

2023 ASCOBANS National Report

1 January – 31 December 2023

As outlined in ASCOBANS [Resolution 8.1 \(Rev.MOP9\)](#) *National Reporting*, this form will cover the year 2023 (Year 4), and all the topics included in the Annex to the Resolution:

- High-level Summary of Key Messages
- Section I: General Information
- Section II: Habitat Conservation and Management (threats and pressures on cetaceans)
- Section III: Surveys and Research
- Section IV: Use of Strandings Records
- Section V: Legislation
- Section VI: Information and Education
- Section VII: Other Matters

The National Reports submitted will inform discussions at the 10th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS (10-12 September 2024).

- All questions apply to the **reporting period from 1 January to 31 December 2023**.
- 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 2024**.

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 2023 (Year 4), what does this report reveal about:

- 1. The most successful aspects of implementation of the Agreement?** (list up to five items)
 - Continuation and formalisation (e.g. WOT - statutory research tasks) of monitoring tasks on abundance (including SCANS), post mortem examinations and contaminants
 - Adoption and start of the EU LIFE project (CIBBRiNA) with multiple stakeholders and parties to assess bycatch of cetaceans in the North Sea
 - Start of a pilot to investigate the potential to tag porpoises for determining habitat use in the southern North Sea
 - Evaluation Updated Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise in the Netherlands (sent to the Dutch House of Representatives on 11th of April 2024)
- 2. The greatest challenges in implementing the Agreement?** (list up to five items)
 - Data sharing barriers
 - Too many technical outputs and too few communicable key messages for policy makers
 - Willingness of fishers to collaborate and share data
- 3. The main priorities for future implementation of the Agreement?** (list up to five items)
 - Expanding national stranding database and harmonising international strandings databases based on work progressing in ICES
 - Collaborating on bycatch work, among others within CIBBRiNA
 - Determining habitat use of harbour porpoise (and other species) in the southern North Sea

Section I: General Information

A. Country Information

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

2. Details of the Report Compiler

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 No Yes

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Copy box if needed.

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<p>Topic(s) contributed to: all Name: Janneke Ransijn Function: Marine mammal researcher Organization: Wageningen Marine Research</p>
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<p>Topic(s) contributed to: Bycatch Name: Katinka Bleeker & Harriet van Overzee Function: Marine researcher Organization: Wageningen Marine Research</p>
<p>Topic(s) contributed to: Education and Outreach, Surveys Name: Frank Zanderink Function: Director Organization: Stichting Rugvin</p>
<p>Topic(s) contributed to: Underwater noise Name: Xander Campman Function: Principal Science Expert Organization: Shell Global Solutions International</p>
<p>Topic(s) contributed to: Strandings, Education and Outreach Name: Lonneke IJsseldijk Function: Researcher Organization: Department of Pathobiology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht University</p>
<p>Topic(s) contributed to: Contaminants Name: Martine v d Heuvel-Greve Function: Scientist and coordinator Arctic R&D Organization: Wageningen Marine Research Topic(s) contributed to: Education and Outreach Name: Nathalie Houtman Function: Advisor Marine Species & Fisheries Organization: World Wide Fund for Nature</p>
<p>Topic(s) contributed to: Education and Outreach Name: Sanne Hessing Function: Conservation officer Organization: Stichting SOS Dolfijn</p>
<p>Topic(s) contributed to: Microplastics Name: Elisa Bravo Rebolledo Function: Organization: Waardenburg Ecology</p>

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

A. Fisheries-related Threats

1. Bycatch

AIM: to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating bycatch of small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 9.2, **8.5 (Rev.MOP9)**, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.8, 5.7, **5.5, 3.3**

Bycatch, the entanglement of an animal in fishing gear, is identified as a major cause of mortality in small cetaceans. Every effort should be made to reduce bycatch towards zero as quickly as possible. Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed on a number of resolutions that highlight the importance of mitigating bycatch of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area, as available data indicates that levels of bycatch pose a considerable threat to their conservation status. Parties have agreed that modifications of fishing gear and relevant practices shall be applied in order to reduce negative impacts where data indicates unacceptable interaction. The Agreement Area requires improved monitoring, collation of data, and consideration of appropriate mitigation measures, while also taking into account similar work in other areas.

To better understand the extent of the impact of bycatch on small cetaceans, monitoring and mitigation measures in place, and ongoing work in the Agreement Area, countries are requested to provide relevant information.

Note: This section includes bycatch in recreational fisheries.

Questions:

1.1. How is bycatch assessed/monitored in your country?

Method	Used	Percentage (% by monitoring method, of total bycaught animals, by gear type if applicable)
Dedicated observer schemes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fisheries observes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0/9 observer trips onboard NLD flagged active demersal trawlers 0/7 observer trips onboard NLD flagged pelagic freezer trawlers 0/7 observer trips onboard NLD flagged passive demersal vessels
Remote Electronic Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Self-reporting by fishermen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unkown
Pathological investigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(10/47 = 21.3%)
Assessment at stranding site	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Comments:

It is not completely clear how percentages need to be calculated. It is very difficult to determine the % of the different methods used as they are not all quantifiable.

The dedicated fisheries observer schemes monitor cetacean by-catch events in demersal active, demersal passive and pelagic fisheries. However, due to the relative low coverage these schemes do not provide robust estimates of cetacean by-catch in Dutch waters.

Self-reporting by fishermen is occurring, however it is difficult to know to what degree.

Pathological investigation of stranded harbour porpoises (and at times other small cetaceans) is conducted for about 50 animals per year. Bycatch is one of the causes of deaths that is registered.

Additional information on numbers given:

10 individuals out of the 47 necropsied in 2023 were likely bycaught

None of the observer trips reported any by-catch events of cetaceans. However, coverage is low and total effort is currently not quantified for 2023. To put fisheries observers numbers into perspective we report sampling numbers below. Beware these are for 2022. Effort is reported as days at sea (D.A.S.) for 2022 as reported to ICES WGBYC. Due to the structure of the WGBYC data call, the "No. of trips" are counted twice when covering multiple ICES areas. Therefore "Nr trips sampling" for pelagic seems much higher than in 2023, but this is not the case.

	D.A.S fleet	Nr trips fleet	D.A.S. sampling	Nr trips sampling	% D.A.S. coverage	% trips coverage
Active demersal fisheries *	10636	2704	34	12	0.3	0.4
Passive demersal fisheries **	184	156	6	6	3.2	3.8
Pelagic fisheries ***	10934	146	169	28	1.5	18.4

* The sampling effort (only selected observation method=Scientific Observers) is restricted to: L3TB, gear TBB, tsp DEF, areas 27.4.b and 27.4.c. This selection was therefore also applied on fleet effort.

** The sampling effort is restricted to: GNS and DEF, FYK and CRU, area 27.4.c. This selection was therefore also applied on fleet effort.

*** The sampling effort is restricted to: L3PT, gear OTM, tsp SPF, areas 27.4.a, 27.4.b, 27.6.a, 27.7.c.2, 27.7.d, 27.7.e, 27.7.f, 27.7.g, 27.7.j.3, 27.8.a, 27.8.d.2 This selection was therefore also applied on fleet effort.

1.2. Which species of small cetaceans were recorded as bycatch by commercial fishing in the reporting period?

Overview of bycaught small cetaceans per region. Provide information where available.

Species	Number of bycaught animals observed	Year (incl. season if available)	Gear type	Area	Overall sampling effort	Monitoring method used
HP Harbour porpoise	10	2023	UNKNOWN	27.4.c	47	Pathological investigation
CD Short-beaked Common dolphin	1	2023	UNKNOWN	27.4.c	1	Pathological investigation

1.3. Which species of small cetaceans were recorded as bycatch by recreational fishing in the reporting period?

Overview of bycaught small cetaceans per region. Provide information where available.

Species	Number of bycaught animals observed	Year (incl. season if available)	Gear type	Area	Overall sampling effort	Monitoring method used
Choose an item.				Choose an item.		
Choose an item.				Choose an item.		

1.4. Has there been any notable incidents/issues related to bycatch during the reporting period in your country?

No.

Yes. Please provide details:

(Mass bycatch incidents, unusual species bycatch etc.)

1.5. Are there any mitigation measures in place?

No.

Yes. Please provide details: What mitigation measures (including alternative gear) are being used and where? (Acoustic deterrent devices, seasonal closures, gear modifications etc.)

Mitigation approach	Region	Year implemented	Has the mitigation measure been effective?
Pingers in bottom-set gillnets (voluntary)	Oil Southern North Sea		<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Comments: this measure is voluntary and not monitored

Certain N2000 sites have time area closures and mandatory use of pingers	Oil Southern North Sea		<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Comments: Not investigated unknown.
	Choose an item.		<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Comments:

1.6. Have there been changes in fishing effort (for fisheries known to have an impact) in the reporting period?

- No.
 Unknown/not applicable. Comments:
 Yes. Please provide details:

Gillnets have stabilised around ~ 6 vessels since 2022.

The EU Pulse fishing ban come into effect in 2021.

In the last 10 years the Dutch fishing fleet has declined in size to 553 fishing vessels in 2023. This decrease in size is due to a combination of factors (e.g. high fuel prices, poor catch rates, loss of fishing grounds (e.g. caused by OWF development, Brexit and resistance in Danish and Norwegian waters)).

1.7. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on bycatch 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.

The European project "LIFE CIBBRiNA" that aims to address the most urgent bycatch issues for cetaceans and other ETP species in the North Sea started in 2023. It is led by the Netherlands (LNV) and includes a consortium of 35 beneficiary partners, 10 associated partners, 30 organisations in the Stakeholder Advisory Board and numerous smaller organisations from 13 countries.

1.8. Is the perceived level of pressure from bycatch in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable.

Species	Increasing	Decreasing	Staying the same	Unknown	Nature of the evidence (e.g. strandings, observer schemes)
HP Harbour porpoise	<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:

A. Fisheries-related Threats

2. Resource Depletion

AIM: to determine areas where, and to what extent, depletion of fish stocks have occurred during the reporting period. In addition, identify ongoing mitigation efforts regarding detrimental implications for small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 8.3, 7.1, 6.1

Depletion in fish stocks due to overfishing and other factors generates pressure on the favourable conservation status of small cetaceans (through possible food shortage). More integrated management and reductions in fishing effort (also prompted by concern about fish stock depletion or other ecosystem considerations) have been encouraged, especially in areas of known risk. Further research, effective fishery regulations and innovation within certain fishing methods are considered to be helpful steps towards mitigating this pressure.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed on a number of resolutions that (1) determine the impact of the depletion of fish stocks on small cetaceans, (2) encourage fishing effort reductions and (3) review new information on

these depletions to make recommendations. Resource depletion in the Agreement Area requires improved monitoring, collation of data, and consideration of appropriate mitigation measures, while also taking into account similar work in other areas.

