

Agenda Item 8.3

Funding of Projects and Activities

Prioritisation of Activities Requiring
Funding

Document 8.3

**Prioritisation of Activities Requiring
Funding**

Action Requested

- Review list of activities
- Provide guidance as to the overall priority of the different activities

Submitted by

Secretariat

PRIORITISATION OF ACTIVITIES REQUIRING FUNDING

1. Many activities identified or endorsed by Parties require funding for their completion. The table below indicates the urgent need for additional voluntary contributions in order to be able to progress the implementation for the Agreement's work programme.
2. This document also includes the three highest ranking project proposals, submitted to the Secretariat as a result to the 2021 call. However, if the Advisory Committee would like to consider all 13 project proposals with the prioritisation of activities included in this document, please see [ASCOBANS/AC26.Doc.8.2](#) for the full list.
3. Unfunded activities of the ASCOBANS Work Plan 2021-2024 ([Resolution 9.1](#)) or addressing requests of the AC and its working groups, that would be feasible to implement in the coming months if funding were available, would require approximately € 117,407 (incl. € 13,507 in UN Programme Support Costs, PSC).

Initiative	Estimated costs (EUR)
Long-term Coordination of the Harbour Porpoise Action Plans	
Thanks to voluntary contributions in 2020, the coordination of the three Harbour Porpoise Action Plans was able to go ahead for year 2021. Document AC24/Doc.3.0 presented in its Table 1 a flexible example of how annual payments could be distributed and shared amongst Parties. The total coordination costs per annum were estimated at EUR 28,250 (including 13% UN Programme Support Costs). In 2019, the coordination of all three plans was under one contract, but the Secretariat deemed the function more effective with dividing it in two: The North Sea Plan coordination, and coordination of the Jastarnia & Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat Plans. This has been the arrangement in 2020 and 2021. Mandate: Terms of Reference for a Coordinator of Harbour Porpoise Action Plans (AC23 Report, Annex 7); Resolution 7.1; Resolution 6.1	
Coordinator for the Jastarnia & WBBK Plans for one year	12,500
Coordinator for the North Sea Plan for one year	12,500
13% UN PSC	3,250
Funding Required	28,250

Initiative	Estimated costs (EUR)
Coordination of the Species Action Plan for the NE Atlantic Common Dolphin	
The ASCOBANS Species Action Plan (SAP) for North-East Atlantic Common Dolphin was adopted intersessionally in 2019 and is now covered under Resolution 8.4 (Rev.MOP9). Funding is needed to support implementation of the SAP, with emphasis on the activities outlined in section 1.5 of the SAP. Ideally, the Common Dolphin SAP would have a coordinator, similarly to the Harbour Porpoise Action Plans. While AC25 ranked coordination of the Common Dolphin SAP as the second priority after coordination of the Harbour Porpoise action plans, it was not allocated funding from the core budget, and has not yet received voluntary contributions. Mandate: AC25 (see Report, Action Point 19); Species Action Plan for North-East Atlantic Common Dolphin (2019)	
Coordinator for the Common Dolphin SAP for one year	12,500
13% UN PSC	1,625
Funding Required	14,125

Initiative	Estimated costs (EUR)
‘European Scientific Workshop’	
<p>It was suggested at the 17th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group (May 2021) that a European workshop (focusing on the Baltic and the North Sea) be organised on consolidating views from the scientific community on minimum standards, thresholds, cumulative impacts, and information needed for impact assessments of different threats to small cetaceans.</p> <p>The Jastarnia Group asked the Secretariat to bring this proposal to the attention of AC26, requesting the Advisory Group to consider that ASCOBANS support Denmark in organising, including logistics, of such a workshop in 2022 / 2023.</p> <p>Mandate: 17th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group</p>	
Towards any costs of the workshop, as appropriate	5,000
13% UN PSC	650
Funding Required	5,650

