

Agenda Item 6.3.1: Publicity/PR Issues in Parties/Range States

**Report for the 11th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory
Committee on Poland's Activities in the Field of Publicising the
Problems of the Status and the Protection of Small Cetaceans in
the Baltic Sea in 2003**

Submitted by: Poland



Report for the 11th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee on Poland's Activities in the Field of Publicising the Problems of the Status and the Protection of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic Sea

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Activities for the dissemination of knowledge about Baltic porpoises and for the implementation of research results in a protection programme of the population were carried out principally by the Hel Marine Station of Gdańsk University (HMS UG). Most of these projects were organised on a national scale and were supported by other organisations and institutions, chiefly by a local NGO, "Friends of Hel" and the Foundation for the Development of Gdańsk University. For the purposes of these and similar activities, the HMS UG and the two aforementioned organisations established a partnership group named – "Pro-Baltic".

Informative and publicising campaigns held by Pro-Baltic in 2003 focused on porpoises and grey seals and included, but were not limited to the following events:

- The *Porpoise Day* was organised on May 17, 2003 in (fig.1,2) accordance with the recommendations of the ASCOBAN Advisory Committee. The event was of an educational nature and its mission was to promote action for the protection and saving of the species and to increase the awareness about the recommendations of the "Jastarnia Plan".



Fig. 1,2

- Another event organised by the same body was the Scientific Festival in Gdynia. The researchers of the HMS UG presented the latest hydro-acoustic methods applied in research about porpoises and various problems related to bycatch of the species (fig.3). A similar display was shown during "Environmental Friendship", an ecological exhibition in Warszawa. (fig.4).



Fig. 3,4

- On June 20, 2003, during on official opening of a new education part of Hel Marine Station a celebration attended by the President of the Republic of Poland – Aleksander Kwaśniewski, a permanent exhibition was opened at the MHS UG. The exhibition is dedicated to small cetaceans inhabiting the Polish zone of the Baltic Sea, the promotion of the ASCOBANS Agreement and the plan for the protection of porpoises with particular focus given to the various threats to the survival of this species in the Baltic (overfishing, pollution, acoustic interference). A special brochure, the “*Harbour Porpoise World*” and post cards were printed on that occasion. An ASCOBANS leaflet published in 2003, with the support of the Secretariat in Bonn, is distributed in the Polish version at the exhibition as well. Some 100 thousand people visited the exhibition in this year. (fig.5-8)



Fig 5-8

- With the backing of the ORLEN oil company, a public campaign was launched before the summer holiday season began, in order to inform the public about the necessity to protect the porpoise population of the Baltic Sea. The campaign included a collection to fund research into these animals in the waters of the Polish zone of the Baltic Sea. Special posters and labels were displayed in all (ca. 800) petrol stations operated by ORLEN in Poland. (fig.9,10)

Przynajemy punkty morświnowi



Fig 9,10

- Another important event in our attempts to publicise knowledge about Baltic cetaceans was the publication of a new edition of the *Red Book of Polish Fauna* (Głowaciński ed., 2003)¹. The Book provides updated information about the current status of the species in Poland.
- Problems concerned with the status of small cetaceans were included in 2002 in an educational programme for schoolchildren, called “Blue School” carried out in the HMS UG and will be continued until 2006 thanks to subsidies from the Provincial Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in Gdańsk. (fig. 12, 13)



Fig 12, 13

- Another event with an educational aspect was a workshop devoted to the improvement of methods of dissecting porpoises. The event was organised as part

¹ Kuklik I, Skóra K.E., 2003. Morświn [porpoise] in “the Red Book Of Polish Fauna. Głowaciński Z. ed. PWRiL Publishers.

of an educational programme: “Endangered Baltic Marine Mammal Species – Threats, Investigations and Conservation Measures”, implemented by the Centre of Excellence for Baltic Development, Education and Research (BALTDER)². The primary aim of the workshop, being a pioneer initiative of its kind in Poland, was to promote professional knowledge of the species amongst university students and researchers from the natural science faculties of Polish universities.

- The Polish edition of the “PROJECT C” CD was received favourably by its Polish audience. The edition was possible thanks to the encouragement and assistance of the ASCOBANS Secretariat and financial support provided by the HMS UG, the latter having transferred the funds of an award granted to it by the Provincial Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in recognition of the title of “the Promoter of Ecology” won by the HMS UG at the “Environmental Friendship” competition. (fig.14).

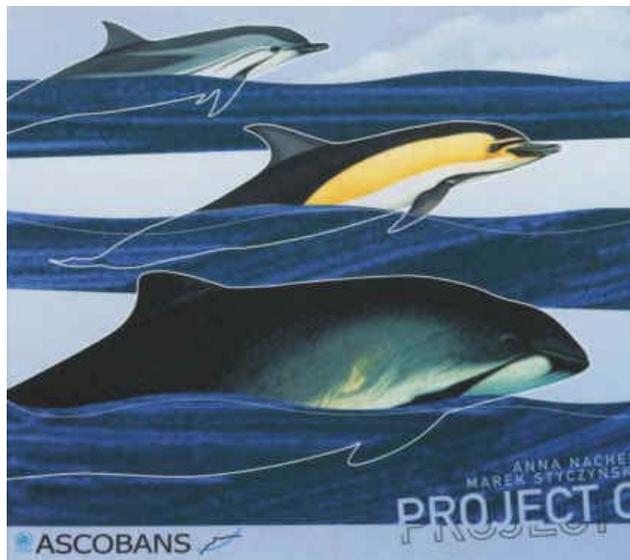


Fig. 14

- For promotion of harbour porpoises among general public the National Bank of Poland in cooperation with HMS UG has begun preparatory work for issuing the coins bearing an image of porpoises.

² See: <http://www.ocean.univ.gda.pl/baltder/index.htm..../work package 7>.