It is of particular interest to ASCOBANS to understand the extent of prey depletions, any related ongoing work, monitoring and mitigation measures in the Agreement Area. Countries are requested to provide relevant information.

Questions:

2.1. Based on the latest stock assessments, are there any notable depletions of fish species which would be a concern for small cetaceans?

No.

Yes.

Please provide details.

Despite further signs of recovery in some fish stocks, the latest OSPAR assessment indicates that the OSPAR targets of achieving 80% of stocks/species in good status were not reached for coastal, demersal or pelagic fish in the Greater North Sea. Therefore, the population status of marine fish in the Greater North Sea is *not in good environmental status* with a medium level of confidence. The highest amount of failed threshold was for coastal fish species compared to demersal and pelagic species.

Information on prey species stock assessments that are potentially directly relevant as targeted prey by harbour porpoises are listed below.

- Whiting achieved (whg.27.47d) **failed (whg.27.7b-ce-k)** unknown (whg.27.3a)
- Atlantic cod **failed (cod.27.47d20, cod.27.7e-k)** unknown (cod.27.21)
- Sandeels achieved (san.sa.3r, san.sa.4) **failed (san.sa.1r, san.sa.2r)** unknown (san.sa.5r, san.sa.6, san.sa.7r)
- Atlantic herring achieved (her.27.1-24a514a, her.27.3a47d) **failed (her.27.20-24)**
- European sprat achieved (spr.27.3a4, spr.27.7de)

Reference:

OSPAR, 2023. *Fish Thematic Assessment*. In: OSPAR, 2023: Quality Status Report 2023. OSPAR Commission, London. Available at: <https://oap.ospar.org/en/ospar-assessments/quality-status-reports/qsr-2023/thematic-assessments/fish/>

2.2. Where are these depletions in national waters occurring?

Sub-areas/regions as defined by ICES/OSPAR & HELCOM.

Area	Region
27.7.b	Choose an item.
27.7.e	Choose an item.
27.7.d	Choose an item.

2.3. What measures are being taken to manage pressures on depleted fish stocks, including relevant regulations/guidelines (current / planned / year of implementation)?

Measure	Timeframe information	Relevant driver

2.4. Is there any evidence within your country's national waters that resource depletion may be impacting small cetaceans (e.g. evidence of starvation)?

No.

Yes.

Please provide details.

Starvation is a cause of death that has been found for harbour porpoises that have stranded, in particular juvenile animals. However, it is not known if the cause of the malnutrition is linked to resource depletion.

2.5. Are there any national efforts to evaluate cetacean body condition at sea (e.g. surveys)? **No.** **Yes.**

Please provide details.

Necropsies are conducted of approximately 50 fresh harbour porpoises per year that have stranded along the Dutch coast. Body condition is determined for them.**2.6. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on resource depletion 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

2.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from resource depletion in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable.

Species	Increasing	Decreasing	Staying the same	Unknown	Nature of the evidence
HP Harbour porpoise	<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:**Unknown****B. Disturbance (incl. potential physical impacts)****3. Noise (impulsive i.e. piling and continuous/ambient i.e. shipping)****AIM:** to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating negative effects on small cetaceans from underwater noise during the reporting period.**Relevant Resolutions:** 9.2, 9.1, **8.11 (Rev.MOP9)**, 8.9, 8.6, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, **6.2, 6.1**

Small cetaceans are especially susceptible to underwater noise due to their high responsiveness to sound and wide hearing range. Good environmental status, as defined by the European Union, suggests that the introduction of energy, including underwater noise, is at levels that do not adversely affect the marine environment. Anthropogenic noise pollution has generally increased in recent times and generates a broad range of frequencies due to a wide variety of human activities. Impulsive and continuous noise present different impacts on small cetaceans, which include communicative masking, behavioural response and physiological injury. Noise in marine environments potentially impedes communication, affects distribution and hence feeding and reproduction of small cetaceans. Studies show that not only cetaceans but also fish and other marine life may be negatively impacted by anthropogenic noise.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed on implementation of measures through a number of resolutions that (1) highlight the potential impact that noise pollution may have on small cetaceans in the Agreement Area and (2) commit to reduce the pressure presented by underwater noise. The Agreement Area requires improved monitoring, collation of data, and consideration of appropriate mitigation measures.

To better understand the extent to which noise negatively impacts the health of small cetaceans, and to learn about new work relevant to the topic, countries are requested to provide related information.

Questions:**3.1. To which noise registers/databases has your country contributed to date?**

ICES Impulsive Noise Register (for HELCOM and OSPAR Parties)	National registry	Other
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable Data on piling, seismic surveys, sonar, UXO detonation Ambient noise measurements are uploaded to the ICES database for continuous noise.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable Specify (e.g. JNCC noise registry): Data on Unexploded Ordnance are collected by the Dutch Navy and shared with the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Specify:

3.2. Any instances/issues in the reporting period including information on planned or completed significant developments/activities, including the details of monitoring in place before, during and after the project:

Development/ Individual Activity of impulsive noise (e.g. construction, seismic, sonar)	Status	Environmenta l Impact Assessment (EIA)	Strategic Environmenta l Assessment (SEA)	Information on noise management and monitoring			Region
				Regulations / guidelines exist	Monitorin g conducted	Mitigatio n in place	
Construction offshore wind park	Not Applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes.	<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Weblinks:	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Oil Southern North Sea
Ocean-bottom-node seismic survey (20 Sept - 2022 22 Mar - 2023 (Intermittent))	Complete	<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. Weblinks:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Weblinks:	Yes	Yes	Yes	Oil Southern North Sea
UXO detonation	Not Applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Weblinks:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Weblinks:	Yes	No	No	Choose an item.

3.3. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on underwater noise in your country.

Ongoing programme: Wozep (wind at sea ecological programme). Ongoing projects: Jomopans (Interreg), DEMASK (Interreg), Saturn (Horizon2020), APELAFICO (NOW)

A source test was conducted ahead of the ocean-bottom-mode seismic survey to evaluate and compare 1) The depth- and frequency dependent Signal-to-Noise ratio of the subsurface image acquired with progressively smaller sources, and a novel low-impact source and 2) to evaluate and compare the output of those sources as measured by three underwater broadband hydrophones. The test was commissioned, developed and agreed with the North Sea Accord, a Dutch consultative body with representation from the energy industry, governmental and non-governmental environmental organizations, and other users of the North Sea. The results have been reviewed by TNO and were presented at the North Sea Accord, IOGP Sound & Marine Life JIP, EAGE and at various companies (Equinor, Shearwater). A publication of the results is in preparation.

3.4. Report on noise management for cumulative impacts, including relevant regulations and guidelines, seismic shot point densities and level of impact deemed acceptable.

- While the source test results could not be applied in the main of the ocean-bottom-mode seismic survey, the source array designed for the survey already had a slightly smaller volume than the legacy survey, but had significantly less individual elements in the array (6 in the production array vs 18 in the legacy array). This led to a reduction of high-frequency noise by about 8 dB at 50 Hz and 6 dB > 100 Hz. This was implemented to reduce the overall / cumulative impact of the survey.
- Applicable regulation: Dutch Nature Conservation Law article 3.5.2 & article 3.10.1 sub b. An exemption from the deliberate disturbance of harbour porpoises was requested and granted on 20 April 2022
- Conditions were formulated in the decision letter and worked into a 'Ecological Work Protocol' which was prepared in consultation with the MMO's/PAMO's.
- Seismic shot-point density was ~400 shots / km² or ~1 shot / 6 s . 750000 shots were allowed in the permit. 400000 shots were planned. The survey could not be acquired in the summer season

as agreed in the North Sea Accord (because of the higher porpoise density (and higher vulnerability) during that period). As a result, the acquisition started just before the autumn started. Due to operations through the autumn and winter months – with storms and high swell – , there were very significant operational challenges which led to re-acquisition of various patches, increasing the number of acquired shots to ~700000 versus 400000 planned.

- There does not seem to be a general guideline on what level of impact is acceptable – it should not reduce the population by more than 5%. This is based on sound model calculations and assumptions on population densities.

3.5. Is the perceived level of pressure from underwater noise 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
HP Harbour porpoise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Increased construction of wind farms, causing piling activities and increased UXO clearances
HP Harbour porpoise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Continuous noise due to shipping
Choose an item.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Not applicable. Comments:

B. Disturbance (incl. potential physical impacts)

4. Ocean Energy

AIM: to understand the extent and development of current and planned ocean energy projects, and progress in monitoring and mitigation of their negative effects on small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, **8.6**, 8.3, 6.2

Renewable energy is a necessary component of the efforts to supply the energy needs of human populations while combatting climate change. Efforts to harness renewable energy sources, however, should be conducted in a way that does not have a harmful impact on biological diversity and the marine environment. There are potential adverse effects of ocean energy on small cetaceans from such energy projects. In regard to small cetaceans, this can include potential lethal interactions or injury, negative behavioural impacts from displacement and changes in fecundity, calf survival and juvenile and adult mortality. There remains uncertainty regarding quantifying the (magnitude of the) pressure from ocean energy production on small cetaceans.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed to introduce precautionary measures and procedures for activities surrounding the development of renewable energy in marine environments in order to minimise and mitigate possible effects on small cetaceans, by following best practices. Parties have committed to investigating such pressures and robustly monitoring and mitigating them through environmental impact assessments. Addressing all aspects relevant to the conservation of protected species in regard to ocean energy and collaboration with other organizations working on or potentially interested in the issue is to the benefit of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area.

It is of particular interest to ASCOBANS to understand current and ongoing renewable energy projects in the Agreement Area, mitigation measures and procedures in use and other work relevant to the topic. Countries are requested to provide information relevant to their activities.

