





The Most Endangered Whale in Europe - the Baltic Proper Harbour Porpoise

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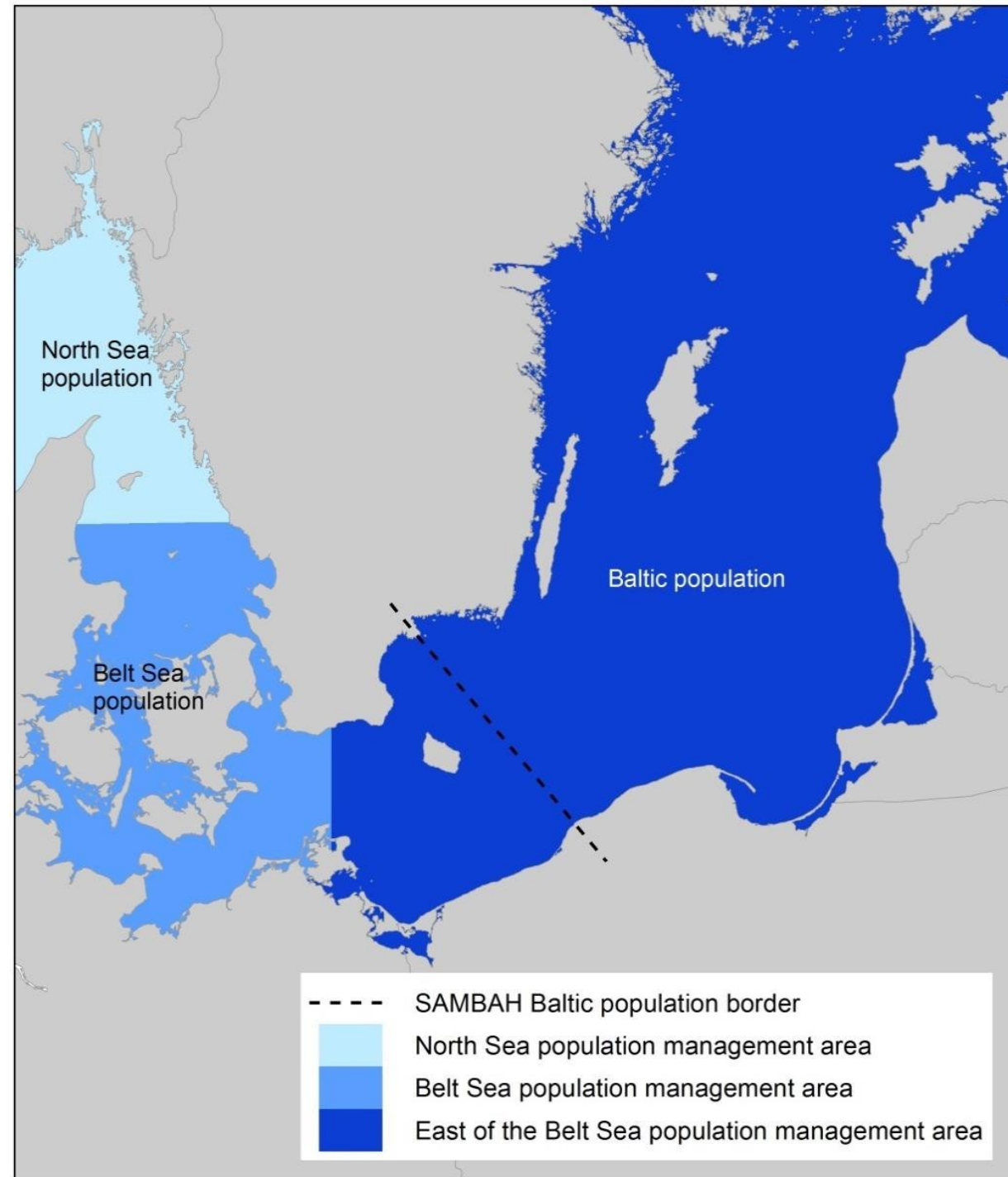
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PORPOISES in the Baltic

Have been present for about
9000 years

Separate population

- Genetic differences
- Morphometric differences
- Distribution separate from neighbouring populations during reproduction period



