

Terms of Reference for the Steering Group for the ASCOBANS Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises (“Jastarnia Group”)

1. Introduction

The need for a Baltic harbour porpoise recovery plan was recognised for a considerable time not only by ASCOBANS, but also by other international bodies. In 2002, a recovery plan was elaborated under the auspices of ASCOBANS in a collaborative effort involving scientists, managers and stakeholders. This recovery plan is the culmination of a series of scientific initiatives and meetings. The Recovery Plan, now known as the Jastarnia Plan, was welcomed by the 4th Meeting of the parties to ASCOBANS in Esbjerg, Denmark, in 2003. It calls for periodic reviews of the plan. The present revised plan is the result of the first such review.

Since 2005, annual meetings of the so-called Jastarnia Group have been held. This expert working group, composed of representatives from the environment and fisheries sectors of the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea, discusses progress made and further implementation priorities for the Jastarnia Plan and makes recommendations to the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee.

In the process of reviewing the Jastarnia Plan, it was agreed that the Jastarnia Group should continue its work and act as a Steering Group for the Jastarnia Process, in accordance with the Terms of Reference below.

2. Terms of Reference

The Jastarnia Group is a working group of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee within the meaning of Article 5.4 of the ASCOBANS Agreement. It is the Steering Group for the ASCOBANS Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises.

a) Tasks

The Jastarnia Group has the following tasks:

- Evaluate progress in the implementation of the Plan;
- Establish further implementation priorities;
- Promote the implementation of the Recovery Plan;
- Carry out the periodic reviews of the Plan.

b) Composition

The Group consists of representatives of all states bordering the Baltic Sea (“Baltic Sea States”), irrespective of their status as ASCOBANS Parties or Non-Party Range States, of the North Sea Coordinator, respectively the Chair of the North Sea Group, as well as Baltic Sea environmental non-governmental organisations and Baltic Sea fisheries organisations (hereinafter referred to as “Jastarnia Group Members”). Each Baltic Sea State shall be entitled to appoint two Jastarnia Group Members, one of whom shall represent the environmental sector, the other the fisheries sector and such Advisers as the Party may deem necessary.

Two Baltic Sea environmental non-governmental organizations and two Baltic Sea fisheries organizations designated by and representing the Baltic Sea environmental, respectively fisheries communities, shall be entitled to appoint one Jastarnia Group Member each and such Advisers as they may deem necessary. The participation of environmental NGOs and Baltic Sea fisheries organizations is subject to approval by the Baltic Sea Parties prior to each meeting of the Jastarnia Group. In the event that the Chairperson of the Group is a representative of an NGO or a fisheries organization, this organization shall be granted a permanent seat in the group for the duration of that representative's term as chairperson.

The Jastarnia Group may, as appropriate, invite representatives of any other body or any individual qualified in cetacean conservation and management to participate in a meeting in the capacity of "Invited Experts".

c) Meetings

The Jastarnia Group meets at least once annually.

d) Rules of Procedure

Pursuant to Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee, those Rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of the Jastarnia Group insofar as they are applicable.