 2002 up to April 2003);
- White beaked dolphins *Lagenorhynchus albirostris*: several sightings of groups at sea;
- Bottle nosed dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* ('Randy'): harbours of Blankenberge and Antwerp (December 2002);
- Pilot whales *Globicephala melaena*: group of 2 animals (November 2002);
- Sperm whale *Physeter macrocephalus*: solitary animal (June 2002).

Some publications:

Posters:

Beans, C., Das, K., Mauger, G., Rogan, E & Bouquegneau, J.M., 2002. Relative trophic levels of several marine mammal species from the northeastern Atlantic determined through stable isotope analysis. Poster presented at the 16th annual meeting of the European Cetacean Society, Liège, 7-11 April 2002.

Boseret, G., Jauniaux, T. & Mainil, J.G., 2002. Septicaemic infection caused by *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae* in a harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) stranded on the Belgian coast. Poster presented at the 16th annual meeting of the European Cetacean Society, Liège, 7-11 April 2002.

Brenez, C., Jauniaux, T. & Coignoul, F., 2002. Parasitosis of porpoises stranded along the Belgian and northern French coasts. Poster presented at the 16th annual meeting of the European Cetacean Society, Liège, 7-11 April 2002.

Haelters J., Jauniaux T. & Van Gompel J., 2002. Increased numbers of harbour porpoise strandings in Belgium between 1990 and 2001. Poster presented at the 16th annual meeting of the European Cetacean Society, Liège, 7-11 April 2002.

Haelters, J. & Tavernier, J., 2002. Strandings of marine mammals: interventions and field problems. Poster presented at the symposium "Duurzaam Beheer van de Noordzee", Brussels 21-22 January 2002.

Kiszka, J. & Jauniaux, T., 2002. Suspicion of collision in a Sowerby's beaked whale (*Mesoplodon bidens*) stranded on the northern French coast. Poster presented at the 16th annual meeting of the European Cetacean Society, Liège, 7-11 April 2002.

Other:

Bouquegneau J.M., Coignoul, F., Das, K., Debacker, V., Haelters, J., Holsbeek, L., Jauniaux, T., Joiris, C., Stienen, E., Tavernier, J. & Van Waeyenberge, J., 2002. North Sea seabirds and marine mammals: pathology and ecotoxicology. Proceedings of the Symposium "Duurzaam beheer van de Noordzee", Brussels, 21-22 January 2002, 9 p.

Debacker, V., Coignoul, F., Das, K., Haelters, J., Holsbeek, L., Jauniaux, T., Joiris, C.R., Stienen, E., Tavernier, J., Van Waeyenberge, J. & Bouquegneau, J.M., 2002. North Sea seabirds and marine mammals: pathology and ecotoxicology. Final report to the project MARIN, funded by the SSTC (MN/DD/50-53), Brussels.

Haelters, J. & Kerckhof, F., 2002. Bedreigde mariene diersoorten: een reglementering voor een betere bescherming en wetenschappelijk onderzoek. *Leefmilieu* 25 (4): 104-109.

Jauniaux, T., 2002. Causes de mortalité des mammifères marins sur les côtes continentales de la baie sud de la Mer du Nord. Thèse présentée en vue de l'obtention du grade de Docteur en Sciences Vétérinaires, Université de Liège, 2001-2002, 191 p.

Jauniaux, T., Garcia Hartmann, M., Haelters, J., Tavernier, J. & Coignoul, F., 2002. Echouage de mammifères marins: guide d'intervention et procédures d'autopsie. *Annales de Médecine Vétérinaire* 146:261-276.

Jauniaux, T., Petitjean, D., Brenez, C., Borrens, M., Brosens, L., Haelters, J., Tavernier, J. & Coignoul, F., 2002. Post mortem findings and causes of death of harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) stranded from 1990 to 2000 along the coastlines of Belgium and northern France. *J.Comp.Path.* 126: 243-253.

## ***Denmark***

No new information.

## ***Finland***

See 5 below.

## ***Federal Republic of Germany***

A research project of the University of Kiel, which examined the genetic structure of the Baltic, Kattegat and Belt Seas harbour porpoise populations, was finalized. The results will be published soon. Morphometric investigations were done on the skulls of harbour porpoises from the German Bight, the outer part or transition area of the Baltic Sea and the central Bal-

tic Sea (German Oceanographic Museum). The results were published in 2002. The results of both studies indicate the existence of populations in the Baltic different from the North Sea populations. Further differences were found between the animals from the transition area and the central Baltic Sea, indicating the occurrence of a separate population in the Baltic proper.

