

REPORT OF THE 17TH MEETING OF THE ASCOBANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

UN Campus, Bonn, Germany

4-6 October 2010



**Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans
of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	List of Action Points and Decisions	1
1.	Opening of the Meeting	4
1.1	Adoption of Rules of Procedure	4
1.2	Adoption of the Agenda of the Science and Conservation Session	4
2.	Annual National Reports 2009	5
3.	Accession and Agreement Amendments	6
4.	Priorities in the Implementation of the Triennium Work Plan (2010-2012)	6
4.1	ASCOBANS Baltic Recovery Plan (Jastarnia Plan)	6
4.1.1	Implementation	6
4.1.2	Recommendations of 6 th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group	6
4.2	ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea	7
4.2.1	Implementation	7
4.2.2	Report of the Coordinators	7
4.3	Review of New Information on Bycatch	8
4.3.1	Outcome of the Bycatch Workshop, 20 March 2010, Stralsund, Germany	9
4.4	Review of New Information on the Extent of Negative Effects of Sound	11
4.5	Publicity and Outreach	13
4.5.1	Report of the Secretariat	13
4.5.2	Reports of Parties, Range States and Partners	14
4.5.3	Draft Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan	15
5.	Implementation of the Triennium Work Plan (2010-2012) – Other Issues	15
5.1	Review of New Information on Population Size, Distribution, Structure and Causes of Any Changes	15
5.1.1	Status of Coastal Bottlenose Dolphin Populations	17
5.2	Coverage of Western Baltic, Inner Danish Waters and Kattegat Areas in Harbour Porpoise Action Plans	18
5.3	Review of New Information on Pollution and its Effects	18
5.4	Review of New Information on the Extent of Negative Effects of Vessels and Other Forms of Disturbance	19
5.5	Extension of the Work of the Agreement into the new Agreement Area, incl. Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction	20
5.6	Report of the Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans	20
6.	Project Funding through ASCOBANS	20
6.1	Progress of Supported Projects	20
6.2	Selection and Prioritisation of Projects for Future Support	20
6.3	Draft ASCOBANS Project Proposal Format	21
7.	Relations with other Bodies	21
7.1	Dates of Interest 2010/2011	22
7.2	Proposal to Extend the ACCOBAMS Agreement Area	22
8.	Any other Business	23
9.	Adoption of the List of Action Points of the Science and Conservation Session	24
10.	Close of the Session	24

11.	Opening of the Administrative Session	25
12.	Adoption of the Agenda of the Administrative Session	25
13.	Report of the Secretariat on Finance and Administrative Issues	25
13.1	Administrative Issues	25
13.2	Accounts for 2009	25
13.3	Outline of Budget for 2010	25
14.	Any other Administrative Issues	26
15.	Date and Venue of the 18 th Meeting of the Advisory Committee in 2011	27
16.	Election of Chair and Vice-Chair	27
17.	Adoption of the List of Action Points of the Administrative Session	27
18.	Close of Meeting	27
Annex 1	List of Participants	28
Annex 2	Agenda	34
Annex 3	List of Documents	36
Annex 4	Rules of Procedure	40
Annex 5	ASCOBANS Triennium Work Plan 2010-2012 – Progress and Further Actions	46
Annex 6	Revised Recommendations of the 6 th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group	59
Annex 7	Terms of Reference for the Steering Group for the ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea	61
Annex 8	Report of the Working Group to Develop Terms of Reference for an Intersessional Bycatch Working Group	63
Annex 9	Terms of Reference for the ASCOBANS Intersessional Noise Working Group	64
Annex 10	Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan	65
Annex 11	Results of ASCOBANS Pollution Review 2010	80
Annex 12	Format for Project Proposals for the Consideration of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee	92
Annex 13	Dates of Interest to ASCOBANS in 2010-2011	94
Annex 14	ASCOBANS Style Guide for Advisory Committee Reports	97

LIST OF ACTION POINTS AND DECISIONS
of the 17th ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Meeting

SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION SESSION

1. The Secretariat would prepare a list of decisions and action points for adoption at the end of the meeting, which would be forwarded to participants promptly. A draft report would follow within two weeks for comments. (Agenda Item 1.2)
2. The Advisory Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Jastarnia Group as amended. (Agenda Item 4.1)
3. A Working Group for the Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea was established and terms of reference agreed. Until the chair for this working group was elected, the Netherlands would take the lead. (Agenda Item 4.2.1)
4. A time-limited Working Group on Bycatch was established to report to the next Advisory Committee meeting and terms of reference agreed. (Agenda Item 4.3)
5. Parties were requested to provide funding to facilitate the representation of ASCOBANS at RACs and similar meetings. (Agenda Item 4.3)
6. An open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group on Noise was established and terms of reference adopted. Karsten Brensing was elected Chair. (Agenda Item 4.4)
7. Parties were encouraged to develop national information material for outreach to fishermen and would report back on their success in due course. The draft leaflet developed by ASCOBANS would be passed to the Parties for their consideration. Material from the leaflet could be incorporated into the ASCOBANS website as the Secretariat felt appropriate. (Agenda Item 4.5.1)
8. The Secretariat would make changes to the redesigned website to make the page on Resolutions more user-friendly. Parties were invited to convey any further comments to the Secretariat. (Agenda Item 4.5.1)
9. The Secretariat, Parties and partners should give thought to possible events to mark the 20th anniversary of ASCOBANS in 2012. (Agenda Item 4.5.2)
10. The Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan was adopted with minor changes. (Agenda Item 4.5.3)
11. Parties, concerned that ASCOBANS species and possibly populations were affected, requested the Secretariat to contact the authorities of the Faeroe Islands regarding the whale hunt. (Agenda Item 5.1)
12. Peter Evans (ECS) would provide a tabular summary of the results of various trend analyses in strandings, sightings and by-catch for all cetacean species occurring in the ASCOBANS area, country by country. (Agenda Item 5.1)

13. With a view to adopting a revised version of the Jastarnia Plan at MOP7, the Jastarnia Group was requested to identify by AC19 at the latest measures geared to the situation of Harbour porpoises in the area west of the Darss-Limhamn Ridge. (Agenda Item 5.2)
14. A map of the ASCOBANS Area showing places with a high risk of ship strikes should be prepared in time for AC19. Peter Evans would be contracted in order to produce this map. (Agenda Item 5.4)
15. The Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans to be chaired by Peter Evans was established. The Group would conduct its business through correspondence and meet physically during AC18. (Agenda Item 5.6)
16. The following Projects were endorsed: 1 (Inventories of Harbour porpoise presence in Russian territorial waters of the Baltic Sea - €6,950); 3 (Feasibility study on the creation of a web-accessed strandings database covering Agreement Parties and Range States - €8,500); 4 (Pollutant exposure in coastal top predators: assessing current levels of exposure and toxic effects - €9,750) and 6 (Understanding Harbour porpoise and fishery interactions in the North-West Iberian peninsula - €10,000). Poland would provide questions for the Secretariat to forward to the applicants for project 1 for a possible cost-neutral amendment of the project. (Agenda Item 6.2)
17. The ASCOBANS Project Proposal Format was adopted with minor amendments. (Agenda Item 6.3)
18. The Secretariat would liaise with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat over organizing a joint workshop at the ECS Annual Conference in 2011 on pollutants and new compounds now entering marine ecosystems and their effects on cetaceans. The Secretariat should also discuss co-funding the participation of speakers with ACCOBAMS and would revert to Parties in the event of lack of funding. Peter Evans and Mark Simmonds offered to convene the workshop. (Agenda Items 7 and 5.3)
19. The Secretariat would examine the feasibility of a joint CMS Family workshop on a subject of common interest such as bycatch, involving all marine Agreements and MoUs. (Agenda Item 7)
20. The Advisory Committee agreed which meetings the ASCOBANS Secretariat or other representatives would attend. (Agenda Item 7.1)
21. The Acting Executive Secretary was mandated to write to the Executive Secretary of ACCOBAMS to present the ASCOBANS Parties' position regarding the proposed extension of the ACCOBAMS Area and to request that discussion of this proposal be postponed until the CMS Future Shape Process had run its course. The position of the ASCOBANS Parties should also be presented at the forthcoming ACCOBAMS MOP (9-12 November 2010). (Agenda Item 7.2)
22. The ASCOBANS Style Guide was adopted with minor amendments. (Agenda Item 8)

ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION

23. The Secretariat would continue the practice of sending a mid-year report on administrative and budgetary issues to Parties. (Agenda Item 13.1)
24. The Secretariat would discontinue the budget outlines of the running year presented to the Advisory Committee Meeting. (Agenda Item 13.3)
25. The Netherlands would take the lead in preparing the evaluation of the Secretariat arrangements requested by MOP6. Parties interested in joining an intersessional working group to prepare a preliminary report for consideration by AC18 should contact the Dutch National Coordinator by 15 November 2010. (Agenda Item 14)
26. Germany would fund a temporary part-time North Sea Plan Coordinator in 2011. Other Parties were urged to provide voluntary contributions to cover further years. In the absence of sufficient contributions, the 18th Advisory Committee Meeting would decide on the use of trust fund reserves. (Agenda Item 14)
27. The Secretariat would prepare a draft job description for the North Sea Plan Coordinator and send it to the North Sea Working Group for comments. (Agenda Items 14 and 4.2)
28. The next Meeting of the Advisory Committee would take place in spring 2011. Offers to host the meeting should be sent to the Secretariat by 1 November 2010. The default venue would be Bonn. The Secretariat would conduct an online poll to determine suitable dates. (Agenda Item 15)
29. Sami Hassani (France) was elected as Chair of the Advisory Committee. Penina Blankett (Finland) was elected as Vice-Chair. (Agenda Item 16)
30. The Secretariat would prepare a list of proposals for funding of internal activities presented during a Meeting of the Advisory Committee in addition to external project proposals received prior to the meeting. Parties would prioritize and decide on the funding of these activities before the end of each meeting.
31. The Secretariat would intensify efforts to ensure representation of the Russian Federation at future ASCOBANS Meetings and if necessary seek German support.

REPORT OF THE 17TH MEETING OF THE ASCOBANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. Opening of the Meeting

1. The Chair, Stefan Bräger (Germany) welcomed participants, thanked the Secretariat for hosting the meeting and expressed his regret that the original plans to meet in Cornwall had had to be cancelled because of the volcanic eruption in Iceland.

2. Elizabeth Mrema, the Acting Executive Secretary, noted the high attendance at the meeting which she felt was a sign of the Parties' and partners' commitment to ASCOBANS. She introduced Borja Heredia, the new Senior Adviser of ASCOBANS who had started work as CMS Scientific Officer at the beginning of the year, and Bettina Reinartz, the new ASCOBANS Assistant. She also announced that Heidrun Frisch had been confirmed as the ASCOBANS Coordinator.

3. After a successful MOP, ASCOBANS faced the challenge of implementing its new programme and the two harbour porpoise action plans, and dealing with the pressing issues facing cetacean conservation such as bycatch and underwater noise. ASCOBANS as part of the CMS Family also had a role to play in the "Future Shape" process, and the agenda included an item concerning a proposal to extend the Agreement Area of ACCOBAMS to waters covered by ASCOBANS. The meeting was also reminded of Germany's offer to fund an additional administrative post within the Secretariat for one year, on condition that matching funding was provided to extend the post. Ms Mrema reported that after discussions with the Chair and Vice-Chair, it was proposed that the Secretariat would produce a detailed list of decisions and action points, rather than a full report by the end of the meeting. The full draft report would however be circulated within two weeks.

4. Ms Mrema concluded her comments by paying tribute to the Chair and Vice-Chair, both of whom would be stepping down at the end of the meeting.

1.1 Adoption of Rules of Procedure

5. The Secretariat introduced AC17/Doc.1-01, the Draft Rules of Procedure. The meeting's attention was drawn to a number of proposed amendments, such as the merger of rules 1 and 3 and the provision for the permanent observer status of representatives of advisory bodies of other CMS instruments. The rules would also remain in force unless amended. The rules as amended were adopted (Annex 4).

1.2 Adoption of the Agenda of the Science and Conservation Session

6. The Secretariat introduced the Provisional Agenda (AC17/Doc.1-02 rev.1) and proposed some changes to the schedule, bringing forward discussion of two items: the review of new information on population size (item 5.1) as one of the guest speakers would only be present on the first day and the ACCOBAMS Agreement Area (item 7.2). The agenda (Annex 2) and schedule were adopted.

7. The Secretariat would prepare a list of decisions and action points for adoption at the end of the meeting, which would be forwarded to participants promptly. A draft report would follow within two weeks for comments.

8. The Chair suggested that the administrative session be open to observers and that the restricted documents be released. This proposal was accepted by the meeting.

2. Annual National Reports 2009

9. The Chair invited participants to make an oral report to complement the written reports submitted in advance of the meeting.

10. Jan Haelters (Belgium) reported that surveys had been carried out during pile driving work for an offshore wind farm. A Fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*) had been involved in a collision with a ship at an unknown location and had been carried on the bulb to Antwerp harbour. Research was being conducted into the comparison of the ecological consequences of static fishing gear and beam trawling in Belgian waters. Harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) had been common in Belgian waters from August to October 2010 which was unlike previous years. A bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) of unknown origin had been present in Belgian waters for some months in 2010.

11. Maj Munk (Denmark) reported on various research projects including participation in the Static Acoustic Monitoring of the Baltic Sea Harbour Porpoise (SAMBAH) project. Penina Blankett (Finland) confirmed that Finland was also involved with SAMBAH.

12. Sami Hassani (France) stressed the interaction of small cetaceans with fisheries. A pilot study had been started with an observer programme in the English Channel. The University of La Rochelle was investigating pollution by heavy metals. A study resulting from collaboration between the University of Brest, OCEANOPOLIS and the Marine Protected Area in the Iroise Sea had started in Brittany on pollutants. Several surveys had been conducted and details were given in the national report. Details of work on public awareness raising, the presence of cetaceans in given waters and the strandings network were contained in the written report.

13. Oliver Schall (Germany) announced that the new Federal Nature Protection Law included provisions for the marine environment and the transfer of some areas of competence to the Federal Government from the *Länder*. A workshop on man-made noise had been held in Berlin in the spring, and the report would be published soon, possibly also in English. The certificate for the designation of the Wadden Sea as a UNESCO World Heritage site had recently been presented to the German authorities.

14. For the Netherlands, Folchert van Dijken reported that research was being conducted into blubber of harbour porpoises and a new national conservation plan for harbour porpoises in the Dutch part of the North Sea was being drafted. There was likely to be a reorganization of governmental departments when the new administration took office following the recent election.

15. Krzysztof Skora reported that Poland continued its work in Puck Bay identifying conflicts with fisheries and the data would be presented next year. The Ministry of Agriculture had distributed 500 pingers (acoustic underwater deterrent devices) to larger fishing vessels. Data showed an increasing trend of stranded animals. Of the protected areas designated under HELCOM, two were specifically related to harbour porpoises. Finally, WWF Poland had recently become a partner and had developed a "blue manual" explaining what actions should be taken when a stranded animal was found.

16. Christina Rappe (Sweden) said that a new investigation into harbour porpoises suggested that designation of another Natura 2000 site for the species might be justified. The Swedish Agency had produced a new leaflet and the agency was funding a new genetic survey on the Baltic harbour porpoise to be undertaken by the University of Stockholm finishing in 2012. Sweden too was participating in SAMBAH. More work was being done to develop cod traps with interest shown from Mexico because of the endangered Vaquita (*Phocoena sinus*) in the Gulf of California. Finally, nine video cameras had been purchased for installation on vessels setting gill nets and trawls. Sweden was yet to identify fishers willing to take these on board.

17. Sarah Archer (UK) said that the 2009 cetacean bycatch figures had been published. Mitigation work was focussed on studying the gear types and areas of most concern; and work on pingers continued. Experimental trials of deterrent devices, to determine any potential wide-scale negative impacts, demonstrated that dolphin and porpoise avoidance was limited to around 2km from the device. Progress continued on delivering an ecologically coherent and well-managed network of Marine Protected Areas by 2012.

18. Mark Simmonds (WDCS) noted that Denmark had designated 17 marine Natura 2000 sites and asked whether details of their management regimes could be made available to Erich Hoyt whose book "Marine Protected Areas for Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises – A World Handbook for Cetaceans Habitat Conservation" was about to be published by Earthscan.

19. The Chair asked that France and the Netherlands make the results of the contaminants studies available in due course.

3. Accession and Agreement Amendments

20. The Secretariat confirmed that no new Parties had acceded to the Agreement, nor had any further Parties ratified the amendment, meaning four of the ten still had to do this. With regard to recruitment, ASCOBANS had for the first time contributed to the UN Treaty Event for instruments deposited with the Secretary General. During the event, UN Member States were invited to sign, ratify or accede to multilateral treaties and ASCOBANS was one of the MEAs presented. This year's Treaty Event specifically highlighted the theme of biodiversity.

21. After positive indications made by the Norwegian observer at the last MOP, it appeared that Norway's accession had not progressed due to concerns in the fisheries department. Germany also continued to hold bilateral meetings with the Russian Federation, where participation in ASCOBANS meetings was promoted.

4. Priorities in the Implementation of the Triennium Work Plan (2010-2012)

22. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) introduced AC17/Doc.4-06 rev.1, the work plan adopted at MOP6. The meeting would be requested to provide guidance on further action required for each activity outlined in the work plan throughout the meeting. The resulting revised version would be annexed to the report (Annex 5).

