

Agenda Item 5.7.2

Implementation of the ASCOBANS Triennial  
Work Plan (2007-2009)

Publicity and Outreach

Report of the Secretariat

Document 23

**Draft Communication, Education and  
Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan for  
ASCOBANS**

**Action Requested**

- Take note of the draft document
- Comment
- Endorse the plan

Submitted by

Secretariat



**NOTE:**  
**IN THE INTERESTS OF ECONOMY, DELEGATES ARE KINDLY REMINDED TO BRING THEIR OWN  
COPIES OF DOCUMENTS TO THE MEETING**

## Secretariat's Note

The ASCOBANS Secretariat has been mandated by MOP 5 (Res.8, 2006) to step up promotional activities. This includes the development of the website to address a wider target group and include more educational material. The purpose of a Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan is to identify actions and activities to be taken by the Secretariat, Parties and relevant partners within the given budget.

The triennium work plan for 2007-2009 identifies a number of outreach and educational priorities. The CEPA Plan's purpose is to identify how these can be met more fully and will serve as a basis for producing relevant sections of a work plan for the coming triennium (2010-2012). In particular, the CEPA Plan should identify how the Secretariat, Parties and partners can work together to raise awareness of issues related to cetacean conservation in the Agreement Area; how ASCOBANS can synchronize joint actions in educational and promotional activities, and create synergy to provide added value while avoiding duplication of effort with the EU, CMS, OSPAR, HELCOM and ACCOBAMS; and how the Agreement and its aims can be promoted more effectively in Parties, Range States and with other relevant players.

The plan aims to improve the effectiveness of the Agreement. Specifically, this will be achieved through the increased implementation of outreach aspects of the Agreement, including exhibition and information material as well as collaboration with key partners in the field of cetacean conservation in the Agreement Area.

In consultation with the ASCOBANS Secretariat and with advice from the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS), the consultant Ms Fenella Gerry was asked to develop a Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan for the Agreement. She took into account the preliminary work already done by the Secretariat and consulted Outreach Plans of other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), such as CMS (Res.9.05) and CBD (<http://www.cbd.int/cepa/>).

The Terms of Reference for the assignment specified that the CEPA Plan should:

- a) Tie in with the CMS Outreach Plan, as outlined in CMS Res.9.05;
- b) Identify activities to be carried out by the ASCOBANS Secretariat and the joint Information, Capacity Building and Fundraising Unit (FICFU), taking into account the limited staff complement and modest budgetary provisions;
- c) Identify activities to be carried out by the ASCOBANS Parties;
- d) Identify activities best carried out by partner organisations;
- e) Clearly outline what the expected results and benefits of activities are.

**DRAFT**

**Communication, Education and  
Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan  
for the Agreement on the Conservation  
of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East  
Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS)**

Work plan for the coming triennium  
(2010 – 2012)

Fenella Gerry, April 2009

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## **1. Summary**

ASCOBANS is a regional intergovernmental treaty working to conserve small whales, dolphins and porpoises in the Baltic, North and Irish Seas and the North-East Atlantic.

When the Agreement came into force in April 1994, it covered only the Baltic and North Seas. In 2008, the Agreement Area was extended westwards to include important habitats adjacent to the original area, address threats to small cetaceans more effectively and improve the international coordination of conservation measures.

As of 2008, ASCOBANS has 10 Party States: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

ASCOBANS also collaborates with the Range States, which are not (yet) party to the Agreement: Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Russia and Spain.

The Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan provides an approach to communicating with a wide range of audiences to maximise the potential for the Agreement to achieve its objectives. Ultimately the aim is to encourage positive contributions by the people who reside in the 10 Party States, those living in Range States and visitors to the countries in the important and urgent objectives of the Agreement.

## **2. Introduction**

The ASCOBANS Secretariat commissioned the production of this Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan after having been mandated by MOP 5 (Res.8, 2006) to step up promotional activities; including the development of the website in order to address a wider target group and include more educational material.

The purpose of the Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan is to identify actions and activities to be taken by the Secretariat, Parties and relevant partners within the given budget. The triennium work plan for 2007 – 2009 identifies a number of outreach and educational priorities. The CEPA Plan's purpose is to identify how these can be met more fully and will serve as a basis for producing relevant sections of a work plan for the coming triennium (2010 – 2012). In particular, this plan will identify the following:

- How the Secretariat, Parties and partners can work together to raise awareness of issues related to cetacean conservation in the Agreement Area;
- How ASCOBANS can synchronize joint actions in educational and promotional activities, and create synergy to provide added value while also avoiding any unnecessary duplication of effort with the EU, CMS, OSPAR, HELCOM and ACCOBAMS; and
- How the Agreement and its aims can be promoted more effectively in Parties, Range States and with other relevant players

The plan has been developed to help improve the effectiveness of the Agreement and provide a focus for increased implementation of outreach aspects of the Agreement, including exhibition and information material as well as collaboration with key partners in the field of conservation in the Agreement Area.

