ASCOBANS
NORTH SEA STEERING GROUP 11

Implementation Review
- Germany -

REVIEW OF CURRENT PINGERS, DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE PINGERS AND GEAR MODIFICATIONS

Ongoing Projects:

1. **Project "STELLA 2":**

Development and testing of alternative fishing gears (Nov. 2021 – Oct. 2024)

2. **Project "PAL-CE":**

PAL use in German waters - Current efficiency and mode of operation" (Dec. 2021 – Nov. 2024)

- „**voluntary agreement"** for the conservation of harbour porpoises and sea ducks in the Baltic Sea (since 2013): was extended in Oct. 2022 till Dez. **2026**
  - Reduction of gillnet length in summer (July to Aug.)
  - Use of PALs

MONITORING TRENDS IN DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

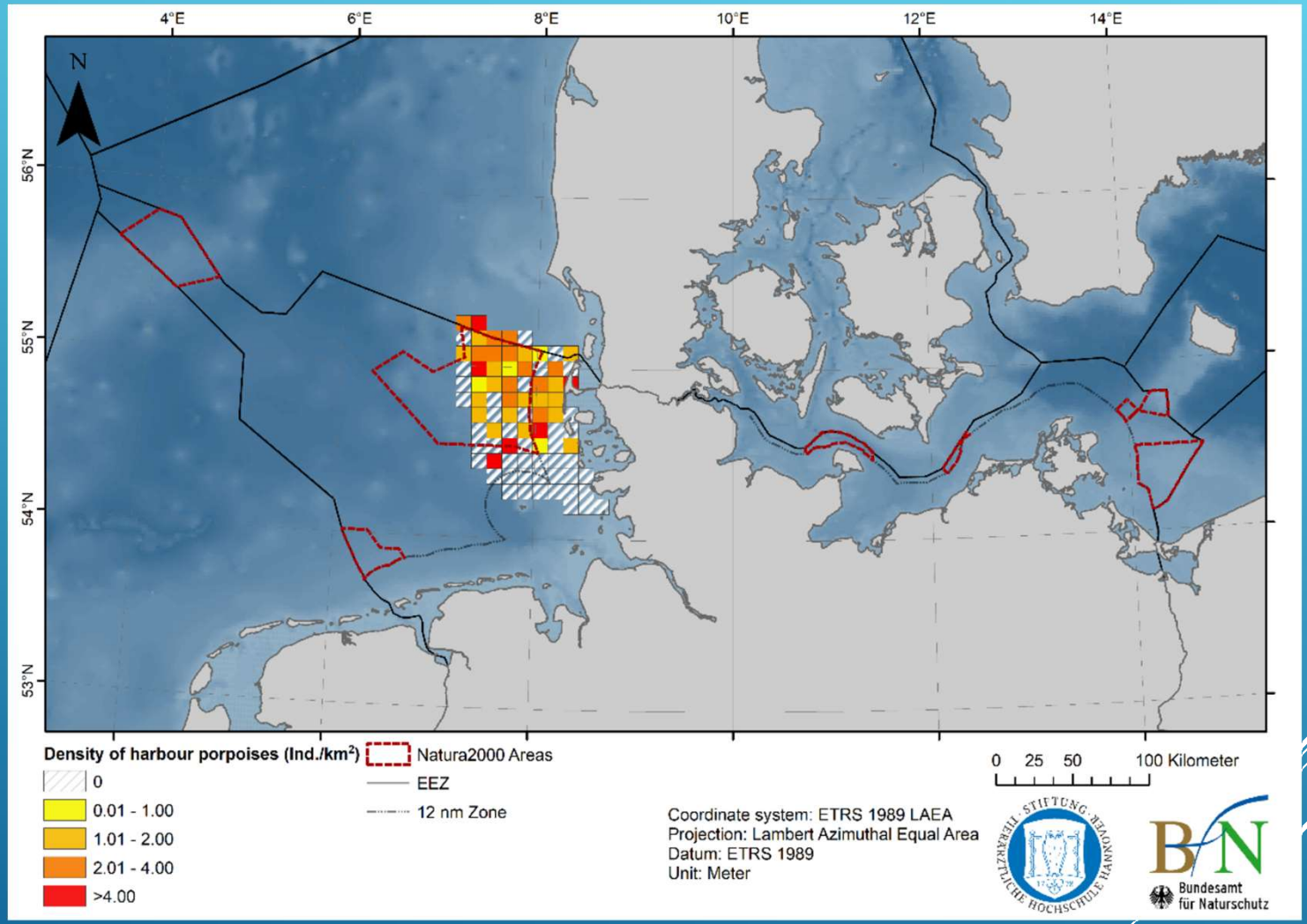
- **2021: 2 Surveys (spring and summer) by ITAW/BfN**
- **2022: SCANS IV**