In 2001 a study had been carried out in order to collect information about strandings and sightings of harbour porpoises along the coast of Lower Saxony (North Sea). As a follow-up to this study, in 2002 two surveys were planned in cooperation with the Research and Technology Centre to achieve a more complete overview about the recent situation. The first survey was carried out in August 2002 using standard line transect methods, the second survey will be carried out in the first half of 2003. The results of 2002 showed only few sightings of harbour porpoises mainly north of a line between the islands of Spiekeroog and Scharhörn.

The information scheme along the shore of the Elbe estuary of the Lower Saxony side will be intensified as a consequence of the four strandings of newly born dead harbour porpoises and of the two strandings of live harbour porpoises which were rescued and returned to the sea at safe locations nearby. A living mother-calf couple was located in the Cuxhaven Harbour.

These observations indicate that there is a growing stock inside the Elbe estuary and that this region may be a difficult environment for the harbour porpoises that needs further investigation.

In 2001 the German Oceanographic Museum and the University of Rostock started a project to investigate the applicability and limits of PODs (Porpoise Detectors) in controlled situations with harbour porpoises in captivity (Fjord & Belt Centre, Kerteminde, Denmark) as well as in the field (Fyns Hoved, Denmark). These experiments were recapitulated with the new version of PODs in 2002. In cooperation with two other projects (one in conjunction with the Research and Technology Centre), a net of POD measurement points was built up in 2002 along the German coast of the Baltic, in selected areas of the Exclusive Economic Zone (Fehmarnbelt, Kadetrinne, Kriegersflak, Adlergrund, Oderbank) and in the North Sea. A utilisation profile of these areas as well as of other German and Polish waters was elaborated giving diurnal and seasonal variation of the presence and absence of harbour porpoises.

In 2002 the Research and Technology Centre conducted research in the Whale Protection Area off the islands of Sylt and Amrum. One aim of the study was to conduct visual surveys from boats in this area to determine the distribution and density of harbour porpoises. Additionally, PODs were deployed in the North Sea and also towed during the visual surveys in order to decide whether these devices can be used to monitor habitat use.

In addition, the Research and Technology Centre conducted aerial surveys in the German North Sea and Baltic Sea using line-transect methodology. The main objective of this study was to identify areas of high densities of harbour porpoises as well as to investigate seasonal changes of distribution and density.

### ***Poland***

Aerial and visual surveys were carried out in Polish waters in 2002. Both were conducted in international cooperation with Swedish, German and British partners.

The surveys were conducted in the south-western Baltic, including Polish territorial waters, using the same transects in the same period (July and August 2002).

Both confirmed an extremely low density of porpoises in the Baltic and the low number of counted animals was not sufficient to make the estimation of the population size.

A joint project with the German Oceanographic Museum in Stralsund was carried out where porpoise detectors were planned to be used both in German and Polish Baltic waters. The ice conditions during the winter of 2002/2003 made the use of PODs impossible until March 2003.

A further hydroacoustic survey is planned for 2003, combined with the aerial survey in the Puck Bay region.

Information on bycatch, strandings and sightings of porpoises was collected in Hel Marine Station. Bycaught animals were collected and sampled for further research on biology and population structure.

Investigations of the pathological changes in the auditory organs of the harbour porpoise associated with parasite infection were carried out by the Department of Invertebrate Zoology, University of Gdańsk in cooperation with Hel Marine Station, University of Gdańsk and the Medical University of Gdańsk.

Studies on mercury, selenium and radionuclides in the tissues of Baltic porpoises were carried out by the Medical University in Gdańsk.

### ***Sweden***

An aerial survey to give a better population estimate was carried out in July 2002 according to a plan proposed by Per Berggren.

An examination of the work of different scientists concerning population structure of harbour porpoises in Swedish and adjacent waters was initiated during 2002. The study is carried out by the Institution of population genetics at the University of Stockholm and will be finished during 2003.

