

Agenda Item 2

Review of New Information on Threats and
Other Issues Relevant to Small Cetaceans

National Report 3

2022 Annual National Report: Belgium

Action Requested

Take note

Submitted by

Belgium



2022 ASCOBANS National Report

1 January – 31 December 2022

As outlined in ASCOBANS [Resolution 8.1 \(Rev.MOP9\)](#) *National Reporting*, this form will cover the year 2022 (Year 3), and the following topics included in the Annex to the Resolution, in addition to the standard Sections I (General Information) and VII (Other Matters):

- Cetacean watching industry (Section II B5)
- Recreational sea use (Section II B6)
- Other sources of disturbance (Section II B7)
- Pollution and hazardous substances (incl. microplastics) (Section II C10)
- Ship strikes (Section II C11)
- Climate change (Section II 12)
- Physical habitat change (Section II C13)
- Other issues (Section II C14)
- Protected areas (Section II E16)
- Education and outreach (Section VI A)

The national reports submitted will inform discussions at the 27th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (26-28 September 2023).

- All questions apply to the reporting period from 1 January to 31 December 2022.
- Region in the tables refers to the sub-regions as defined by the HELCOM and OSPAR, and Areas refers to the sub-areas as defined by ICES. An overview and maps of these can be found in Annex A. Species can be chosen from the drop-down list provided, based on ASCOBANS species list, see Annex B.
- Throughout the form, please include relevant web links and add rows where applicable.
- The deadline for the submission of National Reports is 31 May 2023.

Where possible, National Coordinators should consult with, or delegate to, experts for particular topics so as to ease the reporting burden. The Secretariat has provided a list of potential country contacts as a starting point. Once the baseline information is in place, it should become easier to update in the future.

For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the [Secretariat](#).

High-level Summary of Key Messages

In your country, for 2022 (Year 3), what does this report reveal about:

1. The most successful aspects of implementation of the Agreement? (list up to five items)

- Cooperation with neighbouring countries
- Cooperation with the NGO's involved in ASCOBANS
- Feeding the regulatory framework, including MSFD

2. The greatest challenges in implementing the Agreement? (list up to five items)

- Keeping the strandings network up and running.
- Reporting obligations are currently very high, with challenges for civil servants to be as efficient as possible and to avoid duplication of efforts, with a high risk of losing momentum and efficiency.

3. The main priorities for future implementation of the Agreement? (list up to five items)

- To deal with overlap with other work and/or obligations in international fora, such as those in OSPAR, IWC, ICES and MSFD – ASCOBANS could find niches with preparatory work for other fora, or newly emerging threats, instead of working on similar issues as other international fora?

Section I: General Information

A. Country Information

1. Name of Party / Non-Party Range State:

2. Details of the Report Compiler

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 Does the Report Compiler act as ASCOBANS National Coordinator (i.e. focal point)?
 No Yes

3. Details of contributor(s)

Topic(s) contributed to:
Name:
Function:
Organization:
Postal Address:
Telephone:
Email:

Copy box if needed.

Section II: Habitat Conservation and Management (threats and pressures on cetaceans)

B. Disturbance (incl. potential physical impacts)

5. Cetacean Watching Industry

AIM: to determine if the developing cetacean watching industry poses a threat to small cetaceans.
Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 6.1, 5.4

Whale and dolphin watching is a global industry that can provide socio-economic benefits to local communities by attracting tourism, as well as strengthening public awareness of conservation needs. However, it also has the potential of being harmful when it interferes with the behaviour of animals in their natural environment and may even lead to injury or death. As the cetacean watching industry is still scarcely developed in some countries, collecting this data now allows tracking the development of the industry.

It is of particular importance to ASCOBANS to obtain an overview of the current scale of the activities and to monitor the development of the industry in the future. This is done by quantifying the number and locations of operators, reporting negative interactions and providing information on the development and implementation of any guidelines regarding cetacean watching.

Filling out this section accurately and completely will help to detect any indications of potential threats, allow timely mitigation action and enable Parties and Non-Party Range States to work towards a coordinated approach regarding the development of cetacean watching guidelines in the Agreement Area.

Note: We are here only addressing commercial cetacean watching activities which take place from vessels and include viewing of small cetacean species. Operators are defined as those offering trips with a primary focus: they advertise specifically with the aim to see small cetaceans, or a secondary focus: they advertise either for other taxa, such as birds or seals, or large cetaceans, or more general for wildlife, but mention the opportunity to see small cetaceans.

Questions:

5.1. Do you have any commercial small cetacean watching industry operating in your country?

- No.** Go to Question 5.3.
 Yes.

5.2. Please identify the total number of operators conducting commercial cetacean watching in your country and provide details in the table below.

- 0-5
 6-10
 11-20
 21+

In the table, provide the sub-regions in which commercial cetacean watching takes place. Identify if small cetacean watching is a primary and/or secondary focus of the operators and, in the first case, what the target species are.

Overview of commercial small cetacean watching activities per sub-region. If necessary, add rows.

Region	Small cetacean watching		Link to website or contact details (include information on ports and operators if available)
	Primary focus / target species	Secondary focus	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose a species Choose a species Choose a species Choose a species	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose a species Choose a species Choose a species Choose a species	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.3. Does your country have a definition of the term 'harassment' in general and/or as it relates to the Cetacean Watching Industry? ¹

- No.**
 Yes. Provide definition below:

¹ For example, the US Marine Mammal Protection Act uses the term harassment, and defines two levels: Level A harassment means any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance that has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild. Level B harassment refers to acts that have the potential to disturb (but not injure) a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by disrupting behavioural patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering. NB. The UK uses the term 'disturbance' in its legislation.

In legislation, it is stated in general that the intentional disturbance of marine mammals is prohibited and the disturbance of marine mammals should be avoided.

5.4. Have there been any incidents of harassment towards small cetaceans in the context of commercial cetacean watching reported to authorities during the reporting period?

No.

Yes. Provide information on table below. If necessary, copy table.

Date dd/mm/yy	Context of incidence	Outcome for (a) the animal or (b) human (e.g. behavioural response, injury, death)
Legal procedures / court proceedings / convictions that took place		Responsible authority for such reports
Link to websites or documentation of this report		

5.5. Does your country have any operators that offer swimming with dolphins (or other small cetaceans)?

In some parts of the world this has become an important tourism industry with potential impacts for both small cetaceans and swimmers. Although scarcely developed, it has occurred within the ASCOBANS Agreement Area, and requires at least background monitoring. Sometimes incidents occur and can lead to harm for small cetaceans and/or swimmers.

No.

Yes. Provide information in the table below.

Location	Species	Operator	Any reported incidents between small cetaceans or swimmers.
	Choose an item.	(include link to website)	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, please describe:
	Choose an item.	(include link to website)	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, please describe:
	Choose an item.	(include link to website)	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, please describe:

5.6. List any incidents of harassment to small cetaceans during the reporting period in your country in the context of swimming with small cetaceans reported to authorities – and the outcome if known (behavioural response, injury, death, any court proceedings).

Date	Context of incidence	Outcome for (a) the animal or (b) human (e.g. behavioural response, injury, death)	Legal procedures/ court proceedings/ convictions that took place	Responsible authority for such reports	Link to websites or documentation of this report
dd/mm/yy					
dd/mm/yy					
dd/mm/yy					

5.7. Are there any solitary sociable dolphin interactions in your country?

Occasionally, individual solitary dolphins may associate with humans, resulting in increased interactions between the two which may lead to impacts upon either. Sometimes incidents occur and can lead to harm for small cetaceans and/or swimmers.

