

Quick Guide for the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Workspace (<http://workspace.ascobans.org>)

The Advisory Committee Workspace is an electronic working platform designed to assist the Advisory Committee and its working groups to address the numerous mandates for intersessional work and prepare the content for meetings in a collaborative manner. It is a pre-structured discussion forum that follows the ASCOBANS Work Plan as well as the Terms of Reference for the different working groups.

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Start Page and Features on All Pages

The start page (Figure 1) gives easy access to all working areas and provides a glimpse of recent activities, which are also visible from throughout the platform.

Figure 1 - Start Page

Public Area

- [Introduction to the AC](#)
- [Current Groups](#)
- [ASCOBANS Secretariat](#)
- [Links and Resources](#)

New comments

- [Arrangements for the North Sea Group Meeting](#)
1 hour 29 min ago
- [Report posted to AC20](#)
1 week 2 days ago
- [Report posted to AC20](#)
2 weeks 6 days ago
- [Observer participation](#)
3 weeks 21 hours ago
- [Comments on policy options](#)
4 weeks 1 day ago

[more](#)

Who is online

There are currently 2 users online.

Welcome to the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Workspace

The **ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Workspace** (AC Workspace) is the electronic, web-based communication space and working area for the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (AC). Its aim is to provide a central platform for online collaboration and to support the work and the communication of the Advisory Committee between meetings. The platform consists of a public and a restricted area, the latter being accessible only to the current members and observers of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee. It includes the following sections:

WORKING GROUPS - An area where the Advisory Committee does its technical work during the intersessional period on priority topics as instructed by the previous Meeting of the Parties and the Agreement's official documents.

MEMBERS - This area contains the contact list for all AC members and observers and their individual profiles.

RESOURCES - This area contains resource documents, such as a user manual, the Agreement text, relevant resolutions, as well as the contact list for the ASCOBANS Secretariat staff and their individual profiles.

DISCUSSION - A forum area where the Advisory Committee discusses all other matters which are not covered by the existing groups.

WIKI - This is where text documents can be worked on jointly with track change and automatic reminder functionalities.

Search

New forum topics

- [Dates for AC20 \(2013\)](#)

[More](#)

New content

- [Report of the Bycatch Working Group to AC20](#)
- [Report to ASCOBANS AC20 from working group marine debris](#)
- [Societal decisions required for the determination of safe bycatch limits for harbour porpoise, common dolphin and bottlenose dolphin](#)
- [Terms of Reference for the Jastarnia Group](#)
- [Miscellaneous](#)

New comments (on the left) are the most recent contributions made to any discussion. *New content* (on the right) refers to newly created discussion threads or new Wikis for collaborative editing of documents. *New forum topics* shows which general discussion threads (i.e. those not relating to the topics covered by any of the thematic or regional discussions, but of interest to the entire Advisory Committee) have recently been started. All can be directly accessed by clicking on the links.

Tab: Working Groups

Working Groups (Figure 2) is the main working area for users of the Workspace. This area is structured by the officially established regional or thematic working groups of the Advisory Committee, as well as other topics appearing in the Work Plan for the Agreement.

Figure 2 - Working Groups

The screenshot shows the 'Advisory Committee Workspace' interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with tabs: Home, Working Groups (highlighted with a red circle), Discussion, Members, Resources, and Wiki. The 'Working Groups' tab is selected. Below the navigation bar, the page title is 'Overview Working Groups'. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Working Groups**: A sidebar menu with options: Regional Working Groups, Thematic Working Groups, and Other Topics.
- Overview Working Groups**: A central text block stating: 'The **Advisory Committee Working Groups** is where the Advisory Committee (AC) does its technical work during the intersessional period between the Meetings of the Parties.'
- Regional Working Groups**: A list of groups:
 - Jastarnia Group
 - North Sea Group
 - Extension Area Working Group
- Thematic Working Groups**: A list of groups:
 - Bycatch Working Group
 - Underwater Noise Working Group (joint group with ACCOBAMS)
 - Pollution Working Group
 - Marine Debris Working Group
 - Marine Strategy Framework Directive Working Group (joint group with ACCOBAMS)
 - Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans
- New comments**: A list of recent comments with timestamps, such as 'Arrangements for the North Sea Group Meeting' (1 hour 31 min ago).
- Who is online**: A section indicating 'There are currently 2 users online.'
- Search**: A search bar with a magnifying glass icon.
- New forum topics**: A list of topics, including 'Dates for AC20 (2013)'.
- New content**: A list of new reports and documents, such as 'Report of the Bycatch Working Group to AC20'.
- Interesting links**: A section for additional resources.