### ***United Kingdom***

In 2002, CCW funded, or contributed to, a number of projects examining population abundance and structure including trials on monitoring methods:

1. A cetacean sightings database for Wales. Ongoing.
2. A further survey of Risso's dolphins, harbour porpoises and other cetaceans in northern Cardigan Bay (Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society). 2002.
3. Risso's dolphin and other cetacean boat-based surveys in southern Cardigan Bay (Friends of Cardigan Bay). 2002.
4. Research review of Cardigan Bay & development of methods (phase 2) (Friends of Cardigan Bay). This involves the development of a coordinated survey of cetaceans in Cardigan Bay and immediate waters, survey and data sharing protocols, and the identification of research needs to provide information about populations and activities that may be affecting cetaceans. 2001-2003.
5. North Anglesey surveys of harbour porpoise (Marine Awareness North Wales). 2002-2005.
6. Harbour porpoise occurrence: Carmarthen Bay - Gower peninsula - Swansea Bay (Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) Partnerships). The aim of this project is to gain quantitative data on harbour porpoise occurrence in areas where there has been little previous survey effort, and to evaluate automatic recording against sightings observation data through the deployment automated data loggers or PODs to continuously record porpoise occurrence alongside simultaneously gathered shore-based observations. Winter 2002 – spring 2004.

A Biological Monitoring Programme for Jersey is currently being developed, which includes proposals for pressure, state and response monitoring for marine mammals.

c. Research on the effects of pollutants on cetacean health

***Belgium***

Some publications:

Posters:

Das, K., Jauniaux, T. & Bouquegneau, J.M., 2002. Involvement of metallothioneins in the dynamic of Zn, Cd, Cu and Hg in harbour porpoises, *Phocoena phocoena* stranded along the southern North Sea coast. Poster presented at the 16th annual meeting of the European Cetacean Society, Liège, 7-11 April 2002.

Holsbeek, L., Das, K., Bouquegneau, J.M. & Joiris, C.R., 2002. New findings on selenium related mercury detoxification processes. Poster presented at the 16th annual meeting of the European Cetacean Society, Liège, 7-11 April 2002.

Pillet, S., Cyr, D.G., Fournier, M. & Bouquegneau, J.M., 2002. Metallothioneins in peripheral blood leukocytes from a marine mammal, implications in heavy metal immunotoxicity. Poster presented at the 16th annual meeting of the European Cetacean Society, Liège, 7-11 April 2002.

### ***Denmark***

The long-term series of data on sexual hormones, and chemistry and hematology values, coupled with pollutants levels and clinical diagnostic, obtained at the Fjord&Bælt since 1997 on captive porpoises, constitute baseline data for examining the effect of pollutants on different functions in wild porpoises.

### ***Finland***

No new information.

### ***Federal Republic of Germany***

The Research and Technology Centre finished a study on the effect of organochlorines on the immune system and endocrine system of harbor porpoises. The PCB-, PBDE-, DDT-, DDE- and toxaphene concentrations were analysed in blood and blubber, and these results were correlated with lesions of the endocrine system and immune system. Serum adrenalin, ACTH, cortisol, dopamin, noradrenalin, thyroxine und trijodthyronine concentrations of the animals were determined. Different methods for the investigation of the immune system were established and spleen and thymi of the animals were examined for morphological and immunphenotypical changes. The cytokine expression was measured in different lymphatic organs and in the blood using real time RT-PCR.

There was no correlation between the production of hormones and the concentration of organochlorines. The correlation between increasing organochlorine concentrations and decreasing size of the solid tissue in the thyroid gland was significant. Increasing concentrations were also significantly correlated with an increase of connective tissue within the thyroid gland. Increasing PBDE and PCB concentrations were correlated with an increasing lymphocyte depletion of lymphatic organs. The increasing DDE concentration was correlated with a splenic lymphocyte depletion. The cellular immune response of harbor porpoises was measured for the first time using lymphocyte stimulation essays. The T-cell immune response was significantly reduced in moribund animals.

The present project demonstrated for the first time that organochlorine concentrations are correlated with morphological changes of lymphatic and endocrine organs. It is speculated that these changes may have a negative effect on the health of the porpoises. Further analyses of the correlation of the endocrine and immune system and the health of the harbor porpoises are necessary.

### ***Poland***

See 4.b above.



## ***Sweden***

No new information.

## ***United Kingdom***

During 2002, IOZ and SAC received a new batch of toxicology data from the CEFAS Burnham Laboratory, Essex, UK. In total, data on polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)(n=340), organochlorine pesticides (n=169-222), butyltins (n=132) and polybrominated biphenyl ethers (PBDEs) (n=62) are now held jointly (by IOZ/SAC/CEFAS) for UK-stranded harbour porpoises alone. These datasets, combined with systematic pathological and other data from the same animals, will be the subject of collaborative investigations into potential relationships between the health status of the harbour porpoise and its exposure to these disparate groups of contaminants. Although these investigations were initiated in 2002, the final results should be completed in early 2003.