4.1 ASCOBANS Baltic Recovery Plan (Jastarnia Plan)

4.1.1 Implementation

23. The Chair of the Jastarnia Group, Rüdiger Strempele (Coalition Clean Baltic), gave an account of the Group's 6th meeting, which had been held in Hel in February 2010, in conjunction with a meeting of the SAMBAH Steering Committee. Twenty-four recommendations had been made, nine of which related to SAMBAH. The Group had also made recommendations on the draft leaflet for fishermen and the possible westward extension of the Jastarnia Plan. Parties' activities had all been included in the National Reports.

4.1.2 Recommendations of 6th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group

24. Heikki Lehtinen (Finland) suggested that the recommendations be regrouped by theme and also expressed concern about the wording of some, especially recommendation 14. Christina Rappe (Sweden) agreed, adding that the 23rd recommendation and the one concerning the westward extension should be discussed in an in-session Working Group.

Petra Deimer (Germany) requested that a reference to part-time fishers be added to recommendation 14 and added that the Jastarnia Plan had greater affinities to HELCOM than to ICES, so it made more sense for the Plan's definition of the Baltic to be based on the one used by HELCOM. Maj Munk (Denmark) also requested that further attention be paid to the proposed extension of the Jastarnia Plan into Inner Danish Waters and stressed that this area had a distinct population which did not face the same degree of threat as the Baltic one.

25. Stefan Bräger (Chair) asked the Chair of the Jastarnia Group, Rüdiger Stempel (Coalition Clean Baltic) to lead a working group to discuss the westward extension of the plan pointing out that this question was on the agenda as item 5.2 and to identify any amendments needed for the recommendations and the triennial work plan, particularly points 5, 6 and 14.

26. The recommendations as revised by the working group (Annex 6) were endorsed by the Committee.

4.2 ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea

4.2.1 Implementation

27. Sami Hassani (France) said that in France no activities had yet been undertaken directly in connection with the North Sea Conservation Plan, but relevant activities included observer programme in the Channel and abundance surveys.

28. Jan Haelters (Belgium) said that aerial surveys were being carried out in Belgium and that the federal administration funded a project (2010-2011) to analyse the diet of stranded and bycaught porpoises.

29. Folchert van Dijken (Netherlands) reported that autopsies were carried out on stranded harbour porpoises to establish the cause of death. The data were not yet entirely clear, but showed a peak in 2007 with a disproportionate number of young males among the stranded animals and indicated that many had become entangled in nets. A multi-sectoral Working Group had been established on the harbour porpoise. Marije Siemensma (Coastal & Marine Union) added that permits were now being issued to allow fishermen to land bycaught harbour porpoises legally so that they could be passed to the authorities for autopsy.

30. Oliver Schall (Germany) reported progress on implementing EC Regulation 812/2004 with the completion of training of observers who would start work in November.

4.2.2 Report of the Coordinators

31. Russell Leaper (Consultant) explained that since bycatch had been identified as the main problem in the North Sea, it was the initial focus of activities. Regarding EC Regulation 812/2004, it was recognized that it had contributed to mitigating bycatch but several changes concerning monitoring had been recommended, such as better sampling to improve bycatch estimates. Although monitoring programmes had been undertaken towards the objectives of EC Regulation 812/2004, the data collated so far had not allowed the estimation of total bycatch numbers. The SCANS II survey in 2005 showed a southward shift of harbour porpoises in the North Sea, while a Norwegian survey in 2009 showed a dramatic decline in sighting rates (down to 10% of previous averages) in the northern North Sea.

32. Mr Leaper reported that new designs of pingers were being employed and used more flexibly. Surveys conducted on behalf of ICES had not resulted in new estimates of bycatch this year. Stakeholders were being consulted on the review of the Common Fisheries Policy. New electronic monitoring schemes for fishing vessels seemed to be promising but measures to monitor smaller boats (<15m) were still required. A combination of video and GPS might allow effective monitoring of smaller vessels.

33. Mr Leaper noted that there were still more than half of the days of the coordinators' contract left and he sought guidance on which areas of work to focus on. Efforts should now be made to promote the plan to stakeholders and develop practical means to implement it. However, given the time-limited contract, he felt that devoting the remaining time to more self-contained items would be more beneficial.

34. With regard to the review of EC Regulation 812/2004, Maj Munk (Denmark) suggested that any changes should lead to efforts being concentrated on those fisheries known to be responsible for bycatch. Mark Tasker (United Kingdom) explained that ICES had been asked by the European Commission to review the Regulation and its advice covered issues such as observer programmes. He was still drafting the report which would have to be circulated for consultation before being submitted. ICES would then provide advice based on the report. How the European Commission, Council and Parliament as well as Member States (responsible for inshore small-vessel fisheries) would respond was not known. He therefore suggested that the Committee note that the report was being compiled and that advice would also be provided.

35. Folchert van Dijken (Netherlands) said that there was a significant difference between estimates of bycatch and the numbers reported by Dutch gill net fishermen. Research was also being carried out on stranded specimens to determine whether the animals came from fisheries undertaken in the waters of Belgium or the UK rather than the Netherlands. Many appeared to have drowned and some bore the marks of having been entangled in nets. He hoped to give a fuller report to the next meeting.

36. Stefan Bräger (Chair) reminded the meeting of the need to establish a Steering Group for the North Sea Conservation Plan along the lines of the Jastarnia Group for the Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises. Thought should be given to the composition and terms of reference for the Group. The Jastarnia Group could serve as a model. It met annually and conducted much of its business electronically. The Chair invited all North Sea Parties to join a Working Group to formulate the terms of reference and discuss financial aspects, and asked Martine van den Heuvel-Greve (Netherlands) to take the lead.

37. After the working group had reported back to the meeting, the North Sea Group was established and the terms of reference agreed (Annex 7). Until the chair for this working group was elected, the Netherlands would take the lead.

4.3 Review of New Information on Bycatch

38. The Chair invited Parties to report on developments regarding bycatch mitigation.

39. Some progress had been achieved in the Netherlands, where a gill net fisherman would have a camera installed on his vessel in 2010. It was also now legal for fishers who voluntarily cooperated in a pinger trial to land bycaught harbour porpoises to pass to the authorities for autopsies. Revisions were being made into a pinger project, the early results of which had been disappointing regarding the practical workability of the tested pingers. The cooperation with the fishermen however was positive.

40. A number of projects were under way in the UK and full reports would be made to the next meeting.

41. In Sweden pingers were being used voluntarily in parts of the south of the country.

42. France had submitted AC17/Doc.4-16, a report of recent studies on bycatch and pingers in the Channel, in which three subareas were considered – the Pas-de-Calais-Nord, and the Eastern and Western Channel. Lower bycatch was recorded off the Breton coast.

43. In Germany, a project to monitor bycatch by use of video equipment in the herring fisheries would begin in the autumn in the Baltic. Germany was interested in the results of Swedish trials of cod traps as an alternative to wider pinger use.

44. Marije Siemensma (Coastal & Marine Union) also expressed an interest in trials with Dutch fishermen with cod traps as an alternative for pinger use.

45. The Secretariat announced that a tender had been issued for a project to examine gill net fisheries. The project would be run under the supervision of Barry Baker, the CMS Conference-appointed Scientific Councillor for Bycatch. The deadline for receipt of tenders was 25 October 2010 and the final report was required in September 2011.

46. Stefan Bräger (Chair) reminded the meeting that an intersessional Steering Group had been established at the 6th Meeting of the Parties to initiate a constructive dialogue with the fisheries sector to aid bycatch mitigation through common meetings (TWP Activity No. 16). This group had been established electronically in September 2009 and had supported the organization of a first workshop which had been held in Stralsund in March 2010. While the Steering Group was still active, the Chair sought guidance on how the Advisory Committee wanted to pursue the constructive dialogue with fisheries, one possible avenue being through local workshops with fishers in local languages supported by the Parties concerned. A possible framework to create a sustainable fishery was outlined in three working documents introduced by the Chair.

47. The Stralsund workshop was entitled “Cetacean bycatch: Effectiveness of current mitigation measures and possible improvements in the future”. The Chair thanked the convenors, Peter Evans and Marije Siemensma, for organizing the workshop.

4.3.1 Outcome of the Bycatch Workshop, 20 March 2010, Stralsund, Germany

48. Peter Evans (ECS) reported on the Stralsund Workshop, which had been attended by 65 participants from 20 countries. The morning had been dedicated to presentations on fishing gear, pingers and reducing seabird bycatch given by participants from the USA, Poland, Norway, the Netherlands and Spain. In the afternoon, various aspects of cooperating with fishermen were discussed, including improving communication, incentives for fishers to adopt practices less likely to result in bycatch and green labelling of products, public perceptions, and legal obligations. Addressing the weaknesses of EC Regulation 812/2004 was important, as was ensuring that it focussed on the types of vessels causing the greatest damage in the key areas. Direct engagement with fishing communities and attending RAC meetings were identified as possible ways forward. Responsible fishermen could be allowed higher quotas and permission to operate in protected areas.

49. ASCOBANS Parties were urged to finance collaborative projects, to try to influence the review of European Regulations and create incentives for ecologically sustainable fisheries. One avenue that had not been adequately explored was cooperation with the Marine Stewardship Council.

50. Heikki Lehtinen (Finland) sought clarification of the status of a recommendation of the Advisory Committee, asking whether such recommendations imposed obligations on the Parties. He was concerned that his Ministry would need a mandate from the Finnish Parliament to lobby the European Commission for particular changes to Regulations. He endorsed the idea of increasing direct contacts with fishermen but noted with regret that none were present at the meeting.

51. Peter Evans (ECS) stressed that DG Mare within the European Commission was supportive of strengthening the Regulation, but the final decision rested with the Member States. He wanted practical solutions to the problems and they were more likely to be found if fishers were brought into the process. The best means of engaging them was proving elusive and as they seemed unwilling to attend ASCOBANS meetings, then the Parties' representatives should seek them out. It was also pointed out that an ASCOBANS Party (Poland) was about to assume the Presidency of the EU.

52. The Committee noted the recommendations of the Stralsund Workshop.

Presentation by James Turner: “The role of Pingers in a multiple strategy solution to European Cetacean Bycatch Mitigation”

53. Stefan Bräger (Chair) introduced the invited speaker, James Turner of Fumunda Marine, a manufacturer of pingers who would speak about the experience of pinger use in the USA and Australia.

54. Mr Turner first acknowledged that as someone coming from the commercial sector his thinking might be radically different from that of government and NGO representatives. He was aware that the private sector was often viewed with suspicion and was considered to be insufficiently scientific, but he hoped to persuade ASCOBANS to adopt an attitude of action.

55. The most common designs of pinger available on the market came from the Netherlands and the USA. A producers' association was being set up to ensure high quality and integrity. The equipment produced was technologically highly advanced, containing computer chips and sophisticated electronics. Developed from a Canadian idea in the 1990s, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) endorsed pinger use midway through the initial trials. Early concerns included two key issues: habituation and exclusion, neither of which in the event appeared to be real problems.

56. The EC Regulation had its strengths and weaknesses. The weaknesses included the fact that 80 per cent of the EU fishing fleet was not covered, deterrents for non-compliance were nonexistent, the industry was not cooperative and pingers were required in areas of no bycatch and not obligatory in many areas where cetaceans were present. Most cost/benefit analyses showed that it was not worthwhile for fishers to use pingers.

57. Mr Turner was concerned that too many people were trying to “reinvent the wheel”. He felt that existing technology was sufficient and there was little point delaying implementation in the hope that designs would improve dramatically. Field tests showed that pinger deployment could result in bycatch being reduced by 90 per cent. The manufacturers were in contact with the fishers and understood the market's needs. In the USA, the USFWS was engaging all stakeholders and had adopted a varied approach of temporal closures and restricting the use of certain types of gear, but was conducting courses to train fishers to use pingers. The manufacturers had noticed the effects of this approach on their sales of equipment, which had been rising over the past five months.

58. ASCOBANS should seek to have the EC Regulation 812/2004 amended and should also communicate more with the fishing industry, recognizing that fishermen were small businessmen facing a wide variety of challenges beyond bycatch. It was also a stark fact of life that with so many interest groups involved in wildlife conservation, finding solutions acceptable to all was virtually impossible. Fishermen did not want to catch cetaceans, and spoken to properly, they would respond, as the Stralsund Workshop had proven, when they came forward to examine pingers and sought advice on how to fit them to their nets.

59. Following Mr Turner's presentation, Maj Munk (Denmark) identified a further problem with pingers as being the requirement to use them in areas with no known bycatch. Less intensive deployment of pingers than mandated by the authorities might also be effective and could be more cost-effective by reducing the number of pingers to be purchased. Mr Turner agreed that there had been insufficient consultation on the implementation of the Regulation. Mr Tasker pointed out that the provisions for consultation had been removed from the final draft by the European Council. It was an important message that the conservation interests were willing to work with rather than against the fisheries side. The effectiveness of fishermen's informal networks to disseminate information should also not be underestimated, as well as organizing local meetings in the local language. The example of a successful workshop in Portugal where both sides had learned from each other could be followed. Both France and the Netherlands said that the recent management plans

(respectively for a Marine Protected Area and for the harbour porpoise) had provisions for the participation of fishermen.

60. It was important that ASCOBANS activities were well coordinated between the North Sea and Baltic action plans and with other bodies. It was also stressed that solutions proposed were practical and affordable. For example, the comprehensive replacement of gill nets would be prohibitively expensive over a short timescale and thus likely required the support of the Parties or the European Commission.

61. The Chair suggested that – as a second avenue to advance bycatch mitigation – ASCOBANS should continue to advise the Parties on related issues, particularly in areas of high bycatch such as the German Baltic Sea. Such advice could, for example, draw on US Take Reduction Plans to aid meeting obligations under the Habitats Directive and under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. A standing Working Group was one means of providing such expert advice on bycatch mitigation. This suggestion was welcomed and it was proposed that fisheries interests should be involved. An informal group proposed the terms of reference in Annex 8 which were agreed, noting that it may be necessary to await the amendments to Regulation 812/2004. Accordingly, a time-limited Working Group on Bycatch with Russell Leaper as convener was established to report to the next Advisory Committee Meeting.

62. Parties were requested to provide funding to facilitate the representation of ASCOBANS at RACs and similar fisheries meetings.

4.4 Review of New Information on the Extent of Negative Effects of Sound

63. Oliver Schall (Germany) said that a workshop in spring 2010 on research into marine noise found a number of activities relating to the issue were under way. Germany was providing €20 million for research, mostly on wind energy, with smaller elements on military and shipping noise.

64. Jan Haelters (Belgium) mentioned a workshop convened by the University of Liège, with partners from France and the University of Barcelona, investigating the inner ears of newly stranded cetacean specimens. A further workshop was being planned, possibly taking place in the summer of 2011.

65. Yvon Morizur (France) announced a project on acoustic monitoring for underwater noise in an MPA was to begin in a few months' time.

66. The Netherlands was also cooperating with the Laboratory of Applied Bio-Acoustics (LAB) in Villanova, Barcelona, and was investigating underwater noise particularly in connection with pile driving during wind farm construction. An independent research institute was working on acoustics and thresholds shifts in seals and harbour porpoises.

67. Christina Rappe (Sweden) said that Sweden was currently working on a national guidance document on noise which would be ready before Christmas 2010.

68. Mark Tasker (United Kingdom) again urged that the Secretariat develop stronger links with ICES. He pointed out that the ICES Working Group on Marine Mammal Ecology annually reviewed any new information on small cetacean populations and, in 2010, also reviewed contaminant loads in marine mammals, including the cause-effect relationships with health status and the population-level effects. They had also reviewed the effects of wind farm construction and operation on marine mammals and provided advice on monitoring and mitigation schemes. ICES WGMME reports were available at the website <http://www.ices.dk/workinggroups/ViewWorkingGroup.aspx?ID=32>. The ICES Study Group on Bycatch of Protected Species annually reviewed Member State reporting under EU Regulation 812/2004, as well as other bycatch estimates (e.g. the assessments required through the Habitats Directive) and mitigation measures. ICES SGBYC reports were

available at the site: <http://www.ices.dk/workinggroups/ViewWorkingGroup.aspx?ID=291>. Regarding the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Mr Tasker had chaired a working group which had provided advice on noise indicators for Good Environmental Status. Reports were available at <http://www.ices.dk/projects/projects.asp#MSFD>.

69. Krzysztof Skora (Poland) asked whether noise from explosions, military exercises and seismic surveys was likely to have any effect on SAMBAH. As the instruments being used by surveys were delicate, they might be damaged by military and geological activities.

70. Yanis Souami (France) said that paragraph 6.1 of AC17/Doc.4-08 could not be seen as a directive restricting the use of military sonar, reminding the meeting that Article 2361 of the Montego Bay Convention gave Navy ships immunity regarding their activity. It was indicated in the ASCOBANS Agreement text that its provisions did not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties resulting from other conventions or agreements. The French Navy also implemented the NATO mitigation measures and was working on the draft of new procedures on the implementation of active sonar. Naval exercises were planned in such a way that extra care was taken in areas known to host marine mammals. A survey with observers was also carried out before and during the exercises and the resulting data were transmitted to the technical centre of the Defence Ministry.

71. The Chair stressed that Doc.4-08 did not impose any obligations on the Parties and did not require the endorsement of the meeting.