Questions:

4.1. Please enter **NEW** wind energy farm data into the table below.

Name of wind farm	Operational date (or foreseen grid connection date)	Area	Output (megawatts per turbine)	Number of turbines	How were the individual wind turbines installed in the seabed?	Was scour protection used?	Noise mitigation during construction used? (multiple ticks possible)	If the wind farm is floating, how was it anchored?	Other mitigation used in pre-/post-construction	Additional information
Hollandse Kust Zuid I-IV	dd/mm/2023	27.4.c	11 MW	139	Pile-driving	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Single bubble curtains <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Double bubble curtains <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acoustic deterrent devices <input type="checkbox"/> Time/area closures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: Soft start	N.A.		
Hollandse Kust Noord, Kavel V	dd/mm/2023	27.4.c	11 MW	69	Pile-driving	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Single bubble curtains <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Double bubble curtains <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acoustic deterrent devices <input type="checkbox"/> Time/area closures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: Soft start	N.A.	Start/stop-project: stopping turbines during bat or bird migration https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/functies-gebruik/windenergie/start-stop/ (since 2023)	

4.2. Please enter **NEW** wave power installation data into the table below.

Name of installation	Operational date (or foreseen grid connection date)	Area	Output (megawatts per turbine)	Number of turbines	How is the installation anchored?	Was scour protection used?	Mitigation used in pre-/during/post-construction	Additional information
	dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.				Choose an item.		
	Dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.				Choose an item.		

4.3. Please enter **NEW** tidal energy installation data into the table below.

Name of installation	Operational date (or foreseen grid connection date)	Area	Output (megawatts per turbine)	Number of turbines	Type	Collision mitigation	Other mitigation used in pre-/during/post-construction	Additional information
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	dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.		
	Dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.		

4.4. Please enter **NEW** tidal lagoon/barrage installation data into the table below.

Name of installation	Operational date (or foreseen grid connection date)	Area	Output (megawatts per turbine)	Number of turbines	Type	Collision mitigation	Other mitigation used in pre-/during/post-construction	Additional information
	dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.		

4.5. Has there been any other instances/issues related to ocean energy during the reporting period in your country? **No.** **Yes.**

Please provide details:

4.6. How is the pressure managed, incl. relevant regulations / guidelines and the year of implementation (current and planned)?

Windpark development is regulated by Dutch law (<https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0036752/2017-01-01> in Dutch). General information at: <https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/en/functions-and-use/offshore-wind-energy/>

To manage the pressure, specific sound level criteria need to be met during construction. These are regularly reviewed. For the construction of Hollandse Kust Noord Kavel V and Hollandse Kust Zuid. measures to limit or monitor the introduction of impulsive sound included a maximum sound level during piling of SEL @ 750m: 163-172 dB re $\mu\text{Pa}^2\text{s}$ were obligated. Noise was to be monitored continuously and mitigated if the criteria were exceeded.

The Netherlands has developed the 'Framework for Assessing Ecological and Cumulative effects' (KEC). Sound Exposure Level (SEL) threshold value at 750 metre from the source for piling has been set for the construction of all offshore wind farms on the Dutch Continental Shelf. This threshold will remain subject to review as new information becomes available. In addition to the noise threshold, mitigation measures (Acoustic Deterrent Device (ADD), soft start) have to be used to encourage harbour porpoises to move away in order to reduce the risk of hearing damage (Permanent Threshold Shift (PTS)). More information can be found in the Updated Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise *Phocoena phocoena* in the Netherlands, available at:

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/rapporten/2020/11/16/updated-conservation-plan-for-the-harbour-porpoise-phocoena-phocoenain-the-netherlands/bijlage-updated-conservation-plan-for-the-harbour-porpoise-phocoena-phocoenain-the-netherlands.pdf>

Start/Stop-procedure first used in 2023: In the autumn of 2023, the wind turbines of the Borssele wind energy area were virtually shut down for three nights because a large bird migration across the North Sea was predicted: <https://windopzee.nl/actueel/nieuws/nieuws/succesvolle-eerste-start-stop-procedure-ter/>

4.7. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on ocean energy 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).

The Wind at Sea Ecological Research Program (Wozep), focuses on gaining more knowledge about the direct effects of the construction and ultimately the operation of wind farms and the translation of this to population level. In addition to the use of models (for both underwater noise and its effects at population level), many field measurements are also made in and near wind farms (under construction) and scientific research is conducted into the behaviour of harbour porpoises.

4.8. Mark the perceived level of pressure from ocean energy in your country to the table below.

For example, active construction of new developments could increase the pressure, while decommissioning or addition of mitigation measures to pre-existing projects could decrease the pressure.

Energy type	Status in 2023 relative to previous years	Nature of the evidence
Wind energy	Increasing	A lot more wind farms to be built delivering 38 to 72 GW in 2050: https://www.rvo.nl/sites/default/files/2023-12/Routekaart-windenergie-op-zee-november-2023.pdf
Wave power	Not Applicable	
Tidal energy	Not Applicable	
Tidal lagoon/barrage	Unchanged	

Comments:

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	
Oil Southern North Sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	HP Harbour porpoise WBD White-beaked dolphin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> https://deltasafari.nl/reizen/dagtochten/ Ports: Neeltje Jans, Roompotsluis
Oil Southern North Sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	HP Harbour porpoise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> https://frisiarondvaarten.nl/ Ports: Zierikzee, Gorishoek, Sint-Annaland

Region	Small cetacean watching		Link to website or contact details (include information on ports and operators if available)	
	Primary focus / target species	Secondary focus		
Oil Southern North Sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	HP Harbour porpoise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	https://www.ms-onrust.nl/en/boat-trip-oosterschelde/ Port: Burghsluis

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:

The Netherlands has a number of regulations relating to Animal Welfare. These regulations define harassment, but mainly relate to domesticated animals or animals in captivity. For wild animals the Nature Conservation Act, which follows the EU Habitats Directive directly, defines deliberate disturbance, and states that it is prohibited to kill, catch or disturb wild animals.

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					

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.

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
Choose an item.	dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.		
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)

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
HP Harbour porpoise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change in the number of dolphin operators or the scale of the operation.
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)

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:

- There are more than 500 000 recreational vessels in use in the Netherlands (but this includes freshwater recreation). <https://www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/water/scheepvaart/pleziervaart>
- The Netherlands has a relatively long coastline, with many accessible beaches that are visited by many local and international tourists, especially in summer. In addition, the Dutch North Sea sees a lot of recreation(al boating) from surfers, recreational fishermen, sailors and divers. Map of recreational areas along the coast: <https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/functies-gebruik/recreatie-toerisme/>.
- Coastal tourism is increasing: until 2030, the Dutch tourism agency expects growth mainly in coastal areas (+56 per cent). In 2017, the Dutch coast attracted 6.5 million tourists; by 2030, it is expected to reach 10 million. <https://www.nbtc.nl/nl/site/bestemming-nederland/perspectief-2030.htm>

Web link or other relevant link to data: (where can this information be found)

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:

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:	
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.

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:

--

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
HP Harbour porpoise	<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)

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

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

8. Unexploded Ordnance

AIM: to provide information on the mitigation, management and potential negative impacts of unexploded ordnance on small cetaceans during the reporting period.
 Relevant Resolutions: 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.8, 8.3

Unexploded chemical and conventional munitions present a threat to small cetaceans. Hazards exist from unexploded munitions, which release chronic contaminants, and upon detonation, which is physically hazardous from extreme underwater noise and a sudden release of toxic substances. Unexploded ordnance is a notable threat in many areas, such as the Baltic Sea, where the quantity is unknown, though estimates are high. Information on disposal, state of corrosion and quantities of dumped munition is limited, as are meaningful data on the measured environmental impacts. The significance of this pressure's impact on small cetaceans requires further quantification. However, it is clear that mitigation measures are necessary to

support alternatives to detonations, and when no alternative is feasible, to reduce negative impacts on small cetaceans.

In the ASCOBANS Area, millions of tons of unexploded ordnance are present in the marine environment and thousands of sea users, such as fishermen, encounter such munitions every year. Parties have agreed on resolutions to support (1) research investigating the pressure on marine animals and habitat and (2) mitigation measures regarding effects of disintegrating submerged munitions on the marine environment. Parties are to strive towards providing relevant information to required bodies and supporting efforts to address the negative implications from this pressure in other regional and international organizations and waters.

Questions:

8.1. To which registers/databases covering conventional and chemical munitions has your country contributed to date?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OSPAR	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HELCOM	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please state:	

8.2. How many UXOs were detonated / released at sea?

- 1-9
 10-49
 50-99
 100+

Provide link to database if available:

8.3. Have there been any other instances/issues related to the issue of unexploded ordnance during the reporting period in your country?

- No.
 Yes.

Please provide details:

8.4. How is the issue of unexploded ordnances being managed?

(incl. mitigation measures, relevant regulations/guidelines, year of implementation; may include planned management)

8.5. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on the issue of unexploded ordnance 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)

8.6. Is the perceived level of pressure from unexploded ordnance in your country:

<input type="checkbox"/> Increasing	<input type="checkbox"/> Decreasing	<input type="checkbox"/> Staying the same	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unknown
<p>Please provide the nature of the evidence where applicable: Offshore wind park (OWF) construction includes the removal (by explosion) of unexploded ordnance from the area. With current plans for fast expansion it is expected that ordnance use for OWF will likely increase in the future.</p>			

Not applicable. Comments:

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

9. Marine Debris (ingestion and entanglement)

AIM: to illustrate progress, during the reporting period, on understanding, monitoring and mitigating impacts of marine debris on small cetaceans.
Relevant Resolutions: 8.8, 8.3, 6.1

Marine debris, such as macroplastics and discarded fishing gear, poses a threat to small cetaceans due to the potential for these materials to be ingested or to cause entanglement. Commercial fishing operations, recreational fishing and cargo shipping are notable sources of this material, of which the majority is plastic and ghost nets. However, it is assumed that most of the marine litter worldwide comes from land, although this differs per region. Even small amounts of macroplastics that have been ingested may present serious effects on small cetaceans, such as detrimental influence on the gastrointestinal tract or leaching pollutants into the body, potentially leading to mortality or reduced body condition. Entanglement is well-established as a threat to small cetaceans as plastic debris continues to accumulate in aquatic environments, and may cause physical injuries, reduced survival or drowning.

To better understand the impact of marine debris on small cetaceans and measures in place to mitigate these effects, countries are requested to provide relevant information.

Note: Includes macroplastics and discarded fishing gear. Microplastics are covered under Section C10 Pollution and Hazardous Substances.

Questions:

9.1. Does your country have monitoring in place to assess levels of marine debris?

- No.** Go to **Question 9.3.**
 Yes. Provide information in the table below:

Include parameters provided through monitoring (e.g. type of litter (size, shape, material), amount, impacts on species, geographical location, etc.)