No. Go to Question 5.12.

Yes. Provide information in the table below.

Region	Date	Species	Link to websites	Reported incidents between small cetaceans and swimmers
Oil Southern North Sea	2022	BD Bottlenose dolphin		No incidents: a resident bottlenose dolphin (Belgian-French waters) regularly interacts with divers, at its own initiative, and with the divers respectfully interacting with the animal.
Choose an item.	dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.		

5.8. Does your country have any mitigation measures (codes of conduct/guidelines) in place in the event of disturbance or harassment in the context of commercial cetacean watching, swimming with cetaceans, and interactions with solitary sociable dolphins?

No.

Yes. Please provide information below:

Measure: (may include regional measures)		
Date of implementation:		Region: Choose an item.
Has the measure been effective?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Comments:	
Other information:		

Copy table if needed.

5.9. List any incidents of harassments to small cetaceans during the reporting period in the context of interactions with solitary sociable dolphins reported to authorities – and the outcome if known (behavioural response, injury, death, any court proceedings).

Date	Context of incidence	Outcome for (a) the animal or (b) human (e.g. behavioural response, injury, death)	Legal procedures/ court proceedings/ convictions that took place	Responsible authority for such reports	Link to websites or documentation of this report
dd/mm/yy					
dd/mm/yy					

5.10. Relevant new research/ work/ collaboration on the cetacean watching industry, “swim with small cetacean” operations, solitary sociable dolphin interactions and their possible effects on small cetaceans in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)
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5.11. Have there been any other instances/issues related to cetacean watching industry during the reporting period in your country?

No.

Yes. Please provide details:

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5.12. Is the perceived level of pressure from commercial small cetacean watching in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

To be done per species where applicable.

Species	Increasing	Decreasing	Staying the same	Unknown	Nature of the evidence
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Not applicable. Comments: none present in 2022

B. Disturbance (incl. potential physical impacts)

6. Recreational Sea Use

AIM: to determine whether recreational sea use is detrimental to small cetaceans and, if so, to identify types of activity and areas of concern.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 8.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.4

Recreational use of the sea by humans includes a wide variety of activities, some of which are known to have a potential negative impact on small cetaceans. This includes the use of RIBs (rigid-hulled inflatable boats), hard-hulled boats exceeding 10 knots in speed, yachts and personal watercrafts such as jet skis, kayaks and surfboards; and excludes recreational fishing and sea-angling.

Interactions can cause animals to change behaviour and move away, but can also have more serious impacts, such as injury or even death due to collision. ASCOBANS has agreed on a number of resolutions that highlight the importance to review all available information on recreational use of the sea. Obtaining an overview of best practices and guidelines will enable comparisons to be made across the Agreement Area, and ultimately may lead to the provision of overall, consistent guidelines that might be developed at a regional or national level. In this section we strive to obtain an overview of potential risk areas and national sources that have data on incidents with small cetaceans related to recreational sea use.

Questions:

6.1. Are data on recreational sea use available for your country?

No. Go to Question 6.3.

Yes. Provide information in the table below:

Type of information: (e.g. number of licenced recreational vessels per region, tourist number per region, other)

Information on number of recreational vessels per port and socio-economic aspects.

Web link or other relevant link to data:

Belgische Staat, 2018. Actualisatie van de socio-economische analyse van het gebruik van de Belgische mariene wateren en de aan de aantasting van het mariene milieu verbonden kosten. Kaderrichtlijn Mariene Strategie – Art 8.1.c. Federale Overheidsdienst Volksgezondheid, Veiligheid van de Voedselketen en Leefmilieu, Brussel, België, 115 pp.

https://www.health.belgium.be/sites/default/files/uploads/fields/fpshealth_theme_file/socio-economische_analyse_msfd_2018.pdf

Dauwe, S.; Verleye, T.; Pirllet, H.; Martens, C.; Sandra, M.; De Raedemaecker, F.; Devriese, L.; Lescrauwaet, A.-K.; Depoorter, M.; Moulart, I.; Mees, J. (Eds.) (2022). Kennisgids Gebruik Kust en Zee 2022 - Compendium voor Kust en Zee. Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee (VLIZ): Oostende. 276 p. ISBN 9789464206128. <https://dx.doi.org/10.48470/20>

6.2. Is information on main areas of recreational sea use available for your country?

Many Range States are mapping human activities to fulfil obligations under the EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, MSFD, OSPAR, and HELCOM; this information is relevant (though often not readily accessible) to ASCOBANS in understanding the extent and trends of human activities potentially impacting small cetaceans.

No.

Not applicable. Comments: recreational sea use is, for the major part, taking place within the coastal zone, at the most up to a few miles offshore.

Yes. Provide information in the table below.

Region	Type of information	Is the data available online?	Provide link to data, or comment on unavailability
Choose an item.	(e.g. maps, GIS, reports)	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	(weblinks)
Choose an item.	(e.g. maps, GIS, reports)	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	(weblinks)

6.3. Were there any incidents of disturbance or harassment to small cetaceans in relation to recreational sea use in your country?

- No.**
 Unknown.
 Yes. Provide information in the table below.

Date	Area	Context of incidence	Outcome for (a) the animal or (b) human	Legal procedures/ court proceedings/ convictions	Link to websites or documentation of the incident
dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.	(e.g. what kind of recreational activity)	(e.g. behavioural response, injury, death)		
dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.	(e.g. what kind of recreational activity)	(e.g. behavioural response, injury, death)		

6.4. Does your country have any mitigation measures (codes of conducts/ guidelines/ laws/ rules) in place in the event of disturbance or harassment of small cetaceans through recreational sea use?

- No.**
 Yes. Please provide information in table below:

Measure:	Legislation states that it is illegal to disturb marine mammals, and that disturbance needs to be avoided.	
Date of implementation:	2001	Region: Oil Southern North Sea
Has the measure been effective?	<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Comments: interactions very rare – none in 2022	
Other information:	Not on small cetaceans: in 2022 a humpback whale stayed off the Belgian coast for a few days. A company that sells excursions at sea planned to take people out to see for whale watching (this particular animal), but did not continue with these plans, mainly due to pressure from the public.	

Copy table if needed.

6.5. Relevant new research/ work/ collaboration on disturbance or harassment of small cetaceans through recreational sea use in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)

6.6. Have there been any other instances / issues related to recreational sea use in your country during the reporting period?

- No.**
 Yes. Please provide details:

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6.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from recreational sea use in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

To be done per species where applicable.

Species	Increasing	Decreasing	Staying the same	Unknown	Nature of the evidence
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

- Not applicable.** Comments:

B. Disturbance (incl. potential physical impacts)**7. Other Sources of Disturbance**

AIM: to identify new sources of disturbance that could be a threat to small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 6.1

Overlap of small cetacean and human habitat use is not covered by the questions above, while human activities in the seas are increasing, particularly in the coastal zone. Human activities can, for example, cause a small cetacean to change behaviour, or it can cause physical harm or death. This section aims to identify new sources of disturbance that could be a threat to small cetaceans. The issue of noise is covered under section B3.

7.1. Have there been any incidents of disturbance to small cetaceans in your country during the reporting period, not covered in the items above?

- No.**
 Unknown.
 Yes. Please provide information in the table below.

Any incidents of disturbance to small cetaceans not covered in Sections B5 or B6 by the report.

Description of event:		Date: dd/mm/yy	Area: Choose an item.
Outcome for (a) the animal or (b) human	(e.g. behavioural response, injury, death)		
Describe mitigation measures:			
Legal procedures/ court proceedings/ convictions:			
Links to relevant information:	(Websites, etc.)		