72. Mark Simmonds (WDCS) drew the meeting's attention to the short report of an informal meeting between members of the ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS working groups on noise in the margins of the ECS Conference in Stralsund. Ways of promoting cooperation between the two Agreements were considered along with the inclusion of OSPAR, who had expressed interest in collaborating. The terms of reference for a joint working group might best be narrowly drawn with a focus on advice on implementing EC Directives and developing mitigation measures.

73. Stefan Bräger (Chair) pointed out that an ASCOBANS-ACCOBAMS-OSPAR joint working group would be consistent with Action 31 of the Triennial Work Plan. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) reported that following the attendance by the Executive Secretary of OSPAR at MOP6, contacts had been pursued at the 2010 OSPAR Biodiversity Committee Meeting in June in Bonn, and further consideration was being given to producing joint guidelines. While collaboration with other bodies was desirable, it was important for ASCOBANS to progress its thinking on noise issues, and the establishment of a working group was proposed.

74. Mr Simmonds suggested that events such as the ECS Annual Meeting would provide opportunities to liaise with ACCOBAMS and OSPAR representatives. Jan Haelters (Belgium) recalled that a detailed resolution on pile driving had been adopted at MOP6 and consideration should be given to its implementation. Folchert van Dijken (Netherlands) recalled that marine noise had been identified as a core issue for ASCOBANS. There was a discussion over the merits of a report comparing different technologies and their cost-effectiveness in addressing noise during different operations. The UK felt that current legislation on environmental impact assessments covered all likely eventualities and the findings were in the public domain already. It might however be worth examining how the EC Directives were implemented in respect of underwater sound issues in all Member States.

75. An open-ended intersessional Working Group on Noise was established and terms of reference adopted (Annex 9). Karsten Brensing (WDCS) was appointed Chair.

4.5 Publicity and Outreach

4.5.1 Report of the Secretariat

76. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) referred to AC17/Doc.4-02 rev-1 and reported that the updated ASCOBANS leaflet was now available in all languages. A leaflet for the SAMBAH project was also being developed with the project coordinators. The ASCOBANS exhibition was now available in English and German. All this had been funded thanks to the German voluntary contribution. The Secretariat had held an event at the SeaLife Centre in Königswinter for the International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise in May 2010.

77. Ms Frisch also demonstrated some pages of the new ASCOBANS website, which was expected to be ready to go live within a few weeks. New features included flash images, extended sections on the species covered by the Agreement and their threats. Further plans for additional pages were outlined in Doc.4-02 rev.1. The site contained an archive of all MOP resolutions as requested at MOP6, and it was suggested that current and superseded resolutions be distinguished in some way. Parties would be invited to submit further comments on the form and content of the site to the Secretariat as soon as the website was ready to be launched.

Leaflet for Fishers

78. The Secretariat had been given the task of producing a leaflet aimed at fishermen and had engaged a consultant, Ms Joanna Wharam. An initial draft had been circulated in February 2010 and comments invited, based on which a revised draft had been prepared for AC17. Ms Wharam explained that she had examined existing material in the ASCOBANS Area and from other regions. In the course of the project, it had become clear that a single leaflet for the entire Agreement Area was not a practical solution, and regional and national versions were required. Accordingly, she had prepared three versions, covering the Baltic Sea, the North Sea and the North East Atlantic.

79. Parties expressed the view that the draft presented needed to be better addressed to the intended target audience. The text needed to be direct without being confrontational and without excessive background explanations, but clearly stating the problems and possible solutions. The issue of bycatch in particular had to be approached carefully without being accusatorial. Sami Hassani (France) thought that starting the leaflet by giving an estimate of bycatch could be perceived as tactless, especially bearing in mind that the goal of the document was the collaboration with fishermen.

80. Marije Siemensma (Coastal & Marine Union) suggested that if a leaflet was to be used as an outreach tool it might be advisable to use examples provided by fishermen who had successfully adopted mitigation methods. Peter Evans (ECS) thought the draft was more appropriate for fishermen's organizations rather than individual fishermen, and the question of the leaflet could be added to the discussion points during meetings with RACs. As cetaceans were not the only species affected by bycatch, a broader approach was needed. Karl-Hermann Kock (Germany) said that there were fishermen who were sympathetic to conservationists' concerns and who might help in redrafting the leaflet to better meet the requirements of fishermen. James Turner (Invited Speaker) suggested that a simple "tick box" questionnaire might be a better format. The UK had had a positive experience of engaging fishermen regarding discards by asking the industry to prepare the leaflets. The Chair of the Jastarnia Group, Rüdiger Stempel, recalled that Sweden had produced a leaflet which the fisheries representative in the Jastarnia Group had introduced to the Group at its most recent meeting. Sweden confirmed that it had produced a leaflet targeted for fishermen and also a more general leaflet. Poland felt that factors of greatest interest to the fishermen should be emphasized, such as the economic benefits of avoiding bycatch.

81. It was agreed that a national approach to producing a leaflet should be adopted. Parties would be at liberty to use the material in the draft leaflet and were asked to report back on their experiences. The Secretariat would consider adapting parts of the draft leaflet to use on the ASCOBANS website.

4.5.2 Reports of Parties, Range States and Partners

82. Sami Hassani (France) reported that training was being undertaken by CRMM/ULR (Centre de Recherche sur les Mammifères Marins / Université de La Rochelle) for observers to assist with strandings and sightings programmes. An exhibition at the national history museum in Paris had gone on tour to Belgium and the Netherlands. A French version of the ASCOBANS exhibition would be a good idea. Education workshops on cetaceans, their diets and the conservation of the bottlenose dolphin were held at OCEANOPOLIS.

83. Folchert van Dijken (Netherlands) said that the above-mentioned exhibition on whales was currently on display in the Natural History Museum. The skeleton of a stranded humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) would be assembled publicly on 15 October 2010 to draw attention to an exhibition on whales at the Naturalis museum in Leiden (15 October 2010- 21 August 2011). A live killer whale (*Orcinus orca*) had been found severely underweight and it had been taken to a dolphinarium, where it was recovering. Consideration was being given to the animal's future, but it would not be staying where it was. DNA tests were being carried out to determine from which pod the animal originated. If possible it would be released, or otherwise taken to a different facility with other killer whales. An advisory would be issued to all coastal districts with guidance on what to do when a stranded animal was found. WDCCS offered its advice concerning the killer whale arising from experiences with rehabilitating animals.

84. Krzysztof Skora (Poland) reported that one achievement was the issue of a series of stamps featuring Baltic marine animals. A new version of the CD about harbour porpoises had been published, including an explanatory leaflet. Meetings had been held with teachers to promote a positive image of marine animals. The porpoise friendly sprats were still being marketed. Activities had been undertaken in connection with the International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise, and WWF Poland had produced a "blue manual" for Polish beaches explaining what to do if a stranded animal was found. Information material was distributed to holiday-makers at Warsaw station on their way to the Baltic. Harbour porpoise mobile phone ring tones could be downloaded from www.morswin.pl.

85. Christina Rappe (Sweden) said that a new leaflet had been distributed to fishermen, ferries, the general public and yacht clubs and a poster targeted at yachting clubs, ferries and museums had been produced. The International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise had been celebrated in a small museum on the west coast of Sweden.

86. Joop Coolen (North Sea Foundation) added that his organization together with Rugvin Foundation and SOS Dolfijn Foundation had also produced a leaflet and had organized a large meeting of stakeholders.

87. Mark Simmonds (WDCCS) drew attention to examples of recent WDCCS literature which were on display at the back of the room. Copies could be ordered through the WDCCS website.

88. Oliver Schall (Germany) suggested a public awareness raising event to mark the 20th anniversary of ASCOBANS in 2012. The Secretariat, Parties and partners were invited to give thought to this and discuss suggestions and ideas at AC18.

4.5.3 Draft Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan

89. James Gray (United Kingdom) introduced AC17/Doc 4-04. He thanked those responsible for the previous drafts which had provided a sound basis upon which to build. After a discussion about how to take actions forward after the conclusion of the International Year of Biodiversity (2010) and the introduction of some amendments, the CEPA was adopted (Annex 10).

5. Implementation of the Triennium Work Plan (2010-2012) – Other Issues

5.1 Review of New Information on Population Size, Distribution, Structure and Causes of Any Changes

90. Stefan Bräger (Chair) introduced two guest speakers from the Institute of Zoology (at the Zoological Society of London) to give presentations on the UK's Cetacean Strandings' Investigation Programme. Rob Deaville spoke about the programme in general and Paul Jepson provided an account of a stranding incident which had occurred in 2008 near Falmouth in the South West of England.

Presentation by Rob Deaville: The UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme – a summary of strandings research in the UK 1990-2009

91. Rob Deaville explained that the collaborative Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP, www.ukstrandings.org) had been providing a systematic and coordinated approach to the surveillance of cetacean strandings around the UK coast and to the investigation of causes of death since 1990. The CSIP was funded by The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Devolved Administrations in the UK – the Institute of Zoology led the consortium of partner organizations (Scottish Agricultural College - Inverness, the Natural History Museum and Marine Environmental Monitoring) making up the CSIP and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee provided day-to-day project management oversight. The project currently aimed to:

- collate, analyse and report data for all cetacean, marine turtle and basking shark strandings around the coast of the UK
- determine the causes of death in 100 stranded cetaceans each year
- undertake surveillance on the incidence of disease in stranded cetaceans in order to identify any substantial new threats to their conservation status.

92. Between 1990 and 2009, the CSIP received reports of 9,410 UK-stranded cetaceans, of which 2,690 were investigated at necropsy. A number of causes of death were identified in necropsied individuals, including by-catch, infectious disease, live stranding, starvation and evidence of inter-species aggression. Research also demonstrated a strong link between immunosuppressive pollutants such as polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) exposure and death due to infectious disease in UK-stranded harbour porpoises, suggesting that current levels of pollutant exposure could increase mortality. Levels of PCBs in whale and dolphin species listed for priority conservation actions, such as bottlenose dolphins, were even greater, suggesting that these pollutants continued to pose a serious threat.

93. The information from this project helped to ensure that the UK complied with a number of national and international agreements/obligations, including the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North-East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS) and the Habitats Directive. The CSIP continued to provide long-term and systematic monitoring of UK-stranded cetaceans and also collected data on UK-stranded marine turtles and basking sharks. It facilitated the investigation of spatial and temporal trends in new and existing diseases, causes of death and exposure to environmental

pollutants largely inaccessible by other methods. A national cetacean tissue archive was maintained by the CSIP and together with data generated during the last 20 years, had helped support a broad range of collaborative research that had led to a high number of scientific publications. More recently, data collected through the project had been made publicly available for the first time, through a web-accessed database¹. The research conducted by the CSIP over the last 20 years had helped to advance knowledge about cetaceans, educate the public and inform Government policy.

Presentation by Paul Jepson: What caused the UK's largest common dolphin mass stranding event?

94. Paul Jepson spoke about the UK's largest mass stranding event (MSE) of common dolphins (*Delphinus delphis*), which had occurred on 9 June 2008 in Falmouth Bay, Cornwall. At least 26 dolphins died and a similar or larger number was refloated and herded back to sea. On necropsy, all 26 dead dolphins were in good nutritive status with empty stomachs. There was no evidence of significant infectious disease or acute physical injury. All seven adult dolphins tested were free of harmful algal toxins and had low chemical pollutant levels. The auditory apparatus (ears) was normal in each case. Pathological evidence of seawater inhalation (n=11) was used as a novel forensic technique for establishing that death probably occurred on a rising tide after 06:30-07:00hrs and before 08:21hrs. Potential causes either excluded or considered highly unlikely included infectious disease, gas/fat embolism, boat strike, by-catch, predator attack, foraging unusually close to shore, chemical or algal toxin exposure, abnormal weather/climatic conditions and high-intensity acoustic inputs from seismic airgun arrays or natural sources (e.g. earthquakes).

95. Although a definitive cause of the MSE could not be identified, international naval exercises occurring in close proximity remain the only known cause of cetacean MSEs that cannot be excluded. A large group of 40-60 common dolphins was seen unusually close to shore in the 3-4 days leading up to the MSE and may be the same group that eventually stranded. Greater insight into the causes of any future MSEs may require either a direct observation of the onset, or the emergence of an unusual level of coincidence of cetacean MSEs with one or more causal factors.

96. Iwona Pawliczka (Poland) mentioned a recent publication of genetic studies in the Baltic which had been released in 2010 (Wiemann et al., "Mitochondrial Control Region and micro-satellite analysis on harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) unravel population differentiation in the Baltic Sea and adjacent waters"; Conservation Genetics 11: 195-21, which was available on the web: www.springerlink.com/content/cm030816545ht5p/).

97. In France, the national agency responsible for the marine environment was working on the selection of Natura 2000 sites and marine protected areas in the Bay of Biscay. Genetic tests were being carried out on stranded harbour porpoises in Brittany. Systematic surveys using oceanographic ships had been done in the Bay of Biscay and in the English Channel (CRMM/ULR). In addition, aerial surveys had been conducted in the Iroise sea (MPA/OCEANOPOLIS) and ship based line transect surveys in the North Sea (OCEAM).

98. A number of other documents were presented: AC17/Doc.5-01 from the Secretariat was an abstract of a global review of cetaceans by Boris Culik and published by CMS online website. An intern had gone through the species accounts and extracted the information relevant for ASCOBANS. The second, AC17/Doc.5-02 concerned dolphin strandings and had been tabled by WDCCS. It was based on a collaborative international study involving various partners from different countries. AC17/Doc.5-04 originated from OSPAR and concerned the harbour porpoise. AC17/Doc.5-05 was about opportunistic sightings of

¹ <http://data.nbn.org.uk/datasetInfo/taxonDataset.jsp?refID=0&dsKey=GA000775>

harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea since 2002, containing an analysis of group size and age structure and the number of dead animals. The data, produced in collaboration with Denmark, had all be posted online and sent to the appropriate agencies. A map of the sightings was available on the website of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (www.bfn.de). AC17/Doc.5-08 was a report of the first ECS Workshop on white-beaked and Atlantic white-sided dolphins, about which relatively little was known and which both seemed to have limited genetic variation.

99. The report of the project on genetic structure of the white-sided dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus acutus*) in the Eastern North Atlantic was tabled as AC17/Doc.6-07. The results of this study, which had been conducted by Eulalia Banguera-Hinestroza of the University of Durham, advocated a change in the generic name of the species and genetic differences between the Northern and Eastern Atlantic populations indicated a “bottleneck” at some stage.

100. The interim report of a review of trend analyses of status and distribution of small cetaceans and impacts on them in the ASCOBANS Area was presented by Peter Evans (ECS) as AC17/Doc.6-08. It included some data from non-Parties. The second part of the project would follow up the issue of databases and simplification of reporting to speed up data collection. Mr Evans offered to set the ball rolling by providing in tabular form an overview of trends from Annual Reports and asked that fresh data be provided from Parties before the end of the year to ensure inclusion in the overview to be presented at the next Advisory Committee. Some changes were required in the data relating to Finland which the Finnish delegation undertook to provide in writing.

101. James Gray (United Kingdom) asked whether there was evidence of the whale hunts in the Faeroe Islands having any impact on populations covered by the Agreement. Mark Simmonds (WDCS) said that there were indications that the intensity of the hunts was increasing and cited the numbers of different species taken over recent years (details could be found on the news pages of the website, www.wdcs.org). Peter Evans (ECS) reported that the range of Risso’s dolphins (*Grampus griseus*) appeared to be moving northwards and some specimens of this species might have been opportunistically taken as well as pilot whales (*Globicephala melas*). The Secretariat was requested to make enquiries of the Faeroese authorities regarding the cetacean hunt.

102. Mark Simmonds (WDCS) said that there was also some evidence of changes to species’ ranges as a result of climate change and suggested that this was an issue that the Advisory Committee might investigate further. A Workshop was being convened in Vienna later in the year on climate change and small cetaceans. The University of Aberdeen had examined climate change and discovered that some beaked whales were moving away from the continental shelf. Recent literature on the subject included: Alter, S.E., Simmonds, M.P. and Brandon, S.R. (2010) Forecasting the consequences of climate-driven shifts in human behaviour on cetaceans. Marine Policy, and Simmonds, M.P. and Elliot, W.J. (2009) Climate change and cetaceans: concerns and recent developments. Journal of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom 2009: 89: 203-10

5.1.1 Status of Coastal Bottlenose Dolphin Populations

103. Nick Tregenza of Chelonia Limited had intended to present AC17/Doc.5-06 at the meeting in Cornwall, but had asked Mark Simmonds of WDCS to do so on his behalf as he was unable to attend this meeting in Bonn.

104. Bottlenose dolphins had been a common sight in Cornish waters but may have disappeared because of organo-chlorines. The species reappeared in the 1990s, but from a peak of 40 individuals, numbers had declined to between 8 and 15. The re-colonizing animals were assumed to have originated in Cardigan Bay in Wales or from populations around Brittany. Bycatch and high levels of contaminants were both problems. The overall

more favourable status of the species in the EU as a whole ignored the problem of the small size of this population. Peter Evans (ECS) confirmed that this species had been quite common until the 1940s. Yvon Morizur (France) said that groups of bottlenose dolphins were being acoustically monitored off the coast of Brittany and Normandy to establish their home range and behaviour. Sami Hassani (France) added that genetic studies were planned on the resident groups of bottlenose dolphins in Normandy and Brittany.