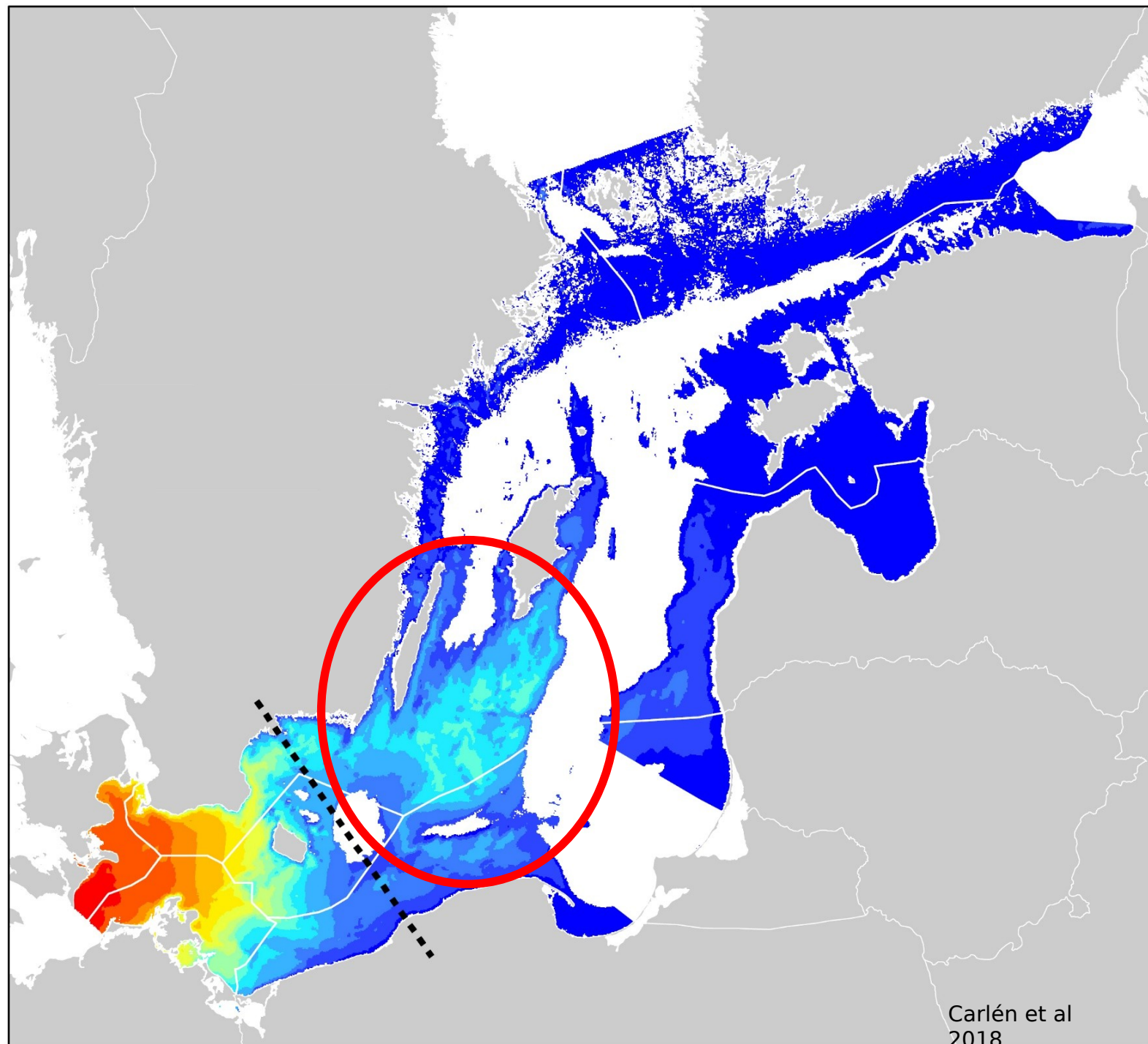


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PORPOISES in the Baltic

May -
October

SAMBAH II ongoing!