7.2. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on other sources of disturbance in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)

C. Habitat Change and Degradation (incl. potential physical impacts)

10. Pollution and hazardous substances (incl. microplastics)

AIM: to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating impacts of important current and emerging pollution-related hazards on small cetaceans. during the reporting period
 Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 8.8, 8.7, 8.4, 8.3, 7.4, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7

Marine environments have been subject to a wide range of different types of pollution over the last decades. Top predators, such as small cetaceans that feed on higher trophic prey, tend to accumulate many of these potentially hazardous substances. There are a number of contaminants and pathogens that are known, or suspected, to have impacts on small cetacean health, immune status or reproduction. These include, for example: polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other persistent organic pollutants (POPs), oil pollution (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), toxins from harmful algal blooms (HABs), sewage, radionuclides, toxic elements, tri-butyl tin (TBT), morbillivirus, and Brucella. In addition, micro- and nano-plastics are also present in marine environment and their impacts are presently poorly understood.

Monitoring can be done using body tissue from small cetaceans obtained from live animals through biopsies, or from dead animals that are generally found on the shore. Necropsies allow the sampling of different types of tissue such as blubber, muscle, kidney or liver and these can be analyzed subsequently.

To better understand the impact of contaminants on small cetacean health, to detect new emerging hazards and to work towards a common protocol for analyzing samples, countries are asked to provide information on their programs.

Note: Includes microplastics. Macroplastics and discarded fishing gear are covered under Section C 9 Marine Debris.

Questions:

10.1. Does your country conduct monitoring of pollutants in small cetaceans?

Several pollutants have serious effects on individual small cetaceans and can threaten populations. The aim is to capture the nature of existing monitoring and identify gaps in terms of which pollutants are monitored, the extend of this monitoring and the establishment of securely funded long-term data series.

No. Go to Question 10.7.

Yes.

Comments:

Belgium participates in the OSPAR work – indicator on persistent chemicals in marine mammals (<https://oap.ospar.org/en/ospar-assessments/quality-status-reports/qsr-2023/indicator-assessments/pcb-marine-mammals-pilot/>)

10.2. Who is carrying out the pollutant monitoring program? Please provide information on the institution(s)/agencies that collect the samples and carry out the analyses. Copy table if needed.

<p>Name: University of Liège Role in monitoring: necropsy and sampling Postal Address: Université de Liège, Département de Pathologie Vétérinaire, Sart Tilman 43, 4000 Liège Contact Person: Thierry Jauniaux Telephone: Email: t.jauniaux@uliege.be Weblink:</p>
<p>Name: RBINS Role in monitoring: OSPAR HASEC contact point Postal Address: 3de en 23ste Linierregimentsplein, 8400 Ostend, Belgium Contact Person: Koen Parmentier Telephone: Email: kparmentier@naturalsciences.be Weblink:</p>

10.3. Identify the small cetacean species that were covered by your monitoring program during the reporting period. Mark the year in which the species was sampled with an x.

2016	2017	2018	2019	Species	2016	2017	2018	2019	Species
				Choose a species					Choose a species
				Choose a species					Choose a species
				Choose a species					Choose a species

Comments:

Information not received from ULg

10.4. Select the source of your samples (multiple answers possible)

- Necropsy from stranding
 Necropsy from bycatch
 Sample from live stranding
 Biopsy from live animal
 Other (specify in comments)

Comments:

From a selection of cetaceans necropsied, tissue samples are taken for future analysis, if deemed appropriate or interest would arise (tissue bank).

10.5. Select the geographical coverage of your monitoring program (several answers are possible)

A map of the OSPAR and HELCOM regions and sub-regions can be found in the Annex A.

OSPAR Region I Arctic Waters <input type="checkbox"/> Norwegian Sea OSPAR Region II Greater North Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Dogger Bank <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Southern North Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Northern North Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Channel <input type="checkbox"/> Norwegian Trench <input type="checkbox"/> Skagerrak OSPAR Region III Celtic Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Celtic Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Irish Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Irish & Scottish W. Coast	OSPAR Region IV Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast <input type="checkbox"/> N. Bay of Biscay <input type="checkbox"/> Iberian Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf of Cadiz OSPAR Region V Wider Atlantic <input type="checkbox"/> HELCOM <input type="checkbox"/> Bothnian Bay <input type="checkbox"/> Bothnian Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Archipelago Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Åland Sea	HELCOM cont. <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf of Finland <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Baltic Proper <input type="checkbox"/> Western Gotland Basin <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Gotland Basin <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf of Riga <input type="checkbox"/> Gdansk Basin <input type="checkbox"/> Bornholm Basin <input type="checkbox"/> Arkona Basin <input type="checkbox"/> Kattegat <input type="checkbox"/> Belt Sea <input type="checkbox"/> The Sound
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10.6. Select the contaminant / pathogen analyses you have conducted for small cetaceans.

<input type="checkbox"/> POPs (e.g. PCBs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Radionuclides	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brucella	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others: Herpesvirus
<input type="checkbox"/> Oil (e.g. PAHs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Toxic elements	<input type="checkbox"/> Microplastics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others: Influenzavirus
<input type="checkbox"/> HAB toxins	<input type="checkbox"/> TBT	<input type="checkbox"/> Nanoplastics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others: fungus
<input type="checkbox"/> Sewage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Morbillivirus	<input type="checkbox"/> Others:	<input type="checkbox"/> Others:

Comments:

10.7. Does your country determine microplastics in small cetaceans?

No. Go to Question 10.9.

Yes. Please provide information in the table below:

Do you have a specific protocol to monitor microplastic in small cetaceans? **No** **Yes** (If yes, please provide details and weblinks or upload document.)

There is currently no agreed protocol between Parties. Best practice needs to be established to make sure that all results obtained are comparable between research institutes. In particular, it is essential to avoid contamination of samples during processing, e.g. with airborne microplastic fibres.

10.8. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on impact of pollution and hazardous substances (incl. microplastics) on small cetaceans in your country.

We need to capture information on new knowledge arising from monitoring schemes or other research projects, especially results which enhance our understanding of impacts of hazardous pollutants and/or assess their known or likely effects on small cetacean population status (e.g. considering PCB concentrations in blubber in relation to threshold for inhibition of reproduction). Where relevant, please report separately per pollutant, species and area.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)

10.9. If applicable, list any additional evidence/ data of reduced impacts of pollutants on small cetaceans following implementation of national mitigation measures (e.g. decline of contaminant levels in blubber over time).

No information

10.10. Have there been any instances/ issues related to pollution and hazardous substances in your country during the reporting period?

No.

Yes. Please provide details:

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10.11. Is the perceived level of pressure from pollution and hazardous substances in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

To be done per species where applicable.

Species	Increasing	Decreasing	Staying the same	Unknown	Nature of the evidence
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Not applicable. Comments:

C. Habitat Change and Degradation (incl. potential physical impacts)

11. Ship Strikes

AIM: understanding the potential risk of ship strike as a cause of injury/death in small cetaceans.
Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 8.2, , 6.1, 5.4

Ship strikes are collisions between vessels and cetaceans. In the last decades, evidence has emerged that ship strikes might occur more often than previously thought and can have a significant impact on small resident cetacean populations. Most research so far has focused on large cetaceans as those animals are often carried visibly into port at the bow of a vessel. For small cetaceans, ship strike events are not well documented.