Through taking this approach the Agreement will be better placed to achieve its objectives in promoting close cooperation amongst Parties to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for small cetaceans.

### **3. Why is there urgent need for a CEPA plan?**

#### **I. THREATS: To make public and raise awareness of the human threats to whales, dolphins and porpoises and their human dominated destinies:**

- i. Cetaceans are wide-ranging and often migratory animals and face a number of man-made threats across their ranges. The most serious of these is **bycatch**. Every year, thousands of cetaceans in the Agreement Area accidentally become entangled in fishing gear, and perish;
- ii. Another serious threat is posed by **marine pollution**, which can have adverse impacts on the health of the animals, their reproductive success, their habitats and prey;
- iii. Cetaceans are also affected by **underwater noise** e.g. from shipping, seismic and industrial activities or navy sonar. Very intense sounds can harm them physically, but since hearing is their main sense, even less intense noise disturbs them and makes it hard for them to communicate or hunt;
- iv. As the number of ships and their speed increases, so do the incidents of **collisions** between vessels and cetaceans. Such ship collisions are of a growing concern to those working for the conservation for small cetaceans; and
- v. The extent of the threat to small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS area is dramatically illustrated by the decline in the population of **harbour porpoises** in the Baltic Seas where it is the only native cetacean. However, the harbour porpoise remains the most common cetacean species in the North Sea and ASCOBANS has developed an Action Plan for its conservation there.

#### **II. 2010 Biodiversity Target**

##### **The target is thus defined:**

*“Biodiversity-the variability within and among living organisms and the systems they inhabit-is the foundation upon which human civilization has been built. In addition to its intrinsic value, biodiversity provides goods and services that underpin sustainable development in many important ways, thus contributing to poverty alleviation. First, it supports the ecosystem functions essential for life on Earth, such as the provision of fresh water, soil conservation and climate stability. Second, it provides products such as food, medicines and materials for industry. Finally, biodiversity is at the heart of many cultural values.”<sup>1</sup>*

##### **In addition:**

- i. In April 2002, the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity committed themselves to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth;

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<sup>1</sup> CBD COP9

- ii. The 2010 Biodiversity Target was subsequently endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the United Nations General Assembly and was incorporated as a new target under the Millennium Development Goals;
- iii. The UN General Assembly declared 2010 as the **International Year of Biodiversity**;
- iv. Parties to CMS recognised that the Convention on Migratory Species, including its Agreements, has an important role to play in helping to achieve the targets set for biodiversity conservation and emphasized the need to highlight the importance of migratory species as indicators for biodiversity and their importance for the preservation of healthy ecosystems<sup>2</sup>; and
- v. COP 6 Decision VI/26: Strategic Plan for the Convention on Biological Diversity. With specific reference to Goal 4: There is a better understanding of the importance of biodiversity and of the Convention, and this has led to broader engagement across society in implementation. 4.1 All Parties are implementing a communication, education, and public awareness strategy and promoting public participation in support of the Convention.

**III. The ASCOBANS Conservation and Management Plan, which is annexed to the treaty, states:**

**4. Information and education:** *Information shall be provided to the general public in order to ensure support for the aims of the agreement in general and to facilitate the reporting of sightings and standings in particular.*

**4. Strengths and weaknesses of the ASCOBANS Communication strategy**

**1. Strengths**

- i. ASCOBANS has developed a number of communication documents. This includes the information brochure which is published in all languages of the ASCOBANS Parties and several non-Party Range States.
  - ii. A new ASCOBANS Exhibition is available in English; a German version is planned.
  - iii. ASCOBANS has a well-functioning website.
  - iv. A newsletter has been published and widely circulated since 2007.
- Hence a range of information is available to the public across the agreement area.

**2. Weaknesses**

- i. The existence and specific activities of the Agreement are little known to the general public at large, both in Party States and in Non-Party Range States; and
- v. There are a number of IGOs and NGOs who work in the same or similar fields and their PR activities may be overshadowing the work of the Agreement.

To maximise the potential of the Agreement, it is important to consolidate the valuable work that has been undertaken to date and this will assist in the Agreement being more effective in the planning process for the next triennium. With regard to delivering and maintaining an effective Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan, the Agreement will be better placed to achieving its objectives if the following aims are reached:

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<sup>2</sup> UNEP/CMS/Resolution 9.5

- More effective engagement with audiences, both existing and potential ones:
- Clear focus amongst Secretariat, Parties, Partners and key stakeholders about key messages and objectives;
- More impact upon audiences;
- More reflection by audiences helping to lead to consequent actions;
- More effective connection with issues;
- More effective connection with educational, fundraising and promotional initiatives;
- More engagement with the public and potential investors in the work of ASCOBANS; and
- More effective and easily understood communication of science

Of critical importance to the delivery is a clear focus on making each activity and action that supports the Agreement available to a wide audience in the most effective way possible. It is important to note that effectiveness can be measured in terms of the ability to impact through communication, but also in terms of human and financial resources gained.