Regional Working Groups are structured as shown in the menu on the left, reproduced in Figure 3. *Thematic Working Groups* are shown in Figure 4.

The ASCOBANS Work Plan, as contained in Resolution 7.2, requires the Advisory Committee also to work on *Other Topics* not covered by a specific Working Group. Discussion threads have been prepared for these, too, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 3 - Regional Working Groups

- Working Groups
 - [-] Regional Working Groups
 - [+] Baltic Sea Region
 - [+] Jastarnia Plan
 - [+] Western Baltic Conservation Plan
 - [+] Jastarnia Group Meetings
 - Miscellaneous
 - [+] North Sea Region
 - [+] Atlantic Region (Extension Area)
 - [+] Thematic Working Groups
 - [+] Other Topics

Figure 4 - Thematic Working Groups

- Working Groups
 - [+] Regional Working Groups
 - [-] Thematic Working Groups
 - [+] Bycatch
 - [+] Underwater Noise
 - [+] Pollution
 - [+] Marine Debris
 - [+] Marine Strategy Framework Directive
 - [+] Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans
 - [+] Other Topics

Figure 5 - Other Topics

- Working Groups
 - [+] Regional Working Groups
 - [+] Thematic Working Groups
 - [-] Other Topics
 - Population Size, Distribution, Structure
 - Marine Protected Areas
 - Underwater Unexploded Ordnance
 - Emerging Issues
 - Small Cetaceans at Risk
 - Communication, Education and Public Awareness
 - Cooperation with other Organizations
 - Review of Project Proposals
 - Revision of National Reporting Format

For each of the official Working Groups, terms of reference have been agreed by the Advisory Committee. Accordingly, all points a Group should address in its intersessional work and the reports to the Advisory Committee are listed as separate discussion threads, allowing users to go straight to the topic they are interested in. As an example, the structure in Figure 6 has been prepared for the Bycatch Working Group.

Figure 6 - Tasks of the Bycatch Working Group

Working Groups

- ⊕ Regional Working Groups
- ⊖ Thematic Working Groups
 - ⊖ Bycatch
 - ⊕ Management procedures (SCANS II and CODA)
 - Cooperating projects related to bycatch
 - Best approaches within fisheries fora
 - Fisheries fora meetings
 - Involvement at relevant RAC and other meetings
 - National initiatives (bycatch mitigation, alternative gear experiments, monitoring)
 - Scientific studies on bycatch
 - Results of other fora
 - Overview of problem areas/status of knowledge
 - ⊕ Miscellaneous

Bycatch Working Group

Group:
[Request group membership](#)

The ASCOBANS Bycatch Working Group was established in 2010 and has received updated Terms of Reference at AC19 in March 2012:

The group will work intersessionally with the provisional tasks listed below; these can be fine-tuned by the group itself where deemed necessary. A report will be submitted to the next AC meeting detailing new information. The group should coordinate its activities closely with the regional working groups of ASCOBANS.

Tasks:

- To further explore management procedures relating to bycatch, including those proposed under the SCANS II and CODA projects.
- To report on, and assist in, projects related to bycatch in which fishermen, gear technologists and cetacean scientists cooperate.
- To assess the best approaches to address the bycatch problem within fisheries fora.
- To identify relevant fisheries fora meetings where an ASCOBANS representation would be useful, and promote input as appropriate.
- To develop active ASCOBANS involvement at relevant RAC and other meetings, and report back from such meetings.
- To report on national initiatives concerning bycatch mitigation, alternative gear experiments, improvement of bycatch monitoring, etc.
- To report results of scientific studies on bycatch.
- To summarize the results of initiatives at, or meetings of other fora such as OSPAR, EC, ICES and HELCOM.
- To prepare an overview of problem areas (geographical and fishery type) and the status of knowledge of the problem, monitoring and mitigation in place to identify gaps.