Ship strike occurrence is directly linked to the frequency of shipping activity, including such directed at cetaceans, i.e. cetacean watching. To quantify this pressure, it is important to know what kind of vessels are involved in the strike, as well as the type, size and speed of the vessel. But it is also important to have information on the small cetaceans involved, in particular if the animals were engaged in certain behaviour such as feeding.

Ship strike can cause direct death or injury in cetaceans. Even collisions that are non-fatal might leave individuals with a reduction in their chance of survival. To determine the occurrence of ship-strikes, different sources are used. For small cetaceans, direct observations are the rarest. Necropsies of stranded animals can find evidence of characteristic trauma and photographs of animals that survived ship strikes can show typical injuries, such as marks left by propellers. One way to quantify how many animals in a population are impacted by ship strike is to assess the percentage of animals in a photo-identification catalogue that bear ship strike marks.

As this is still a not well documented threat, this section aims to obtain an overview of what kind of data and research is available and ongoing in the countries.

Questions:**11.1. Are there reports available in your country of ship strikes with small cetaceans from visual observations?**

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) has a global database for ship strike incidents with small cetaceans. Whether or not your country is Party to the IWC, it is encouraged for countries to provide all ship strike incident information to the IWC database.

No.

Yes. Please provide information from the reporting period in the table below.

Has the ship strike been submitted to the IWC Ship Strike Database?	Region	Species (if known)	Date of incident (dd/mm/yy)	Contact (if available contact details of the observer)	Description of the observed incidence (Group size if other cetaceans present, dead/alive after collision, animal retrieval, animal being dead before collision, other information, vessel type/name, speed, damage to vessel or injuries to people)	Is there a necropsy report?	Websites, other information, photographs or publications: (provide links)
Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.				Choose an item. Link:	
Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.				Choose an item. Link:	
Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.				Choose an item. Link:	

11.2. Are there reports in your country of vessel strikes from necropsies of stranded animals for the reporting period?

No.

Yes. Please provide information in the table below.

General Information			Necropsied animals		Comments
Year	Region	Species	Number of animals with cause of death ship strike (e.g. animals showing ship strike markings ²)		
			possible	certain	
2022	OII Southern North Sea	BD Bottlenose dolphin	1		The bottlenose dolphin showed lesions that could be a consequence of a ship strike, but the necropsy could not substantiate this – the lesions might have been caused post-mortem. The animals was decomposed, and death probably occurred outside of Belgian waters. Images are taken up in the yearly strandings report 2022.
	Choose an item.	Choose a species			

² These can be sub-acute (animal dies not immediately after the ship-strike) or chronic lesions (scar forming starts, but there is likely infection/inflammation) or healed lesions that are unrelated to the cause of death (although they could have affected an animals health status in the longer term).

	Choose an item.	Choose a species			
Provide source of information and database link if applicable: Haelters, J., Moreau, K. & Kerckhof, F., 2023. Zeezoogdieren in België in 2022 (Mammifères marins en Belgique en 2022). Koninklijk Belgisch Instituut voor Natuurwetenschappen, Brussel. 34pp. www.marinemammals.be/reports					

11.3. Does your country have a protocol in use to determine that a cause of death in post-mortem examination is due to a vessel strike? **No.** **Yes.** Please provide information below:

Standard necropsy protocol

11.4. Is there evidence in your country from existing photo-identification catalogues of small cetaceans of any non-lethal ship strike during the reporting period?

For populations of small cetaceans, such as bottlenose dolphins, one can identify those animals in photo-identification catalogues of animals that show ship-strike evidence (e.g. scars). Monitoring the % of animals that show ship strike evidence can be a useful tool to monitor the development of this threat.

 No. **Yes.** Please provide information in the table below.

Overview of ship strike evidence in photo-identification catalogues

General Information			Photo-identified animals in the catalogue			
Year	Region	Species	# individual animals in the photo-identification catalogue	# animals showing ship strike markings (e.g. scars)		
				possible	certain	Unknown
	Choose an item.	Choose a species				
	Choose an item.	Choose a species				
	Choose an item.	Choose a species				

11.5. Do you have any other photographs or evidence of ship strikes outside of photo-identification catalogue? **No.** **Yes.** Please provide details:

--

11.6. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on ship strike and its possible effects on small cetaceans in your country.

Belgium participates in the EU Life-project "Seadetec"
--

11.7. List any management/ policy actions/ relevant regulations/ guidelines related to mitigating ship strike for small cetaceans (re-routing, tracking animals, ship speed limits) in your country and the year of implementation (current and planned).

Provide web links if available.

None

11.8. Have there been any other instances / issues of ship strike on small cetaceans in your country in the reporting period? **No.** **Yes.** Please provide details:

--

11.9. Is the perceived level of pressure from ship strikes on small cetaceans in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

To be done per species where applicable.

Species	Increasing	Decreasing	Staying the same	Unknown	Nature of the evidence
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Not applicable. Comments: hardly any animals present that are vulnerable to ship strikes.

C. Habitat Change and Degradation (incl. Potential physical impacts)

12. Climate change (incl. ocean acidification)

AIM: to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating negative effects of important and emerging climate change related impacts on small cetaceans.
Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.4, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7

It is certain that climate change is altering the habitat of cetaceans. However, our understanding of how the predicted changes will impact different species and populations can be further developed by identifying issues and trends through reporting. CMS³ highlights the importance of addressing potential issues through the engagement of (1) researchers to better understand the underlying processes, as well as (2) conservation managers and policy makers to monitor changes and to mitigate negative impacts. Focus should be given to understanding tangible climate change effects relevant to cetaceans, such as changing ocean temperatures, prey depletion / prey range shifts, ocean acidification, increased frequency and intensity of ocean storms, changes in sea ice and weakening of the North Atlantic Drift. Such occurrences require that we gather evidence on the existence and nature of climate change effects on small cetaceans and evaluate current monitoring programmes and mitigation measures.

This section aims to provide an overview of what kind of activities are already ongoing in the member states to address climate change. The focus is on those actions specifically regarding cetaceans as well as the most likely impacts on their habitat and prey. Climate change possibly represents one of the most important future threats to the status of cetaceans in the ASCOBANS region. Direct effects may arise due to ocean warming, resulting in distribution shifts (generally northward) so that the animals continue to occupy waters with temperature regimes compatible with their thermal niches. Key indirect effects will result from changes in prey distribution and abundance due to ocean warming, ocean acidification and changes in ocean current systems.

Questions:

12.1. Does your country undertake monitoring that has potential to contribute to knowledge and identification of climate impacts on small cetaceans?⁴

Climate change will have a multiplicity of possible direct and indirect effects on small cetaceans. Attempting to quantify this is challenging, these questions are aimed to provide an overview of the type of monitoring programmes that are conducted that may provide indirect evidence of climate change on small cetaceans.

- No.** Go to Question 12.3.
 Yes. Continue to Question 12.2.

12.2. Which effects has your country been monitoring during the reporting period?

Overview of monitoring activities related to climate change effects on small cetaceans. Please add additional direct or indirect effects if applicable.

Monitoring activity	Comments (if possible, provide contact / link to project)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in small cetacean abundance	There is a standard program of density and distribution monitoring of harbour porpoises, not specifically with climate change effects in mind.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in small cetacean distribution	There is a standard program of density and distribution monitoring of harbour porpoises, not specifically with climate change effects in mind.

³ [CMS Resolution 12.21](#) on Climate Change and Migratory Species.

⁴ This refers to direct and indirect effects.