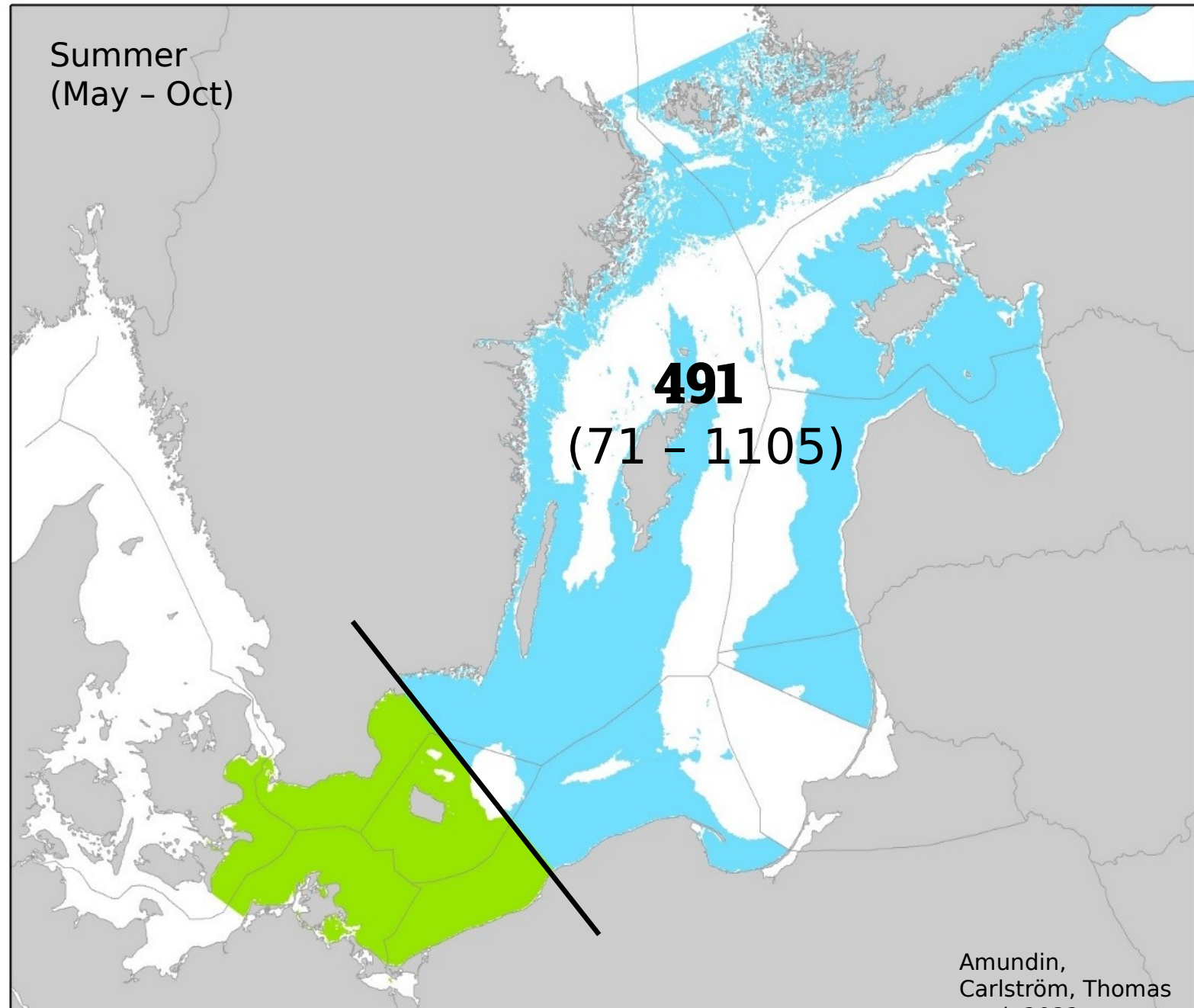
Carlén et al
2018



Naturskyddsföreningen

PORPOISES in the Baltic

May -
October
Listed as Critically
Endangered by
IUCN (Carlström et al 2023)



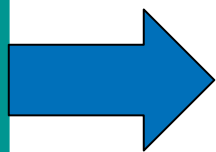


Total ≈ 500 individuals $\rightarrow \approx 220$ females

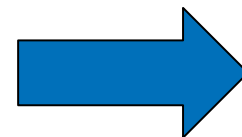
50% reproductive $\rightarrow 110$ females

20% not fertile due to contaminants $\rightarrow 88$ females

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- Underwater noise can interrupt mating and nursing behaviours
 - High calf mortality