## 5. Objectives and recommended actions:

	Recommended Action			Done
Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners	
<b>MOP 5 Res. 8: Educational and Promotional Activities</b>				
Website development	Continue efforts to make the website more interactive and appealing – ideas include more information about the species that the Agreement covers and games for children.	Provide suitable information and visual aids.	Provide suitable information and visual aids.	Redesign of website underway: improved usability, streamlined with cms.org look
Coordination between Secretariat and hosts of MOP/AC to promote ASCOBANS activities	Secretariat to liaise with Parties in good time ahead of meetings and to provide suitable information for press briefings etc.	IDBHP: maximise involvement & target group. Publicise AC & MoP in national media.	Relevant national partners should assist.	
Development of new by-catch related material with fisheries, RACs, others	Specifically contact the organisations in question to specify possible areas of collaboration.	Parties should seek to assist in efforts.	Partners should seek to assist (a recent good example being the video produced by the RSPCA).	
ASCOBANS's role working with EU, CMS, HELCOM, OSPAR, ACCOBAMS	Invite representatives to attend AC for closer involvement. Send out information on ASCOBANS activities and seek synergies in terms of joint educational and promotional materials.	Countries attending relevant meetings should look for opportunities to promote ASCOBANS and also opportunities for joint outreach.		Analysis made on relations with OSPAR, HELCOM

	Recommended Action			Done
Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners	
<b>AC 15 Points for Action</b>				
12. More ecological and biological info on Website	Liaise with organisations such as HELCOM and other sources of suitable information and websites that could be linked to.	Parties should seek to assist by providing updates on, for example, relevant national research programmes.	NGOs conducting field studies may be able to provide information.	
13. New banner & postcards for IDBHP	Postcards to double-up as promotional cards for IDBHP.	Parties to consider budget for printing and circulating promotional cards.	Partners to consider budget for printing and circulating promotional cards.	Done. New design has been produced in the form of post cards and one large roll-up banner
<b>AC 16 Points for Action</b>				
18. Wikipedia Pages on ASCOBANS	Spanish and Norwegian versions of the page are currently being prepared. Other language versions should be considered.			Comprehensive page on ASCOBANS has been uploaded on Wikipedia in English, German and Russian.
19. Monitoring Wikipedia Pages on ASCOBANS	Regular monitoring of pages and editing of inaccurate information as and when the need arises.			Regular monitoring of the pages
<b>Triennium Work Plan 2007-2009</b>				
8. Develop CEPA Plan				1 <sup>st</sup> draft
9. Continue to translate ASCOBANS material and undertake promotional activities in both Party and non-Party Range States.	Underway	Parties to provide funding for printing costs	Partners should seek to assist.	Leaflet text has been updated and translated; Parties have kindly agreed to proof read/help. IDBHP info has been

	Recommended Action			Done
Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners	
				circulated to parties for translation.
10. Continue to develop the ASCOBANS website, aiming to meet the needs of a wide range of target audiences, to include educational material.	<p>Develop accessible information on biology and ecology of small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area.</p> <p>Downloadable fact sheets, art and craft ideas, resources such as ‘All About Dolphins’ that can be used for school projects both by students and teachers (ensuring relevance to threats and biodiversity)</p> <p>Downloadable PowerPoint presentations with notes that teachers/group leaders can give to classes</p> <p>Interactive section on how people can help (campaigning &amp; fundraising)</p> <p>Kids ‘Join In’ section – gallery of artwork where they can upload their own artwork. Link to WDCCS website to complete their Dolphin Diploma.</p> <p>Music downloads (Project C) encourage youth groups to use as motivational and inspiring resource in order to get involved.</p> <p>Species guide, versions for adults and children. Visitors should be able to download copies of the Agreement area species guide – they can also order laminate versions from the secretariat at a</p>	Parties should seek to assist in promotional efforts.	NGOS might be able to enter into partnership with the Agreement to help sponsor and/or produce such materials.	