## **5. Public awareness and education**

- a. Measures taken in the fields of public awareness and education to implement or promote the Agreement

## ***Belgium***

The University of Liège hosted the 16<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the European Cetacean Society from 7 to 11 April 2002. The opening was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Laurent of Belgium, and Government Commissioner Yvan Yllieff.

During the “Week of the Sea” (20-26 May 2002), and especially the exhibit at Ostend (“Oostende voor Anker”; 24-26 May 2002), MUMM provided information to visitors about ecological and legal matters concerning cetaceans. Similar information was provided to visitors on the oceanographic vessel BELGICA during the Navy days at Zeebrugge, 12 to 14 July 2002.

During a course on fishery control (6 to 14 June 2002) by the ministry of agriculture, to which personnel of the maritime police participated, information was provided about the new legislation (Royal Decree of 21 December 2001) concerning the protection of species in the marine waters under Belgian jurisdiction.

## ***Denmark***

The project entitled “Look out for whales, dolphins and porpoises in Denmark” was commenced 2000 partly financed by the Danish Outdoor Council, the GB Bank Foundation and The Danish Forest and Nature Agency. The project is developed and coordinated by the Fisheries and Maritime Museum, Esbjerg and the Zoological Museum, Copenhagen.

The main objectives of the project are to raise public awareness on cetaceans in Denmark (through posters, newsletters, and exhibitions) and to improve the Danish stranding network in close cooperation with the National Forest and Nature Agency, and to monitor the distribution of harbour porpoises in the Inner Danish Waters. A database and home-page have been established ([www.hvaler.dk](http://www.hvaler.dk)).

The Fjord&Bælt houses harbour porpoises for research purposes and public education and awareness. It provides information to the general public and special groups on harbour porpoises in general, the bycatch problem and the effort undertaken to mitigate it through exhibition and talks.

### ***Finland***

Finland continued the harbour porpoise sighting campaign and received information of three sightings, due to which it could be concluded that there were probably 3-4 harbour porpoises in Finnish waters during the summer 2002. The ASCOBANS exhibition, "Harbour Porpoise in Distress" also toured Finland for three and a half months and was shown in Helsinki (Finnish Museum of Natural History), Tampere (The Dolphinarium in Särkänniemi), Kasnäs (Blåmusslan Visitor Centre) and Turku (Biological museum).

### ***Federal Republic of Germany***

Lectures were given at universities in northern Germany to increase public awareness of small cetaceans.

As a consequence of the relatively high number of strandings in the region of the inner part of the Elbe estuary there will be an information scheme to inform tourists what should be done and who must be informed if there is a stranding of a living harbour porpoise.

In Schleswig-Holstein the National Park Service continued to distribute three available brochures, i.e. on harbour porpoises, on whales and seals in general and also on seals and whales especially in the Wadden Sea.

A special wing for exhibitions on whales was built at the „Multimar-Wattforum-Tönning“. It accommodates a sperm whale skeleton and information on harbour porpoises. It was inaugurated in January 2003.

### ***Poland***

An educational and informational campaign targeting the status of the Baltic population of harbour porpoises has been important in ensuring public support in implementing conservation measures for these animals. The University of Gdańsk's Hel Marine Station (HMS UG) and a local pro-environment, non-governmental association, "Friends of Hel," play leading roles in this area.

In January 2002, thanks to the effort of HMS UG, a total of 131 000 unique prepaid telephone cards (nr 1285) were placed on the Polish market, endorsing ASCOBANS and encouraging the reporting of stranded porpoises and accidental catches in fishing nets. In the series “Endangered species,” TPSA (Telecommunications Poland) introduced 10,000 prepaid phone cards with a picture of the common dolphin (nr 1006).

HMS UG and the association “Friends of Hel” have designed the Polish version of the ASCOBANS exhibit “Harbour porpoise in distress! Save our native cetaceans”. It has been displayed at HMS UG on Hel Peninsula for two years. Approximately 400,000 people visited the exhibit in 2002.