Monitoring activity	Comments (if possible, provide contact / link to project)
<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in small cetacean migration or movement range	
<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in small cetacean migration or movement timing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in small cetacean community structure	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in reproductive success and timing in small cetaceans	A monitoring programme of causes of death and ecological parameters of stranded marine mammals is in place, not specifically with climate change effects in mind.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in prey (fish) abundance and distribution	A monitoring programme is in place for fish (EC DCF, ICES), not specifically aimed at prey for small cetaceans.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in timing of prey (fish) spawning and migration	A monitoring programme is in place for fish (EC DCF, ICES), not specifically aimed at prey for small cetaceans.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in fishing effort	In the framework of ICES and EC DCF, fishing effort is monitored.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in the occurrence of pathogens (from sampled individuals)	A monitoring programme of causes of death, including the presence of pathogens, of stranded marine mammals is in place, not specifically with climate change effects in mind.
<input type="checkbox"/> Incidences of algal blooms (if yes, where; specify year)	There is no programme that routinely investigates algal blooms.
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):	

12.3. Relevant new research/ work/ collaborations which provide evidence/ data about climate change, including its emerging potential issues and effects, on small cetaceans in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information); include the species concerned, the climate change effect observed, who did the work)

12.4. Have there been any instances / issues related to identified trends in small cetacean populations as a result of climate change in your country during the reporting period?

No.

Yes. Please provide details:

12.5. Is the perceived level of pressure from climate change to small cetaceans in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

To be done per species basis where applicable.

Species	Increasing	Decreasing	Staying the same	Unknown	Nature of the evidence
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Not applicable. Comments: no information

C. Habitat Change and Degradation (incl. potential physical impacts)

13. Physical Habitat Change (e.g. from construction)

AIM: human activities in the Agreement Area have the potential to impact upon small cetaceans. Tracking those activities that cause physical habitat change and improving our understanding of their relative impacts will help shape any necessary mitigation action required.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.6, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, 6.2, 6.1, 5.7

This section aims to review new information on physical habitat change, e.g. from construction, and its impacts on small cetaceans, their prey and their habitat, and make recommendations to Parties and other relevant authorities for further action.

The collation of this information will contribute to the development of risk maps showing the spatial and temporal (by season) distribution of activities that have an impact on small cetaceans, including information provided in National Reports, taking into account the work done by other organizations.

Note: In the term “physical habitat change”, we include a) coastal/marine construction – artificial islands, harbours, bridges, oil/gas platforms, wind turbines, tidal turbines; and b) seabed damage – dredging, bottom trawling.

Questions:

13.1. Provide spatial information on locations (in form of maps and/or links) of physical habitat change in your country by activity type (dredging, marine construction, coastal construction) for the reporting period.

Many range states are mapping human activities to fulfil obligations under the EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, MSFD, OSPAR, and HELCOM; this information is relevant (though often not readily accessible) to ASCOBANS in understanding the extent and trends of human activities potentially impacting small cetaceans.

Region	Type of information (e.g. maps, GIS, reports)	Is the data available online?	Provide web link to data, or comment on unavailability
Oil Southern North Sea	Maps, GIS, reports	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	https://www.marineatlas.be/en/
Choose an item.		<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Choose an item.		<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	

13.2. Does your country have any reported cases of physical habitat change (e.g. dredging, marine construction, coastal construction) impacting small cetaceans during the reporting period?

No.

Yes. Please provide details:

During the reporting period, no specific habitat change took place (although dredging, sand extraction and dumping of dredge spoil continue as usual). There was no offshore construction, except for the construction of a mariculture farm (blue mussels), for which no information of an impact is available (yet). There was no construction of offshore wind farms, although we would like to point at the two publications below, containing information on the temporary unavailability or marine space for porpoises during construction activities:

Rumes, B. & Zupan, M., 2021. Effects of the use of noise mitigation during offshore pile driving on harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*). In: Degraer, S., Brabant, R., Rumes, B. & Vigin, L. (eds). 2021.

Environmental Impacts of Offshore Wind Farms in the Belgian Part of the North Sea: Attraction, avoidance and habitat use at various spatial scales. Memoirs on the Marine Environment. Brussels: Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, OD Natural Environment, Marine Ecology and Management, 104 pp.

https://odnature.naturalsciences.be/downloads/mumm/windfarms/winmon_report_2021_final.pdf

Rumes, B., De Pauw, L., Meys, J., Debusschere, E. & Baeterns, J., 2022. What drives harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) response to pile driving sound? In: Degraer, S., Brabant, R., Rumes, B. & Vigin, L. (eds). 2022. Environmental Impacts of Offshore Wind Farms in the Belgian Part of the North Sea: Getting ready for offshore wind farm expansion in the North Sea. Memoirs on the Marine Environment. Brussels: Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, OD Natural Environment, Marine Ecology and Management, 106 pp.

13.3. Does your country have any mitigation measures (regulations/guidelines) to prevent impacts on small cetaceans during physical habitat change activities (e.g. dredging, marine construction, coastal construction)?

No.

Yes. Please provide details below:

Overview of mitigation measures related to small cetaceans and physical habitat change activities.

Measure:	Use of sound mitigation and effect mitigation during offshore wind farm construction (but no construction activities took place in 2022).
Industry:	Offshore wind farm
Activity type:	Piling
Has the measure been effective?	<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. Comments: see 13.2.
Other information:	

Copy table if needed.

13.4. Relevant new initiatives/projects/publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) in your country during the reporting period on impacts from physical habitat change on small cetaceans (incl. title, organization, lead author).

Provide web links if available.
See 13.2.

13.5. Have there been any other instances/issues in your country regarding physical habitat change during the reporting period?

No.

Yes. Please provide details:

13.6. Is the perceived level of pressure from physical habitat change in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

To be done per species basis where applicable.

Species	Increasing	Decreasing	Staying the same	Unknown	Nature of the evidence
Choose an item.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing level of activities at sea with an effect on habitats (mariculture, laying of cables, offshore wind farms, ...)
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Not applicable. Comments:

C. Habitat Change and Degradation (incl. potential physical impacts)

14. Other issues

14.1. List any other issues related to habitat change and degradation not mentioned above.

E. Area-based Conservation / Marine Protected Areas

16. Protected areas, e.g. Natura 2000 sites

AIM: to provide information on existing and proposed marine protected areas with small cetaceans as part of the selection criteria.
Relevant Resolutions: 5.7

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are considered under numerous agreements (including the Convention on Biological Diversity, Habitats Directive, Bern Convention, Ramsar Convention, OSPAR Convention, HELCOM, ACCOBAMS, MSFD) as a tool to achieve conservation goals. Part of ASCOBANS remit is to provide expert advice on the conservation and management of small cetaceans. This includes inviting Parties and Range States to continue or initiate research aimed at locating areas of special importance to the survival (in particular breeding and feeding) of small cetaceans as suitable sites for the establishment of protected areas. This also includes advising on appropriate management measures in these areas, on their own or in the context of other intergovernmental bodies to ensure the protection of small cetaceans.

To monitor the progress of such work to fulfil the obligations of Resolution 5.7 and actions in the workplan, ASCOBANS requires information (e.g. location, species, status, spatial data, management plans and monitoring) on existing and proposed marine protected areas with small cetaceans as part of the selection criteria.

It is of particular interest to ASCOBANS to obtain an overview of the current scale of marine protected areas and to review best practice approaches to management of marine protected areas, in order to make recommendations to Parties.