	Recommended Action			Done
Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners	
	<p>small fee.</p> <p>On-line database of speakers (volunteers/paid) within the region who would be available to give talks to schools/groups/at events.</p> <p>IDBHP Pin Badges available to purchase on-line.</p>			
11. Clearly define the role of the Secretariat in working together with the EU, CMS, OSPAR, HELCOM and ACCOBANS in order to synchronise joint actions in educational and promotional activities, and create synergy to provide added value while avoiding duplication of effort.	<p>Definition of role and working relationship with relevant bodies in all new literature.</p> <p>Share knowledge and intention of participation in relevant educational and promotional activities.</p>	<p>Parties to proof-read new literature and identify educational and promotional activities they will be taking part in.</p>	<p>Partners to proof-read new literature and identify educational and promotional activities they will be taking part in.</p>	CEPA plan 1 <sup>st</sup> draft
12. Take appropriate advice, produce targeted information material on conservation issues facing small cetaceans in the region, and in particular in consultation with appropriate (international) fishermen's organisations, RACs and others, develop material to distribute to fishermen, especially with respect to bycatch issues.	<p>Interactive section on the ASCOBANS website for fishermen including DVD which is available to download.</p>	<p>Parties to contact national fishermen's organisations and investigate methods of regular communication.</p> <p>Parties to look at covering costs to reprint DVD's for circulation.</p>		<p>Secretariat wrote to contacts in Parties and Range States to gather available material.</p> <p>Suggested to EC DG Fisheries to co-fund leaflet.</p>
13. Continue to produce information material in the languages of the Baltic Seas region.	<p>Websites (ASCOBANS and CMS) to include translations in the languages of the Baltic Seas region.</p> <p>Exhibition panels to be produced in the languages of the Baltic Sea region.</p> <p>Wikipedia pages to be produced in the languages of the Baltic Seas</p>			<p>ASCOBANS leaflet available as PDF in Russian. Translations of updated Baltic version of leaflet finalised for all languages (Polish pending final check).</p> <p>CCB Baltic Harbour</p>

	Recommended Action			Done
Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners	
	region.			Porpoise brochure available in German (Finnish, Polish and Swedish without Secretariat involvement)
26. Promote the Agreement and its aims in Parties, Range States and with other relevant players.	Bi-Annual award that goes to an individual/group that is making a direct difference to the animals (this would be in addition to the educational award). Establish regional 'champions' to species/populations who would focus activities on these groups of animals and report progress into the Agreement.	Parties to find budget for prizes. Parties to report progress to the Secretariat regarding regional 'champion' animals.	Partners to find budget for prizes. Partners to report progress to the Secretariat regarding regional 'champion' animals.	Bilaterals with governments. Presentations in relevant meetings. CEPA plan 1 <sup>st</sup> draft
27. Promote accession of non-Party Range States to the Agreement.	Bilaterals to be set up where possible. Recruitment letters to be sent to remaining Range States.	Bilaterals to be set up where possible. Recruitment letters to be sent to remaining Range States.	NGOs in relevant countries to encourage participation.	Targeted letters sent to Estonia and Ireland. Recent targeted visit to Ireland. Regular contact with all non-Party Range States.
New ASCOBANS Exhibition	Underway. Format, content and design being revamped, to be presented to ASCOBANS AC16 (some of copy used within this plan)			
<b>UNEP/CMS/Resolution 9.5 – Outreach and Communication issues</b>				
3.1 Engagement and commitment of CMS Parties increased. 4.7 Regional capacity enhances	Regular exchange of news and mutual linking on websites. Preparation of joint publications on	Support outreach activities and publications on the national level.	Support and develop joint outreach activities and scientific meetings by involving national/regional	Creation of an electronic system for the prompt delivery of notifications and information notes to

	Recommended Action			Done
Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners	
particularly where CMS is under-represented	issues of mutual interest.	Support global species campaigns (Year of Biodiversity). Provide links to CMS and relevant agreements on national websites.	authorities in (NGOs, Friends of CMS, corporate sponsors) Facilitate contacts to key actors and decision makers. Provide the joint CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat with relevant information.	parties.
3.2 Engagement of CMS non-parties increased 4.1 CMS membership to increase by 10 Parties of importance for migratory species and new Agreements.	Coordinate recruitment efforts with CMS Secretariat for a joint approach.	Provide financial support to organisation of workshops Assist the Secretariat with establishing bi-lateral contacts	Provide information on their websites on the importance of CMS and Agreements for non-Parties Lobbying to promote implementation of conservation plans Undertake joint activities for non-Parties Assist with preparation and organisation of regional and national workshops	
3.3. Number of partners supporting CMS increased 4.3. Cooperative activities with MEA's and key partners increased 4.8. Extra-budgetary funding widely secured	Join CMS in displaying exhibits at relevant meetings of MEAs and major IGOs, organising presentations/side events and delivering statements at main biodiversity and environmental meetings Participation in public events and contribution to celebration of World Environment Day (5 June)	Exchange information between CMS focal points and other convening focal points, also by regular meetings Support national initiatives to celebrate World Environment Day	Support the network of Parties and involve new bilateral partners in CMS and ASCOBANS-related work Enter into partnership agreements with CMS and establish joint programme of work. Support national initiatives to celebrate World Environment Day.	