Previous reports of the Working Group to the Advisory Committee are accessible below:

Each of the topics listed in the menu gives users the opportunity to post comments, links etc. relating to that issue in the discussion thread. Also, further resources, such as Wikis (see below), can be linked up through the menu. In the example in Figure 7, a document made available for comments by the Working Group has been added.

Figure 7 - Example Discussion Thread and Related Wiki

Home » Thematic Working Groups » Marine Debris » Miscellaneous

Working Groups

- Regional Working Groups
- Thematic Working Groups
 - Bycatch
 - Underwater Noise
 - Pollution
 - Marine Debris
 - Recommendations for research methodologies
 - Beach surveys
 - Relevant literature
 - Micro-debris investigations
 - Liase with other working groups
 - Protocol for necropsies
 - Data from stranding networks
 - Miscellaneous
 - Report to ASCOBANS AC20**
 - Marine Strategy Framework Directive
 - Informal Working

Miscellaneous

Submitted by [Heidrun Frisch](#) on Wed, 20/03/2013 - 18:47



This area provides space for the working group to exchange other relevant information, such as news reports etc.

Parent working group taxonomy:
Marine Debris Working Group

Subscribe

Add new comment

Comments

Press Release: EMFF to fund debris collection projects

Press Release: EMFF to fund debris collection projects



Submitted by [Heidrun Frisch](#) on Thu, 18/07/2013 - 18:53

THE EUROPEAN MARITIME AND FISHERIES FUND (EMFF) ENABLES NOW PROJECTS TO SUPPORT THE COLLECTION OF MARINE DEBRIS BY THE FISHERMEN

On the 10th of July 2013, the Committee on Fisheries (PECH) of the European Parliament approved the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for

Feature: Adding a Comment

To add a comment on a discussion thread, go to the appropriate item in the menu on the left and click *Add new comment*. A box with standard text editing options will appear (see Figure 8).

Please choose a meaningful subject line, as this is what will appear in the box *New comments* visible on all pages. This way, you will allow other users to see easily whether the comment relates to a subject they are interested in. If you leave the subject line empty, the first few words of your comment will be used by the system.

The text box allows a variety of editing and formatting options, pasting from other sources, insertion of tables and pictures, as well as hyperlinks.

Figure 8 - Commenting

Home » Thematic Working Groups » Marine Strategy Framework Directive » Environmental status of cetaceans

Environmental status of cetaceans

Submitted by [Secretariat](#) on Tue, 09/10/2012 - 15:42

By mid-2013, identify relevant species, geographical and temporal scales and parameters to measure, including developing, if appropriate, an index of cumulative impacts, in order to assess the environmental status of cetaceans

Parent working group taxonomy:
[Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#)

[Subscribe](#)

Add new comment

Your name: [Demo Member](#)

Subject:

Comment *

Source

B I U S

Format - Font - Size - **A** - **A** -

body p

[Switch to plain text editor](#)

Text format: Full HTML [More information about text formats](#) ?

- Web page addresses and e-mail addresses turn into links automatically.
- Lines and paragraphs break automatically.

New comments

- [Arrangements for the North Sea Group Meeting](#)
1 hour 38 min ago

When you have inserted your comment, you have the following options:



Choose *Save as draft* if you are not yet finished writing or editing your comment, and would like to keep it to continue working on it at a later time. You can then access your draft at any time through *My account* on the top right of the screen (see Figure 9), and then under the tab *My drafts*.

Figure 9 - How to Find "My Account"