Questions:**16.1. Does your country have MPAs (existing or proposed) where small cetaceans are the primary reason for the (proposed) designation?** **No.** **Yes.** Please provide details/updates in table below:

Name (full name of MPA)	ASCOBANS Action Plan	Region	Size (km ²)	Species	MPA status	Date of designation (if applicable)	Legislation/ directive (e.g. Habitats Directive)	Is there a site-specific management plan in place?	Link to shapefile and/or online map	Link to any other online information
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jastarnia Plan <input type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan <input type="checkbox"/> WBBK Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Common Dolphin SAP <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	Choose an item.		Choose an item. (Copy drop-down to add more species)	<input type="checkbox"/> Designated <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted <input type="checkbox"/> Under consultation <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	dd/mm/yy		<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Link:		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jastarnia Plan <input type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan <input type="checkbox"/> WBBK Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Common Dolphin SAP <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	Choose an item.		Choose an item. (Copy drop-down to add more species)	<input type="checkbox"/> Designated <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted <input type="checkbox"/> Under consultation <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	dd/mm/yy		<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Link:		

16.2. Does your country have MPAs (existing or proposed) with small cetaceans are forming part of the selection criteria? **No.** **Yes.** Please provide details/updates in table below:

Name (full name of MPA)	ASCOBANS Action Plan	Region	Size (km ²)	Species forming part of selection criteria	MPA status	Date of designation (if applicable)	Legislation / directive (e.g. Habitats Directive)	Is there a site-specific management plan in place?	Link to shapefile and/or online map	Link to any other online information
Vlaamse Banken	<input type="checkbox"/> Jastarnia Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan <input type="checkbox"/> WBBK Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Common Dolphin SAP <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	OII Southern North Sea	1000	HP Harbour porpoise (Copy drop-down to add more species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted <input type="checkbox"/> Under consultation <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	2016	Habitats Directive	<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. Link:	https://www.marineatlas.be/en/marine-spatial-plan	https://www.health.belgium.be/nl/beheerplannen-voor-natura-2000-het-belgische-deel-van-de-noordzee-2018-2023
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jastarnia Plan	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/> Designated <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted	dd/mm/yy		<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Link:		

	<input type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan <input type="checkbox"/> WBBK Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Common Dolphin SAP <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable			(Copy drop-down to add more species)	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consultation <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable					
--	---	--	--	--------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

16.3. Provide information on management measures, including regulations/guidelines, particularly relevant to small cetaceans in MPAs listed above. Including any temporal/spatial restriction of activities (i.e. seasonal fishery closures).

In order to monitor implementation of MPA management measures and make recommendations on best practice, we need to understand what management measures are being used and be aware of examples of what approaches are proving effective.

Site Name	Pressure (add pressures per site as applicable)	Measure (add measures per pressure per site as applicable)
Vlaamse Banken		Site not designated for small cetaceans and no specific measures

16.4. Provide details of existing or proposed monitoring schemes related to the effectiveness of MPAs / management measures listed above for small cetaceans.

No specific measures or monitoring scheme for the Natura 2000 site

16.5. Relevant new research/work/collaboration relating to MPAs in your country.

In order to plan future approaches for MPA management and monitoring we need to be aware of current gaps and emerging issues.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information; include the species concerned, who did the work)

Section VI: Information and Education

A. Education and outreach

AIM: to determine if there are gaps in the outreach and education activities and if additional material should be produced in your country or by the Secretariat (e.g. on certain themes, species, regions, languages, for certain target audiences).

Relevant Resolutions: 8.13, 8.3, 8.2, 5.8,

The revised ASCOBANS Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan (see [ASCOBANS/MOP9/Doc.5.3](#) Annex 1) was endorsed by the 9th Meeting of the Parties (2020). The purpose of the CEPA Plan is to identify realistic activities relevant to ASCOBANS and mandated by Parties, to be undertaken by the Secretariat, Parties, and relevant partners. It seeks a clearer focus amongst Secretariat, Parties, Partners, and stakeholders regarding objectives. (The previous CEPA Plan is available at AC17/Report/Annex10.) The purpose of this section is to highlight successes and to identify potential gaps in outreach and education activities and related materials.

Questions:

1.1. List education/outreach activities in the reporting period in your country, which are of relevance to conservation of small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area (e.g. activities during the International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise in May)

Organizer	Name of activity (incl. translation to English, where applicable)	Date(s)	Location	Target audience (general public, scientists, children, fishers; other – please state)	Links (for further information)
RBINS	Yearly report on marine mammals for the larger audience	2022		Wider public	www.marinemammals.be/reports

Organizer	Name of activity (incl. translation to English, where applicable)	Date(s)	Location	Target audience (general public, scientists, children, fishers; other – please state)	Links (for further information)

1.2. List current information/outreach materials produced in your country, which are of relevance to ASCOBANS Area and species.

Name of publication (incl. translation into English, where applicable)	Author(s)	Publisher	Year	Links (to download publication)	Can ASCOBANS distribute the link to publication for outreach purposes?
Strandingen en waarnemingen van zeezoogdieren in België in 2021 [Strandings and sightings of marine mammals in Belgium in 2021].	Haelters, J., Moreau, K., Team SeaLife, Jauniaux, T. & Kerckhof, F.	RBINS	2022	www.marinemammals.be/reports	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
Zeezoogdieren in België in 2022 [Marine mammals in Belgium in 2022].	Haelters, J., Moreau, K. & Kerckhof, F.	RBINS	2023	www.marinemammals.be/reports	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes

1.3. List other organizations engaged in outreach relevant to the ASCOBANS Area, incl. web links.

--

1.4. List other initiatives/work/collaboration relevant to the ASCOBANS Area that are not included above.

--

1.5. List any gaps in your country's outreach relevant to the ASCOBANS Area. What would be needed to fill these gaps?

--

1.6. Resources permitting, are there any materials that you think the ASCOBANS Secretariat should produce?

No.

Yes. Please describe what, and why:

--

Section VII: Other Matters

A. Other information or comments important for the Agreement:⁵

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B. Difficulties in implementing the Agreement:

Time constraints to participate to relevant meetings organised by ASCOBANS (AC and meetings on eg. the North Sea Plan or bycatch), also given that many issues are discussed in parallel at other fora.