HMS UG also provides postcards and stickers with harbour porpoises and white-beaked dolphin illustrations. The ASCOBANS posters “Harbour porpoises in the Baltic Sea” are regularly distributed to schools and the fishing community.

During a research expedition by the IFAW yacht “Song of the Whale” in the summer of 2002, an information campaign was initiated in the media (newspapers, radio, TV) and on site at the dock. The captain and crew held a popular/scientific meeting with tourists and townspeople at HMS UG.

One of the results of media cooperation was an attempt by the illustrated magazine “Marie Claire” (No.1/1 March 2002) to help porpoises by gathering donations for conservation purposes.

Materials concerning the status of the Baltic porpoise population have been distributed among the audience of the Polish premiere of the film DOLPHINS (directed by Greg MacGillivray) shown in the largest national IMAX type cinema in Warsaw. Along with the premiere, Panasonic IMAX Warsaw and the Ministry of the Environment launched a contest for schools, “Describe how you imagine a Polish dolphin”. Techniques were optional and included drawings, water and oil painting, etc.

The association, “Friends of Hel,” in a 9 part series called “The life of the Gulf,” produced a video cassette entitled “Marine mammals,” acquainting the viewer with ecological problems encountered by Gulf of Gdansk porpoises and seals. The same organisation regularly provides the local public with current news concerning porpoises, for example, ASCOBANS undertakings, research projects and other items in their fortnightly periodical “Helska Bliza”

(<http://www.przyjacielehelu.org/bliza/hb147/eko.html>).

Recently, HMS UG launched a website dedicated to the harbour porpoise and the implementation of its recovery plan for the Baltic sea (ASCOBANS “Jastarnia Plan”).

Problems dealing with the status of small cetaceans are also included in the educational programme for schoolchildren called “Blue School,” carried out in HMS UG. Classes run from September to June and the project has been extended to 2006 thanks to subsidies from the Voievodship Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in Gdansk.

A rescue telephone (24h) is operational at Hel Marine Station to collect information on stranded, bycaught and observed cetaceans as well as carcasses. The telephone number and

the address have been included in all information material to facilitate the delivery of the reports.

### ***Sweden***

A brochure to inform fishermen, the coast guard, municipalities and people living off and by the sea what to do if they find a stranded or bycaught small cetacean is available at present.

SEPA intends to produce another brochure for the general public during 2003 with the objective of a rising public awareness and receiving reports on sighted harbour porpoises. This information will also be available on the SEPA website.

A reporting system of porpoise sightings is currently being elaborated by the Swedish Museum of Natural History.

### ***United Kingdom***

The NHM expanded its National Cetacean Strandings website by adding links to its database. Strandings data from 1998 to 2000 can now be interrogated by county, date and species, and distribution maps can be generated. Further data will be made available once initial evaluation of visitor use has been completed. The website can be found at [www.nhm.ac.uk/zoology/stranding/index.html](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/zoology/stranding/index.html). Regular open discussions are held in the new Darwin Centre at the NHM, giving members of the public the opportunity to talk directly to staff and hear about developments in strandings research.

The University of St Andrews (SMRU) produced a short (3.5 minute) video explaining to the public and media what is being done to try to address dolphin bycatch in the bass pair trawl fishery.

CCW funded and contributed towards a number of projects in 2002 including:

*Welsh cetacean sightings database and newsletter* – a synthesis of Welsh data from the Sea Watch Foundation UK sightings database and production of a newsletter ‘Sightings in Wales.’

*Centre for Marine Awareness for North Wales* - support for an information centre and education officer in Bangor, North Wales. 2002-2005.

*Marine Environmental Education for Cardigan Bay and environs (Sea Watch Foundation)* - support for an information centre, education officer, scientific support for volunteers of a Marine Wildlife Centre and year-round surveys of bottlenose dolphin and harbour porpoise. 2002-2005.

*Cetacean surveys in Wales* – training and use of volunteer observers (Sea Watch Foundation). Work includes the promotion of a national sightings scheme, the training of volunteer participants in this network and the provision of sightings data on cetaceans encountered during training. 2002-2005.

The Jersey Bird Report of La Société Jersiaise includes the Zoology Section's Marine Mammal Report, which provides information about strandings and sightings.

## C. NEW ACTION/MEASURES BY NON-PARTY RANGE STATES

### 1. Direct interaction of small cetaceans with fisheries

#### a. Investigations of methods to reduce bycatch

##### *Estonia*

No investigations carried out.

