

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE
2ND MEETING OF THE ASCOBANS COMMON DOLPHIN GROUP (CDG)**

(Adopted by the 27th Meeting of the Advisory Committee)

1. For reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, it is recommended that a transboundary assessment should be undertaken by Member States in conjunction with third countries; an assessment that could be undertaken by the ASCOBANS CDG and consider marine mammal common indicators developed by OSPAR.
2. The CDG endorses ICES advice on Emergency Measures for the Common Dolphin in the North-east Atlantic, subject to minor amendments to reflect ASCOBANS conservation objective *'to allow populations to recover to and/or maintain 80% of carrying capacity in the long term'*.
3. While emergency short-term measures are imperative to reduce bycatch of Common Dolphins in the North-east Atlantic, a strategic long-term population level plan is recommended to ensure the favourable conservation status of this European protected species in the long term. The strategic bycatch reduction plan, detailing monitoring and mitigation requirements, could be co-developed by the ASCOBANS CDG in association with other stakeholders, including Advisory Councils and the fishing industry.
4. Parties are encouraged to continue to review and test a range of mitigation options to reduce bycatch of Common Dolphins, including acoustic deterrents, gear modifications, fishing practices, time-area closures, move-on procedure etc., mitigation measures that could be implemented at the fleet level.
5. Parties are encouraged to conduct further analysis towards fine-scale risk-mapping to better understand factors determining high bycatch and to direct resources to high-risk areas and times.
6. Parties are encouraged to consider the geographic coverage of largescale transboundary surveys, such as SCANS, as it is crucial to cover as much range of the North-east Atlantic population as possible, to assess population shifts resulting from environmental change.
7. Parties are recommended that North-east Atlantic-wide information on life history parameters be collected and analysed from strandings and bycaught animals to assess for evidence of temporal changes in those parameters that may have resulted from anthropogenic activities.
8. Parties are recommended to undertake a review of aerial survey monitoring techniques to better discriminate small delphinid species to ensure explicit estimates of population size and uncertainty.
9. The Steering Group should identify the added value of its scientific advice compared to the other scientific fora, in order to avoid duplication of effort.
10. Letters of invitation to be sent from the Secretariat to request Non-Party Range States' participation in implementation of the SAP on Common Dolphins.
11. SAP Range States to complete the 'Achievements Table' by end of the year to identify data gaps, as well as actions and funding that are required going forward. The Steering Group should then set priorities for each country. Gaps to be potentially addressed by the CetAMBICion EMFF project led by Spain and any relevant national projects.