	Recommended Action			Done
Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners	
<p>3.4. Awareness of key media of CMS enhanced</p> <p>4.4. Enhance visibility of CMS family</p>	<p>Make full use of CMS' media outreach through their website and interaction with DCPI, UNEP Regional Offices RUSIC, and Deutsche Welle (German International Radio) to enhance distribution of press releases</p> <p>Provide species information by linking to IUCN database</p> <p>Use the specific information by linking to IUCN database</p> <p>Use the specialized information channels of CMS and Agreements to highlight important common issues (coordinated web-based news releases)</p> <p>Improve visibility of CMS and Agreements in Host Country</p> <p>Contribute to production of image film on CMS</p> <p>Issue press releases on CMS and Agreement events, initiatives, meetings and projects on a regular basis</p>	<p>Promote cooperation with ministerial press departments to distribute joint press releases</p> <p>Focal point to translate press releases into national languages and pass them to national media</p> <p>Improve visibility of CMS and Agreements at a national level</p> <p>Provide the Secretariat with relevant articles issued in the national press</p>	<p>Regularly provide information on CMS family activities in their newsletters and on Websites.</p> <p>Highlight joint activities with CMS and Agreements.</p>	
<p>3.5 Opinion leaders of sectors impacting migratory species influenced</p>	<p>Assist in advising CMS ambassadors to include issues relevant to the Agreement in their work programme</p> <p>Join in preparing targeted brochures for decision-makers and politicians</p> <p>Make joint targeted contacts with opinion leaders on specific issues</p>	<p>Facilitate contacts with national conservation bodies, politicians and decision makers also through meetings</p>	<p>Assist the secretariat with the identification of campaign ambassadors on the national and international level</p> <p>Team-up with the Secretariat to reach out to relevant politicians and decision makers and/or enable joint activities (joint letters to ministers, joint press</p>	

	Recommended Action			Done
Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners	
			releases etc)	
3.6. Information material in UN languages disseminated 4.4. Visibility of the CMS family strengthened	Provide input for updated versions of the “CMS Family Guide”, (to be translated into all UN languages) Cooperate with CMS to include information on Agreements in the electronic newsletter Improve website to contain specific information for the press, academia, NGOs and Parties	Provide financial assistance for the preparation and publication of the “CMS Family Guide” and other relevant publications Provide official translation of brochures and important outreach material	Disseminate CMS Family material at meetings/events Prepare joint publications on issues of common interests Develop publications on species groups based on “Conserving Cetaceans”	

## **6. Methods (Key Areas for Development)**

In order to be effective, progressive but also sustainable, it is important to consider maximising on the potential of resources that have been specifically commissioned in order to avoid duplicating efforts and committing unnecessary expenditure. Using local resources (products/labour/local volunteer programmes etc) where possible will help to maximise the potential of the Agreement and at the same time engage important community commitment and long-term support.

### **I. Printed resources and educational/promotional material:**

Following recommendations from the Triennium Work Plan 2007 – 2009, the Secretariat was instructed to step up its awareness raising activities. The following activities could be introduced:

#### **i. ASCOBANS Exhibition:**

- An updated and modernised exhibition for ASCOBANS is under production. If resources allow, the exhibition could be enhanced by a plasma screen showing footage of cetaceans in the Agreement Area and equipment for relaying underwater sounds.
- As well as in English and German, copies for the exhibition should be produced in the languages of the Baltic Sea region.
- Specially designed mobile displays highlighting the whale and dolphin watching opportunities within the Agreement Area could be considered, information should be available on responsible whale watching and the appropriate code of conduct when approaching the animals.
- A roving wildlife photography competition. This could be an annual event based on the successful exhibition organised by the BBC (Wildlife Photographer of the Year)<sup>3</sup>. Talented young photographers would be given the opportunity to submit a selection of photographs which would be judged by a panel of wildlife experts and well-respected photographers. The event could be linked to the International Year of Biodiversity and photographers wishing to enter the competition would be expected to submit photographs that capture the importance of biodiversity within the Agreement Area. The exhibition could be sponsored by Partners as well as a well-known brand (such as Nikon). The exhibition would welcome a vast and diverse audience; it would raise considerable awareness of the amazing and precious biodiversity in the Agreement Area and give young people the opportunity to develop their career prospects. The event could be promoted through the Media, within joint CMS/ASCOBANS/NGO publications and on the website.