##### *Latvia*

No information.

#### b. Implementation of methods to reduce bycatch

##### *Estonia*

No bycatch reported and suspected in reporting period. No methods implemented.

##### *Latvia*

No information.

#### c. Estimates of bycatch in set net and pelagic trawl fisheries

##### *Estonia*

No bycatch reported and suspected in reporting period.

Estimates of bycatch in set net and pelagic trawl fisheries:			
Species	Estimated number of bycaught animals	Area (ICES area or more detailed)	Notes (type of fishery, effort, seasonal variations etc.)
-	-	-	-

## *Latvia*

No bycatch reported.

Estimates of bycatch in set net and pelagic trawl fisheries:			
Species	Estimated number of bycaught animals	Area (ICES area or more detailed)	Notes (type of fishery, effort, seasonal variations etc.)
-	-	-	-

## **2. Reduction of disturbance to small cetaceans**

- a. Information on levels of disturbance (e.g. seismic surveys, new high-speed ferry routes, studies about acoustic impacts on cetaceans etc.)

### *Estonia*

No new ferry routes taken into use since last report to ASCOBNS AC9. The same applies to seismic surveys and other acoustic disturbance.

### *Latvia*

No information.

- b. Implementation of guidelines, new legislation etc. to reduce disturbance

### *Estonia*

No new legislation relevant to this topic implemented.

### *Latvia*

Cetaceans are not included in the list of Latvian Fauna Species.

## **3. Protected areas for small cetaceans**

- a. Measures taken to identify, implement and manage protected areas

***Estonia***

No Measures taken to identify, implement and manage protected areas for small cetaceans.

***Latvia***

No information.

**4. Further research on small cetaceans**

- a. Implementation of schemes to use and gain information from stranded cetaceans

***Estonia***

No stranding network designed because no strandings observed.

***Latvia***

No information.

- b. Research on abundance, population structure etc.

***Estonia***

No abundance studies carried out so far. For 2004 a pilot project for collection of information through questionnaires and acoustic survey is planned, if the application received a positive answer. The decision will be taken in January 2004.

***Latvia***

No information.

- c. Research on the effects of pollutants on cetacean health

***Estonia***

No information.

***Latvia***

No information.

## **5. Public awareness and education**

- a. Measures taken in the fields of public awareness and education to implement or promote the Agreement

### ***Estonia***

See 4 b. (research on abundance). Part of this project is a public awareness campaign through media and specially targeted information for fishermen, sailors, etc. In 2003, the ASCOBANS exhibition was presented in two places and approximately 75 days.

### ***Latvia***

Educational material (leaflets) on the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals as well as relevant Agreements under CMS (ASCOBANS, AEWA, EUROBATS) was elaborated, printed and distributed.



# **ANNEX 1**

b. Tab.1. High speed ferries timetable in Poland 2002

Name /type of craft	Route (return)	No. of round trips per day	Speed (knots)	Capacity (passengers)	Size/ tonnage	Engine power	Ship owner
HS Merlin (hydrofoil)	<sup>1</sup> Gdynia-Hel	5, 2-R (1 May-15 Sept only)	32	70	20 tons	736 KW	Żegluga Gdynńska
	<sup>2</sup> Gdynia-Jastarnia	2, 4-R (1 May-15 Sept only)					
	<sup>3</sup> Sopot-Hel	3 (1 May-15 Sept only)					
	<sup>4</sup> Sopot-Jastarnia	3 (1 May-15 Sept only)					
Delfin I (hydrofoil)	<sup>5</sup> Kolobrzeg-Nexo	1 (10 April-31 May: We,Sa,Su; 1 June-31 August: all week; 1 Sept-31 Oct: We,Sa,Su)	36	130	31,9m / 60 tons	2 x 960 KW	Żegluga Kołobrzewska
Polesie (hydrofoil)	<sup>6</sup> Elbląg-Krynica Morska	1 (1 May-15 Sept)	28	43	31 BRT	736 KW	Żegluga Gdańska
	<sup>7</sup> Frombork-Kaliningrad	1 (1 May-15 Sept)					
	<sup>8</sup> Frombork-Krynica Morska	1 (1 May-15 Sept)					
HSC Baltic Spirit (high speed catamaran)	<sup>9</sup> Kolobrzeg-Nexo	1 (26-Feb-31 Aug: We,Th)	30	240	286 BRT	2 x 1500 KW	
HSC Baltic Spirit (high speed catamaran)							

