

Intergovernmental Framework for Tackling Cetacean Bycatch



INTRODUCTION

Accidental entanglement in fishing gear is generally considered the most serious threat to cetacean populations, as well as to many other marine species. Addressing it requires effective collaboration between the environment and fishing sectors.

A collaborative framework has been set up in 2019 to combat bycatch. The framework consists of **Resolutions** providing guidance to member countries on how to address bycatch; **action plans** and **regional groups** targeted at helping stakeholders to implement measures to mitigate bycatch in a coordinated fashion; and **workshops** to facilitate knowledge transfer and to develop guidance.



KEY DOCUMENTS

ASCOBANS Resolutions

- Res.8.5 Monitoring and Mitigation of Small Cetacean Bycatch
- Res.5.5 & 3.3. Incidental Take of Small Cetaceans

ASCOBANS Action Plans

- Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises
- Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea
- Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise Population in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat
- Species Action Plan for North East Atlantic Common Dolphin

ACCOBAMS Resolutions

- Res.7.11 Interactions between Fisheries and Cetaceans
- Res.4.9 Fisheries Interactions with Cetaceans
- Res.3.8 Strengthening Collaboration with the GFCM
- Res.A/3.1 amendment to ACCOBAMS Annex 2 on use of drift nets
- Res.2.21 Assessment and Mitigation of the Adverse Impacts of Interactions between Cetaceans and Fishing Activities
- Res.2.13 Pelagic Gillnets
- Res.2.12 Guidelines for the use of Acoustic Deterrent Devices



JOINT BYCATCH WORKING GROUP



ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS established a joint working group on bycatch in January 2019, which addresses their respective mandates. In providing its advice, the working group will liaise as necessary with other relevant bodies and fora:

CMS

IWC Bycatch Mitigation Initiative

HELCOM

ICES WG on Bycatch of Protected Species

NAMMCO

OSPAR

Regional Fisheries Management Organizations

NGOs

Barcelona Convention

Regional fishery bodies

Working groups of the two Agreements e.g.
Common Dolphin Group, Steering Groups of the Harbour Porpoise action plans

Terms of Reference:

- collate and prepare an overview of scientific information relevant to bycatch of affected cetacean species
- review available information on IUU fishing, recreational fishing, identification of bycatch risk areas, fishing techniques and gears applied related to bycatch
- contribute to the assessment process of the EU-MSFD criteria and/or UNEP-MAP EcAp and associated targets
- review and provide updates on bycatch mitigation measures currently available or under development and their effectiveness, using existing sources
- overview of national and international legislation and other measures relevant to the monitoring and management of cetacean bycatch
- prepare, as appropriate, and in coordination with ICES WGBYC, advice on target setting incl. potential conservation and user objectives, in accordance with the Agreements' policies, and monitoring cetacean bycatch and fishing operations
- provide technical support as required to facilitate dialogue with relevant bodies that have certification schemes by actively contributing to the assessment of relevant fisheries with respect to cetacean bycatch



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ASCOBANS is a UNEP Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas. It was established in 1992 and currently has 10 Parties.

ACCOBAMS is an Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea, and Contiguous

Atlantic Area. It was established in 1996 and has 24 Parties.

Both intergovernmental treaties were concluded under the UNEP Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, CMS.



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