Initiative	Estimated costs (EUR)
Expert workshop to recommend small cetacean conservation objectives in relation to anthropogenic removals	
<p>ASCOBANS set a conservation objective for small cetaceans based upon a consideration of the vital rates observed in the harbour porpoise (see Resolution 8.5 (Rev.MOP9)). A management threshold of 1.7% of the population size of the harbour porpoise was proposed (with a precautionary threshold of 1%), applying a conservation objective set at 80% of carrying capacity with a 95% probability over an unspecified but more or less infinite time period. In other fora, slightly different conservation objectives have been set. Under the US Marine Mammal Protection Act, the conservation objective is to maintain the population at 50% of carrying capacity for 95% of cases over a temporal window of 100 years, whilst the Catch Limit Algorithm (CLA) applied as part of the IWC’s Revised Management Procedure, is set at 72% of carrying capacity for 50% of cases, also over 100 years.</p> <p>The applicability of these different approaches to small cetaceans within the ASCOBANS Agreement Area needs assessing to decide an appropriate precautionary, yet practical, conservation objective. Furthermore, the setting of management thresholds above which anthropogenic removals are considered to risk the sustainability of populations needs considering not only for harbour porpoise but also other small cetacean species.</p> <p>Since plans were made for the Second Workshop on ‘Unacceptable Interactions’ in 2017, things have progressed, and its original Terms of Reference are now outdated. An expert workshop is needed to provide best scientific advice in order to reach a decision on a general conservation objective for small cetaceans, and recommendations for how management thresholds should be set for different small cetacean species/species groups.</p> <p>Part 1 would be a small technical (online) meeting primarily comprising those who have been directly involved in defining conservation objectives in relation to bycatch, and applying these using various different approaches (PBR, RLA, etc.) to reach an agreed usable quantitative management objective (maintaining the population at a certain % of carrying capacity for a certain % of cases over a temporal window of x years, and setting thresholds appropriate to different small cetacean species. The second wider expert workshop (face-to-face) would be taking those conclusions and recommendations into a wider debate.</p> <p>Mandate: Resolution 9.1 (Work Plan Activity 4); Resolution 8.5 (Rev.MOP9)</p>	
Expert travel / meeting logistics	6,500
13% UN PSC	845
Funding Required	7,345

Initiative	Estimated costs (EUR)
Joint ASCOBANS-ACCOBAMS Workshop on the Common Dolphin	
<p>AC25 requested the Secretariat to organise a joint ASCOBAN-ACCOBAMS workshop on the common dolphin at the European Cetacean Society conference in 2021. The conference was changed to a webinar format held online in March 2021, with no possibility to organise a workshop. Now the conference is planned to take place in Israel in April 2022, with the theme 'Marine mammal research and conservation efforts - Are we on the right path?'. If the workshop is organised, it is anticipated some costs may need to be covered.</p> <p>Mandate: AC25 (see Report, Action Point 18).</p>	
Towards any costs of the workshop, as appropriate	4,000
13% UN PSC	520
Funding Required	4,520

Initiative	Estimated costs (EUR)
Using fishers' knowledge to understand the use of alternative gears to static gillnets in the ASCOBANS Region	
<p>This is project proposal #8 received in the ASCOBANS 2021 call. It was ranked the highest out of the proposals received. Please see AC26/Doc.8.2 for details.</p> <p>The overall objective of the proposed project is to engage with fishers in the UK, Germany and Atlantic Spain and identify alternative gear(s) to which static gillnet fishers would be willing to trial/switch.</p> <p>This project would also provide continuation to the report 'Cost-benefit Analysis for Mitigation Measures in Fisheries with High Bycatch' (in prep.), commissioned by ASCOBANS, since fishers' knowledge and/or opinions were not covered in the report and, furthermore, current monitoring or mitigation of cetacean bycatch does not typically account for fishers' opinions on reducing such interactions. However, it remains crucial that the development of alternative gear should involve all stakeholders.</p>	
A literature review identifying the main harbours with cetacean bycatch; a database in English of fishers' responses to the questionnaire available to ASCOBANS Parties and Range States; a final report; findings to be submitted for peer-review and publication in a scientific or policy-oriented journal	20,000
13% UN PSC	2,600
Funding Required	22,600

Initiative	Estimated costs (EUR)
Status of the Iberian harbour porpoise	
<p>This is project proposal #12 received in the ASCOBANS 2021 call. It was ranked the second highest out of the proposals received. Please see AC26/Doc.8.2 for more information.</p> <p>The proposed project aims to quantify life history parameters in Iberian harbour porpoises during the last decade; estimate total and fisheries mortality rate; examine evidence for temporal trends; compare life history parameters with northern Europe; and assess the status of the population and provide recommendations on conservation that will aid development of an Iberian Harbour Porpoise Species Action Plan.</p>	
Collate strandings samples; collate historical data; process teeth and gonad samples; perform data analysis; final report to ASCOBANS & scientific publication to a peer-reviewed journal	10,900
13% UN PSC	1,417
Funding Required	12,317

Initiative	Estimated costs (EUR)
Prediction of the cochlear frequency maps of harbour porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>)	
<p>This is project proposal #2 received in the ASCOBANS 2021 call. It was ranked third highest out of the proposals received. Please see AC26/Doc.8.2 for more information.</p> <p>The cochlear frequency maps (i.e. the frequency distribution along the cochlear spiral) for harbour porpoises and other species of marine mammals are not known since they require the animals to be sacrificed. The importance of having these maps relies in the possibility to determine the frequencies that are impaired when lesions are found. In addition, in cases of noise-induced hearing loss, it will be possible to extrapolate the acoustic characteristics of a source that had triggered these lesions.</p>	
Report to ASCOBANS on the main results of this project, including the prediction of the cochlear frequency map for harbour porpoises; results for publication on an open-source peer-reviewed international scientific journal; to inform decision makers and general public on the potential damaging sound sources and discuss improved mitigation measures	20,000
13% UN PSC	2,600
Funding Required	22,600