5.2 Coverage of Western Baltic, Inner Danish Waters and Kattegat Areas in Harbour Porpoise Action Plans

105. This item had been comprehensively dealt with during the discussion of the Jastarnia Plan (see Item 4.1 above). The Committee requested the Jastarnia Group to identify by AC19 at the latest measures geared to the situation of harbour porpoises in the area west of the Darss-Limhamn Ridge. A revised version of the Jastarnia Plan could then be tabled for adoption at MOP7.

5.3 Review of New Information on Pollution and its Effects

106. Mark Simmonds (WDCS) presented the report of the ASCOBANS pollution review group (Annex 11) and drew the meeting's attention in particular to:

- The two papers by Law et al (2010) considered trends in PCBs (UK porpoises). PCBs declined slowly from 1989 to the late 1990s, then levelled off (this was probably the largest pathology/toxicology dataset for a marine mammal species). Organochlorine pesticides were declining more rapidly and were now at low levels. More than 95 per cent of organochlorine toxicity now came from PCBs. It was not clear why PCBs had stopped declining but DEFRA had now agreed to fund a retrospective analysis of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), organochlorine pesticides (OCPs) such as DDT and dieldrin and also brominated diphenyl ethers (BDEs) from previously extracted blubber samples of UK-stranded harbour porpoises from the 4-year period 2005-8. This effort would fill a large knowledge gap for 2005-2008 and ultimately provide a dataset of toxicological data for harbour porpoises in UK waters covering nearly 20 years.
- ICES 2010 (WGMME): The Working Group on Marine Mammal Ecology had reviewed the last 10 years of literature on contaminants in the ICES range. The review showed that high levels of PCBs were still the main toxicological concern - especially for killer whales, bottlenose dolphins, St Lawrence belugas (*Delphinapterus leucas*) and Baltic marine mammals. We were still losing some inshore bottlenose dolphin populations in Europe and others were small. The conservation status of killer whales in NE Atlantic was largely unknown but had had highest individual exposure to organochlorines of all species on earth for over 60 years. The UK dataset (n=5) was also largest dataset on PCBs in stranded killer whales. The ASCOBANS pollution review group commented with respect to recommendation 5.6 contained in this paper that :
 - i. Re Point 2: an exclusion of any groups of cetaceans for consideration at this time was not recommended; and
 - ii. Re Point 3: high exposure areas could also include North Sea estuaries
- The recent paper on pollution and reproduction by Murphy et al., showing that high persistent organic pollutants (POP) burdens might have effects on the reproductive capacity of harbour porpoise and common dolphin females.

5.4 Review of New Information on the Extent of Negative Effects of Vessels and Other Forms of Disturbance

107. Peter Evans (ECS) presented interim results of his ASCOBANS-funded study on the risk of ship strikes in the Agreement Area. Evidence suggested that the “hotspots” for ship strikes were the Bay of Biscay and off the coast of North Western Spain. The limitations of his study were the dependence on voluntary observation schemes and the reception range of shore-based radio stations.

108. Mr Evans observed that the Baltic Sea along with the North Sea was among the busiest areas for marine traffic globally. He also presented statistical analysis of figures from the United Kingdom, showing the number of dead specimens found with evidence of trauma. Using data from shore-based stations, an assessment had been made of the types of shipping and typical speeds, from which a calculation of the degree of risk of collision with cetaceans could be made. Seasonal and locational variations could be taken into account. Through collaboration with UNEP, it was hoped to gain access to historic shipping records to complement the cetacean distribution atlas published by the United Kingdom's Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). The overall results were based on a more focussed study of the Irish Sea (which included Cardigan Bay) and among the traffic was included the Holyhead-Dublin high-speed ferry. The results from the Irish Sea had been extrapolated for the entire ASCOBANS Agreement area.

109. Maj Munk (Denmark) asked whether the speed limit threshold of 10 knots was applicable to all species as vessel speed would be an element in the management of protected sites. Mr Evans felt that more studies were needed to determine the speed thresholds for different species and vessel types. Oliver Schall (Germany) said that studies conducted in the 1990s in the Wadden Sea indicated that 8 knots was the optimal maximum speed in those coastal waters, and in the 1980s the USA had set speed limits in areas frequented by humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*). Russell Leaper (Consultant) reported that the IWC had developed a global database of all ship strikes and Jan Haelters (Belgium) drew the meeting's attention to an IWC Ship Strikes leaflet which was available in six languages (http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/shipstrikes.htm). He also reported that a joint IWC-ACCOBAMS Workshop on ship strikes had taken place in Monaco in September, focusing mainly on large whales in the ACCOBAMS Area.

110. Ms Munk also asked about the effects of different types of sound and whether cetaceans were disorientated by ambient noise. Karl-Hermann Kock (Germany) asked whether the study had found any correlation between noise incidents and times of day or year. He wondered whether weekends were worse than weekdays, the summer worse than winter or day worse than night. He also asked whether any changes were planned to shipping lane management as he understood had been the case in the Straits of Gibraltar under ACCOBAMS.

111. Penina Blankett (Finland) wanted to ascertain whether the HELCOM shipping data had been used for this study. Mr Evans confirmed that all Baltic Sea receiving stations were covered by it.

112. The Chair said that he would welcome seeing the final report at the next Advisory Committee. Mr Evans also undertook to prepare a map of the ASCOBANS Area showing places with a high risk of ship strikes for AC19. The Secretariat would provide him with a contract in order to produce this map based on additional data. The cost estimate for this was €3,000-5,000.

5.5 Extension of the Work of the Agreement into the new Agreement Area, incl. Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction

113. Borja Heredia (Secretariat) said that the issue of marine protection was being discussed at the level of a working group of the United Nations General Assembly. There were related processes being undertaken in the EU, UNCLOS and under CBD, which aimed to establish a global marine network by 2012. By way of comparison, while 15 per cent of the world's land surface was designated as protected areas of various kinds, the figure for the marine environment was just 1 per cent. The forthcoming CBD COP would discuss the management and designation of marine areas.

5.6 Report of the Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans

114. The 6th Meeting of the Parties had agreed terms of reference for an informal working group on large cetaceans. Peter Evans (ECS) reported that it had been intended that the Working Group should meet during the Advisory Committee, but scheduling pressures had made this impossible. He urged that time should be found for the Working Group to meet at the next Advisory Committee. He therefore proposed to take the work forward inter-sessionally.

115. Mr Evans also noted that most countries with large cetaceans present in their waters tended to include references to these species in their National Reports.

116. Sami Hassani (France) reiterated France's position that ASCOBANS should be extended to cover large cetaceans, and that further consideration of that issue had become more pressing in the light of the Spanish and Portuguese proposals to extend the Agreement Area of ACCOBAMS. In response to concerns voiced by some Parties, the Secretariat clarified that it was not the working group's mandate to reopen the discussion about the pros and cons of an amendment of the Agreement to include large cetaceans. Rather, they would identify key conservation issues for large cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area and provide informal advice to the Advisory Committee on how to address these in conjunction with their efforts to conserve small cetaceans.

6. Project Funding through ASCOBANS

6.1 Progress of Supported Projects

117. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) presented AC17/Doc.6-01 rev.3 setting out progress achieved by projects which had received or were still receiving support from ASCOBANS. Details of individual projects were contained in other meeting documents. To date, three of the projects selected for funding by AC15 and AC16 had been completed. Four projects were still ongoing.

118. Eunice Pinn (UK) gave an update on a British project on the bottlenose dolphin, Tursiops SEAS. The planned meeting with the ECS had not taken place after all, but it was hoped to be able to report more progress at the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.

6.2 Selection and Prioritisation of Projects for Future Support

119. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) reported that about €60,000 was available to allocate to projects and other activities. James Gray (United Kingdom) reported that an In-Session Working Group had recommended four projects for funding: No 1 (Inventories of harbour porpoise presence in Russian territorial waters of the Baltic Sea - €6,950); 3 (Feasibility study of the creation of a web-accessed strandings database covering Agreement Parties and Range States - €8,500); 4 (Pollutant exposure in coastal top predators: assessing current levels of exposure and toxic effects - €9,750); and 6 (Understanding harbour

porpoise and fishery interactions in the North West Iberian Peninsula - €10,000). These were considered to be the highest priority and supporting them would require €35,200. Germany's proposal to set a ceiling of support for any one project at €15,000 was accepted.

120. Iwona Pawliczka (Poland) suggested the Secretariat should ascertain whether any cost-neutral adjustments could be made to the Russian project to enhance the aspects on awareness raising and reviewing historical data. The Secretariat agreed to forward her questions and suggestions to the proposers. Ms Pawliczka also asked whether funding could be made available for a consultant coordinator of the Jastarnia Plan to reduce the Group's dependence on the time voluntarily given by its members. Other delegates suggested that terms of reference be developed by the Jastarnia Group for a formal proposal to be submitted to the next meeting.

121. Mark Simmonds (WDCS) sought an explanation of the criteria adopted by the Working Group in scoring the projects as this would assist project coordinators in drafting proposals likely to be of more interest to ASCOBANS. Peter Evans (ECS) also suggested that an explanation of the scoring system would be helpful and sought clarification of the procedure. He was concerned that some worthy projects were not being given due consideration. James Gray (United Kingdom) answered that Parties had had several months to review proposals and that relevance to ASCOBANS and costs were among the factors.

6.3 Draft ASCOBANS Project Proposal Format

122. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) presented AC17.Doc.6-03, a draft project submission form. The new features of the form were explained, including criteria which were meant to help sift out ineligible projects before applications were made. The format had already been used for the call for proposals to be submitted to this meeting, and the experiences had been good. A closing date of 15 February of each year was proposed, on the assumption that the Advisory Committee would revert to spring meetings, giving participants enough time to review them before the meetings.

123. Peter Evans (ECS) sought clarification how the Committee would in future deal with project ideas that came up during the Advisory Committee Meetings stemming from the deliberations of the participants and for which therefore no advance proposal had been submitted. Ms Frisch pointed to the document, in which the Secretariat suggested that a Working Group be established to review such proposals intersessionally.

124. Some delegations suggested that ASCOBANS should give an indication of areas of interest, for which projects would be positively encouraged. There was some discussion of the merits of setting an indicative ceiling to the value of any project. Mark Tasker (United Kingdom) said that the experience in ACAP of setting a ceiling resulted in proposals all being at that level, and he also raised doubts about having a defined scoring system as these produced as many problems as they solved.

125. The Meeting adopted the ASCOBANS Project Proposal Format with minor amendments (Annex 12).

7. Relations with other Bodies

126. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) provided an overview of relations with other IGOs although ASCOBANS also had regular contact with other types of organizations. The main source for her presentation was AC17/Doc.7-01 rev.3, which contained a compilation of reports on the representation of ASCOBANS at meetings. Since AC16, the main bodies with which the Secretariat had been dealing were: HELCOM, OSPAR, the European Commission (regarding the green paper on the common fisheries policy and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive), the Bonn Agreement, ACCOBAMS, the IMO and IWC.

127. Penina Blankett (Finland) reported on HELCOM and a recent meeting of the Seal Group, where the harbour porpoise database was demonstrated. Poland had reported on bycatch. Estonia on searches for harbour porpoises using acoustic devices, but as the effort was rather limited, no animals were located.

128. Mark Simmonds (WDCS) suggested that there was perhaps scope for a joint workshop of all the marine instruments of the CMS Family, beyond the customary cooperation between ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS. Bycatch was suggested as a suitable topic of common concern and the Secretariat was requested to investigate the feasibility of organizing such a workshop.

129. Stefan Bräger (Chair) asked the meeting for suggestions for a theme for the next joint workshop with the ECS. After some discussion, the topic of pollutants and their effect on cetaceans was put forward. It was proposed that this would be a good theme for a joint workshop with ACCOBAMS, especially in view of the fact that the next ECS Conference would be held in Spain. The Secretariat would liaise with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat over organizing such a workshop and covering the travel and accommodation costs of guest speakers who might not otherwise be able to attend. The Secretariat would revert to Parties in case of a shortage of funding. Mark Simmonds (WDCS) and Peter Evans (ECS) offered to convene the workshop.

7.1 Dates of Interest 2010/2011

130. The meeting went through AC17/Doc.7-02 rev.4, a list of Dates of Interest compiled by the Secretariat. Additional meetings were suggested and members of the Committee mandated to report back to ASCOBANS were nominated. The revised list appears as Annex 13. Representatives of the Agreement were invited to report back to the following Advisory Committee Meeting in writing.

7.2 Proposal to Extend the ACCOBAMS Agreement Area

131. Elizabeth Mrema (Secretariat) drew the meeting's attention to the proposals submitted to the forthcoming ACCOBAMS MOP by Portugal and Spain to extend the Agreement Area of ACCOBAMS into waters of the Atlantic already covered by ASCOBANS. Key facts to bear in mind were that Spain and Portugal were Range States to both ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS but were only Party to the latter. France was a Range State and Party to both. While ASCOBANS was confined to small cetaceans, no such restriction applied to ACCOBAMS. The proposal, if adopted, would lead to an overlap of the areas covered by the two Agreements and two different regimes would apply to the common species of the two Agreements. In terms of coherence with other international treaties such as OSPAR and the EU, ASCOBANS was better placed than ACCOBAMS. In the light of the CMS Future Shape process, which was examining the Convention and the extended family of agreements concluded under its auspices, the timing of the Spanish and Portuguese proposals was unfortunate. The views of the ASCOBANS Parties had been sought, but no written replies had been received. The views of the Advisory Committee were now sought. The Secretariat's opinion was that it would be preferable for ACCOBAMS to defer consideration of the extension of its Agreement Area until the outcome of the Future Shape process was known.

132. Peter Evans (ECS) stated that the Spanish and Portuguese proposal did not make ecological sense as the Mediterranean and Atlantic populations of the species concerned were distinct. From the point of view of cohesion with fisheries, ASCOBANS was also better placed to deal with the Bay of Biscay and the North East Atlantic.

133. Maj Munk (Denmark) noted Mr Evans' rejection of the scientific case for the ACCOBAMS extension but asked whether a merger of ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS was

feasible and whether the fact that the former was outside UNEP while the latter was within it would pose any insurmountable hurdles. Ms Mrema said that merging the two Agreements would reopen negotiations, during which countries could decide on any arrangement they preferred, but such a process was likely to be time consuming.

134. Monika Lesz (Poland) supporting the retention of separate Agreements and Secretariats, stated that attention should be focussed on avoiding any difficulties arising from any overlaps.

135. Sami Hassani (France) said that France had not decided upon its position yet, although it did seem unlikely now that Spain and Portugal would be acceding to ASCOBANS.

136. Elsa Nickel (Germany) fully understood the position of Spain and Portugal as these countries were Range States for three cetacean-related instruments under CMS and they also wanted all cetacean species to be covered. She thought France was the key country as a Party to both Agreements and she also wondered whether all ACCOBAMS Parties, especially those in the Black Sea, were supporting the proposal. Oliver Schall said that it would be worth soliciting the view of the IWC. Fears were also expressed that the Baltic harbour porpoise would lose prominence in a wider Agreement if the CMS instruments were to merge.

137. The United Kingdom saw the flaws of the scientific argument for the extension and along with the Netherlands agreed that ACCOBAMS should postpone the decision until after the conclusion of the Future Shape process.

138. While not expressing an opinion on the proposal, the Mark Simmonds (WDCS) saw little scientific case for it and was concerned at the prospect of a long distraction away from conservation. WDCS wanted the two Agreements to work together more effectively. Rüdiger Stempel (Coalition Clean Baltic) said that CCB had not yet formulated a final position on this issue. However, he pointed out that there were very good reasons why CMS had created a number of quite specific instruments tailored for different regions. He also voiced concern that the institutional and legal issues likely to result from the proposed extension of the ACCOBAMS agreement area – which might even entail re-negotiation of one or both agreements – would likely divert attention away from conservation for many years to come.

139. The Committee agreed that the Secretariat should contact ACCOBAMS to seek the postponement of the discussion of extending the Agreement Area until the Future Shape process had run its course. The Acting Executive Secretary was also mandated to present the views of the ASCOBANS Parties to the Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS.

8. Any other Business

Style Guide for Advisory Committee Reports

140. The Secretariat had tabled AC17/Doc.8-01, a draft style guide for Advisory Committee Reports, modelled closely on the UN Editorial Guide. It also set out a draft timetable for the production of meeting reports, taking into account that ASCOBANS only employed one report writer. The Meeting welcomed the proposal and adopted it with minor amendments (Annex 14).

Status Overview of Resolutions

141. At the 6th Meeting of the Parties, Denmark had requested that the Secretariat produce a status overview on ASCOBANS resolutions, which was presented as AC17/Doc.8-02. It detailed which Resolutions were still valid, which had been repealed and which had been

superseded. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) pointed out that the last category was largely a matter of interpretation and that comments on the classification made would be welcome.

Report of the 6th Meeting of the Parties

142. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) explained that a preliminary version of the report of MOP6 had been published at the beginning of the year (AC17/Doc.8-03). The report was to be considered final with the exception of one page in the revised Jastarnia Plan, for which another map had been requested by the MOP. This map was still under production and the report would be published as a self-standing document as soon as possible.

UK Workshop on Animal Welfare and Ethics

143. James Gray (United Kingdom) announced that the UK would be hosting a Workshop on Animal Welfare and Ethics at the Eden Project in Cornwall on 22-23 March 2011. The dates unfortunately clashed with the ECS Annual Meeting. It was intended that the outcomes of the Workshop would include recommendations on whale watching, non lethal research and whaling, which could be fed into the IWC processes.