#### **ii. The publication of “Great Migrations”**

- Launch parties could be organised to coincide with the publication date of the book. The launch parties would be ticketed and the money paid would be subsequently redeemed off the price of the book (books will be available to buy on the night), guests will be given the opportunity to meet the author and

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<sup>3</sup> BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year. <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit-us/whats-on/temporary-exhibitions/wpy/>

get their copy of the book signed and dedicated. There could be a question and answer session. The Secretariat, Parties, Partners and key players could invite interested parties along to the launch parties as well as the press.

- NGOs could also promote this book. For example WDCS could review the book on its 'book review' section on the website and in the WDCS Magazine (circa approximately 20,000).<sup>4</sup>

### **iii. New short CMS promotional film**

The film could also be broadcasted using various channels:

- YouTube
- ASCOBANS and CMS website
- Other Parties/Players/Partners/NGOs/IGOs websites (this could just be a link from to the CMS site or YouTube page.
- At International Year of Biodiversity events.

### **iv. Species Guide laminate:**

A species guide laminate of animals in the Agreement Area would be a useful and accessible tool for a diverse audience (from school children to tour operators).

- The species guide would include anatomically accurate illustrations of the species found within the Agreement Area; an artist should be commissioned to produce such illustrations. Key ecological and biological information (diversity/location/threats) should be included within the design. The laminate should also list relevant contact details for people to be able to record sightings/strandings and potential by-catch incidences. Providing information on responsible whale and dolphin watching including information on appropriate code or conduct.
- The production costs of the laminate should be divided between Parties, Partners and regional authorities. All sponsors should have their logo clearly visible in the design; there should also be a link to all associated NGOs. The objectives of the ASCOBANS Agreement should be clearly featured. The Secretariat, Parties, Partners and key players should circulate the laminates as appropriate. The laminates will engage visitors at events.

### **v. Species Stamps:**

A series of stamps showing the range of species in the relevant waters would help people recognize the marine species that they rarely (if ever) see, which is clearly an ongoing problem in terms of initiating support for their conservation.

- The stamps could be launched during the opening activities for the International Year for Biodiversity.
- The Secretariat could try to persuade the national authorities to publish the stamps.
- This initiative would significantly raise the profile of the Agreement and raise public awareness of common cetaceans found the Agreement Area.

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<sup>4</sup> WDCS Book Reviews: [http://www.wdcs.org/connect/education/story\\_details.php?select=88](http://www.wdcs.org/connect/education/story_details.php?select=88)

## II. Engaging through Events and mobile Exhibitions

Both activities will prove to be powerful, emotive and effective way of engaging large and varied audiences. This plan recommends that where there are public awareness programmes in place, such programmes should be supported in order to integrate them into the wider effort to promote awareness in the areas covered by the Agreement.

- i. Please refer to AC 15 Report (Publicity & Outreach) where Poland informed the members of the meeting of activities being undertaken on a regular basis each year, such activities have been contributing to the preparation of a national protection plan for the harbour porpoise and another for Puck Bay. An information campaign for children was carried out on a weekend in a large shopping centre involving presentations, competitions and contribution from celebrities. All customers were reportedly interested in the campaign and the event proved a successful and effective platform for communicating with the public. This successful activity is an example of a simple yet effective initiative to engage a large and potentially uninformed audience.
- ii. In cases where existing field projects do not already include public awareness activities, effort should be made to develop such activities by taking advantage of the local expertise. If funds are available, training courses and capacity-building initiatives could be implemented in order to engage the local communities and both develop and promote education and awareness-raising activities.
- iii. Organising or supporting public events in areas close to where whales and dolphins are sighted is a direct and effective way to inspire, engage and sensitize people of the importance of protecting the animals they are lucky enough to see.
- iv. **Awareness days:** Holding specific whale/dolphin/porpoise awareness days are an effective way of creating and maintaining awareness among local communities as well as stakeholders and tourists. The International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise is a good example in this regard. Obviously dependent on the available resources and budget (there is no reason these events should be an expensive initiative), key activities could be organised, supported and promoted by local Partners and authorities.

Depending on the audience and location, such events could include the following activities: public seminars and presentations (experts in the field of cetacean conservation could be invited as well as celebrity support), film projections (CMS film/ RSPCA fisheries documentary etc), dolphin sounds (it is possible to use the beautiful sounds from Project C<sup>5</sup>), music events, beach cleans, creative competitions for under 12 year olds, whale/dolphin/porpoise artwork (using a feature in the given location such as painting a mural in a town centre or graffiti artwork that will capture peoples attention and imagination), distribution of specific resources and public awareness literature (such as the ASCOBANS brochure and postcards).

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<sup>5</sup> CD produced by UNEP/ASCOBANS in cooperation with Hel Marine Station.

Provide opportunities for children to become ‘dolphin experts’ through taking part in activities such as the Dolphin Diploma – encourage direct participation in conservation activities and acquiring knowledge that can be passed on to family and friends.