**EVERY
INDIVIDUAL IS
VERY**



**ALL OTHER
MORTALITY AND
DISTURBANCE
MUST BE**

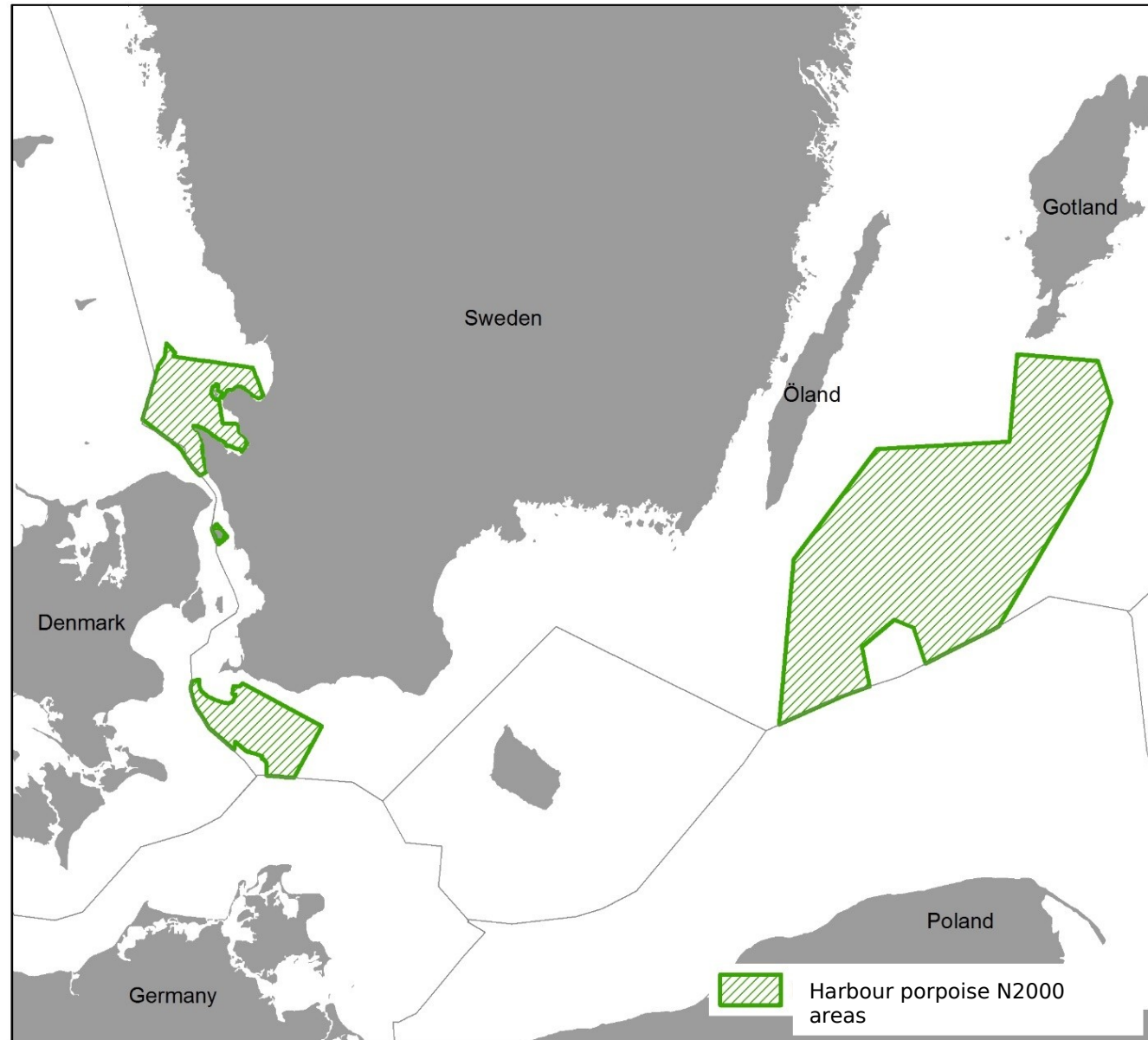


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Conservation

Protected areas
designated in 2016

But what about
measures?





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Policy progress

2019

- eNGOs ask for emergency measures for the Baltic harbour porpoise
- eNGOs submit a general complaint about cetacean bycatch in European waters

2020 – ICES publishes scientific advice

2020-21 – BALTFISH negotiates joint recommendations

2021 – National navies deny the use of pingers

2022 – delegated act under the CFP to minimise bycatch in MPAs





Policy progress

2023

- EC Marine Action Plan sets a deadline for further measures (deadline 2023-12-31)
- continued negotiations in BALTFISH
- NGO-report on alternative measures

2024

- Sweden implements pinger use in large area south of Skåne
 - ICES advice on alternative measures to mitigate bycatch
 - ICES advice on bycatch risk in the Baltic Proper
- main recommendation to adhere to 2020 advice
- Negotiations in Baltfish must urgently result in implementing effective measures





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Policy progress

2020 – Formal notice

European Commission starts an infringement against Sweden for not adhering to the habitats directive in relation to harbour porpoise bycatch

- Bycatch monitoring
- Bycatch mitigation measures in designated Natura 2000 areas
- Bycatch mitigation measures in the entire population range
- Incorporation of habitats directive art 6.2 and 12.4