❖ 2021:

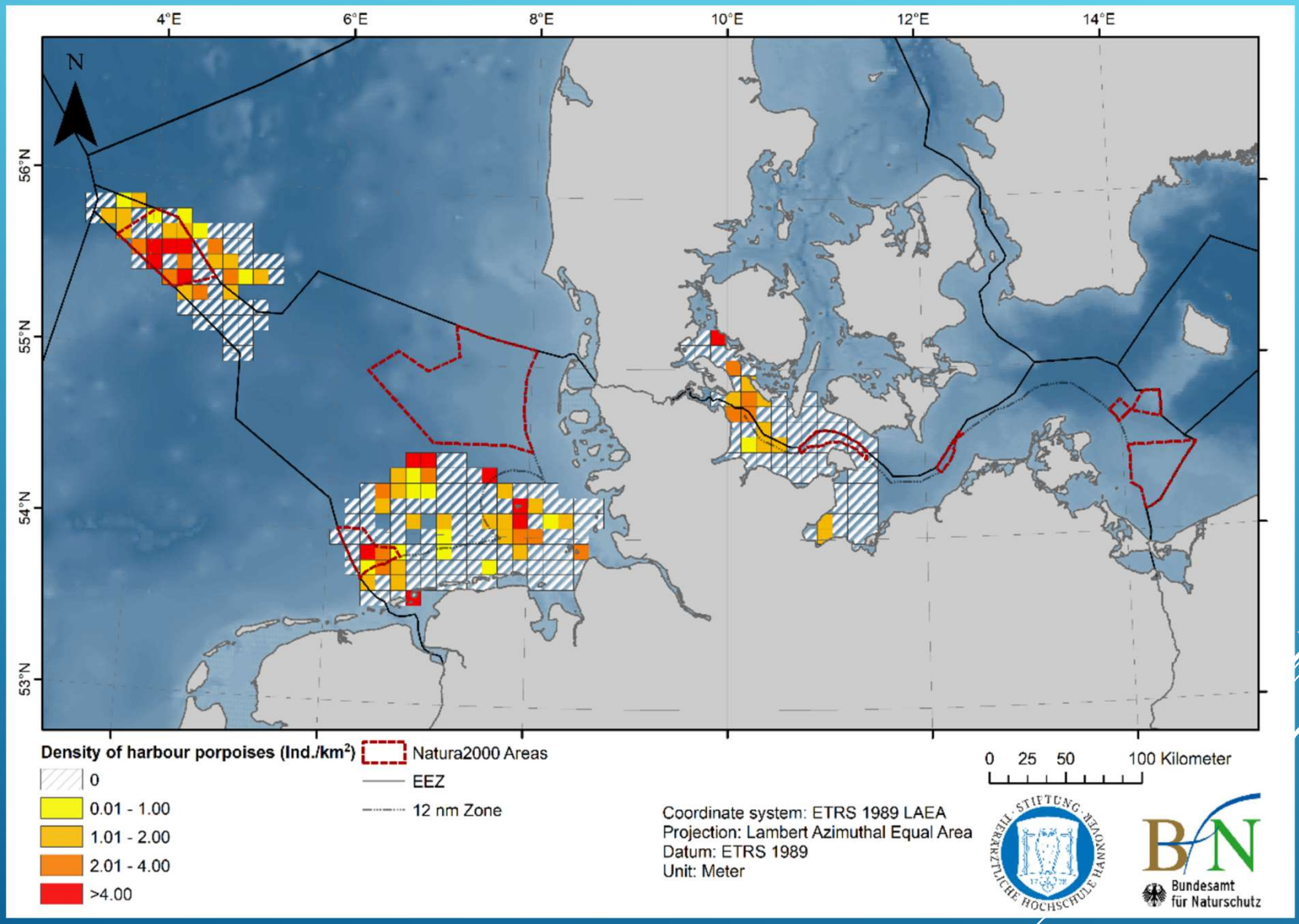
Area	Area size [km²]	Abundance (95% CI)	Density (95% CI)
D	6,897	7,836 (4,144 – 12,838)	1.14 (0.6 - 1.86)
Σ Surveyed North Sea areas spring	*6,897*	*7,836 (4,144 – 12,838)*	*1.14 (0.6 - 1.86)*
A	5,647	5,305 (2,142 – 9,401)	0.94 (0.38 - 1.66)
E	4,377	4,571 (1,391 – 10,152)	1.04 (0.32 - 2.32)
F	6,092	3,986 (1,438 – 7,465)	0.65 (0.24 - 1.23)
Σ Surveyed North Sea areas summer	*16,116*	*13,862 (7,338 – 22,037)*	*0.86 (0.46 - 1.37)*
I	3,116	2,063 (645 – 3,458)	0.66 (0.21 – 1.11)
J	3,575	*145 (0 - 496)*	*0.04 (0 - 0.14)*
Σ Surveyed Baltic Sea areas summer	*6,691*	*2,209 (773 – 3,653)*	*0.33 (0.12 - 0.55)*