9. Adoption of the List of Action Points of the Science and Conservation Session

144. The Secretariat circulated a draft list of Action Points arising from the Scientific Session, which was adopted as amended (pre-fixed to this report).

10. Close of the Session

145. After the customary expression of thanks to all who had contributed to the success of the meeting, the Chair closed the Scientific Session. Trevor Perfect (United Kingdom) thanked Mr Bräger for his chairmanship and Jan Haelters for his vice-chairmanship over the past three years.

11. Opening of the Administrative Session

146. Jan Haelters (Belgium), the Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee opened the session on Wednesday, 6 October.

12. Adoption of the Agenda of the Administrative Session

147. The draft agenda (Doc AC17/Doc.1-02 rev.1) was adopted without amendment.

13. Report of the Secretariat on Finance and Administrative Issues

13.1 Administrative Issues

148. The Chair invited Borja Heredia (Secretariat) to introduce AC17/Doc.13.01 rev.2. Several changes in staffing had taken place since the last meeting: the appointment of Elizabeth Mrema as Executive Secretary of CMS and therefore *ex officio* Acting Executive Secretary of ASCOBANS, his own entry on duty as Scientific and Technical Officer of CMS and *ex officio* Senior Advisor to ASCOBANS, the replacement of Tine Lindberg-Roncari by Bettina Reinartz as Administrative Assistant and the confirmation in the post of Coordinator of Heidrun Frisch. In addition, a number of interns had worked at the Secretariat.

149. The Secretariat sought guidance on whether the six-monthly progress reports requested by MOP5 but not explicitly required by MOP6 should continue. It was agreed that these reports were useful and should be continued.

13.2 Accounts for 2009

150. Heidrun Frisch (Secretariat) presented AC17/Doc.13.2 rev.1, the accounts overview for 2009. Because the Committee was meeting later in the year than normal, the accounts were already certified and final figures for the trust fund could be presented. The breakdown of each budget line was however still subject to exchange rate fluctuations.

151. All subscriptions for the year 2009 had been received. Table 2 showed expenditure for each budget line, the overall underspend and the certified balance including the operational reserve. Table 3 showed how the voluntary contributions had been spent. Funding received from Germany had been used on the draft leaflet for fishers, a German language version of the ASCOBANS exhibition, the publication of the proceedings of the population structure workshop, co-financing Boris Culik's update and revision of the review of toothed whales, producing the ASCOBANS leaflets in various Agreement languages and MOP6-related expenditures. A voluntary contribution from Finland, received in 2009, had been used to fund the participation of experts in the Jastarnia Group meeting in 2010.

152. The accounts were accepted by the Meeting.

13.3 Outline of Budget for 2010

153. With the Meeting taking place later in the year than normal, AC17/Doc.13.03 rev.1 reflected some actual expenditure rather than merely projections. The Secretariat reported that most subscriptions had been paid and more had been received since the document was prepared. Also for this year, some underspends could be expected, especially on the Coordinator's budget line.

154. Guidance from the Committee was sought on the usefulness of the practice of presenting a status of accounts of the running year and projection of expenditures to Advisory Committee Meetings. It was agreed that the Secretariat could discontinue their preparation.

155. In response to a question from Germany, the Secretariat explained that invoices for IT services were still expected from UNV. The Acting Executive Secretary explained that CMS had sought tenders for IT services. UNV's offer was the cheapest, although the level of service provided was not always entirely satisfactory.

14. Any other Administrative Issues

Evaluation of the Secretariat Arrangements

156. MOP6 had requested that a further evaluation of the Secretariat arrangements be produced by the end of AC18 to be forwarded to the CMS Conference of Parties (November 2011) as input to the decision on the Future Shape of CMS. The Netherlands, which had funded the first review, agreed to lead the working group, which would prepare a preliminary report for consideration by AC18. Parties interested in participating were requested to notify Folchert van Dijken, the Dutch National Coordinator, by 15 November.

Pledges for funding a part-time GS-4 post

157. Elsa Nickel (Germany) reminded the meeting of a promise to provide funding for an additional administrative post in the Secretariat for the year 2011. This pledge had been conditional on matching funding being offered to extend the duration of the post for at least one further year. The financial crisis had led to no further contributions being offered.

158. Ms Nickel explained that in discussions with the Secretariat, funding a North Sea Plan Coordinator was identified as an alternative use of the available funds. Other Parties were urged to provide voluntary contributions to cover further years. In the absence of sufficient contributions, the 18th Advisory Committee Meeting would decide on the use of trust fund reserves.

159. The Netherlands was close to completing its conservation plan for harbour porpoises in the North Sea and some resources might be identified as consideration was given to how to implement it.

160. Maj Munk (Denmark) suggested that if a permanent post was envisaged it should be included in the budget proposal to be prepared for the next MOP. If the post was seen as a short-term project, then voluntary contributions and withdrawals from the reserve seemed more appropriate.

161. The Secretariat undertook to prepare draft terms of reference for the North Sea Plan Coordinator and to forward them to the North Sea Working Group for finalization, before seeking tenders.

CMS Thesis Award

162. Borja Heredia (Secretariat) made an announcement concerning the CMS Thesis Award for completed post graduate research relevant to CMS. The prize of €10,000 provided by Lufthansa would be awarded at the CMS COP in Bergen in November 2011. The deadline for submissions was 15 April 2011. More information could be found at http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2010/07_jul/nw_120710_CMS_Thesis_Award.htm.

Procedure for Prioritizing Funding Requests

163. Christina Rappe (Sweden) and Mark Tasker (United Kingdom) voiced concern at the apparently random nature of identifying activities to receive financial support. The Committee agreed that the Secretariat should in future prepare a list of proposals for funding of internal activities presented during a Meeting of the Advisory Committee in addition to

external project proposals received prior to the meeting. Parties would prioritize and decide on the funding of these activities before the end of each meeting to ensure that funding was sensibly targeted.

Invitations to Representatives of the Russian Federation

164. Germany said that as a result of bilateral meetings with the Russian Federation, contacts had been established with interested bodies and individuals, and urged the Secretariat to continue to try to secure the attendance of representatives of the Russian Federation at future meetings. The Secretariat would intensify efforts to this effect and seek German support if necessary.

15. Date and Venue of the 18th Meeting of the Advisory Committee in 2011

165. The Meeting agreed to revert to holding the Advisory Committee meetings in spring. A deadline of 1 November 2010 was set for offers to host the next meeting. If no Party came forward, the venue would be the UN Campus in Bonn. The Secretariat would consult Parties electronically to ascertain suitable dates between late March and early May, taking account of holidays and other meetings.

16. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

166. As Stefan Bräger (Germany) and Jan Haelters (Belgium) were not seeking re-election, the posts of Chair and Vice-Chair were both vacant. Sweden proposed Sami Hassani (France) as Chair and Penina Blankett (Finland) as Vice Chair, and both proposals were seconded by the United Kingdom. Both candidates accepted nomination and were elected by acclamation.

17. Adoption of the List of Action Points of the Administrative Session

167. Subject to some minor amendments, the draft List of Action Points and Decisions for the Administrative Session was adopted (pre-fixed to the report).

18. Close of Meeting

168. After the customary expression of thanks to all involved in the organization and execution of the meeting, and a presentation of gifts to the outgoing Chair and Vice Chair, the meeting closed at 13:00 on 6 October 2010.

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Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
 - 1.1 Adoption of Rules of Procedure
 - 1.2 Adoption of the Agenda of the **Science and Conservation Session**
2. Annual National Reports 2009
3. Accession and Agreement Amendments
4. Priorities in the Implementation of the Triennium Work Plan (2010-2012)
 - 4.1 ASCOBANS Baltic Recovery Plan (Jastarnia Plan)
 - 4.1.1 Implementation
 - 4.1.2 Recommendations of 6th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group
 - 4.2 ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea
 - 4.2.1 Implementation
 - 4.2.2 Report of the Coordinators
 - 4.3 Review of New Information on Bycatch
 - 4.3.1 Outcome of the Bycatch Workshop, 20 March 2010, Stralsund, Germany
 - 4.4 Review of New Information on the Extent of Negative Effects of Sound
 - 4.5 Publicity and Outreach
 - 4.5.1 Report of the Secretariat
 - 4.5.2 Reports of Parties, Range States and Partners
 - 4.5.3 Draft Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan
5. Implementation of the Triennium Work Plan (2010-2012) – Other Issues
 - 5.1 Review of New Information on Population Size, Distribution, Structure and Causes of Any Changes
 - 5.1.1 Status of Coastal Bottlenose Dolphin Populations
 - 5.2 Coverage of Western Baltic, Inner Danish Waters and Kattegat Areas in Harbour Porpoise Action Plans
 - 5.3 Review of New Information on Pollution and its Effects
 - 5.4 Review of New Information on the Extent of Negative Effects of Vessels and Other Forms of Disturbance
 - 5.5 Extension of the Work of the Agreement into the new Agreement Area, incl. Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
 - 5.6 Report of the Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans
6. Project Funding through ASCOBANS
 - 6.1 Progress of Supported Projects
 - 6.2 Selection and Prioritisation of Projects for Future Support
 - 6.3 Draft ASCOBANS Project Proposal Format

7. Relations with other Bodies
 - 7.1 Dates of Interest 2010/2011
 - 7.2 Proposal to Extend the ACCOBAMS Agreement Area
8. Any other Business
9. Adoption of the List of Action Points of the Science and Conservation Session
10. Close of the Session

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11. Opening of the **Administrative Session**
 12. Adoption of the Agenda of the Administrative Session
 13. Report of the Secretariat on Finance and Administrative Issues
 - 13.1 Administrative Issues
 - 13.2 Accounts for 2009
 - 13.3 Outline of Budget for 2010
 14. Any other Administrative Issues
 15. Date and Venue of the 18th Meeting of the Advisory Committee in 2011
 16. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
 17. Adoption of the List of Action Points of the Administrative Session
 18. Close of Meeting

List of Documents

No.	Agenda Item	Document Title	Submitted by	Distributed
Doc.1-01	1.1	Draft Rules of Procedure for the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee	Secretariat	09/03/10
Doc.1-02 rev.1	1.2 / 12	Provisional Agenda	Secretariat	27/09/10
Doc.1-03 rev.3	1.2 / 12	Provisional Annotated Agenda	Secretariat	28/09/10
Doc.1-04 rev.5		List of Documents	Secretariat	06/10/10
Doc.2-01	2	Annual National Report Belgium	Belgium	29/03/10
Doc.2-02	2	Annual National Report Denmark	Denmark	07/04/10
Doc.2-03	2	Annual National Report Finland	Finland	29/03/10
Doc.2-04	2	Annual National Report France	France	12/04/10
Doc.2-05	2	Annual National Report Germany	Germany	29/03/10
Doc.2-06	2	Annual National Report Lithuania	Lithuania	31/03/10
Doc.2-07	2	Annual National Report Netherlands	Netherlands	07/04/10
Doc.2-08	2	Annual National Report Poland	Poland	16/08/10
Doc.2-09 rev.1	2	Annual National Report Sweden	Sweden	07/04/10
Doc.2-10 rev.1	2	Annual National Report United Kingdom	United Kingdom	08/04/10
Doc.4-01 rev.1	4.1	Recommendations of the 6 th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Jastarnia Group	Jastarnia Group	13/04/10
Doc.4-01 Addendum rev.1	4.1	Report of the 6 th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Jastarnia Group	Jastarnia Group	13/04/10
Doc.4-02 rev.1	4.5	Report of the Secretariat on Publicity and Outreach Activities	Secretariat	23/08/10
Doc.4-03	4.5	Development of a Leaflet for Fishers in the ASCOBANS Area	Secretariat	15/03/10
Doc.4-03 Addendum	4.5	Development of a Leaflet for Fishers in the ASCOBANS Area – Draft Texts	Secretariat	12/04/10
Doc.4-04	4.5	Draft Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan for ASCOBANS	Working Group	07/04/10
Doc.4-05 rev.1	4.2	Interim Report on Progress to develop further the ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoise in the North Sea	Secretariat	06/09/10

No.	Agenda Item	Document Title	Submitted by	Distributed
Doc.4-06 rev.1	4 / 5	ASCOBANS Triennium Work Plan 2010-2012 – Progress and Further Actions	Secretariat	23/08/10
Doc.4-07	4.3	Report of the ASCOBANS/ECS Cetacean By-catch Mitigation Workshop	AC Chair / ECS / Secretariat	09/04/10
Doc.4-08	4.4	Final Report of the ASCOBANS Intersessional Working Group on the Assessment of Acoustic Disturbance	Working Group	09/04/10
Doc.4-09	4.3	Human dimensions of bycatch reduction technology: current assumptions and directions for future research	AC Chair / Secretariat	08/04/10
Doc.4-10	4.3	The community: a missing link of fisheries management	AC Chair / Secretariat	08/04/10
Doc.4-11	4.4	IMO MEPC59 Noise from Commercial Shipping and its Adverse Impacts on Marine Life – Report of the Correspondence Group	Secretariat	12/04/10
Doc.4-12	4.4	IMO MEPC60 Noise from Commercial Shipping and its Adverse Impacts on Marine Life – Report of the Correspondence Group	Secretariat	12/04/10
Doc.4-13	4.3	By-catch begone: changes in the philosophy of fishing technology	AC Chair	12/04/10
Doc.4-14	4.3	Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Plan Monitoring Strategy	AC Chair	15/04/10
Doc.4-15	4.3	Bycatch Estimates of Coastal Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>) in U.S. Mid-Atlantic Gillnet Fisheries for 1996 to 2000	AC Chair	15/04/10
Doc.4-16	4.3	Note on the recent French studies on by catch and pingers in the English Channel	France	16/04/10
Doc.4-17	4.4	IMO MEPC61 Noise from Commercial Shipping and its Adverse Impacts on Marine Life – Report of the Correspondence Group	Secretariat	16/08/10
Doc.5-01	5.1	Characteristics of and Threats to Toothed Whales Found Frequently Within the ASCOBANS Area	Secretariat	13/04/10
Doc.5-02	5.1	A note on the unprecedented strandings of 56 deep-diving whales along the UK and Irish coast	WDSCS	16/03/10

No.	Agenda Item	Document Title	Submitted by	Distributed
Doc.5-02 Addendum	5.1	A note on the unprecedented strandings of 56 deep-diving whales along the UK and Irish coast – Figure 1b	WDSCS	14/04/10
Doc.5-03	5.5	Summary of the Third Meeting of the UNGA Working Group on Marine Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction	Secretariat	18/03/10
Doc.5-04	5.1	OSPAR Biodiversity Committee Background Document on <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour porpoise)	AC Chair	18/03/10
Doc.5-05 rev.1	5.1	Opportunistic Sightings of Harbour Porpoises (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>) in the Baltic Sea at large – Kattegat, Belt Sea, Sound, Western Baltic and Baltic Proper	Germany	22/09/10
Doc.5-06	5.1	Bottlenose Dolphins in the Southwest of England	WDSCS	07/04/10
Doc.5-07	5.2	Explanatory Note on Recommendation No. 23 adopted by the 6 th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group	Secretariat (on behalf of JG Chair)	13/04/10
Doc.5-08	5.1	Report of the First ECS Workshop on White-Beaked & Atlantic White-Sided Dolphins	ECS	14/04/10
Doc.5-09	5.1	UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme	UK	22/09/10
Doc.6-01 rev.3	6.1	Progress of Projects Supported through ASCOBANS	Secretariat	23/08/10
Doc.6-02 rev.2	6.2	Project Proposals Received for Future Funding	Secretariat	28/09/10
Doc.6-03	6.3	Draft ASCOBANS Project Proposal Format	Secretariat	09/03/10
Doc.6-04	6.1	Update on the Tursiops SEAs project	UK	17/03/10
Doc.6-05	6.1	Project Report: Effects of Contaminants on Reproduction in Small Cetaceans	Secretariat	16/04/10
Doc.6-06	6.1	Interim Project Report: Risk Assessment of Potential Conflicts between Shipping and Cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Region	Secretariat	16/04/10
Doc.6-07	6.1	Project Report: Genetic structure of white-sided dolphin (<i>Lagenorhynchus acutus</i>) in the Eastern North Atlantic	Secretariat	16/04/10

No.	Agenda Item	Document Title	Submitted by	Distributed
Doc.6-08 rev.2	6.1	Interim Project Report: Review of Trend Analyses in the ASCOBANS Area	Secretariat	06/10/10
Doc.6-09	6.1	Project Report: Development of the HELCOM-ASCOBANS Harbour Porpoise Database	Secretariat	24/08/10
Doc.7-01 rev.3	7	Reports of Representation of ASCOBANS at Meetings	Secretariat	23/08/10
Doc.7-02 rev.4	7.1	Dates of Interest to ASCOBANS in 2010/2011	Secretariat	29/09/10
Doc.7-03	7	Invitation for submission of data on Harbour Porpoise sightings, by-catches and strandings	HELCOM	31/03/10
Doc.7-04	7	HELCOM Indicator Fact Sheet: Decline of the harbour porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>) in the southwestern Baltic Sea	AC Chair	14/04/10
Doc.7-05	7.2	Proposal to Extend the ACCOBAMS Agreement Area	Secretariat	28/09/10
Doc.7-06	7.2	Legal and Practical Implications of the Extension of the ACCOBAMS Geographical Scope	Secretariat	28/09/10
Doc.7-07	7.2	Proposal for Extension of ACCOBAMS Agreement Area – Some Legal Implications	Secretariat	28/09/10
Doc.8-01	8	Draft ASCOBANS Style Guide	Working Group	16/03/10
Doc.8-02	8	Status Overview of ASCOBANS Resolutions	Secretariat	17/03/10
Doc.8-03	8	Report of the 6 th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS	Secretariat	17/03/10
Doc.13-01 rev.2 Restricted	13.1	Report on Administrative Issues 2009/2010	Secretariat	04/10/10
Doc.13-02 rev.1 Restricted	13.2	Report on Budgetary Issues 2009	Secretariat	23/08/10
Doc.13-03 rev.1 Restricted	13.3	Outline of Budget for 2010	Secretariat	24/08/10

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE ASCOBANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

*As amended at the 17th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee
4-6 October 2010, UN Campus, Bonn, Germany*

PART I

DELEGATES, OBSERVERS, SECRETARIAT

Rule 1: Delegates

- (1) A Party to the Agreement (hereafter referred to as a 'Party')¹ shall be entitled to appoint one member of the Advisory Committee (thereafter referred to as a Committee Member) and alternate, when appropriate, who shall represent the Party, and such advisers as the Party may deem necessary.
- (2) Contracting Parties shall submit the names of the Committee Member and the advisers to the Secretariat through their coordinating authorities by the start of the Meeting.
- (3) The voting rights of the Parties shall be exercised by the Committee Member. In the absence of the Committee Member, an adviser may be appointed by the Committee Member to act as a substitute over the full range of the Committee Member's functions.
- (4) The appointed Committee Member or alternate shall be available for consultation inter-sessionally.