Name /type of craft	Route (return)	No. of round trips per day	Speed (knots)	Capacity (passengers)	Size/ tonnage	Engine power	Ship owner
	<sup>10</sup> Ustka-Nexo	1 (22 <i>Jue</i> -31 <i>Aug</i> : <i>Sa,Su, Mo</i> )	30	240	286 tons	2 x 1500 KW	Żegluga Gdańska
	<sup>11</sup> Darlowo-Nexo	1 (25 <i>Jun</i> -31 <i>Aug</i> : <i>Tu,Fr</i> )					
	<sup>12</sup> Ustka-Dar <sup>3</sup> owo	1 (22 <i>Jun</i> -31 <i>Aug</i> : <i>Mo</i> -return- <i>Fr</i> )					
	<sup>13</sup> Dar <sup>3</sup> owo-Kolobrzeg	1 (22 <i>Jue</i> -31 <i>Aug</i> : <i>Tu</i> -return- <i>Th</i> )					
Tornado –I (hydrofoil)	<sup>12</sup> Ustka - Nexo	1 (19 <i>Jun</i> –31 <i>Aug</i> . <i>Wed</i> )	32	124	130 BRT	2 x 960 KW	
	<sup>11</sup> Dar <sup>3</sup> owo - Nexo	1 (19 <i>Jun</i> –31 <i>Aug</i> . <i>Thu</i> )					
	<sup>9</sup> Kolobrzeg - Nexo	1 (1-4 <i>May</i> , <i>Thu, Fr, Sat, Sun</i> )					
		1 (5 <i>May</i> – 18 <i>Jun</i> <i>Fr, Sat, Sun</i> )					
		1R (5 <i>May</i> – 18 <i>Jun</i> <i>Tue, Wed, Thu</i> )					
		1 (19 <i>Jun</i> – 4 <i>Jul</i> <i>Fr, Sat, Sun</i> )					
Tornado –I (hydrofoil)	<sup>9</sup> Kolobrzeg - Nexo	1R (19 <i>Jun</i> – 4 <i>Jul</i> , <i>Mon, Wed</i> )	32	124	130 BRT	2 x 960 KW	

Name /type of craft	Route (return)	No. of round trips per day	Speed (knots)	Capacity (passengers)	Size/ tonnage	Engine power	Ship owner
		1 (5 Jul – 5 Aug , Mon, Sun)	32	124	130 BRT	2 x 960 KW	
		1 (5 Jul – 5 Aug , Tue, Fr, Sat)					
		1 (1-30 Sep, Fr, Sat, Sun)					
		1R (1-30 Sep, Tue, Wed, Thu)					
Tornado I (hydrofoil)	Gdynia – Hel -Kaliningrad	June 20 to September 30	32	124	130 BRT	2 x 960 KW	Żegluga Gdańska
Raketa (hydrofoil)	<sup>14</sup> Gulf of Gdansk (Gdynia -Hel and others)		26	64	77 BRT	730	
Zodiak or Pogwizd (hydrofoils)	<sup>15</sup> Gdynia-Hel	2 (?) (01 May-30 Oct.)	32*	116	35 m / 60 tons	1000 KM	Polish Navy

**6.** All types of vessels (including hovercraft) capable of travelling at speeds in excess of 30 knots.

**7. LEGEND:**

*R- additional reserved trips; ?- data has not been rendered accessible by the ship owner;*