ITAW: Monitoring Report 2021

Spring Survey 2021



Summer Survey 2021



NEW PROJECT

HABITATWal – Habitat choice and population dynamics of harbour porpoises in the ecosystem if the German North ad Baltic Sea

Mai 2022-Sep 2026; TiHo-ITAW, funding BfN

WP 1 - Habitat selection of harbour porpoises in the North Sea and Baltic Sea, with focus on possible causes of decline

I. Large-scale North Sea-wide analysis of habitat selection

II. Small-scale, fine-scale analysis of habitat selection in the German North Sea

III. Habitat selection and trends of mother-calf pairs

WP2 - Influence of anthropogenic disturbance factors on the population dynamics of harbour porpoises

Implementation of a population dynamics model to investigate the effect of various anthropogenic disturbance factors on population development

WP3 - Visual surveys of marine mammals in the German North Sea and Baltic Sea

I. Quality assurance and evaluation of digital flights of the BfN vertebrate monitoring

II. Observer-based survey flights in sub-areas of the North Sea and Baltic Sea and comparative studies between observer-based and digital surveys

III. Updating the trend analysis of harbour porpoise abundance

IV. Annual shipboard survey for visual and acoustic recording of minke whales and other cetacean species on the Dogger Bank

WP 4 - Contribution to the national report (reporting period 2019 - 2024) according to Art. 17 Habitats Directive in 2024 on marine mammals

WP 5 - SCANS-IV Survey 2022

WP 6 - Concept for further development of marine mammal monitoring in the German North Sea