Rule 2: Observers

- (1) All non-Party Range States and Regional Economic Integration Organisations bordering on the waters concerned may send observers to the meeting, who shall have the right to participate but not to vote.²
- (2) Any body or individual qualified in cetacean conservation and management may request admittance to plenary sessions of the Advisory Committee. Appropriate written applications for attendance should be received by the Secretariat at least 60 days before any Committee meeting, and circulated to Parties by the Secretariat forthwith. Parties shall inform the Secretariat of their acceptance or rejection of all applications no less than 30 days before that meeting. An applicant shall be permitted to attend as non-voting observer, if two-thirds of the Parties accept their application. Decisions on whether such bodies or individuals may attend Committee meetings should take into account possible seating limitations. Information on limitations of the venue shall be provided to the Secretariat by the host in time for circulation with any applications received.
- (3) Representatives of the Secretariats or technical advisory bodies of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and its daughter Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding, may attend the sessions of the Advisory Committee as observers without the need for an application as outlined in Rule 2(2).

¹ See Agreement, paragraph 1.2, sub-paragraph (e), and paragraphs 8.4 and 8.5. A Party is a Range State or a Regional Economic Integration Organisation which has deposited with the United Nations Headquarters its consent to be bound by the agreement.

² See Agreement, paragraph 6.2.1.

- (4) The Advisory Committee may, as appropriate, invite any other body or individual qualified in cetacean conservation and management to participate in a meeting. Such persons shall not have the right to vote.
- (5) Seating limitations may require that no more than two observers from any non-Party State or body be present at sessions of the Advisory Committee.

Rule 3: Secretariat

Unless otherwise instructed by the Parties, the Secretariat shall service and act as secretariat for the Advisory Committee at its meetings.

PART II OFFICERS

Rule 4: Chairpersons

- (1) The Advisory Committee shall, at its first session, elect a Chairperson from among the Committee Members, and a Vice-chairperson from the Committee Members or their advisers.
- (2) The Chairperson and Vice-chairperson of the Advisory Committee shall hold office until the end of the first meeting of the Advisory Committee following each Meeting of Parties. The Chairperson and Vice-chairperson may be nominated for re-election at the end of a term of office. In the event of the election of a new Chairperson or Vice-chairperson, the Advisory Committee shall elect these persons from among the Committee Members or their advisers.

Rule 5: Presiding Officer

- (1) The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Advisory Committee.
- (2) If the Chairperson is absent or is unable to discharge the duties of Presiding Officer, the Vice-Chairperson shall deputize.
- (3) In the event that both the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson are absent or unable to discharge the duties of Presiding Officer, the appointed Committee Member of the Party hosting the Meeting shall assume these duties.
- (4) The Presiding Officer may vote.

PART III RULES OF ORDER AND DEBATE

Rule 6: Powers of Presiding Officer

- (1) In addition to exercising powers conferred elsewhere in these Rules, the Presiding Officer shall at Advisory Committee meetings:
 - (a) open and close the sessions;

- (b) direct the discussions;
 - (c) ensure the observance of these Rules;
 - (d) accord the right to speak;
 - (e) put questions to the vote and announce decisions;
 - (f) rule on points of order; and
 - (g) subject to these Rules, have complete control of the proceedings of the Meeting and the maintenance of order.
- (2) The Presiding Officer may, in the course of discussion at a meeting, propose:
- (a) time limits for speakers;
 - (b) limitation of the number of times the members of a delegation or observers from a State which is not a Party or a Regional Economic Integration Organisation, or from any other body, may speak on any subject matter;
 - (c) the closure of the list of speakers;
 - (d) the adjournment or the closure of the debate on the particular subject or ~~question~~ under discussion;
 - (e) the suspension or adjournment of any session; and
 - (f) the establishment of drafting groups on specific issues.

Rule 7: Right to Speak

- (1) The Presiding Officer shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak, with precedence given to the Committee Members.
- (2) A Committee Member, adviser or observer may speak only if called upon by the Presiding Officer, who may call a speaker to order if the remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
- (3) A speaker shall not be interrupted, except on a point of order. The speaker may, however, with the permission of the Presiding Officer, give way during his speech to allow any participant or observer to request elucidation on a particular point in that speech.

Rule 8: Procedural Motions

- (1) During the discussion of any matter, a Committee Member may raise a point of order, and the point of order shall be immediately, where possible, decided by the Presiding Officer in accordance with these Rules. A delegate may appeal against any ruling of the Presiding Officer. The appeal shall immediately be put to the vote, and the Presiding Officer's ruling, shall stand unless a majority of the Parties present and voting decide otherwise. A delegate raising a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion, but only on the point of order.
- (2) The following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the Meeting:
 - (a) to suspend the session;
 - (b) to adjourn the session;
 - (c) to adjourn the debate on the particular subject or question under discussion;
 - (d) to close the debate on the particular subject or question under discussion.

Rule 9: Arrangements for Debate

- (1) The Meeting may, on a proposal by the Presiding Officer or by a Committee Member, limit the time to be allowed to each speaker and the number of times anyone may speak on any subject matter. When the debate is subject to such limits, and a speaker has spoken for the allotted time, the Presiding Officer shall call the speaker to order without delay.
- (2) During the course of a debate the Presiding Officer may announce the list of speakers, and, with the consent of the Committee, declare the list closed. The Presiding Officer may, however, accord the right of reply to any individual if a speech delivered after the list has been declared closed makes this desirable.
- (3) During the discussion of any matter, a Committee Member may move the adjournment of the debate on the particular subject or question under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, a Committee Member may speak in favour of, and a Committee Member of each of two Parties may speak against the motion, after which the motion shall immediately be put to the vote. The Presiding Officer may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this Rule.
- (4) A Committee Member may at any time move the closure of the debate on the particular subject or question under discussion, whether or not any other individual has signified the wish to speak. Permission to speak on the motion for closure of the debate shall be accorded only to a Committee Member from each of two Parties wishing to speak against the motion, after which the motion shall immediately be put to the vote. The Presiding Officer may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this Rule.
- (5) During the discussion of any matter a Committee Member may move the suspension or the adjournment of the session. Such motions shall not be debated but shall immediately be put to the vote. The Presiding Officer may limit the time allowed to the speaker moving the suspension or adjournment of the session.

PART IV VOTING

Rule 10: Methods of Voting

- (1) Without prejudice to the provisions of Rule 1, Paragraph 2, each Committee Member duly accredited according to Rule 3 shall have one vote.
- (2) The Committee shall normally vote by show of hands at a meeting, but any Committee Member may request a roll-call vote. In the event of a vote during an inter-sessional period, there will be a postal ballot, which may include ballot by email or fax.
- (3) At the election of officers, any Committee Member may request a secret ballot. If seconded, the question of whether a secret ballot should be held shall immediately be voted upon. The motion for a secret ballot may not be conducted by secret ballot.
- (4) Voting by roll-call or by secret ballot shall be expressed by "Yes", "No" or "Abstain". Only affirmative and negative votes shall be counted in calculating the number of votes cast by Committee Members present and voting.
- (5) If votes are equal, the motion or amendment shall not be carried.
- (6) The Presiding Officer shall be responsible for the counting of the votes and shall announce the result. The Presiding Officer may be assisted by the Secretariat. Inter-sessional voting by postal ballot, email or fax will be co-ordinated by the Secretariat.

- (7) After the Presiding Officer has announced the beginning of the vote, it shall not be interrupted except by a Committee Member on point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. The Presiding Officer may permit Committee Members to explain their votes either before or after the voting, and may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations.

Rule 11: Majority and voting procedures on motions and amendments

- (1) All votes on procedural matters relating to the forwarding of the business of the meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of Parties.
- (2) Financial decisions within the limit of the power available to the Advisory Committee shall be decided by three-quarter majority among those Parties present and voting.
- (3) Amendments to the Rules of Procedure require a three-quarter majority among those present and voting.
- (4) All other decisions shall be taken by simple majority among Parties present and voting.
- (5) When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. If the amendment is adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon.

PART V

LANGUAGES AND RECORDS

Rule 12: Working Language

English shall normally be the working language of any Advisory Committee meeting and working groups.

Rule 13: Other Languages

- (1) An individual may speak in a language other than English at meetings, provided he/she furnishes interpretation into English.
- (2) Any document submitted to a meeting shall be in English.

Rule 14: Summary Records

Summary records of Committee meetings shall be kept by the Secretariat and shall be circulated to all Parties in English.

PART VI

OPENNESS OF DEBATES

Rule 15: Committee meetings

All sessions of meetings shall be closed to the public.

Rule 16: Sessions of the Working Groups

As a general rule, sessions of working groups shall be limited to the Committee Members, their advisers and to observers invited by the Chairs of working groups.

PART VII WORKING GROUPS

Rule 17: Establishment of Working Groups

- (1) The Advisory Committee may establish working groups as may be necessary to enable it to carry out its functions. It shall define their terms of reference. The Advisory Committee as well as the working groups may nominate members of each working group, the size of which may be limited according to the number of places available in assembly rooms.
- (2) The working group can appoint committee members, advisers as well as observers as its Chair and Vice-Chair.

Rule 18: Procedure

Insofar as they are applicable, these Rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of working groups.

PART VIII FINAL PROVISIONS

Rule 19: Omissions

In matters not covered by the present Rules, the Rules of Procedure as adopted by the last regular Meeting of the Parties shall be applied *mutatis mutandis*.

Rule 20: Amendments to the Rules of Procedure

- (1) The Committee shall, by three-quarter majority, establish its own Rules of Procedure.
- (2) These Rules shall come into force on adoption by the Committee by three-quarter majority, and may be amended by the Committee as required. They will remain in force until and unless an amendment is called for and adopted.

ASCOBANS Triennium Work Plan 2010-2012 – Progress and Further Actions

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
Conservation Issues					
1. Review annually and as far as possible in conjunction with EU, ICES and IWC, new information on bycatch and make recommendations to Parties and other relevant authorities for further action. This should include information provided by Parties and Range States on the implementation, efficacy and impacts of measures introduced to reduce bycatch, and on effort in relevant fisheries	AC (supported by Secretariat)	Annually	Proposed strategic priority in the Strategy paper	Global study on effects of bycatch in gillnets on migratory species and mitigation measures, financed through CMS with voluntary contributions from the UK and Australia advertised CMS Secretariat made call for information to Parties and organizations, published as ScC16/Inf.11 Bycatch Working Group established at AC17 (ToR see Annex 9 of AC17 Report)	Working Group to report to AC18
2. Continue to review annually new information on pollution and its effects on small cetaceans that occur in the ASCOBANS area and, on the basis of this review, provide recommendations to Parties and other relevant authorities	AC	Annually		Pollution Review 2010 Annex 12 of AC17 Report	

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
3. Continue to review the extent of negative effects of sound, vessels and other forms of disturbance on small cetaceans and to review relevant technological developments and best practices with a view to developing guidelines which Parties may use to reduce disturbance by noise	AC (supported by Secretariat)	Annually	Proposed strategic priority in the Strategy paper	Secretariat made contacts with CMS Scientific Council, OSPAR Biodiversity Committee and ACCOBAMS Secretariat to explore possibility of developing joint guidelines for noise mitigation. Reports contained in AC17/Doc.7-01 rev.1 CMS Secretariat made call for information on national guidelines to feed into the process. Initial responses published as ScC16/Inf.12 Intersessional Noise Working Group established at AC17	Noise Working Group to report on progress to AC18 Map showing areas of high risk of ship strikes to be prepared for AC19

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
4. Review new information, as far as possible in co-operation with EU, ICES and IWC, on cetacean population size, distribution, structure, and causes of any changes in the ASCOBANS area and based on implications for conservation to make appropriate recommendations to Parties and other relevant authorities	AC	Annually			Secretariat to write to the authorities of the Faeroe Islands regarding the whale hunt AC to investigate actual and potential effects of climate change distribution shifts Peter Evans to provide a tabular summary of the results of various trend analyses in strandings, sightings and bycatch
5. Continue to evaluate progress in the implementation of the Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises (Jastarnia Plan), establish further implementation priorities, carry out the periodic review of the Plan and promote the implementation of the Plan	Jastarnia Group (supported by the Secretariat)	Annually	Proposed strategic priority in the Strategy paper	6 th Jastarnia Group meeting held in February 2010 SAMBAH (Static Acoustic Monitoring of the Baltic Sea Harbour Porpoise) project commenced in January 2010 (until 2014) with support from Baltic Sea Parties and EU	

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
6. Review the effectiveness of the ASCOBANS Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises in 2011. Jastarnia Group to draft revision of plan if necessary for AC preceding the MoP7 *	Independent reviewer (e.g. R. Reeves) / Jastarnia Group	2011			By AC19, identify measures geared to the situation of harbour porpoises in the area west of the Darss-Limhamn Ridge
7. Incorporate the implications arising from the conclusions of the ASCOBANS/HELCOM Small Cetacean Population Structure Workshops in the development of the Jastarnia and North Sea harbour porpoise action plans and potentially other actions (to be elaborated by the Advisory Committee), taking particular note of the fact that the western Baltic, Inner Danish Waters and Kattegat areas are at present not covered by either plan	AC	AC17		6 th Jastarnia Group meeting made recommendation to AC contained in AC17/Doc.4-01, detailed explanation provided in AC17/Doc.5-07	Jastarnia Group to identify measures geared to the situation of harbour porpoises in the area west of the Darss-Limhamn Ridge by AC19
8. Promote and coordinate the implementation of the Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea, gather information on its implementation and the results obtained, inform the public and evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan every three years to update it*	Coordinator/Steering Group (supported by the Secretariat)	Throughout the triennium	Proposed strategic priority in the Strategy paper	Coordinators contracted in October 2009. Progress report contained in AC17/Doc.4-05 rev.1 North Sea Group established at AC17 (ToR in Annex 8 of AC17 Report)	Coordinators and North Sea Group to report to AC18 Secretariat to prepare a job description for the Coordinator in collaboration with the North Sea Group

ACTIVITY TRIENNIUM WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
9. Continue to consider how the work of ASCOBANS should be extended to take account of the new Agreement Area, which includes areas beyond national jurisdiction	AC (supported by Secretariat)	Throughout the triennium			
10. Promote an informal Working Group of the Advisory Committee which shall summarise information on large cetaceans in the Agreement area and address aspects of their conservation (in accordance with the Terms of Reference proposed by MOP6 for this group)	AC	Throughout the triennium		Intersessional Working Group established at AC17	WG to report to AC18
11. Review progress of bottlenose dolphin project (TURSIOPS SEAs) and guide as required	AC, led by UK			Progress report contained in AC17/Doc.6-04	
ASCOBANS Meetings and Workshops					
12. Ensure the annual cycle of Advisory Committee Meetings, with papers circulated one month in advance of the meetings	Secretariat	Annually	Article 4.2	All Secretariat documents available in time for AC17	

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
13. Seek to secure a host for the 7 th Meeting of Parties at least a year in advance of the meeting; otherwise arrange for it to be held in Bonn	Secretariat	2011	Article 4.2		Make first call for hosts by mid-2011
14. Organize meetings of regional working groups (Jastarnia Group, North Sea Group) at intervals defined in each group's ToR *	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1, 4.2	6 th Jastarnia Group meeting held in February 2010	
15. If required by AC, organize a workshop, e.g. at an annual conference of the ECS, on a topic of priority interest to ASCOBANS *	Secretariat	During triennium	1. Habitat Conservation and Management		Liaise with ACCOBAMS over organizing a joint workshop on pollutants and new compounds and their effects on cetaceans to be held in 2011