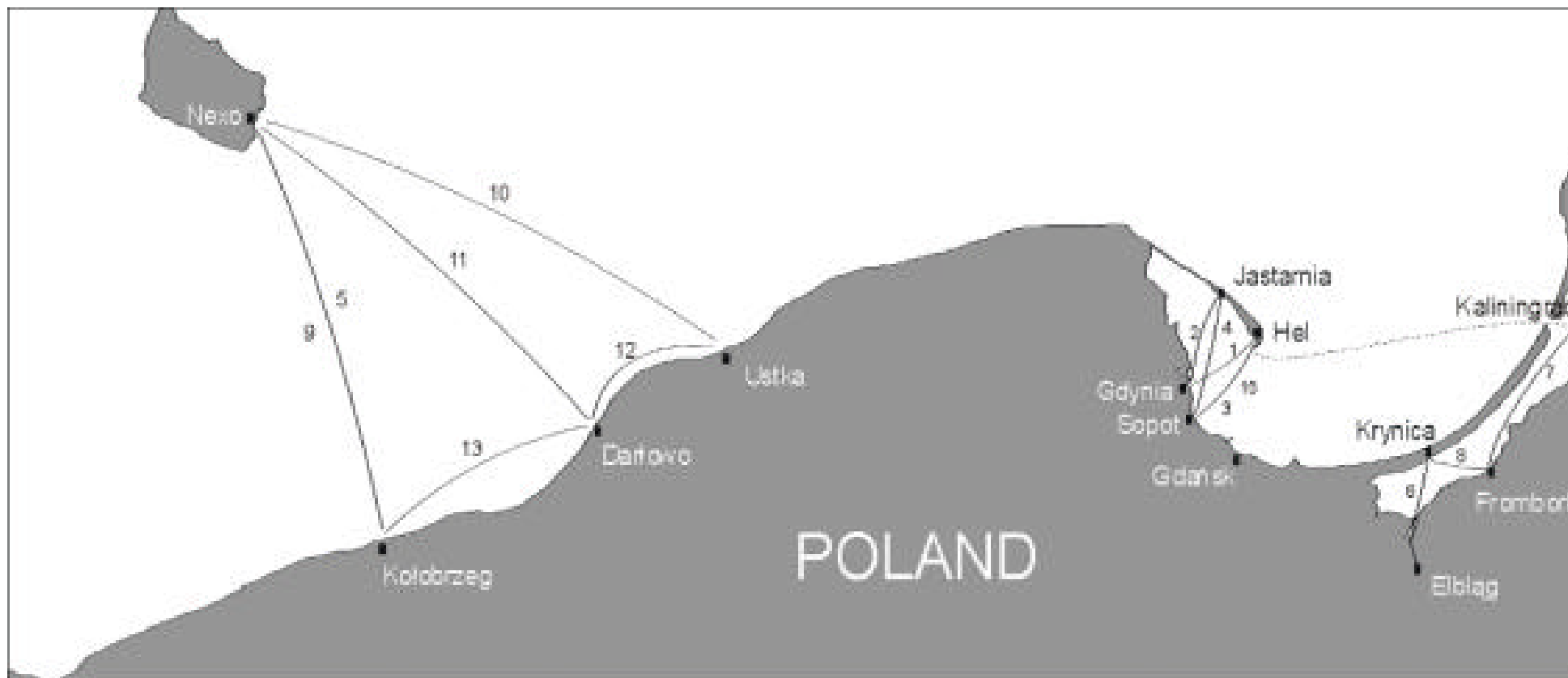
*\* - according to the navy experts opinion this crafts can reach a maximum speed of 26-27 knots nowadays;*

*?\*- data has not been rendered accessible by the ship owner, however it is presumed that this hydrofoil made ca. 5 round trips a day in the period 15 June- 31 October*

*<sup>1-15</sup> - this numbers are connected to the enclosed map (Map 1).*

**Report submitted by:**

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Map 1. Routes of high speed ferries operating in Poland in 2002

## **ANNEX 2**

**Table 1: Cetacean strandings in the United Kingdom during 2002**

	ENGLAND, WALES & ISLE OF MAN	SCOTLAND	NORTHERN IRELAND	TOTAL
<b>FAMILY BALAENOPTERIDAE</b>				
<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	4	13	-	17
<b>FAMILY DELPHINIDAE</b>				
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	115	8	-	123
<i>D. delphis/ S. coeruleoalba</i>	2	2	-	4
<i>Globicephala melas</i>	15	6	-	21
<i>Grampus griseus</i>	2	7	2	11
<i>Lagenorhynchus acutus</i>	2	2	-	4
<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>	2	5	-	7
<i>Orcinus orca</i>	1	-	-	1
<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	4	6	-	10
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	4	2	-	6
Unidentified dolphins	74	2	-	76
<b>FAMILY PHOCOENIDAE</b>				
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	271	61	2	334
<b>FAMILY PHYSETERIDAE</b>				
<i>Kogia breviceps</i>	1	-	-	1
<i>Physeter catodon</i>	-	4	-	4
<b>FAMILY ZIPHIIDAE</b>				
<i>Mesoplodon bidens</i>	1	-	-	1
<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>	2	1	-	3
Unidentified toothed whales	10	4	-	14
Unidentified cetaceans	8	4	-	12
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>649</b>



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