Macro plastics in necropsied harbour porpoises and other stranded cetacean are collected.

OSPAR beach plastic (Elisa Bravo Rebolledo and Stichting de Noordzee)

OSPAR Litter Monitoring Programme of beach litter

Data on the amount of litter on a given stretch of coastline is recorded at item level. Items to be recorded are predefined by the Guideline for Monitoring Marine Litter on the Beaches in the OSPAR Maritime Area (OSPAR Agreement 2010-02).

OSPAR Plastic particles in Fulmar stomachs in the North Sea

Two types of plastic categories are distinguished in the OSPAR Common Indicator. Industrial plastic pellets are separated from consumer debris such as sheets, foams, threadlike materials, and hard fragments. For each of these categories the number of particles and mass (in grams and to the fourth decimal place) is recorded. The final assessment is based only on the total weight of plastics in stomachs, but industrial and consumer waste plastics have different sources and as such provide very useful information for interpreting the monitoring data.

Dutch seafloor litter monitoring in the North Sea

This is a monitoring programme developed to evaluate the state of marine waters (Good Environmental Status) within the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) for the Marine Litter descriptor (D10). The Dutch monitoring program for this descriptor includes the collection of data on the presence, abundance and distribution of macro litter on the seafloor. According to the Dutch program, the data on seafloor litter must be collected during statutory task fish surveys using a standardised GOV (Grand Ouverture Verticale) fishing net as part of the International Bottom Trawl Survey (IBTS), which is carried out yearly in the North Sea. The Dutch seafloor litter monitoring results are uploaded to the ICES DATRAS database, and are used in OSPAR assessments of seafloor litter in the North Sea (Volwater and van Hal, 2020).

9.2. Are these data publicly available?

- No.**
 Yes. Please provide web link:

--

9.3. What species of small cetaceans were found to have been impacted by marine debris?

Species	# of impacted individuals	Year	Region	Description of the impact
Choose an item.		dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.	
Choose an item.		dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.	
Choose an item.		dd/mm/yy	Choose an item.	

9.4. Are there any mitigation measures in place?

No.

Yes. Provide information in the table below.

Mitigation measures might include changes in gear to prevent loss, entanglement response, adoption of measures to reduce land-based/boat-based sources of marine debris, etc.

Measure:		
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.

9.5. How is marine debris managed? (incl. relevant regulations / guidelines and the year of implementation, current and planned)

While there are no specific measures to mitigate marine debris as it relates to small cetaceans, a reduction in plastic pollution is part of the OSPAR Regional Action Plan. <https://www.ospar.org/work-areas/eiha/marine-litter/regional-action-plan>

9.6. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on marine debris 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 e.g. link to OSPAR reports

9.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from marine debris 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
HP Harbour porpoise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marine debris does not seem to be a particular threat to harbour porpoises, based on the post mortem exams conducted. For several other indicators (national and OSPAR) decreased values of litter have been demonstrated, but for some no decrease is shown.
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)

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:

Tissue samples of a sub-sample of the ~50 annually necropsied harbour porpoises are analyzed on PCB's and PFAS.

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.

University Utrecht collects tissue samples during necropsies, and Wageningen Marine Research conducts the contaminant analysis.

Name: University Utrecht

Role in monitoring: sample collection

Postal Address: Yalelaan 1, Kamer O.170, 3584 CL Utrecht, The Netherlands

Contact Person: Lonneke IJsseldijk

Telephone: NA

Email: L.L.IJsseldijk@uu.

Weblink: <https://www.uu.nl/medewerkers/LLIJsseldijk>

Name: Wageningen Marine Research

Role in monitoring: contaminant analysis

Postal Address: Postbus/POBox 77, 4400AB YERSEKE, The Netherlands

Contact Person: Martine Van Den Heuvel-Greve

Telephone: NA

Email: martine.vandenheuvel-greve@wur.nl

Weblink: <https://www.wur.nl/en/persons/martine-van-den-heuvel-greve-1.htm>

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
X	X	X	X	HP Harbour porpoise					Choose a species
				Choose a species					Choose a species
				Choose a species					Choose a species

Comments:

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:

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

<p>OSPAR Region I Arctic Waters</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Norwegian Sea	<p>OSPAR Region IV Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast</p> <input type="checkbox"/> N. Bay of Biscay <input type="checkbox"/> Iberian Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf of Cadiz	<p>HELCOM cont.</p> <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
<p>OSPAR Region II Greater North Sea</p> <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	<p>OSPAR Region V Wider Atlantic</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>OSPAR Region III Celtic Sea</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Celtic Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Irish Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Irish & Scottish W. Coast	<p>HELCOM</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Bothnian Bay <input type="checkbox"/> Bothnian Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Archipelago Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Åland Sea	

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

10.6. Select the contaminant / pathogen analyses you have conducted for small cetaceans.

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

Van Franeker JA, Bravo Rebolledo EL, Hesse E, IJsseldijk LL, Kuhn S, Leopold M & Mielke L (2018) Plastic ingestion by harbour porpoises *Phocoena phocoena* in the Netherlands: Establishing a standardised method. *Ambio* 47(4):387–397. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs13280-017-1002-y>

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 informationAs
Assessment of the occurrence, trophic transfer and accumulation of PFAS in the estuarine foodweb of the Western Scheldt

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).

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:

Not that we know of

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
HP Harbour porpoise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Although the biotamonitoring shows that PCB's still exceed MSFD and OSPAR thresholds. Mercury concentrations are increasing, and mercury bio-accumulates in higher trophic levels. Thus Dogruer et al. (2023) recommend screening cetaceans for mercury. Dogruer, G., Sneekes, A. C., van Hal, R., Geelhoed, S. C. V., & Kotterman, M. J. J. (2023). Biotamonitoring Rijkswateren tot en met 2022. Deel I, Toetsing en trends. (Wageningen Marine Research rapport; No. C057/23). Wageningen Marine Research. https://doi.org/10.18174/637631
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, 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:	

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	
2023	OII Southern North	HP Harbour porpoise	4	1	5 of the 47 necropsied harbour porpoises in 2023 died following trauma
2023	OII Southern North	CD Short-beaked Common	1		This stranded (dead) juvenile male showed signs of significant blunt trauma,
	Choose an item.	Choose a species			

Provide source of information and database link if applicable: Schalkwijk, L. van, A. Gröne & L.L. IJsseldijk (2024) Postmortaal onderzoek van bruinvissen (*Phocoena phocoena*) uit Nederlandse wateren, 2023; Biologische gegevens, gezondheidsstatus en doodsoorzaken WOT-technical report 259

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).

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:

Protocol used please see IJsseldijk, L.L., Brownlow, A.C., & Mazzariol, S. (eds.). (2019). Best practice on cetacean post-mortem investigation and tissue sampling. Joint ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS document: osf.io/zh4ra.

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.**

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

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.

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
HP Harbour porpoise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
CD Short-beaked Common dolphin	<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"/>	

Not applicable. Comments:

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.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in small cetacean abundance	Wageningen Marine Research / Steve Geelhoed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in small cetacean distribution	Wageningen Marine Research / Steve Geelhoed
<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	Lonneke IJsseldijk
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in prey (fish) abundance and distribution	WMR fisheries WOT Commercial fish species mainly
<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in timing of prey (fish) spawning and migration	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in fishing effort	WMR fisheries
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes in the occurrence of pathogens (from sampled individuals)	Lonneke IJsseldijk
<input type="checkbox"/> Incidences of algal blooms (if yes, where; specify year)	
<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) MONS

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:

UNKNOWN

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
HP Harbour porpoise	<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:

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 and GIS	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	Sand extraction IHM Viewer (openearth.nl)
Oil Southern North Sea	Maps and GIS	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	Dredge dump areas IHM Viewer (openearth.nl)
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:

Provide web links if available.

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:	
Industry:	
Activity type:	
Has the measure been effective?	<input type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Comments:
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.

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
HP Harbour porpoise	<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:

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.

D. Management of Cumulative Impacts

15. Marine Spatial Planning

AIM: to provide information on existing and proposed marine spatial plans and processes during the reporting period that may impact small cetaceans.
Relevant Resolutions 9.1, 8.9, 8.6, 8.3

A growing demand for use of maritime space increases pressure on ecosystems and marine resources. Marine ecosystems with good environmental status provide notable benefits to a number of economic outputs. Implementation of an integrated spatial planning and management approach can better mitigate negative impacts from maritime activities on marine environments. Spatial planning can support sustainable marine development through coordinated, coherent and transparent decision-making and the encouragement and identification of multi-purpose uses in relevant projects. Marine spatial planning is essential when selecting the most appropriate siting for marine-based projects. Particular attention should be given to critical habitat and relevant species, such as small cetaceans, in order to achieve good environmental status.

ASCOBANS Parties have agreed on a number of resolutions that support the integration of marine spatial planning into development processes. Small cetaceans benefit from good marine spatial planning and this is

highlighted in the resolutions. Countries are requested to provide information relevant to their country in this regard.