C. Burning Issues:

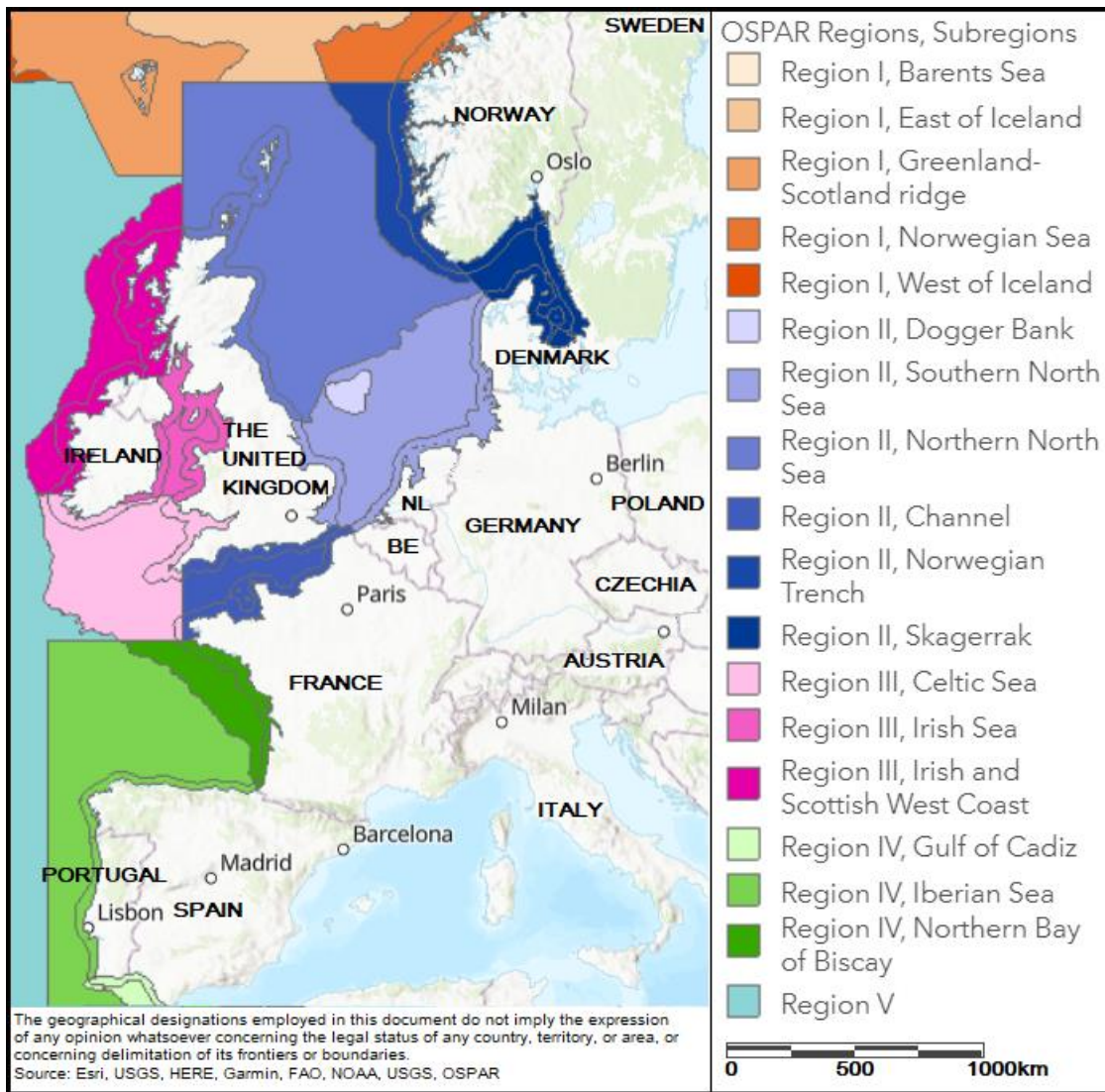
In the near future, new activities will take place, such as the construction of offshore Solar, new pipelines (CO ₂ , H ₂ ?) and new wind farms. New windfarms will likely have turbines of 12 to 20 MW, and it is as yet unclear which underwater noise levels will be reached during the construction of foundations.

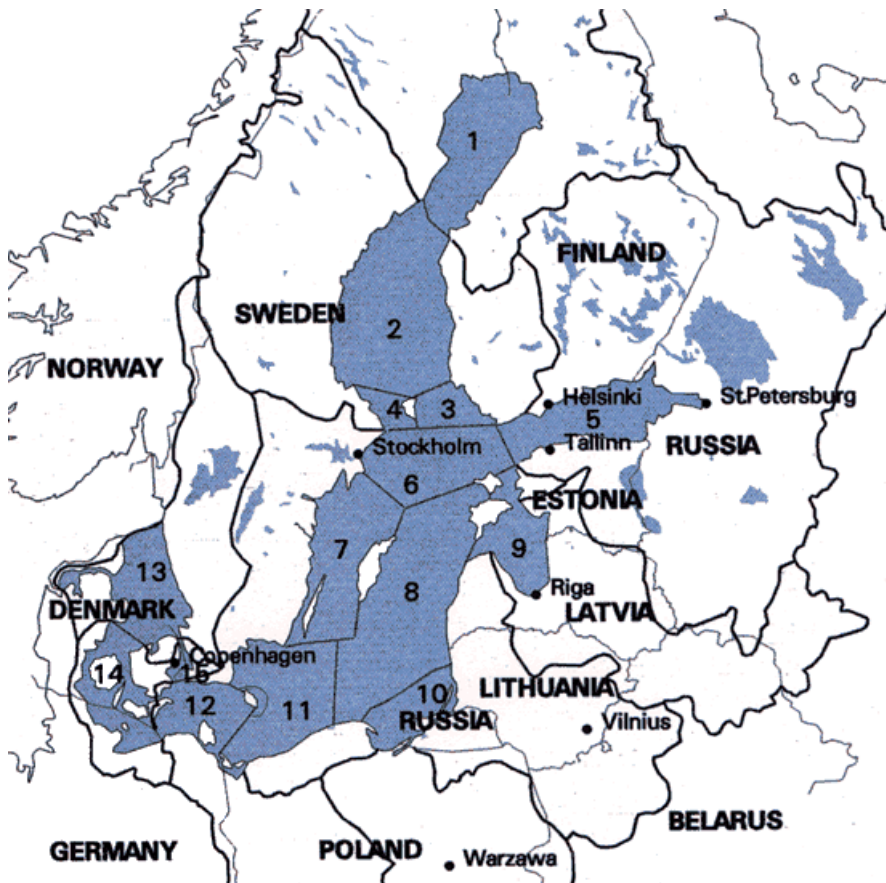
Annex A: Overview of the sub-regions as defined by OSPAR and HELCOM, and areas as defined by ICES.**Drop-down menu sub-regions OSPAR and HELCOM**

Choose an item.

<p>OSPAR Region I Arctic Waters</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Norwegian Sea</p> <p>OSPAR Region II Greater North Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dogger Bank</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Southern North Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Northern North Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Channel</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Norwegian Trench</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Skagerrak</p> <p>OSPAR Region III Celtic Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Celtic Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Irish Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Irish & Scottish W. Coast</p>	<p>OSPAR Region IV Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N. Bay of Biscay</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Iberian Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gulf of Cadiz</p> <p>OSPAR Region V Wider Atlantic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>HELCOM</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bothnian Bay</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bothnian Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Archipelago Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Åland Sea</p>	<p>HELCOM cont.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gulf of Finland</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Northern Baltic Proper</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Western Gotland Basin</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Gotland Basin</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gulf of Riga</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gdansk Basin</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bornholm Basin</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Arkona Basin</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Kattegat</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Belt Sea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The Sound</p>
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⁵ Opportunity to include other information relevant to the topics covered in this form but which are missing.