* Activities marked with an asterisk may require additional funding

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
16. In conjunction with the European Cetacean Society and North Sea Foundation, organize one or more meetings to develop a constructive dialogue with the fisheries sector in the ASCOBANS area, in order to aid the Parties to progress bycatch mitigation measures in an effective manner. The first meeting is proposed to take place at the Annual Conference of the ECS in Stralsund in March 2010. To initiate the process, an intersessional Steering Group under the Advisory Committee Chair shall be established between MOP6 and AC17	AC (supported by Secretariat)	Throughout the triennium	Proposed strategic priority in the Strategy paper	Intersessional Steering Group established 1 st Bycatch Workshop held on 20 March 2010 Bycatch Working Group established at AC17 (ToR see Annex 9 of AC17 Report)	ASCOBANS representatives to be sent to RACs and similar fisheries meetings; Parties to provide funding Working Group to report to AC18
17. Propose priorities for the coming triennium (2013-2015)	AC	2012			
Budgetary and Administrative Issues					
18. Report on budgetary and administrative issues to each meeting of the Advisory Committee	Secretariat	Annually	Article 4.2	AC17/Doc.13-01 rev.2, 13-02 rev.1 and 13-03 rev.1	Continue mid-year report to Parties Discontinue budget outlines of the running year

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
19. Present a draft budget for the next triennium for consideration at an Advisory Committee meeting at least six months prior to the next Meeting of Parties	Secretariat / AC	2012	Article 4.1, 4.2		
20. Prepare draft resolutions on budgetary and administrative issues for consideration at the last meeting of the Advisory Committee prior to MoP7	Secretariat / AC	2012	Article 4.1, 4.2		
21. Encourage Parties and partner organizations to provide voluntary contributions for projects prioritised by the AC or outreach initiatives	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1	Letter requesting voluntary contribution for additional staff support sent in July, followed by phone calls from Executive Secretary Facilitated co-funding of pinger project (Annex 2 to AC17/6-02 rev.1) through Friends of CMS	
22. Assist in developing funding arrangements for projects covering themes prioritised by the Advisory Committee (see task 15) and Meeting of Parties	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1		Conclude funding agreements for selected projects

ACTIVITY TRIENNIUM WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
Communication, Education and Public Awareness					
23. Develop a co-ordinated outreach programme, focussing particularly on activities that can help achieve the aims of ASCOBANS*	Secretariat/AC	2010	Proposed strategic priority in the Strategy paper	Draft Fisheries Leaflet prepared and related recommendations made in AC17/Doc.4-03 CEPA Plan adopted (Annex 11 of AC17 Report)	Parties to develop national material for outreach to fishermen Secretariat to use material from draft fisheries leaflet for further development of website
24. Report on outreach and communication issues to each meeting of the Advisory Committee	Secretariat	Annually	Article 4.2	AC17/Doc.4-02 rev.1	
25. Develop and implement CEPA to raise awareness of issues related to cetacean conservation in the Agreement Area*	Secretariat / Parties and observers	Throughout the triennium	5. Information and education	CEPA Plan adopted (Annex 11 of AC17 Report)	Make plans for events marking the 20 th anniversary of ASCOBANS in 2012
26. Continue to update and translate ASCOBANS information material into the languages of both Party and non-Party Range States*	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	5. Information and education	Revised ASCOBANS leaflet now available in all languages of the Agreement Area German language exhibition produced Draft new website contains basic information in all languages of the Agreement Area	

ACTIVITY TRIENNIAL WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
27. Continue to develop the ASCOBANS website, aiming to meet the needs of a wide range of target audiences and including educational material*	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	5. Information and education	New species pages developed Extended section on threats developed Revised website close to finalization	Finalize new website Develop section with information for fishermen
28. Collaborate with partner organizations to develop joint actions in educational and promotional activities, and create synergy to provide added value while avoiding duplication of effort	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	5. Information and education	Joint ASCOBANS/SAMBAH leaflet has been developed, translations are being prepared; to be printed with German voluntary contribution 2010	
29. Assess the need for targeted information material on conservation issues facing small cetaceans in the region in consultation with Parties and appropriate other bodies, and develop material as necessary in close cooperation with these partners *	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	5. Information and education	Draft Fisheries Leaflet prepared and related recommendations made in AC17/Doc.4-03	
Cooperation with other Organizations					
30. Identify priorities and improve co-operation between ASCOBANS and the European Union institutions	AC / Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1, 4.2, Proposed strategic priority in the Strategy paper	AC representation at the ongoing DG-ENV process to determine "good environmental status" as goal of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive	

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
31. Ensure close collaboration with the Secretariats of CMS and other CMS Regional Agreements on all issues of mutual interest, and contribute to the process of defining the future shape of CMS	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1, 4.2	Ongoing Letter to Parties sent in July with request for guidance on response to ACCOBAMS extension proposal Analysis of legal implications of potential ACCOBAMS extension requested from IUCN Environmental Law Centre	Write to the Executive Secretary of ACCOBAMS to present the Parties' position regarding the proposed extension of the ACCOBAMS Area Examine the feasibility of a joint CMS Family workshop on a subject of common interest such as bycatch
32. Seek to cooperate with the HELCOM Secretariat in the creation and maintenance of a joint Baltic harbour porpoise database as part of HELCOM's online information system *	Jastarnia Group / Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1, 4.2	Funding Agreement concluded in December 2009. Final project report contained in AC17/Doc.6-01 rev.1 Call for input made by HELCOM to ASCOBANS contacts (see AC17/Doc.7-03)	
33. Continue to invite intergovernmental bodies such as IWC, ICES, CMS, HELCOM, NAMMCO, OSPAR, ACCOBAMS, the European Commission and other relevant international organizations to send representatives to Advisory Committee meetings	Secretariat	Annually	Article 4.1, 4.2	Invitations and reminders sent for AC17	

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
34. Ensure that the chairs of the Advisory Committee receive invitations to meetings of CMS and other CMS Regional Agreements	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1, 4.2	Contact details included in CMS database	
35. Explore the possibilities of further developing positive relationships with other stakeholders, especially the fishing industry and Regional Advisory Councils	AC / Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1, 4.2	Bycatch Workshop held on 20 March 2010	ASCOBANS representatives to be sent to RACs and similar fisheries meetings; Parties to provide funding
36. Compile for each meeting of the Advisory Committee a list of Dates of Interest	Secretariat	Annually	Article 4.1, 4.2	Annex 14 of AC17 Report	Representatives to report back to AC18
37. Insofar as budgetary provisions and guidance by the Advisory Committee allow for it, ensure proper representation at an appropriate level at meetings of other relevant organizations *	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1	Participation of AC Chair in 4 meetings of the WG on Good Environmental Status (EU MSFD) (co-) financed Reports of representations since AC16 see AC17/Doc.7-01 rev.3	
38. Continue and improve effective communication with non-governmental and international organizations, such as OSPAR, HELCOM, ICES, ACCOBAMS, CBD and IWC	Secretariat / AC	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1, 4.2	Ongoing	

ACTIVITY TRIENNium WORK PLAN 2010-2012	ACTION BY	TIMING	LINKS TO AGREEMENT, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY PAPER	PROGRESS MADE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
Institutional Issues					
39. Promote the Agreement and its aims in Parties, Range States and with other relevant players *	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1	Ongoing	
40. Promote accession of non-Party Range States and the European Commission to the Agreement	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1	Facilitated participation of ASCOBANS in 2010 Treaty Event of the UN Secretary General	
41. Present to Parties, each year no later than 30 June, provided all reports have been received by that date, a compilation of Annual National Reports	Secretariat	Annually	Article 4.2	Compilation published as soon as possible after receipt of last report	
42. Present to the Meeting of Parties a summary of, <i>inter alia</i> , progress made and difficulties encountered since the last Meeting of Parties	Secretariat	2012	Article 4.3		
43. Support Parties, Range States and Agreement bodies in implementing this Work Plan, in so far as primary responsibility does not lie with the Secretariat	Secretariat	Throughout the triennium	Article 4.1	Ongoing	

Revised Recommendations of the 6th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group

BYCATCH REDUCTION

1. The Jastarnia Group notes the recent promising new methods of monitoring and mitigating bycatch across the Baltic Sea region and recommends that options of compiling this information and making it available to those not or not fully aware of it, especially fishermen, be explored. The Jastarnia Group and the ASCOBANS Secretariat should take the lead in this process.
2. Bycatch mitigation activities of the Jastarnia Group should be coordinated with the related work of other regional bodies and organizations in order to avoid duplication of effort.
3. With respect to recreational fisheries, Parties should work towards the use of fishing gear with no by-catch, such as for instance traps and pots instead of those types of fishing gear known to pose a threat to the harbour porpoise
4. The possibility of using cod traps, as successfully applied in Sweden, or other gear as an alternative to pingers elsewhere in the Baltic Sea region, as well as the possibility of reflecting their use in a porpoise-friendly label should be investigated.
5. Parties are urged to compile data on fisheries effort as required in recommendation 11 of the Jastarnia Plan¹.
6. The AC Chair and the ASCOBANS Secretariat should approach the European Commission to draw attention to the need to address the bycatch problem in the Baltic Sea, as outlined in the Jastarnia Plan.
7. The ASCOBANS Secretariat should produce a synopsis of bycatch-related national regulations of relevance to individual fishermen, especially with regard to legal sanctions for bycatch and incentives for those delivering carcasses.

RESEARCH AND MONITORING

8. A summary of current and historic morphological data should be included in Anders Galatius' and Jonas Teilmann's study of skull morphology of harbour porpoises and presented to the 2011 Jastarnia Group.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

9. The Jastarnia Group should make its expertise available to governments seeking to develop management plans for SACs/MPAs designated for the harbour porpoise.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

10. Parties should designate Focal Points dealing with the Baltic Harbour Porpoise Database and provide the details of these Focal Points to the Secretariats of ASCOBANS and HELCOM.

¹ Recommendation 11: Compile data on fishing effort (MOP6 Resolution No.1, Annex 1)

11. The Jastarnia Group noted the draft of the fishermen's leaflet prepared for the Advisory Committee. The Group feels the draft needs substantial rewording or may even need to be totally rewritten. The Jastarnia Group suggests a new draft be prepared for the AC. The Baltic RAC should be contacted for the Baltic Sea version. If necessary, Parties and the ASCOBANS Secretariat should seek funding to enlist a Baltic Sea expert to help with the Baltic Sea version.

ASCOBANS COOPERATION WITH OTHER BODIES

12. The Jastarnia Group should step up cooperation with the Baltic Sea RAC.

IMPLEMENTATION AND RE-EVALUATION OF THE PLAN

13. The Jastarnia Group recommends that the Jastarnia Plan be extended to cover the Baltic as defined by HELCOM. With a view to enabling the adoption of a formal amendment of the Plan to this effect at MOP 7, the Jastarnia Group should identify, by AC 19 at the latest, measures geared to the situation of harbour porpoises in the extension area, i.e. the area to the west of the Darss-Limhamn Ridge. Measures to be taken in the extension area may deviate to the extent necessary from those applicable to the current area of application, i.e. the area to the east of the Darss-Limhamn ridge.

SAMBAH (Static Acoustic Monitoring of the Baltic Sea Harbour Porpoise)

14. The SAMBAH project team should be invited to participate in future Jastarnia Group meetings.
15. Jastarnia Group members should promote the SAMBAH project including by providing data and also provide these data to HELCOM harbour porpoise data base as appropriate.
16. The ASCOBANS Secretariat should promote the SAMBAH project internationally (including with the European Commission and with the Baltic RAC). The ASCOBANS Secretariat and Parties should also promote SAMBAH in the context of the International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise (IDBHP), e.g. the Secretariat should promote SAMBAH on the ASCOBANS website.
17. Parties and the ASCOBANS Secretariat should try to involve the Russian Federation building on *inter alia* its involvement with harbour porpoises (and offer financial assistance for Russian participation).
18. National activities related to SAMBAH (including in non-SAMBAH countries, in particular Germany) should be coordinated to avoid duplication and information should be shared.
19. Efforts should be made to ensure that SAM devices are left in place or returned when dislodged. Possible means of achieving this might include *inter alia* marking devices with a contact address and offering rewards to people returning them. Such measures should address all sea users.
20. Fishermen and fishermen's organizations should be informed and involved in outreach initiatives to inform the wider fisheries community about SAMBAH.
21. The ASCOBANS Secretariat and Parties should lend support in obtaining permits to set SAM devices by contacting the relevant authorities, and national representatives should assist the Secretariat in identifying the right contact persons to approach.

Terms of Reference for the Steering Group for the ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea

1. Introduction

The Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS) adopted a new Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea on 18 September 2009 at its 6th Meeting of the Parties in Bonn, Germany (at MOP6 and Resolution No. 1 of MOP6). This can be accessed at http://www.service-board.de/ascobans_neu/files/MOP6_7-02_NorthSeaConservationPlan.pdf.

The North Sea Group will, supported by a Coordinator (dependent on the availability of funding) and the Secretariat, ensure the implementation of Activity 8 in the Triennium Work Plan 2010-2012:

“Promote and coordinate the implementation of the Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea, gather information on its implementation and the results obtained, inform the public and evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan every three years to update it.”

2. Terms of reference

The North Sea Group is a Steering Group of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee within the meaning of Article 5.4 of the ASCOBANS agreement. It is the Steering Group for the ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea.

a) Tasks

The North Sea Group has the following tasks:

- Evaluate progress of development and implementation of the Plan, specifically with regards to each of the 12 actions as defined in the Plan;
- Promote and coordinate the implementation of the Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea
- Gather information on its implementation and the results obtained
- Inform the public and evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan every three years to make recommendations for updating it

b) Composition

The group consists of representatives of all states bordering the North Sea, irrespective of their status as ASCOBANS Parties or Non-Party Range States, preferably represented by members that are participating in the development and implementation of the national conservation plans for Harbour Porpoises. The group also consists of North Sea environmental non-governmental organizations and North Sea fisheries organizations. The Group will be supported by a Coordinator (depending on funding) and the Secretariat. The group as described here will hereafter be referred to as “North Sea Group Members”.

Each North Sea State shall be entitled to appoint North Sea Group Members, who shall represent the environmental sector and the fisheries sector and such Advisers as the Party may deem necessary. Appointed North Sea Group Members should ensure sufficient national coordination.

North Sea environmental non-governmental organizations and North Sea fisheries organizations shall be entitled to appoint one North Sea Group Member per organization and such Advisers as they may deem necessary. The North Sea Group may, as appropriate, invite representatives of any other body or any individual qualified in cetacean conservation and management to participate in a meeting in the capacity of “Invited Experts”. The chair of the North Sea Group will be appointed after endorsement of the Terms of Reference and establishment of the actual North Sea Group.

c) Meetings

The North Sea Group will work intersessionally using email and will meet approximately once a year, preferably in the margins of a regular AC meeting. The envisioned time needed for such a meeting is currently estimated as 0.5 day.

d) Rules of procedure

Pursuant to Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee, those Rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of the North Sea Group insofar as they are applicable.

Report of the Working Group to Develop Terms of Reference for an Intersessional Bycatch Working Group

We discussed the need to avoid duplication, particularly with ICES and amendments to the bycatch regulation 812/2004. There was also some discussion as to whether a separate working group was needed or whether the tasks could be achieved in the context of the North Sea Conservation Plan.

It was agreed that establishing a group for the next intersessional period would be valuable but that this may not need to become a standing working group.

Two tasks were identified to be progressed by the group, although it was noted that it may be necessary to await developments on the amendments to EC Regulation 812/2004:

- (i) To develop a guidance framework for co-operative projects that bring together fishers, gear technologists and cetacean scientists for bycatch mitigation.
- (ii) To work with the CMS Scientific Councillor for Bycatch to develop briefing notes for anyone representing ASCOBANS at RACs and similar fisheries meetings in order to maintain a consistent and appropriate approach.

Terms of Reference for the ASCOBANS Intersessional Noise Working Group

This will be an intersessional correspondence group that will work using email unless other opportunities arise. The Noise Working Group will report back to each meeting of the Advisory Committee on:

- i. Relevant activities and developments including in other international bodies (e.g. ACCOBAMS, HELCOM and OSPAR) and under the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive;
- ii. Relevant developments and new literature especially with respect to
 - a) Technologies aimed at mitigating the propagation of marine noise;
 - b) Noise sources that may present a threat to small cetaceans;
- iii. The potential for joint initiatives on noise and disturbance with ACCOBAMS and/or OSPAR;
- iv. Potential terms of reference for a report (or reports) that might
 - a) Examine ways in which ASCOBANS can assist Parties in meeting the requirements of the relevant European Directives (i.e. the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive) and other bodies that countries have elected to adhere to which are concerned with marine noise; and
 - b) Provide Parties with information about mitigating technologies and management measures, and their effectiveness and cost;
- v. The assessment of the implementation by Parties of the different aspects of Resolution No. 2 on Adverse Effects of Underwater Noise on Marine Mammals during Offshore Construction Activities for Renewable Energy Production, as adopted at the 6th Meeting of the Parties of ASCOBANS.

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 Triennium 2010-2012

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan is to identify actions and activities to be undertaken by the Secretariat, Parties and relevant partners within the given budget. In particular, this plan identifies the following:

- How the Secretariat, Parties and partners can contribute, including by working together, to raise awareness of issues related to cetacean conservation in the Agreement Area;
- How ASCOBANS can help develop joint educational and promotional activities, and create synergies to provide added value while also avoiding any unnecessary duplication of effort¹; and
- How the Agreement and its aims can be promoted more effectively within Party States, Range States and with other relevant players.

The CEPA should seek to achieve:

- More effective engagement with audiences, both existing and new ones;
- Clearer focus amongst Secretariat, Parties, Partners and key stakeholders about key messages and objectives;
- Greater impact upon audiences;
- A closer relationship with key conservation issues;
- More effective connection with educational, fundraising and promotional initiatives;
- Closer engagement with potential investors in the work of ASCOBANS; and
- More effective and easily understood communication of relevant areas of science.