Questions:

15.1. Please provide information in regard to current and foreseen marine spatial planning.

<p>National plans(s) and processes in force:</p>	<p>The National North Sea Plan (2022-2027) provides a policy framework for MSP based on the Water Act. It encompasses the Dutch maritime spatial plan, the measures to ensure achieving good environmental status and the management to achieve this. Additionally, it outlines policies aimed at strengthening the ecosystem, transitioning to a sustainable food supply, and shifting towards sustainable energy provision. The legal framework consists of the statutory one obligations of the Water Act, which also fulfils the obligations of the European Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MRP) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD).</p> <p>The Dutch Nature Conservation Act (Natuurbeschermingswet) took effect on 1 January 2017. This new act replaces 3 other laws: the Nature Conservancy Act 1998, the Flora and Fauna Act and the Forestry Act. An approved Code of Conduct lays down guidelines on activities that may harm protected species.</p> <p>The Environment and Planning Act (Omgevingswet) will provide an integrated legal framework for the protection and utilization of the physical environment and activities that (may) affect it. It was expected into force in 2021, but has been postponed to 2024. The Environment and Planning Act will replace 26 existing laws. These include the Nature Conservation Act, the Water Act (Waterwet), the Spatial Planning Act (Wet ruimtelijke ordening) and many others. Relevant exceptions include the Offshore Wind Energy Act, the Mining Act (Mijnbouwwet) and the Fisheries Act (Visserijwet 1963) that will remain as separate laws.</p>
<p>National plan(s) and processes in preparation:</p>	<p>The partial revision of the North Sea Programme 2022-2027 is currently underway and is anticipated to be completed by September 2025.</p>
<p>Further information, including links to online resources and maps where available:</p>	<p>With the adoption of the EU Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning (2014/89/EU), all coastal EU Member States were required to prepare cross-sectoral maritime spatial plans by 2021. These plans can be found on http://msp-platform.eu</p> <p>Maritime spatial plan(s): https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/countries/netherlands</p> <p>The National North Sea Plan (2022-2027) can be found here: https://iplo.nl/thema/water/beleid-regelgeving-water/programma-omgevingswet-water/nationaal-water-programma-2022-2027/nationaal-water-programma-2022-2027-totstandkoming/</p>
<p>Transboundary plans(s) and processes in force:</p>	<p>Water Framework Directive (WFD), Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSP), Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), Birds Directive (BD), and Habitats Directive (HD), CO₂ emission reduction targets, the European strategy for the Sustainable Blue Economy, Sustainable Energy Policy, European strategy for plastics in a circular economy.</p>

	<p>Oslo Paris Convention for the protection of the marine environment in the North-East Atlantic area, including the North Sea (OSPAR), mainly through MSFD implementation. Additionally, protection of cetaceans (ASCOBANS), and protection of migratory waterbirds, including most seabirds in the North Sea (AEWA).</p> <p>The Political Declaration of North Sea Energy Ministers (The North Seas Energy Cooperation 2020-2023, following the declaration 2016-2019) to strengthen cooperation in the development of offshore sustainable energy, with attention to spatial planning and ecology. Additionally, relevant instruments established under the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species and the Bonn Agreement (incident response). The cooperation (The North Sea Region Maritime Spatial Planning Collaboration Group, 2021) based on Article 11 of the European Maritime Spatial Planning Directive between North Sea countries to promote cross-border coherence between plans.</p> <p>The Netherlands engages in numerous bilateral and multilateral agreements with neighbouring countries, such as Belgium, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Denmark, to ensure coherent and coordinated spatial planning efforts.</p>
<p>Transboundary plan(s) and processes in preparation:</p>	<p>The Netherlands is exploring the development of multi-purpose energy hubs in the North Sea, which combine wind energy generation, energy storage, and interconnections with other countries' energy grids.</p> <p>Expanding and effectively managing MPAs is a priority to enhance the conservation of marine biodiversity.</p> <p>The Netherlands is investing in digital tools and data-sharing platforms to improve the efficiency and transparency of spatial planning processes.</p>
<p>Further information, including links to online resources and maps where available:</p>	

15.2. Have there been any other instances/issues in your country regarding marine spatial planning during the reporting period?

No.

Yes.

Please provide details:

15.3. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on marine spatial planning 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)

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
Doggerbank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan	OII Southern North Sea		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	27/05/2016	Habitats Directive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Link:	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/noordzee/doggersbank/doggersbank-kaart	https://www.natura2000.nl/index.php/gebieden/noordzee/doggersbank https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/beheer/gebieden/doggersbank/
Cleaverbank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan	OII Southern North Sea		HP Harbour porpoise (Copy drop-down to add more species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated	27/05/2016	Habitats Directive	Fisheries measures under CFP: https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/noordzee/klaverbank/klaverbank-kaart	https://www.natura2000.nl/index.php/gebieden/noordzee/klaverbank https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/

				more species)				12/C-2022-8918_en.pdf		ket.nl/beheer/gebieden/klaverbank/
North Sea coastal zone ('Noordzeekustzone')	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan	Oil Southern North Sea		HP Harbour porpoise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated	26/02/2009	Habitats Directive, Birds Directive	https://www.bij12.nl/wp-content/uploads/Noordzeekustzone-beheerplan.pdf	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/friesland/noordzeekustzone/noordzeekustzone-kaart	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/friesland/noordzeekustzone https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/beheer/gebieden/noordzeekustzone/
'Vlakte van de Raan'	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan	Oil Southern North Sea		HP Harbour porpoise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated	14/03/2011	Habitats Directive	https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/publish/pages/123357/beheerplan_mart_2016_natura_2000_vlakte_van_de_raan_4971.pdf	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/vlakte-van-de-raan/vlakte-van-de-raan-kaart	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/vlakte-van-de-raan https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/beheer/gebieden/vlakte-raan/
'Voordelta'	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan	Oil Southern North Sea		HP Harbour porpoise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated	19/02/2009	Habitats Directive, Birds Directive	https://www.rwsnatura2000.nl/gebieden/voordelta/vd_documenten/handlerdownloadfiles.ashx?idnv=593295	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/voordelta/voordelta-kaart	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/voordelta https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/beheer/gebieden/voordelta/
Wadden Sea	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan	Oil Southern North Sea		HP Harbour porpoise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated	30-02-2009	Habitats Directive, Birds Directive	https://www.waddenze.nl/fileadmin/content/Dossiers/Overheid/N2000_dec_2016/DEFINITIEF_Waddenzee_Natura_2000-beheerplan_2016-2022.pdf	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/voordelta/voordelta-kaart	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/friesland/waddenzee
'Westerschelde en Saeftinghe'	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan	Oil Southern North Sea		HP Harbour porpoise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated	18/12/2009	Habitats Directive, Birds Directive	https://www.bij12.nl/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Natura-2000-Beheerplan-122-Westerschelde-en-Saeftinghe.pdf	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/westerschelde/westerschelde-saeftinghe-kaart	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/westerschelde-saeftinghe
'Oosterschelde'	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North Sea Plan	Oil Southern North Sea		HP Harbour porpoise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated	18/12/2009	Habitats Directive, Birds Directive	https://www.bij12.nl/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Natura-2000-Beheerplan-118-Oosterschelde.pdf	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/oosterschelde/oosterschelde-kaart	https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/oosterschelde

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)

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

The N2000 areas and their effectiveness are evaluated every 6 years, in line with the EU directive. The MSFD areas have a monitoring scheme, described in https://www.noordzeeloket.nl/publish/pages/198062/mariene_strategie_deel_2.pdf

The updated Conservation plan for the Harbour Porpoise was evaluated in 2023.

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 III: Surveys and Research

A. Biological Information (per species)

1. Abundance estimates

AIM: to provide new information on abundance and life history parameters of small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7, 5.5, 4.7, 3.5, 3.3

Abundance estimates and information on life history are of critical importance for the determination of broader species attributes such as populations levels, health and overall status. These parameters can contribute towards determination of GES and provide a reference for mortality events. Abundance and life history parameters are typically assessed from monitoring programmes. Fluctuations in these parameters can provide insight into trends in populations. Information on abundance and life history parameters can inform the need for mitigation measures, and regional assessment of these parameters allows for a more spatially targeted and concentrated response to support national assessments.

In the ASCOBANS Area, small cetacean abundance and life history should be monitored in response to a number of ASCOBANS resolutions. Continued monitoring of these parameters is essential to understanding current status and trends.

Questions:

1.1. Did your country conduct national dedicated surveys on abundance and distribution during the reporting period?

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

Add rows if necessary. Attach maps separately, clearly marking which survey they apply to. **Note:** Information relevant to SCANS-IV is to be provided in Question 1.2.

Location	Project	Time period	Method	Species	Animal abundance (including confidence limits or CV)	Link to project/report/publication
			(e.g. line transect, Photo ID, etc.)	Choose an item.		
			(e.g. line transect, Photo ID, etc.)	Choose an item.		
			(e.g. line transect, Photo ID, etc.)	Choose an item.		

Relevant information on distribution during the reporting period:

Include species, method, time period, weblinks, and other relevant information.

1.2. Other relevant new research/work/collaboration on abundance estimates in regard to small cetaceans in your country during the reporting period.

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

1.3. Is the abundance of species in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown? Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable.

Species	Increasing	Decreasing	Staying the same	Unknown	Nature of the evidence
HP Harbour porpoise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Last OSPAR report https://oap.ospar.org/en/ospar-assessments/quality-status-reports/qsr-2023/indicator-assessments/abundance-distribution-cetaceans/
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:

A. Biological Information (per species)**2. New information on life history parameters****2.1. Is there new information on the following life history parameters in the reporting period?**

For each life history parameter, please identify the species and provide web links and details where applicable.

Age of sexual and physical maturity	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Please describe: Data is collected but not yet reported Species: Choose an item.
Inter-birth intervals	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Please describe: Data is collected but not yet reported Species: Choose an item.

Calf and adult mortality rates	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Please describe: Data is collected but not yet reported Species: Choose an item.
Potential reproductive span/capacity	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Please describe: Data is collected but not yet reported Species: Choose an item.
Longevity	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Please describe: Data is collected but not yet reported Species: Choose an item.
Diet	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Please describe: Data is collected but not yet reported Species: Choose an item.
Age and sex structure	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Please describe: Yes, is reported in annual post mortem studies. Species: Choose an item.
Other relevant factors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Please describe: Species: Choose an item.

B. Monitoring and Survey Schemes

3. Overview of current monitoring and survey schemes

AIM: to provide information on the progress of monitoring programmes, relevant methodologies and aims thereof, and status of small cetaceans during the reporting period.
Relevant Resolutions: 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.8, 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7

Monitoring programmes provide important data on biological and environmental attributes, such as population status, abundance and spatial-temporal distribution. They create opportunities for new research and development, including potential improvements to methodology for monitoring in terms of accuracy, practicality and cost efficiency.

In the ASCOBANS Area, application of coherent monitoring programmes focused on small cetaceans, which collect and provide objective, robust and comparable data, is a key component in understanding and improving the conservation status of small cetaceans through appropriate management. Parties have agreed to design, implement and support relevant monitoring programmes through a number of resolutions. Such efforts are also supported by legislation from a number of bodies which identify monitoring as a requirement in management systems. Additionally, Parties have been encouraged to coordinate their monitoring programmes, which promotes international cooperation and synergies. Parties have also been encouraged to review such monitoring programmes and propose improvements for the betterment of conservation efforts.

It is the interest of ASCOBANS to understand the current monitoring programmes utilised, their outputs, and future activities in the Agreement Area. Countries are requested to provide information relevant to their activities as well as potential improvements to such programmes and efforts.

Questions:

3.1. Did your country have national monitoring programmes that enabled assessment of the Conservation Status of small cetaceans in your waters (i.e. provides abundance estimates and/or life history parameters and information on pressures) during the reporting period?