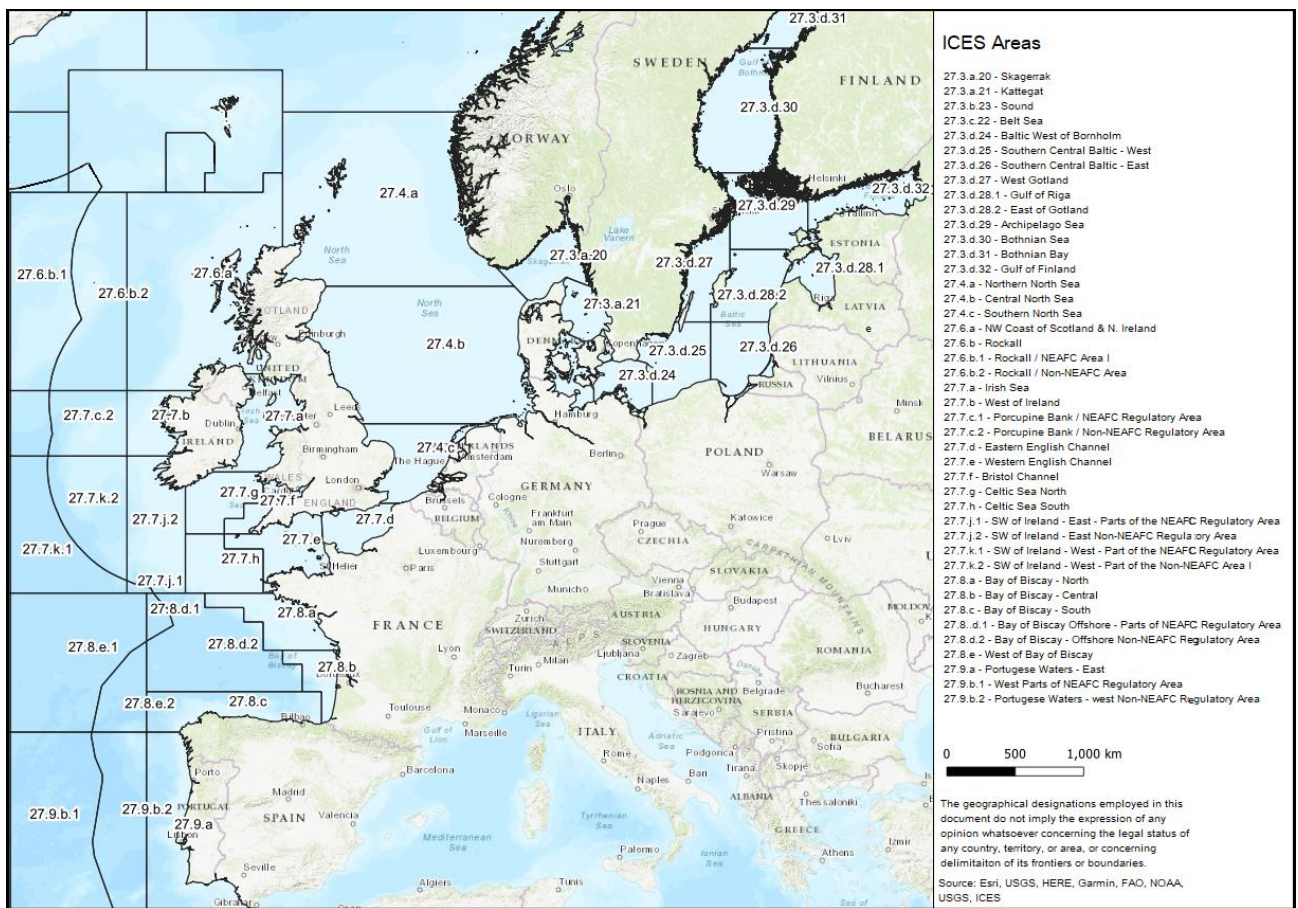
A map of the Baltic Sea drainage basins (catchment area), and marine subdivisions, including basins.

1. Bothnian Bay
2. Bothnian Sea
3. Archipelago Sea
4. Åland Sea
5. Gulf of Finland
6. Northern Baltic Proper
7. Western Gotland Basin
8. Eastern Gotland Basin
9. Gulf of Riga
10. Gdansk Basin
11. Bornholm Basin
12. Arkona Basin
13. Kattegat
14. Belt Sea
15. The Sound

Drop-down menu of ICES Areas

Choose an item.

Area	Area Description	Area	Area Description
27.3	Skagerrak, Kattegat, Sound, Belt and Baltic Seas	27.7.b	West of Ireland
27.3.a	Skagerrak and Kattegat	27.7.c	Porcupine Bank
27.3.a.20	Skagerrak	27.7.c.1	Porcupine Bank / NEAFC Reg. Area
27.3.a.21	Kattegat	27.7.c.2	Porcupine Bank / Non-NEAFC Reg. Area
27.3.b,c	Sound and Belt Sea	27.7.d	Eastern English Channel
27.3.b.23	Sound	27.7.e	Western English Channel
27.3.c.22	Belt Sea	27.7.f	Bristol Channel
27.3.d	Baltic Sea	27.7.g	Celtic North Sea
27.3.d.24	Baltic West of Bornholm	27.7.h	Celtic Sea South
27.3.d.25	Southern Central Baltic – West	27.7.j	SW of Ireland – East
27.3.d.26	Southern Central Baltic – East	27.7.j.1	SW of Ireland – East – Parts of the NEAFC Reg. Area
27.3.d.27	West of Gotland	27.7.j.2	SW of Ireland – East – Non-NEAFC Reg. Area
27.3.d.28.1	Gulf of Riga	27.7.k	SW of Ireland - West
27.3.d.28.2	East of Gotland	27.7.k.1	SW of Ireland – West – Part of the NEAFC Reg. Area
27.3.d.29	Archipelago Sea	27.7.k.2	SW of Ireland – West – Part of the Non-NEAFC Area I
27.3.d.30	Bothnian Sea	27.8	Bay of Biscay
27.3.d.31	Bothnian Bay	27.8.a	Bay of Biscay North
27.3.d.32	Bay of Finland	27.8.b	Bay of Biscay Central
27.4	North Sea	27.8.c	Bay of Biscay South
27.4.a	Northern North Sea	27.8.d	Bay of Biscay Offshore
27.4.b	Central North Sea	27.8.d.1	Bay of Biscay Offshore – Part of the NEAFC Reg. Area
27.4.c	Southern North Sea	27.8.d.2	Bay of Biscay Offshore – Non-NEAFC Reg. Area
27.6	Rockall, NW Coast of Scotland and N. Ireland	27.8.e	Wet of Bay of Biscay
27.6.a	NW Coast of Scotland and N. Ireland	27.9	Portuguese Waters
27.6.b	Rockall	27.9.a	Portuguese Waters – East
27.6.b.1	Rockall / NEAFC Reg. Area I	27.9.b	Portuguese Water - West
27.6.b.2	Rockall / Non-NEAFC Reg. Area	27.9.b.1	Portuguese waters – West Part of the NEAFC Reg. Area
27.7	Irish Sea, West of Ireland, Porcupine Bank, Eastern and Western English Channel, Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea North and South, and Southwest of Ireland – East and West	27.9.b.2	Portuguese waters – Non-NEAFC Reg. Area
27.7.a	Irish Sea		



Annex B: Species covered by ASCOBANS

Code	Common name	Scientific name
AWSD	Atlantic white-sided dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus acutus</i>
BBW	Blainville's beaked whale	<i>Mesoplodon densirostris</i>
BD	Bottlenose dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>
CBW	Cuvier's beaked whale	<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>
CD	Short-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>
FKW	False killer whale	<i>Pseudorca crassidens</i>
GBW	Gervais' beaked whale	<i>Mesoplodon europaeus</i>
HP	Harbour Porpoise	<i>Phocoena</i>
KW	Killer Whale	<i>Orcinus orca</i>
LFPW	Long-finned pilot whale	<i>Globicephala melas</i>
NBW	Northern bottlenose whale	<i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>
PKW	Pygmy killer whale	<i>Feresa attenuata</i>
PSW	Pygmy sperm whale	<i>Kogia breviceps</i>
RD	Risso's dolphin	<i>Grampus griseus</i>
RTD	Rough-toothed dolphin	<i>Steno bredanensis</i>
SBW	Sowerby's beaked whale	<i>Mesoplodon bidens</i>
SD	Striped dolphin	<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>
SFPW	Short-finned pilot whale	<i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>
TBW	True's beaked whale	<i>Mesoplodon mirus</i>
WBD	White-beaked dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>

Drop down menu small cetacean species:

Choose an item.