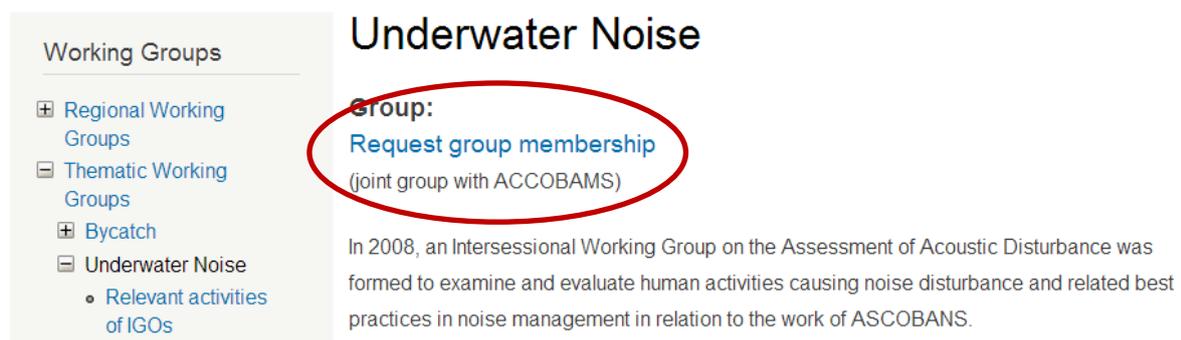


If you choose *Publish*, the comment will become visible to all users, and those subscribed to the Working Group's content will receive an email notification. You can also preview your comment before publishing to avoid the need for multiple revisions due to formatting problems etc.

Feature: Subscription

To appear on the membership list of a Working Group, you need to click on *Request group membership* toward the top of the group's start page (see Figure 10). However, this is not necessary in order to comment and follow discussions.

Figure 10 - Becoming a Group Member



If you wish to receive email notifications for comments posted in a Group of interest to you, please go to *My account* (see Figure 9 above) and select the tab *Subscriptions* (see Figure 11). Under *Categories*, you can manage your subscriptions to any of the Groups in the Workspace. Once subscribed, you will receive an email which includes the new content whenever something is added, easily keeping you abreast of the discussion. Please note that you can also subscribe to discussions even if you are not a member of the Group. You can subscribe to as many Groups as you like.

Figure 11 - Subscribing for Email Notifications of New Content

The screenshot shows the 'Demo Member' account interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'View', 'Edit', 'Invitations', 'Subscriptions', 'Contact', 'My Content', and 'My Drafts'. The 'Subscriptions' tab is selected and circled in red. Below these tabs are sub-tabs: 'Overview', 'Pages/Threads', 'Content types', and 'Categories', with 'Categories' also circled in red. The main content area is titled 'Current subscriptions:' and contains three expandable sections: 'Forums', 'Tags', and 'Working Group'. The 'Working Group' section is expanded, showing a table of subscription categories. Each category has a checkbox in the left-most column for selection.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Subscription
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bycatch Working Group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication Education and Public Awareness
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cooperation with other Organizations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emerging Issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extension Area Group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jastarnia Group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marine Debris
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marine Debris Working Group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marine Protected Areas
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
<input type="checkbox"/>	North Sea Group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pollution Working Group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Population Size Distribution Structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review of Project Proposals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revision of National Reporting Format
<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Cetaceans at Risk
<input type="checkbox"/>	Underwater Noise
<input type="checkbox"/>	Underwater Unexploded Ordnance

The master checkboxes in the left-most column turn the given subscription on or off. To turn a range of subscriptions on or off, click and Shift-click. Depending on the setup of the site, you may have additional options for active subscriptions.

Save

Tab: Wiki

The Wiki function allows multiple users to work on the same online document. It allows full version control and comparison of any version with any other (as in Wikipedia). As such, it is ideal for the collaborative preparation of reports and for gathering comments on draft documents.

A key advantage of using a Wiki instead of asking for comments on a Word document is that there is no need to combine multiple versions back into one, with all the time investment this takes, in particular if comments are contradictory. Wikis can be set up to allow comments, too, therefore enabling the users working on the document to have the necessary discussions directly with each other even if they are not yet ready to suggest specific text.

Wikis that are of relevance to all users can be accessed through the main menu (see Figure 12).

Figure 12 - the Wiki Function



Wikis can also be associated with a specific Working Group. In this case, they do not appear in the general Wiki list, but a menu link can be placed in an appropriate place in the Working Group's topic list. The View page of the Wiki, which you will always access first, shows the latest version of the document (see Figure 13).