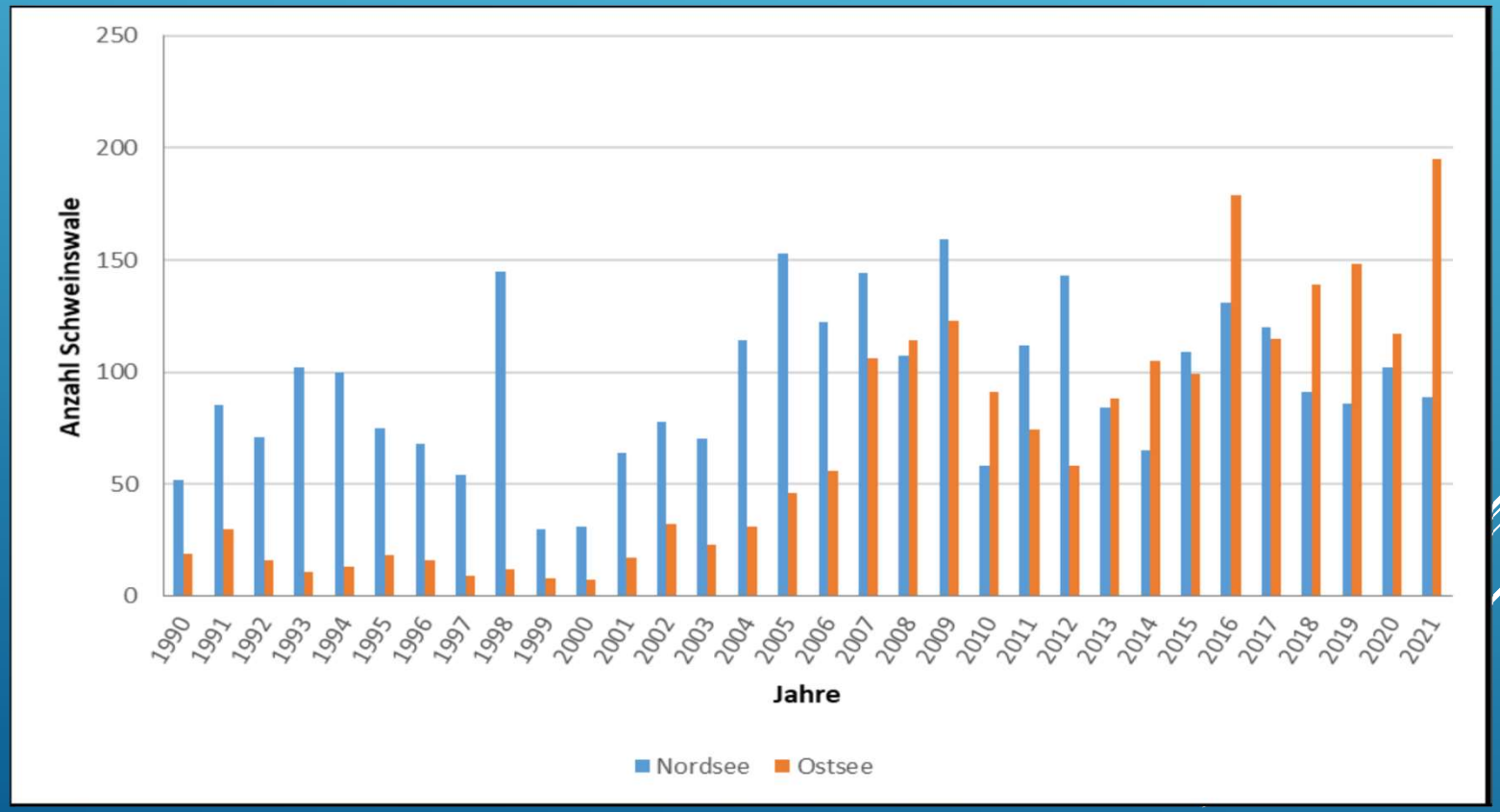
I. Simulation and power analysis for spatio-temporal coverage of marine vertebrate monitoring.

II. Feasibility analysis for the establishment of passive acoustic monitoring (PAM) in the German North Sea with international review process