- v. **Mobile exhibitions:** These could be an event by themselves or complement such events as mentioned above. Developing and touring with the selection of inflatable (life size if possible) cetaceans species that are found in the Agreement area. For people who have never seen cetaceans in the wild, this is a profound visual experience; it is also an effective way to raise awareness of species diversity, location and threats of the Agreement area. This plan recommends identifying priority regions and communities that would benefit from such events and synchronise efforts alongside other initiatives and activities (for example, events for International Year of Biodiversity, World Environment Day, IDBHP) Creating links with venues in these priority regions that have a large footfall (e.g. museums, shopping centres) that such exhibitions could be housed in.

### III. Website

The Triennium Work plan 2007 – 2009 instructs the Secretariat to continue to develop the ASCOBANS website. The web is an important and effective tool to promote and raise public awareness of the Agreement (**Activity 10 of the Triennium Work Plan 2007-2009**) - If successful, it will raise the profile of the Agreement to a wide and varied audience and provide additional/new opportunities to promote educational initiatives to key target audiences. The design of the web should be engaging and interactive and encourage visitors to browse. Information should be accessible and current.

Higher visibility of the Agreement could attract additional interest and potential support from the private sector and enable the Secretariat to undertake new and improve existing initiatives.

- i. In order to avoid duplicating efforts, appropriate links should be made between the ASCOBANS site and the CMS site (due to be relaunched in January 2010). Both websites will give added value to one another increasing the overall outreach potential. Links should also be made when appropriate to other relevant players.
- ii. Content should be kept up to date to avoid deterring regular visitors to the site. Current and forthcoming activities and educational initiatives should be promoted through the website. News pages and breaking page stories should be clearly featured and linked to both current and back copies of the ASCOBANS Newsletter.
- iii. Information on biology and ecology of small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area should be a prominent feature (this would include relevant facts on location, diversity and threats but also offer additional interesting facts on individual animals.) A species guide for the Agreement Area would be a useful and interactive tool. Locations that offer good dolphin watching opportunities (with

information on undertaking this activity responsibly) seeing these wonderful animals in the wild helps enthuse people to take positive action towards their conservation.

- iv. There should be a designated section for children. The section will engage and inspire the next generation of conservationists; encouraging and supporting children is an investment in the future. There should be specific events promoted to children and relevant tools and downloads available or links to initiatives they can take part in straight away (it is important to keep their attention), for example, a link could be made to NGO partner WDCCS to encourage participation in the Dolphin Diploma. Specific on-line activities and ideas should be linked to the IDBHP. Children will take ideas home and inspire their family; they will also take ideas into the classroom and enthuse classmates and teaching staff.
- v. As well as a section designated for children, there should be a section targeting the wider public, including interest groups identified as Prime Targets (for example, fishermen, tour operators and people going whale and dolphin watching). Relevant downloads should be made available such as the RSPCA fisherman documentary.
- vi. The appearance of the website is important. Interactive tools and devices will help capture people's attention and inspire them to take action. It is important to promote events such as IDBHP. An attention-grabbing banner could double up as an advertisement and be circulated to relevant databases (through the extensive CMS database of address lists for example and participants from the Year of the Dolphin activities)
- vii. The website needs to be clear and accessible. Visitors will want to navigate swiftly to find relevant contact information. From the website, visitors will be able to make enquiries and be assured that they will receive the necessary information.
- viii. The ASCOBANS website could include a sightings section<sup>6</sup> where people around the region would be able to report their latest sightings/or stranding, information to fishermen in order to facilitate the reporting of by-catches and the delivery of dead specimens to the extent required for research under the Agreement<sup>7</sup>, and any important news about cetaceans (for example, their listing on the IUCN Species Red List<sup>8</sup>). This would help to attract people to the website to look at what was happening in their region. It is something that the Secretariat might run in conjunction with a partner organisation. All information collected should be made available (together with information collected on CMS website) in an international database. Visitors to the sightings section should be assured that the information they are giving will be used and is a positive contribution to cetacean conservation.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk/sightings.php?uid=29>

<sup>7</sup> ASCOBANS Conservation and Management Plan

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.iucnredlist.org/>

#### **IV. IDBHP – International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise.**

This is a unique Participant event. Participants can get involved in a number of ways. Specific public awareness literature regarding the devastating plight of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise has been produced and can be circulated (postcards/report/handbooks/posters). Therefore, the most important initiative is to raise the profile of the event to as wide an audience as possible. Similar to efforts that were made through the Year of the Dolphin activities, this should be considered an important and integrated campaign.