Figure 13 – Wiki View Page

The image shows a web page for a Wiki document. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home » Regional Working Groups » Baltic Sea Region » Jastarnia Group Meetings » Terms of Reference for the Jastarnia Group'. The main heading is 'Terms of Reference for the Jastarnia Group'. Below the heading are buttons for 'View', 'Edit', and 'Revisions'. The document is attributed to 'Heidrun Frisch' on 'Tue, 02/07/2013 - 18:08'. The title of the document is 'Terms of Reference for the Steering Group for the ASCOBANS Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises ("Jastarnia Group")'. The first section is '1. Introduction', which discusses the need for a recovery plan and mentions the 4th Meeting of the parties to ASCOBANS in Esbjerg, Denmark, in 2003. On the left side, there is a 'Wiki' sidebar with links to 'About the Wiki' and 'Wiki'. Below that is a 'New comments' section with a list of recent comments and a 'more' link. On the right side, there is a 'Search' box, a 'New forum topics' section with a link to 'Dates for AC20 (2013)', and a 'New content' section with a list of recent reports and a 'More' link.

In order to make changes to the text, please click on the *Edit* tab above the text and then insert your changes in the body of the text (see Figure 14). Don't forget to save your changes when you have finished. All people subscribed to the Working Group's content or this Wiki will then be notified by email.

Figure 14 - Editing a Wiki

The screenshot shows a Wiki editing interface. At the top, there are three tabs: 'View', 'Edit', and 'Revisions'. The 'Edit' tab is highlighted with a red circle. Below the tabs is a 'Title' field containing the text 'Terms of Reference for the Jastarnia Group'. Underneath is a 'Body (Edit summary)' section with a rich text editor. The editor's toolbar includes options for source code, undo, redo, bold, italic, underline, strikethrough, subscript, superscript, bulleted list, numbered list, indent, outdent, quote, div, link, unlink, unlink page, and unlink domain. The main text area contains the following content:

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

1. Introduction

The need for a Baltic harbour porpoise recovery plan was recognised for a considerable time not only by ASCOBANS, but also by other international bodies. In 2002, a recovery plan was elaborated under the auspices of ASCOBANS in a collaborative effort involving scientists, managers and stakeholders. This recovery

body p strong

In order to compare revisions, please click on the *Revisions* tab. You will find a list similar to the one shown in Figure 15, which allows you to see how many revisions were made, by whom, and when.

Figure 15 - Wiki Revisions List

✔ *Terms of Reference for the Jastarnia Group* is published. It has 4 revisions.

Home » Regional Working Groups » Baltic Sea Region » Jastarnia Group Meetings » Terms of Reference for the Jastarnia Group » Te Group

New comments

- [Report posted to AC20](#)
4 days 4 hours ago
- [Report posted to AC20](#)
2 weeks 1 day ago
- [Observer participation](#)
2 weeks 2 days ago
- [Comments on policy options](#)
3 weeks 3 days ago
- [Press Release: EMFF to fund debris collection projects](#)
4 weeks 21 hours ago

[more](#)

Revisions for *Terms of Reference for the Jastarnia Group*

View
Edit
Revisions

Revisions allow you to track differences between multiple versions of your content, and revert back to older versions.

To edit, publish or delete one of the revisions below, click on its saved date.

[Delete archived](#) | [Delete](#)

Revision	Compare	Status
Saved 30/07/2013 - 18:00 by Heidrun Frisch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>current revision (published)</i> [status=1]
Saved 30/07/2013 - 14:43 by Genevieve Desportes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	archived [status=1]
Saved 02/07/2013 - 18:11 by Heidrun Frisch	<input type="checkbox"/>	archived [status=1]
Saved 02/07/2013 - 18:08 by Heidrun Frisch	<input type="checkbox"/>	archived [status=1]

Who is online

There is currently 1 user online.

- [Heidrun Frisch](#)

Concluding Remarks

Please be aware that since this is still a new working platform, you may encounter occasional technical difficulties, broken links or similar functional problems. Please report those to the ASCOBANS Secretariat through the appropriate forum under the tab *Discussion* to help us improve the system and ensure a smooth working environment for the Advisory Committee.

We are confident that this new tool will greatly enhance the Advisory Committee's capacity for effective, transparent intersessional collaboration, and we are looking forward to constructive and lively discussions on the many important topics we are working on!