COLLECTION OF INCIDENTAL PORPOISE CATCH DATA THROUGH STRANDING NETWORKS

Stranding Monitoring Programs: Established

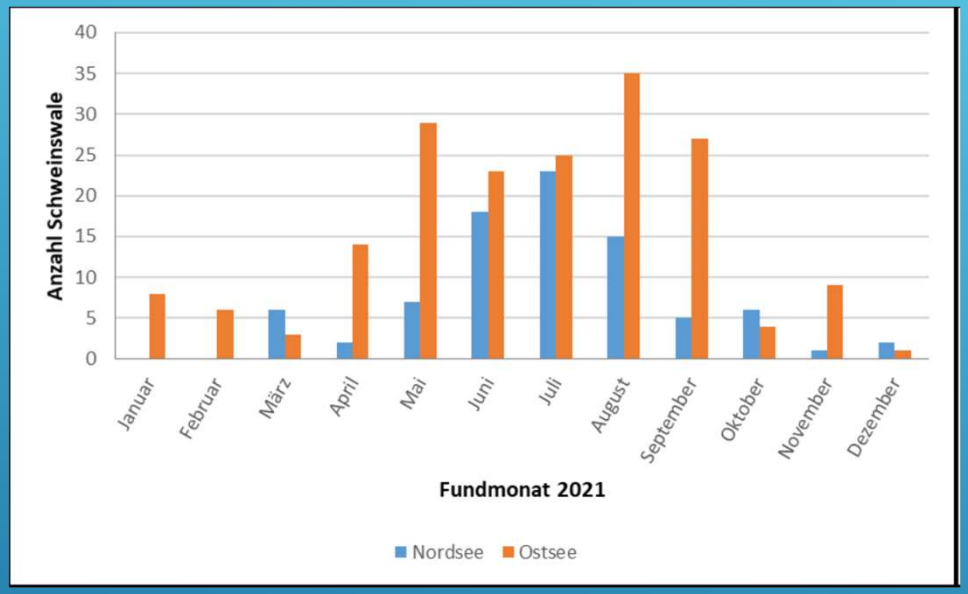
- Schleswig-Holstein: ITAW (Lower Saxony: opportunistic)
- 2021**: SH: 89** (LS: 50)



Source: ITAW Totfundmonitoring Bericht 2021

Results:

- **Per Month**



- **Cause of death:**

Bycatch: 4

Possible bycath: 4

- **Per Age and Sex**

	Adult	Foetus	Juvenil	Neonat	Gesamt
Männlich	14	1	8	20	43
Weiblich	14	3	10	12	39
Gesamt	28	4	18	32	82

Source: ITAW Totfundmonitoring Bericht 2021

INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECTS OF ANTHROPOGENIC SOUNDS ON HARBOUR PORPOISES

Project:

- **Underwater noise effects-2 (UWE-2) (Sept. 2021 – Aug. 2024)**

  ITAW / Aarhus University funded by BfN

  - Investigations of thresholds of individual behavioural reactions of harbour porpoises and harbour seals and grey seals to vessel noise and other significant noise events
  - Investigate additional energetic demands in porpoises due to vessel noise
  - Recommendations for noise mitigation measures for harbour porpoises, harbour seals and grey seals for the North- and the Baltic Sea.
  - Evaluation of noise mitigation measures for anthropogenic noise sources based on current knowledge

NATURA 2000 SITES – FISHERY MANAGEMENT

DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) …/... of 8.12.2022 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/118 as regards conservation measures in Sylter Aussenriff, Borkum-Riffgrund, Doggerbank and Östliche Deutsche Bucht, and in Klaverbank, Friese Front and Centrale Oestergronden

Measures to protect harbour porpoises in N2K sites of German EEZ:

- prohibition of fishing activities with gillnets and entangling nets (in certain areas in two Natura 2000 sites (eastern part of Sylter Aussenriff and Östliche Deutsche Bucht),
- seasonal closure of fishing activities with gillnets and entangling nets (GN, GNS, GND, GNC, GTR and GTN) in the western part of the Natura 2000 site Sylter Aussenriff from 1 March to 31 October
- limitation of fishing activities with gillnets and entangling nets to the average level in the last six years before the entry into force of this Delegated Regulation in two Natura 2000 sites (Borkum-Riffgrund and Doggerbank),

NEW PROJECT

„Anthrotop“ ***Anthropogenic Use of the North Sea: Impacts on marine Top Predators***

Mai 2022 – April 2025 - CAU-Kiel und AWI Sylt (funding BfN)

- WP 1: Preparation of data from different data sources

  Preparation of data sources or databases for analyses on the distribution and abundance of target species and on effects of anthropogenic activities

- WP 3: Modelling of the distribution and abundance of different marine mammal species in relation to current and future anthropogenic activities.
- WP 4: Modelling of the distribution and abundance of different fish species in relation to current and future anthropogenic activities
- WP 5: Potential effects on food web structures (Doggerbank)