- i. There are various channels through which the event can be successfully promoted; the website (the ASCOBANS website will list events happening, there should also be a designated section where relevant information and downloads are easily accessible), ASCOBANS newsletters, e-newsletters, educational bodies and local authorities, joint publications and through all key players. Key players could use the postcards (they would need to find budget for printing costs) as invitations to events they are organising.
- ii. The media will be an important factor in the overall success of the event. It is important to have strong, consistent messaging and emotive imagery (although nothing that too graphic that could deter someone from getting involved). Although it is important to get national and potentially global exposure through TV broadcastings, newspaper articles and Internet campaigns, it is just as important to get local and regional coverage. Local press are often more likely to pick up on local community orientated stories – such as a local community organising an event for a worthwhile cause. Producing and providing a basic press release template to circulate to key players and event organisers will avoid duplication of efforts (templates could be downloaded from the ASCOBANS website). It is worthwhile contacting children’s publications, as children will often encourage their families and friends to participate.
- iii. A competition should be run alongside events in order to engage the community, encourage reflection on the situation and inspire action. This could be a creative competition that targets under 12 year olds. Local companies could sponsor the event and provide necessary funds for prizes (or offer experiences such as a whale and dolphin watching trip). A species-specific diploma could be produced specifically for this day.
- iv. For individual, community and regional events, budget should be found by key players to produce more IDBHP banners, the banners will be an effective way to brand the event and give added value to the professionalism of the event, messaging and display. Budget should also be found by relevant players to print additional postcards. Literature regarding the Baltic harbour porpoise population (Jastarnia Plan) should be made available at every given opportunity. There is potential for fundraising initiatives at all events (linked sponsored events, asking for donations for public awareness literature)
- v. ‘International day of the ...’ events for other species in other locations could be considered. For example, there are several places within the Agreement Area where bottlenose dolphins come close to shore and can often be seen even without going out to sea. Events could be staged at such sites and perhaps in collaboration with local groups who study and/or promote the conservation of these animals. One example

would be in Cardigan Bay in Wales (UK) where an event might be held with the Sea Watch Foundation. Such future events will benefit from lessons learnt from the IDBHP event and skill sharing between those planning to hold such events should be encouraged. One way to do this would be to establish an ASCOBANS education and events working group.

- vi. Pin badges of the Baltic harbour porpoise could be considered. Badges give individuals the opportunity to make a statement – wearing the IDBHP badge is a show of support for the campaign to save the Baltic Harbour porpoise. If funds can be made available, badges are a great outreach tool. The design should be simple yet effective. The FICFU (Information, Capacity Building and Fundraising Unit) could consider marketing the badges. The badges could be purchased on the ASCOBANS website for a limited period.

## **V. International Year of Biodiversity**

- i. The Year of the Dolphin (2007 and extended to 2008) campaign is an example of how the Secretariat, Parties and partners can successfully work together and provide a common platform for joint activities and common goals. It is clear that these partnerships are valuable in order for the Agreement to fulfil its overarching outreach objectives.

The UN General Assembly has declared 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity. The campaign will bring great and diverse opportunities for the Secretariat, Parties, Partners and relevant players to promote and raise awareness of the Agreement as well as emphasising its role and contribution as a lead expert in the field. There will be similar outreach opportunities through the International Year of Biodiversity that will clearly improve the effectiveness of the Agreement. As well as other initiatives already mentioned, the following activities could be considered:

- A poster campaign in prominent venues to raise awareness of threats and what individuals can do to help – visitors' centres for example.
- Provide packs of information/hand outs etc for dolphin watching operators in the region to use/give to their customers.
- Develop a database of speakers (volunteers/paid) within the region who would be available to give talks to schools/groups/at events. This could be promoted on the website.

## **VI. ASCOBANS Care Award:**

This is an award given to people working on behalf of the animals and making a direct difference to their conservation (this would be in addition to the educational award). The honour would be awarded bi-annually (in every year that the educational award is not given) and there would be a cash prize offered that would be channelled directly into field work. The award could be given an honorary name, for example, named after someone and/or its sponsor.

## **VII. Regional Champions:**

ASCOBANS could establish regional ‘champions’ for species/populations who would focus activities on these groups of animals and report progress into the Agreement. This activity would increase action and interest at a regional level. Parties and Partners would report progress to the Secretariat regarding regional ‘champion’ animal populations.

## **VIII. Wikipedia Pages:**

Wikipedia is an important public tool. Pages should be considered for all applicable languages, including the languages of the Baltic Sea region as well as languages of non-Party Range States in order to maximise its potential for outreach. As well as including relevant information about the Agreement, pages should include or link to an (interactive) map of the Agreement Area, a species guide of animals found in the Agreement Area and specific ecological and biological information.

The Wikipedia pages should be updated regularly with links to current documents, latest news and important events such as the International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise and the International Year of Biodiversity.

As an Annex to this document, I have prepared a short power point presentation showing a variety of successful educational and promotional resources and tools.