No.

Yes. Please provide an overview in the table below.

Add rows if necessary.

Within MPAs	Approach: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line transect surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Photo-ID <input type="checkbox"/> Strandings <input type="checkbox"/> Passive Acoustic Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
	Target Species: (Copy drop-down to add more species) HP Harbour porpoise
	Institution(s): (Name, website, etc) Wageningen Marine Research conducts aerial surveys targeting marine mammals. The Dutch national monitoring scheme changed from annual summer surveys to a survey taking place every three years in spring/summer. Due to covid restrictions but also bad weather in 2023 no annual surveys in Dutch waters occurred since 2019, however a survey is planned for the summer of 2024. Additionally, WMR is involved in the six-yearly summer SCANS survey (last one occurred in 2022) and an additional survey was done in the winter of 2024. DeltaProject Management and Waardenburg Ecology conduct MWTL-aerial surveys mainly targeting sea-birds but also records marine mammal sightings: monitoring six times a year. These surveys provide an index of harbour porpoise presence.
Wider Seas	Approach: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line transect surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Photo-ID <input type="checkbox"/> Strandings <input type="checkbox"/> Passive Acoustic Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
	Target Species: (Copy drop-down to add more species) Add WBD and MW HP Harbour porpoise
	Institution(s): (Name, website, etc) Wageningen Marine Research conducts aerial surveys targeting marine mammals. The Dutch national monitoring scheme changed from annual summer surveys to a survey taking place every three years in spring/summer. Due to covid restrictions but also bad weather in 2023 no annual surveys in Dutch waters occurred since 2019, however a survey is planned for the summer of 2024. Additionally, WMR is involved in the six-yearly summer SCANS survey (last one occurred in 2022) and an additional survey was done in the winter of 2024. Deltaproject management and Waardenburg Ecology conducts MWTL-aerial surveys mainly targeting sea-birds but also records marine mammal sightings: monitoring six times (bi-monthly) a year.

3.2. Please provide the relevant information regarding aerial surveying activities.

Provide the number of surveys, area covered, relevant species, and timeframe of the survey.
 Delta project management, Waardenburg Ecology conduct bi-monthly annual MWTL-surveys aimed at birds, but they collect data on cetaceans as well, resulting in relative abundance estimates.

 Wageningen Marine Research conducts three-yearly distance sampling surveys to make abundance estimates for the Dutch Continental Shelf; no surveys conducted in 2023 due to adverse weather

3.3. Please provide the relevant information regarding Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM).

Provide the location of moored instruments, timeframe of the survey, the relevant species, and the make and model of instruments used.
PAM is conducted in the Borssele offshore wind farms in the southern part of the DCS. Harbour porpoise presence is monitored with 14-16 CPODs since the construction of the owf;s in 2019. Underwater noise is measured with Sound traps.

3.4. Are any of these programmes carried out in collaboration with other countries?

No. **Yes.** Provide information below.

Please provide the collaborators and links per programme.

Website for SCANS IV (2022-2024) European project.<https://www.tiho-hannover.de/en/clinics-institutes/institutes/institute-of-terrestrial-and-aquatic-wildlife-research-itaw/scans-iv-survey>

University of St Andrews, United Kingdom (Philipp Hammond, psh2@st-andrews.ac.uk)

Joint Nature Conservation Committee, United Kingdom (Nikki Taylor, Nikki.taylor@jncc.gov.uk)

Wageningen Marine Research, Netherlands (Steve Geelhoed, steve.geelhoed@wur.nl)

Aarhus University, Denmark (Signe Sveegaard, ssv@ecos.au.dk)

Swedish Museum of Natural History, Sweden (Julia Carlström, Julia.Carlstrom@nrm.se, Kylie.Owen@nrm.se)

La Rochelle University, France (Matthieu Authier matthieu.authier@univ-lr.fr & Sophie Laran, sophie.laran@univ-lr.fr)

Instituto Español de Oceanografía, Spain (Camilo Saveedra, camilo.saavedra@ieo.es)

University of Aveiro, CESAM - Centre of Environmental and Marine Studies and Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas, Portugal (Hélder Araújo, helder.araujo@socpvs.org and Marina Sequeira, marina.sequeira@icnf.pt)

3.5. Please provide details on any planned activities relevant to monitoring programmes.

Provide web links if available.

As add-on to SCANS-IV in summer 2022, a winter-SCANS in the southern North Sea has been planned for Jan-Mar 2024**3.6. Relevant outputs/findings from monitoring programmes to note.****Harbour porpoise, White-beaked Dolphin and Minke Whale**

Gilles, A., Authier, M., Ramirez-Martinez, N., Araújo, H., Blanchard, A., Carlström, J., Eira, C., Dorémus, G., Fernández- Maldonado, C., Geelhoed, S., Kyhn, L., Laran, S., Nachtsheim, D., Panigada, S., Pigeault, R., Sequeira, M., Sveegaard, S., Taylor, N., Owen, K., ... Hammond, P. (2023). Estimates of cetacean abundance in European Atlantic waters in summer 2022 from the SCANS-IV aerial and shipboard surveys. *Final Report Published 29 September 2023, September*, 64. https://www.tiho-hannover.de/fileadmin/57_79_terr_aqua_Wildtierforschung/79_Buesum/downloads/Berichte/20230928_SCANS-IV_Report_FINAL.pdf

C. Other Research**Please provide relevant information in regard to other research (not mentioned elsewhere in Sections II, III, IV).**

Per project, please provide the institution, duration, aim(s) / objective(s), and the method.

Section IV: Use of Strandings Records**A. Stranding Networks and Strandings****AIM:** to provide information on stranding events and demonstrate progress of stranding networks in understanding, monitoring and mitigating strandings of small cetaceans.Relevant Resolutions: **8.10 (Rev.MOP9)**, 8.7, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.4, 7.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7

Stranding of cetaceans is an ever-present occurrence and analysis through necropsy and sampling can provide indications of reason for injury and death. Stranding numbers also provide information on population status, abundance and distribution. Effective response to strandings contributes to the maintenance of favourable conservation status of small cetaceans and also has implications for animal welfare. Comprehensive stranding networks are a critical asset in managing small cetacean strandings and have resulted in large numbers of animals rescued and returned to sea. These networks also have the capacity to guide the public on animal welfare, human health and safety considerations during stranding events.

In the effort to mitigate the anthropogenic causes of these occurrences, Parties have agreed to measures through a number of resolutions. Continued monitoring of stranding causation and further developing guidance for best practices in stranding response and necropsies was identified by Parties as important tasks to pursue, as was setting up stranding response networks. This information is to align with appropriate sampling practices and countries should ensure that the data is available for researchers. Additionally, development and support of international strandings databases and regular reporting is conducted through relevant research institutes and stranding schemes. ASCOBANS Secretariat encourages the ongoing funding and support of engagement with organizations for further development of guidelines, best practices and maintaining dataflow for capacity building across stranding networks.

To better understand the extent to which stranding events occur and how these events are managed, it is the interest of ASCOBANS for countries to provide the relevant information on these occurrences within the Agreement Area, procedures undertaken in response to stranding events, necropsies and information on stranding networks.

Questions:

1.1. Is there a national stranding network in place?

- No.** Go to **Question 1.4.**
 Yes.

Please provide details:

Consisting of volunteers, SOS Dolfijn, and Utrecht University. Naturalis Biodiversity Centre maintained the database until <https://www.walvisstrandingen.nl/> moved to [www.stranding.nl_by Observado.org](http://www.stranding.nl_by_Observado.org)

1.2. Does the national stranding network cover the whole, or part of the reporting country's coastline?

- Whole coastline.**
 Part of the coastline.

Please provide details:

The stranding network has a coverage of the whole coastline. There are some areas, such as the Wadden Sea, that has likely lesser effort than other areas.

1.3. Are necropsies carried out to determine cause of death?

- No.**
 Yes.

Please provide details:

A sample of 50 fresh stranded harbour porpoises is necropsied annually. Other species are also necropsied, if possible (but strandings of other species are very limited, see below). Reports can be downloaded here: <https://www.uu.nl/onderzoek/strandingsonderzoek/het-onderzoek/onderzoeksverslagen>

1.4. Is there a database of strandings?

- No.** Go to Question 1.6.
 Yes. Continue to Question 1.5.

1.5. Is the data available online or downloadable on request?

- No.**
 Yes.

Please provide details:

The former strandings database (<https://www.walvisstrandingen.nl/>) maintained by Naturalis Biodiversity Centre has been moved to www.stranding.nl from observado.org.

1.6. Provide details for any new institution(s) responsible for a stranding database, responding to live-strandings, collection of carcasses, and for conducting necropsies.

The former strandings database (<https://www.walvisstrandingen.nl/>) maintained by Naturalis Biodiversity Centre has been moved to www.stranding.nl from observado.org.

1.7. Were cases photographed, measured or sampled even if not collected for necropsy during the reporting period?

No.

Yes.

Please provide details:

Volunteers provide pictures and measurements of stranded animals, and can enter these into the database at www.walvisstrandingen.nl. However, training is needed to improve data collection by volunteers. Efforts are conducted to extend the database and improve the registration of animals in the future.

1.8. Were there recorded stranding events in your country during the reporting period?

No.

Yes.

How many strandings occurred? (Specify live and dead) _____

Please also provide more details in the table below.

Species	Region	Total animals stranded	Number of dead animals	Number of animals stranding alive	Response to live stranding (describe # of successful cases and methods used)
HP Harbour porpoise	OII Southern North Sea	325	315/316	9/10	3 died soon -> kept for research 1 to rehab but euthanized 1 to rehab but died 2 re-floated successfully 2 still in rehabilitation 1 maybe have stranded alive
LFPW Long-finned pilot whale	OII Southern North Sea	1	1	0	
WBD White-beaked dolphin	OII Southern North Sea	1	1	0	
Humpback whale	OII Southern North Sea	1	1	0	
Minke whale	OII Southern North Sea	1	1	0	
Harbour porpoise or dolphin	OII Southern North Sea	1	1	0	
Striped dolphin	OII Southern North Sea	1	0/1	0/1	Just a skull. On 31 March 2010 and 30 May 2020, striped dolphins stranded alive on Vlieland and were re-floated. It is possible that the skull belongs to one of these two specimens, but that is by no means certain. The skull was donated to

					Ecomare and can be seen there in the exhibition.
Common dolphin	OII Southern North Sea	3	3	0	
Fin whale	OII Southern North Sea	1	1	0	
Unidentified dolphin	OII Southern North Sea	4	4	0	

1.9. Were any necropsies conducted during the reporting period?

No.