2024 – Reasoned opinion





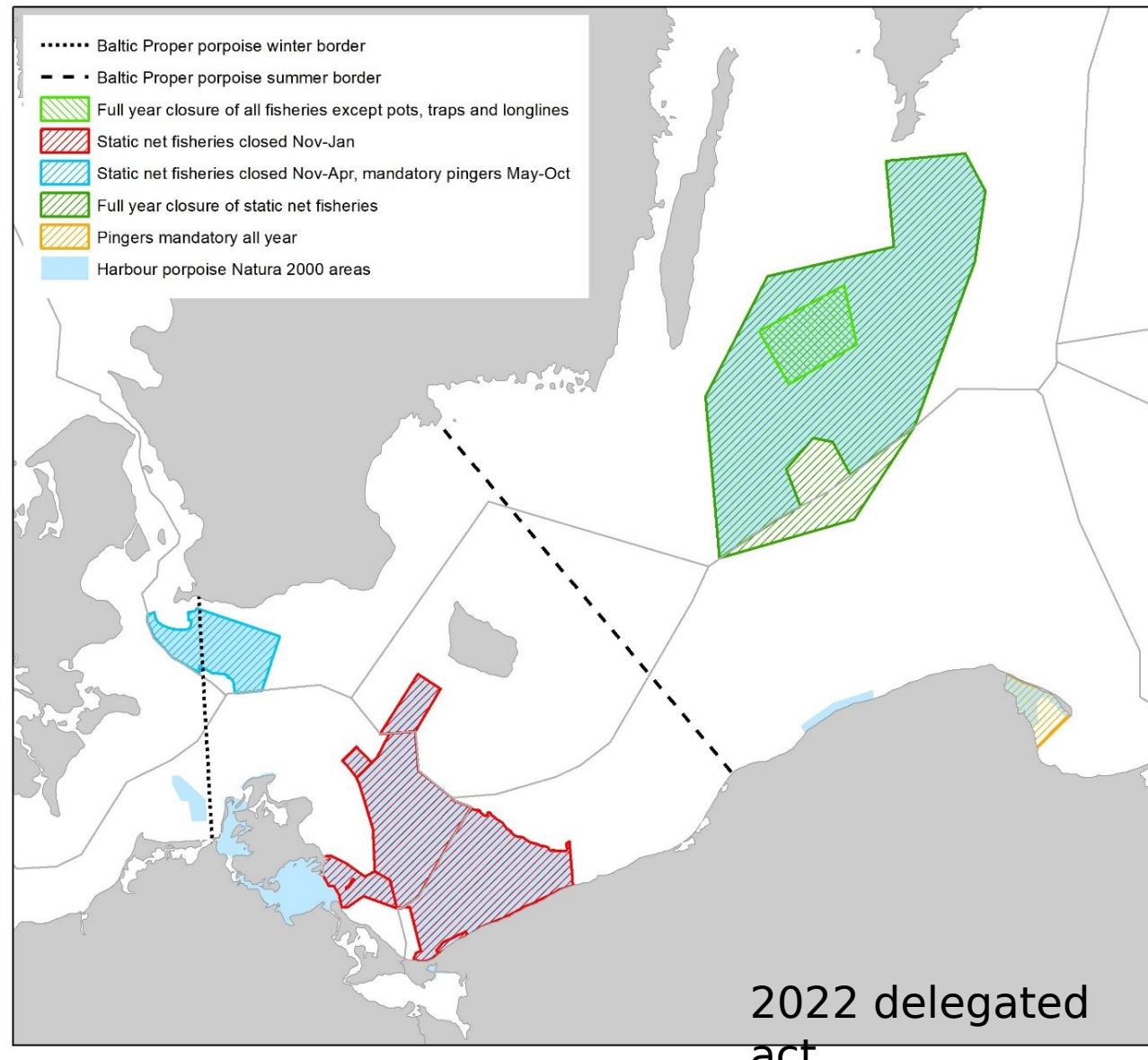
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Conservation measures in place

2022 – Delegated act on fisheries regulations in MPAs and some other important areas

2024 – Swedish area 24, mandatory pinger use in static nets

Still no bycatch mitigation in the entire population range



A photograph of two dolphins swimming in the ocean. The dolphins are dark grey and sleek, with their dorsal fins visible above the water. The water is a deep blue with small, choppy waves. The text "Thanks for listening!" is overlaid in the center in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

Thanks for listening!