Yes.

Please provide information below:

Per necropsy, please provide: the protocol used or dissection / methodologies / collection of samples etc., number of carcasses necropsied, what causes of death were identified (add percentage if available), and any additional comments.

Protocol used please see IJsseldijk, L.L., Brownlow, A.C., & Mazzariol, S. (eds.). (2019). Best practice on cetacean post-mortem investigation and tissue sampling. Joint ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS document: [osf.io/zh4ra](https://doi.org/10.18174/654869).

47 porpoises were necropsied in 2023. Of these, 26 were males and 21 females, divided as 25 adults, 17 juveniles and 5 neonates. There were an additional three male fetuses examined. Most of the examined harbour porpoises died as a result of infectious diseases (31.9%). Bycatch was the most likely cause of death for ten porpoises (21.3%). Five porpoises died following trauma (one caused by propeller-strike and four of unknown origin), and another five died because of food shortage (10.6% per category). For further information see <https://doi.org/10.18174/654869>

1.10. Other relevant new research/work/collaboration on strandings and stranding networks 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)

Section V: Legislation

A. Overview of Legislative Framework

AIM: to provide information on national, regional and international legislation and guidelines relevant to small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 9.2, 8.10 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.8, 8.6, 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, 6.2, 6.1, 5.7, 5.4

Legislation and guidelines are a key component of efforts to support favourable conservation status of small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area. A number of existing legislation and guidelines bear relevance to conservation efforts for small cetaceans on national, regional and international scales. Regular updating and adaptation of guidelines and legislation (where applicable) can ensure ongoing prevention, minimization and reduction of negative impacts of marine activities on small cetaceans. In addition, these actions support transparent and reliable management.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed to support the requisition, development and the implementation of legislation and guidelines to assess, minimize and mitigate pressures on favourable conservation status of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area. Parties have committed to these actions through a number of resolutions regarding pressures known to be detrimental to small cetaceans. It is in the interest of ASCOBANS

for countries to provide information on current and foreseen national, regional and international legislation and guidelines relevant to small cetaceans in the Agreement Area.

Questions:

1.1. Please provide the applicable information regarding legislation and guidelines relevant to small cetaceans in the table below.

<p>Are national guidelines relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. Please identify the guidelines concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise - Framework for Assessing Ecological and Cumulative Effects (Kader Ecologie en Cumulatie) - Guideline stranding living large cetaceans (includes any animal >3m)
<p>Is national legislation relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. Please identify the legal statuses concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature Protection Act (including Habitats Directive) - MSFD
<p>Are regional and/or international guidelines relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. Please identify the guidelines concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASCOBANS/ACCOBAMS Best Practice on Cetacean Post-mortem Investigation and Tissue Sampling - ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i> L.) in the North Sea
<p>Is regional and/or international legislation relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. Please identify the legal statuses concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Habitats Directive - Marine Strategy Framework Directive - OSPAR & ASCOBANS requirements - Common Fisheries Policy - CITES - Bern-convention - Bonn-convention

1.2. Have there been any instances/issues related to national, regional and/or international legislation during the reporting period in your country?

No.

Yes. Please provide details:

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: 9.1, 8.3, 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 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)
WMR					
SOS Dolfijn	First responder course	Year-round.		animal ambulances + stranding network along the Dutch coast	Content: they will learn how to respond to a report of a stranded small cetacean and how to provide appropriate care until the SOS Dolfijn ambulance arrives onsite.
SOS Dolfijn	Primary school visits	Year-round.		children (4-12 years old)	Content: the SOS Dolfijn educational team provided several guest lessons in primary schools. Content: about the species, work of SOS Dolfijn and First Aid Training
SOS Dolfijn	“Bruinvis Buddy” magazine	Distributed four times a year		children, more specifically the members of our educational kids' club.	Content: recent cetacean news, updates on animals in the rehabilitation centre, interviews with experts.
SOS Dolfijn	Development of the Whale Notebook.	An 8-week project for primary schools.		children (8-12 years old).	Content: students will process the teaching material in their own (artistic) way through texts and drawings. The end product will be a notebook about one particular cetacean species inhabiting the North Sea, and topics such as habitat, diet, anatomy, evolution, threats and conservation will be covered.
Rugvin Foundation	Whale Poo Ambassador workshops national (NL) and international	diverse / on request amongst others Future For Nature, CRRU, 6 workshops on the Azores, three in South Africa and during Harbour		heterogeneous target group, mainly nature conservation minded people	Interested parties learn about the value of cetaceans in the ecosystem. They are introduced to the influence of whale poop on the CO2, oxygen production and marine biodiversity which is generated by phytoplankton. https://rugvin.nl/de-walvis-als-mariene-ecologisch-ingenieur-en-redder-van-het-klimaat/
	Lecture on sailing school	diverse / on request of the connected universities		students	Students at the nautical school are made aware of their sailing behavior in waters where whales also occur. Where possible, they learn how and why to prevent collisions.
	Harbour porpoise bicycle route	Always available online		heterogeneous target group (mainly families, students)	This nature cycle route starts in Zierikzee and takes the bicyclists via the Jetty of Zierikzee along the Eastern Scheldt. The focus is on spotting porpoises and seals. They also pass hidden beaches and beautiful bird areas (“Plan Tureluur”). By participating in this route, you can help with porpoise research through citizen science. https://www.routeyou.com/nl-

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)
					nl/route/view/13222036/recreatieve-fietsroute/bruinvis-en-zeeleven-citizen-science-route
	Cetacean and marine ecosystem functioning training	Diverse, on board of a clipper sailing boat		heterogeneous target group with special interest in cetaceans	The course focuses on the ecology of whales, with an emphasis on the whale species of the North Sea. There is also room for special learning objectives/requests that the student submits. During the course we make trips on the Eastern Scheldt with a sailing ship and our own RIB. There are both one-day and two-day courses. https://rugvin.nl/voorlichting/cursus-walvisobservatie/
	Whale lessons voor schools	diverse	primary & secondary education	Children 6 - 16	Pupils are taken into the world of the whale. They get some general information, information about whale poop and play a game together. The educational material is specifically tailored to this target group. There are also opportunities to carry out projects with the class (scientifically substantiated project-based education).
	Activity/presence at Expeditie Next	May		Children 8 - 12	The science event shows children how science works and that it is fun. This always concerns themes that play a major role in society. Including whale poop. It introduces everyone to science in an accessible way through all kinds of activities. Rugvin is at this event with their Whale Poo Ambassadors Programme, including their whale poo game. All children and adults become a Whale Poo Ambassador. https://expeditienext.nl/
	Workshop during ECS	May	O Grove, Spain	Students, scientists	We facilitated together with the Whale & Dolphin Conservation (Germany and UK) a workshop on the positive impact of whales (large and small) on the marine environment and climate as well as a talk on the same topic.
	Whale Travel	September	South Africa	Adults with special interest in cetaceans	This was a 16-day educational self-drive trip along the coast of South Africa from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth in the time of the 'Sardine

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)
				and African nature	Run'. This Sardine Run is a gigantic feeding festival of whales, dolphins, gannets, sharks, etc. that feast on the billions of sardines that pass by here every year from spring for several months. Including “Whale Poo” workshops. https://rugvin.nl/we-had-a-whale-of-a-time/
	Studio Porpoise	Ongoing	Jetty of Zierikzee	All tourist and nature lovers visiting the Eastern Scheldt	https://wwhandbook.iwc.int/en/case-studies/harbour-porpoise-studio-the-netherlands
Utrecht University	CSI on the coast – the case of the harbour porpoise	02-06-2023		High school biology teachers – high school biology student	Development of teaching material ‘CSI on the coast – the case of the harbour porpoise’ generated for high school level student, in collaboration with the Dutch Institute for Biology (NIBI). Presented at 9th NIBI conference for secondary education and lower secondary general secondary education (havo) and pre-university education (vwo) to a class full of teachers. Material can be downloaded freely at: https://www.nibi.nl/pagina/csi-aan-de-kust-de-bruinvis-zaak (NL only)
Utrecht University		24-10-23		Suriname stranding response team,	Virtual training, lecture (ppt) and necropsy, on small cetacean necropsy techniques and sampling, as part of IWC role in the CAMAC project, aiming at capacity building in the Caribbean. Part of wider initiative, see: https://iwc.int/resources/media-resources/news/successful-conclusion-to-strandings-response
Utrecht University		23-11-2023		Students	Lecture at student association Archaeopteryx on strandings, rehab and research
Utrecht University		27-11-2023		High school students	Lecture at the U-talent (Freudental Institute) education program, on campus day for secondary school students about (research into) the plastic soup, on the effect of plastic on marine mammals.
Utrecht University		17-12-2023		Families (children to adults)	Interactive family college at the University Museum Utrecht on stranding research https://umu.nl/familiecolleges/

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)
Utrecht University		21-12-2023		Staff Ecomare / strandingnetwork	Lecture (ppt) and necropsy, to inform upon harbour porpoise stranding research

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?
“De Zeeuwse Walvis”	Rugvin Foundation	Rugvin Foundation	Ongoing	https://rugvin.nl/de-zeeuwse-walvis-de-bruinvis/	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
					<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes

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

SOS Dolfijn
Rugvin foundation
Ecomare
WWF
Utrecht University

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

B. Difficulties in implementing the Agreement:

C. Burning Issues:

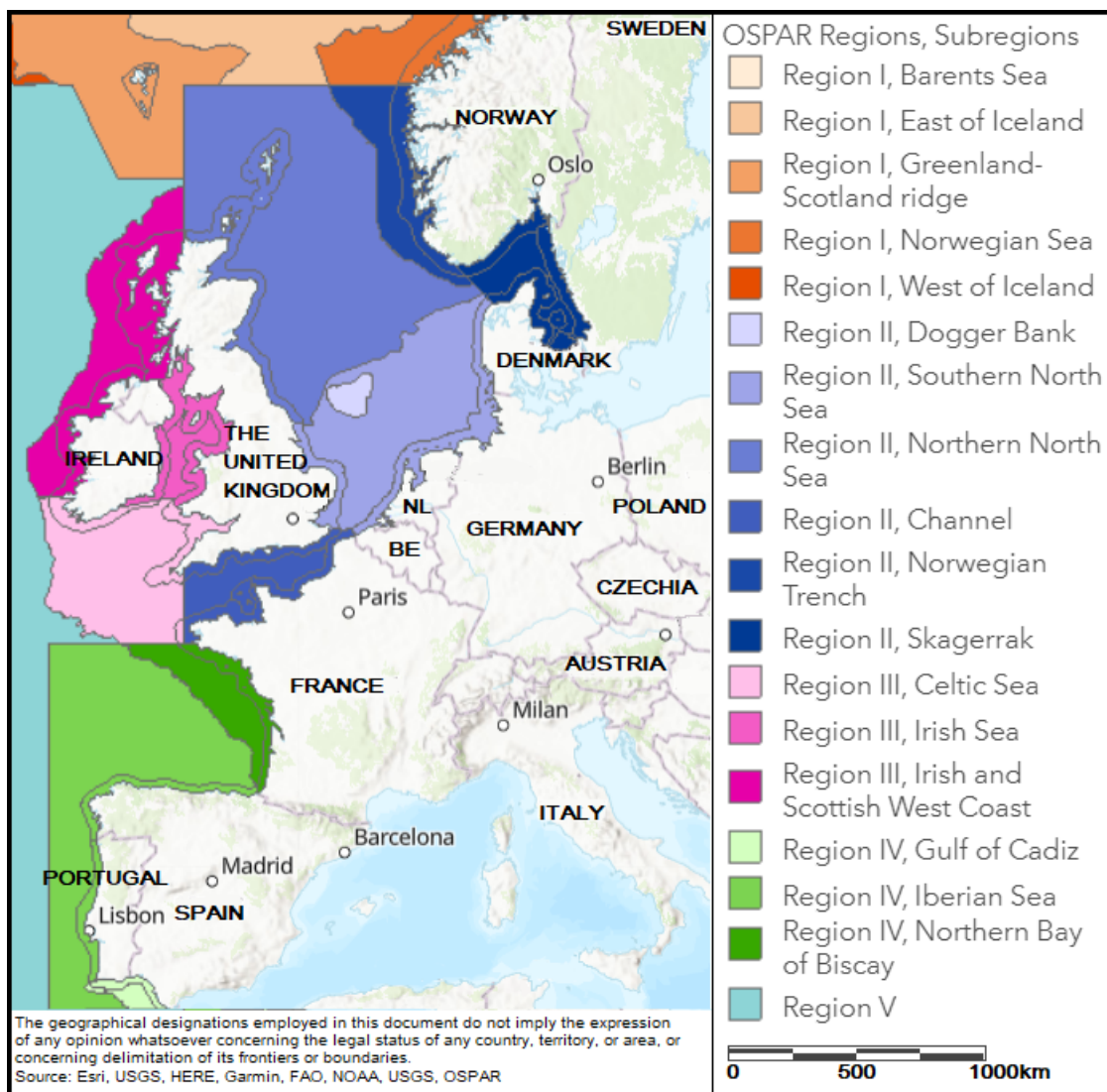
⁵ Opportunity to include other information relevant to the topics covered in this form but which are missing.

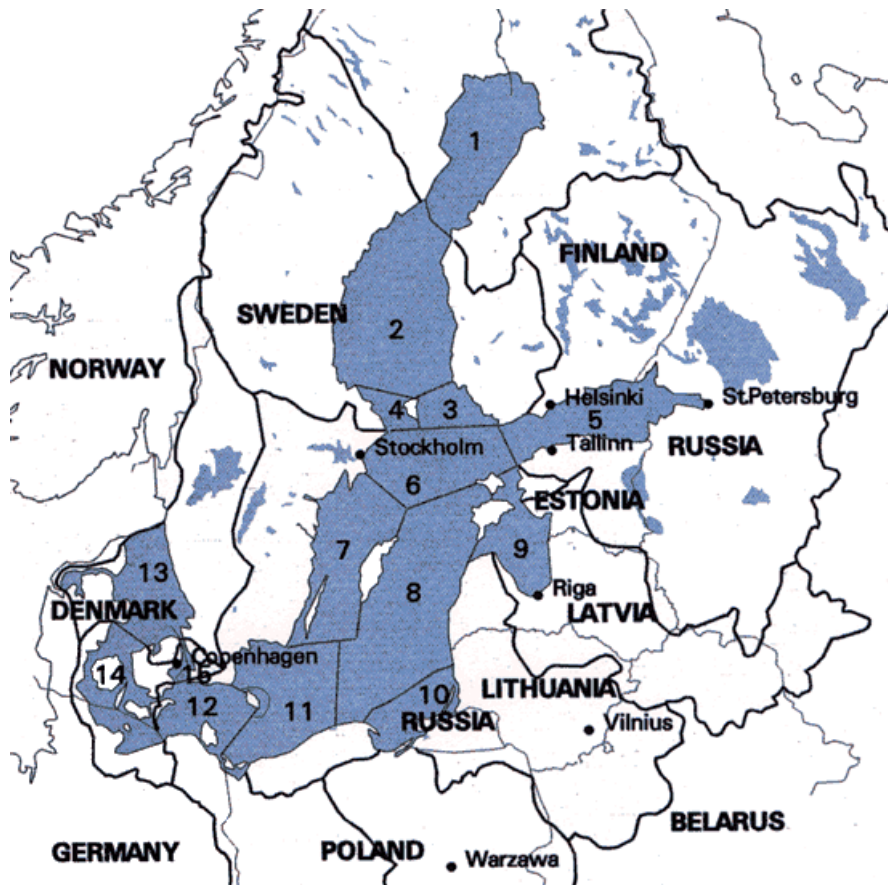
Annex A: Overview of the sub-regions as defined by OSPAR and HELCOM, and areas as defined by ICES.

Drop-down menu sub-regions OSPAR and HELCOM

Choose an item.

<p>OSPAR Region I Arctic Waters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Norwegian Sea <p>OSPAR Region II Greater North Sea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Dogger Bank <input type="checkbox"/> Southern North Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Northern North Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Channel <input type="checkbox"/> Norwegian Trench <input type="checkbox"/> Skagerrak <p>OSPAR Region III Celtic Sea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Celtic Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Irish Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Irish & Scottish W. Coast 	<p>OSPAR Region IV Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> N. Bay of Biscay <input type="checkbox"/> Iberian Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf of Cadiz <p>OSPAR Region V Wider Atlantic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <p>HELCOM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bothnian Bay <input type="checkbox"/> Bothnian Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Archipelago Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Åland Sea 	<p>HELCOM cont.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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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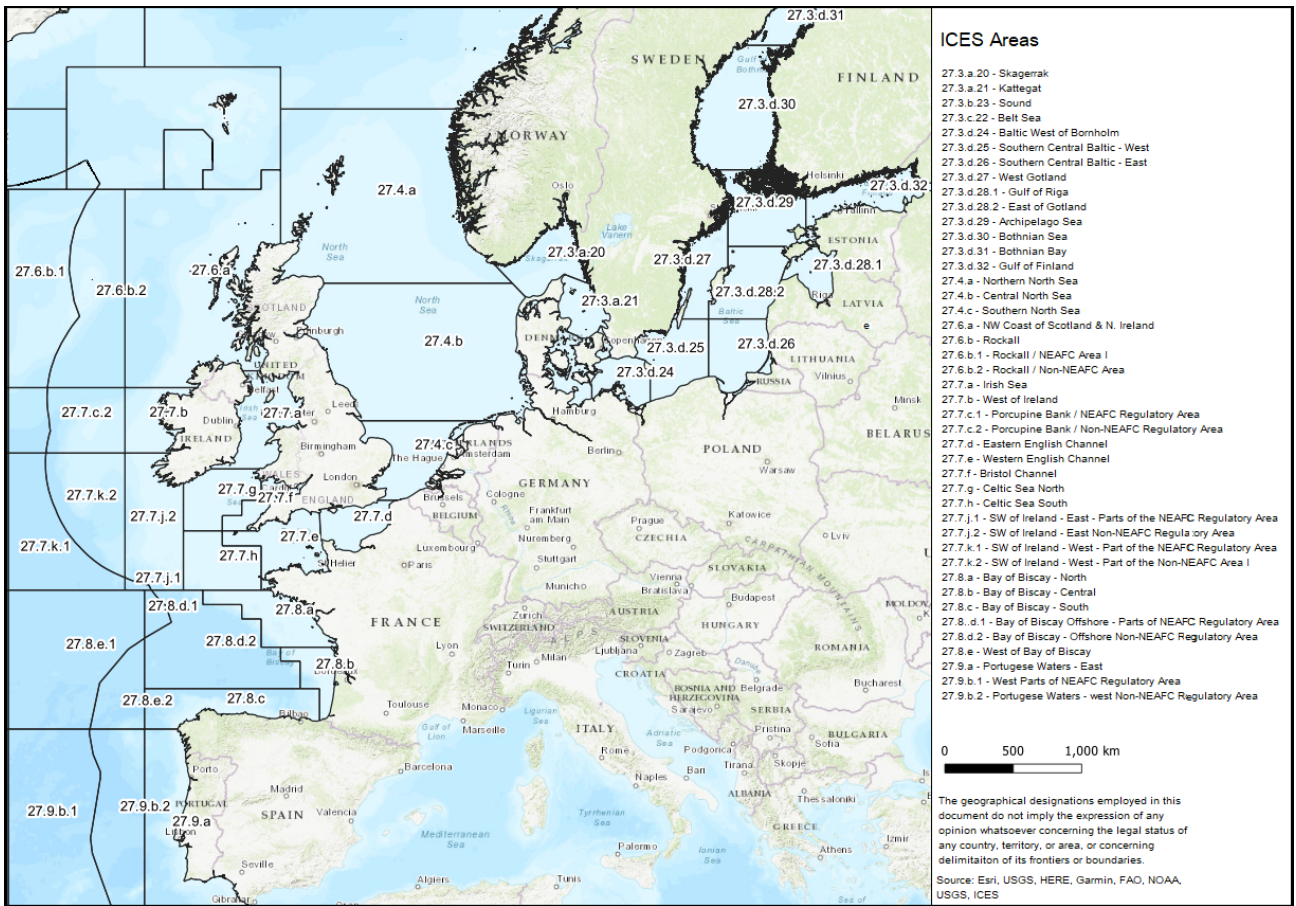
A map of the Baltic Sea drainage basins (catchment area), and marine subdivisions, including basins.

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.