In addition, the 17th Advisory Committee has recommended the following overarching principles and examples of potential activities:

1.1 General principles

- Carefully identifying the audience that we are trying to address – e.g. children, students, policy makers, fishermen, and making materials appropriate to each particular audience and to the message that needs to be conveyed;
- Noting that different localities, communities and cultures may require different approaches;
- Preparing outreach and education materials in relevant languages (including on the website); and
- Building joint initiatives with ‘partner’ organisations and others.

¹ For example with the EU, CMS, OSPAR, HELCOM and ACCOBAMS

1.2 Potential Activities

- Postage stamps showing images of small cetacean species²;
- Education packs (the WDCS dolphin diploma³ has been noted as an example of a simple mechanism to reach a lot of young people) and/or educational CDs;
- Simple one page water-proofed (laminated) ID guides;
- Photographic competitions;
- The development of new ASCOBANS awards - for example a conservation or science award - and/or a student award;
- The utility of sightings schemes (such as that run by GSM or the Sea Watch Foundation) for directly engaging target groups and raising public awareness;
- The development of postcards/stickers/bookmarks;
- Grants for students/and or making data available to them to facilitate projects; and
- The use of ferries for outreach exercises involving sighting cetaceans and/or onboard education initiatives

Incentives to specific users of the sea to undertake conservation activities (such as the collection of marine debris for appropriate disposal on land, as successfully undertaken by the "Fishing for litter" project in Shetland and elsewhere). Develop a "reward" system (e.g. with certificates, announcements, etc.) for companies or organisations that have best demonstrated effective marine environmental/conservation measures in their activities.

2. Interpretation and Further Ideas

2.1 Printed resources and educational/promotional material

2.1.1 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 other Contracting Governments.
- 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. Several Range States have excellent opportunities for land-based watching that does not intrude upon the animals. These should be specifically encouraged.
- 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)⁴. 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 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 cetacean biodiversity within the Agreement Area. The exhibition could be sponsored by Partners as well as a well-known brand (such as Nikon). The exhibition

² Since the 16th Advisory Committee meeting, new stamps featuring the harbour porpoise have been issued in Poland. See: http://www.morswin.pl/index_base.php?Screen_Option=3&Page_ID=73&News_ID=472

³ See WDCS website: http://www.yod2007.org/en/Join_in/Dolphin_Quiz_KIDS/index.html

⁴ BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year. <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit-us/whats-on/temporary-exhibitions/wpy/>

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.

2.1.2 The publication of “Survival⁵”

Launch parties could be organised by ASCOBANS/CMS Parties or others (with assistance from the Secretariat) 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 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 UK Magazine (circa approximately 20,000).⁶

2.1.3 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.

2.1.4 Species Guides

There are several species guides already available for the European region. Either utilising one of these in partnership with its author or working from scratch, ASCOBANS could produce one for the whole region or several for different regions. These could be based on existing guides and would be useful and accessible tools for a diverse audience (from school children to tour operators).

Such species guides 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 bycatch incidences;
- Providing information on responsible whale and dolphin watching including information on appropriate code of conduct.

The production costs of the guides should be divided between Parties, Partners and regional authorities. All sponsors should have their logo clearly visible in the design; there should

⁵ Survival is a new book sponsored by CMS and co-authored by the famous environmentalist Stanley Johnson. It is intended to be popular and introduce more people to the fabulous and extraordinary wildlife that undertake migrations in support of the work of the convention. More information: http://www.stacey-international.co.uk/v1/site/product_rpt.asp?Catid=337&catname=Flora+%26+Fauna.

⁶ WDCS Book Reviews: http://www.wdcs.org/connect/education/story_details.php?select=88

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.

2.1.5 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 on the occasion of an anniversary of ASCOBANS, such as the 20th (2012) or 25th (2017) anniversary of the opening for signature of the Agreement or the 20th anniversary of the entry into force (2014).
- The Secretariat, in cooperation with the coordinating authorities of each country, 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 in the Agreement Area.

2.1.6 Posters and Postcards

Posters and postcards are also excellent ways to raise awareness.

2.2 Engaging through Events and mobile Exhibitions

Both events and mobile exhibitions can prove to be powerful, emotive and effective ways 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.

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 specifically 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.

- i. 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.
- ii. **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.
- iii. 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 available resources and budget (although there is no reason these events should be an expensive initiative), key activities could be organised, supported and promoted by local Partners and

authorities. The UK National Whale and Dolphin Watch week organised by the Sea Watch Foundation provides one example and this approach might be expanded to other countries within the ASCOBANS region.

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 C⁷), 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 people's attention and imagination), distribution of specific resources and public awareness literature (such as the ASCOBANS brochure and postcards).

- iv. Provide opportunities for children to become '**dolphin experts**' through taking part in activities such as WDCS's Dolphin Diploma – encourage direct participation in conservation activities and acquiring knowledge that can be passed on to family and friends.
- v. **Mobile exhibitions** could be an event by themselves or complement such events as mentioned above. Developing and touring with a selection of inflatable (life size if possible) cetacean species that are most commonly 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.

2.3 Website

The Triennium Work Plan 2010-2012 instructs the Secretariat to continue to develop the ASCOBANS website. The internet is an important and effective tool to promote and raise public awareness of the Agreement (Activity 27 of the Triennium Work Plan 2010-2012). 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. **Linking websites:** In order to avoid duplicating efforts, appropriate links should be made between the ASCOBANS site and the CMS site. 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. **Updating website:** 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.

⁷ CD produced by UNEP/ASCOBANS in cooperation with Hel Marine Station.

- 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. **Children's section:** 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 WDCS 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. **General public:** 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 fishermen's documentary.
- vi. **Appearance:** 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. **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. **Sighting reports:** The ASCOBANS website could include links to the sightings sections of countries or organisations⁸ where people around the region would be able to report their latest sightings/or strandings information. These or similar schemes may assist in the reporting of bycatches and the delivery of dead specimens for research and the dissemination of any important news about cetaceans (for example, their listing on the IUCN Species Red List⁹). This would help to attract people to the ASCOBANS and other websites to look at what was happening in their region.

2.4 International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise (IDBHP)

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.

There are various channels through which the event can be successfully promoted:

- i. The **website** (the ASCOBANS website will list events happening, there should also be a designated section where relevant information and downloads are easily

⁸ For example: <http://www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk/sightings.php?uid=29>

⁹ <http://www.iucnredlist.org/>

- 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 a 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, culturally relevant messaging and emotive imagery (although nothing so graphic that it 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 may be even more 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 (potentially including key facts) 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, a 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. A 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 dolphins¹⁰ 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 demonstration 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.

¹⁰ In some areas it may be appropriate instead to focus on lesser known species, such as Risso's dolphins.

2.5 International Year of Biodiversity

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 ASCOBANS as well as emphasising its role and contribution as a source of expertise 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.
- Work with national/regional bodies, to develop a database of speakers (volunteers/paid) within the region who would be available to give talks to schools/groups/events. This could be promoted on the website.

2.6 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.

2.7 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.

2.8 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.

3. Objectives and Recommended Actions

		Recommended Action		
TWP #	Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners
1. Triennium Work Plan 2010-2012				
23 / 25	1.1 Develop a co-ordinated outreach programme, focussing particularly on activities that can help achieve the aims of ASCOBANS* Develop and implement CEPA to raise awareness of issues related to cetacean conservation in the Agreement Area*	Follow recommendations in this Plan. Continue activities related to the IDBHP. Use dedicated banner and postcards as promotional activities. Consider production in more languages. Consider creating and monitoring more language versions of the ASCOBANS Wikipedia page.	Follow recommendations in this Plan. Parties to consider budget for translating, printing and circulating promotional material.	Follow recommendations in this Plan. Partners to consider budget for translating, printing and circulating promotional material.
26	1.2 Continue to update and translate ASCOBANS information material into the languages of both Party and non-Party Range States*	Secretariat to seek mechanisms to allow key material to be translated particularly to the languages of the Baltic Sea region.	Parties to provide translations and/or funding for translations as well as funding for printing costs.	Partners should seek to assist.
27	1.3 Continue to develop the ASCOBANS website, aiming to meet the needs of a wide range of target audiences and including educational material*	Increase publicity so that more people are aware of the website. Develop sections for the press, children, teachers, fishermen, academia, NGOs and Parties. Provide more information in the following categories: 1. Science and research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biology and ecology of small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area. • Provide and use species information by linking to IUCN database • Cooperate with the HELCOM Secretariat in the creation and maintenance of a joint Baltic harbour porpoise database. 	Parties should seek to assist in promotional efforts. Parties should provide web-friendly descriptions of national research programmes and other relevant initiatives. Parties are encouraged to provide visual materials, including photographs of species and other illustrations featuring conservation issues.	NGOS might be able to enter into partnership with the Agreement to help sponsor and/or produce materials. Partners conducting research are encouraged to provide suitable information and visual aids. Partners may have suitable materials, such as information on the species that could be made available. (For example WDCCS' field guide to the cetaceans of the region).

		Recommended Action		
TWP #	Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish information on national and international research projects. <p>2. Education and children's activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kids 'Join In' section – gallery of artwork where they can upload their own artwork. Link to WDCS website to complete their Dolphin Diploma. PowerPoint presentations with notes that teachers/group leaders can give to classes, highlighting the conservation issues and the significance of conservation measures Fact sheets, art and craft ideas, resources such as 'All About Dolphins' that can be used for school projects, (highlighting threats and conservation issues) Species guides, versions for adults and children. Mechanisms to provide waterproof versions should be explored. <p>3. Organisation of events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-line database of speakers (volunteers/paid) within the region who would be available to give talks to schools/groups/at events. Campaigning & fundraising Mechanisms to provide materials in support of ASCOBANS initiatives such as the IDBHP Pin Badges need to be identified¹¹ 	<p>Parties should look into covering costs to reprint DVD's for circulation.</p>	

¹¹ At the present time the Secretariat would not be allowed to take money in exchange for goods. Hence a suitable partnership would need to be set up if Parties agree.

TWP #	Target	Recommended Action		
		Secretariat	Parties	Partners
		<p>4. Information for fishermen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended practices to reduce/avoid bycatch Downloadable DVD 		
28	1.4 Collaborate with partner organizations to develop joint actions in educational and promotional activities, and create synergy to provide added value while avoiding duplication of effort	<p>Clearly define the role of the ASCOBANS secretariat in a working relationship with relevant bodies in all new literature.</p> <p>Share information and intentions to participate in relevant educational and promotional activities.</p> <p>Seek synergies in terms of joint educational and promotional efforts, e.g. in distributing the results of scientific research in a suitable format.</p>	Parties to proof-read new literature and identify educational and promotional activities they will be taking part in.	Partners to proof-read new literature and identify educational and promotional activities they will be taking part in.
29 / 1 / 2	1.5 Assess the need for targeted information material on conservation issues facing small cetaceans in the region in consultation with Parties and appropriate other bodies, and develop material as necessary in close cooperation with these partners*	<p>Pass information coming from the AC on mitigation of bycatch and noise impacts, the effects of pollution as well as causes of changes in populations to relevant authorities.</p> <p>Consult appropriate organisations (e.g. RACs and fishermen's associations) to produce information material.</p> <p>Distribute information material to fishermen, especially with respect to bycatch issues.</p> <p>Create a dedicated, multilingual section on the ASCOBANS website for fishermen, including downloadable material.</p>	Parties to assist with establishing communication with national (fishermen) organisations.	Partners should seek to assist (a recent good example being the video produced by the RSPCA).
30 / 33/ 38	1.6 Continue and improve effective communication with non-governmental and international organizations	<p>Continue to invite relevant organisations to send representatives to Advisory Committee meetings.</p> <p>In accordance with the guidance of the Advisory Committee, send ASCOBANS representatives at an appropriate level to the meetings of relevant organisations, provided that sufficient funds are</p>	<p>Identify priorities and improve co-operation between ASCOBANS and the European Union.</p> <p>Countries attending relevant meetings should</p>	

		Recommended Action		
TWP #	Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners
		available. Suitable material for distribution should be provided to enable the person, to publicise ASCOBANS activities at such meetings	look for opportunities to promote ASCOBANS and also opportunities for joint outreach.	
35	1.7 Explore the possibilities of further developing positive relationships with other stakeholders, especially the fishing industry and Regional Advisory Councils Identify a plan of action to approach other key marine users (i.e. merchant shipping, oil & gas, renewable energy industries, defence, recreational).	Contact the organisations to identify possible areas of collaboration	Parties to contact national fishermen's organisations and investigate methods of regular communication. Parties to assist with outreach to appropriate marine users	Partners to assist with outreach to appropriate marine users
39	1.8 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) ¹² . Establish regional 'champions' who would focus activities on certain species/populations and report progress to 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.
40	1.9 Promote accession of non-Party Range States and the European Commission to the Agreement	Bilaterals to be set up where possible. Recruitment letters to be sent to remaining Range States. The Advisory Committee should be asked to advise on recruitment initiatives.	Bilaterals to be set up where possible. Recruitment letters to be sent to remaining Range States.	NGOs in relevant countries to encourage participation.

¹² Other ideas for an award could include a more specific one to an individual/group that is making a direct difference to the animals in reducing or eliminating bycatch or some other major threat. One example being the WWF "International Smart Gear Competition" (which also includes turtles, birds, sharks – www.smartgear.org) which ASCOBANS might partner.

		Recommended Action		
TWP #	Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners
2. MOP 5 Res. 8: Educational and Promotional Activities				
	2.1 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 (International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise): maximise involvement & target group. Publicise AC & MOP in national media.	Relevant national partners should assist.
3. UNEP/CMS/Resolution 9.5 – Outreach and Communication issues				
	3.1 Increase engagement and commitment of Parties. Enhance Regional capacity particularly where CMS is under-represented.	Regular exchange of news and mutual linking on websites. Preparation of joint publications on issues of mutual interest.	Support outreach activities and publications at a national level. Support global species campaigns (e.g. Year of Biodiversity). Provide links to CMS and relevant agreements on national websites.	Support and develop joint outreach activities and scientific meetings by involving national/regional 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.
	3.2 Increase engagement of non-parties. Highlight importance for migratory species and new Agreements.	Coordinate recruitment efforts with CMS Secretariat for a joint approach.	Provide financial support for 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.

		Recommended Action		
TWP #	Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners
				Assist with preparation and organisation of regional and national workshops.
	3.3 Increase number of supporting partners. Increase cooperative activities with MEA's and key partners. Widely secure extra-budgetary funding.	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 events e.g. World Environment Day (5 June) and the International Year of Biodiversity.	Exchange information between CMS focal points and other convening focal points, also by regular meetings. Support national initiatives to celebrate World Environment / Ocean 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 / Ocean Day.
	3.4 Enhance awareness of key media. Enhance visibility of CMS family.	Make full use of CMS' media outreach through their website and interaction with DCPI, UNEP Regional Offices RUNIC, and Deutsche Welle (German International Radio) to enhance distribution of press releases. Use the specialized information channels of CMS and Agreements to highlight important common issues (coordinated web-based news releases). Improve visibility of CMS and Agreements in Host Country. Contribute to production of image film on CMS. Issue press releases on CMS and Agreement events, initiatives, meetings and projects on a regular basis.	Promote cooperation with ministerial press departments to distribute joint press releases. Focal point to translate press releases into national languages and pass them to national media Improve visibility of CMS and Agreements at a national level Provide the Secretariat with relevant articles issued in the national press.	Regularly provide information on CMS family activities in their newsletters and on Websites. Highlight joint activities with CMS and Agreements.

		Recommended Action		
TWP #	Target	Secretariat	Parties	Partners
	3.5 Influence opinion leaders of sectors impacting migratory species.	Assist in advising CMS ambassadors to include issues relevant to the Agreement in their work programme. Join in preparing targeted brochures for decision-makers and politicians. Make joint targeted contacts with opinion leaders on specific issues.	Facilitate contacts with national conservation bodies, politicians and decision makers also through meetings.	Assist the secretariat with the identification of campaign ambassadors on the national and international level.
	3.6 Disseminate information material in UN languages. Strengthen visibility of the CMS family.	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.	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” and other relevant documents produced by Partners

Results of ASCOBANS Pollution Review 2010

ICES. 2010. Report of the Working Group on Marine Mammal Ecology (WGMME), 12-15 April 2010, Horta, The Azores. ICES CM 2010/ACOM:24. 212 pp.

The 2010 ICES WGMME report reviewed the literature (2000-present) on trends in chemical contaminant exposure and toxic effects in marine mammals within the ICES range. This is available on the web:

The main conclusions and recommendations were:-

5.5 Conclusions

- 1) Despite being banned for two-three decades, polychlorinated biphenyls still occur at concentrations that exceed proposed thresholds for mammalian toxicity (e.g. Kannan *et al.*, 2000; Jepson *et al.*, 2005) in some marine mammal top predator species including bottlenose dolphins, killer whales and polar bears.
- 2) Compared with many other legacy pollutants, PCBs are declining only very slowly in many geographic regions (e.g. harbour porpoises in UK waters).
- 3) Given their high exposure levels in marine mammals (compared with pro-posed toxicity thresholds for marine mammals), resistance to environ-mental degradation and relative toxicity, PCBs undoubtedly continue to pose the greatest toxicological threat to some marine mammal species within the ICES range.

5.6 Recommendations

- 1) In order to better detect future contaminant-related population level effects, there is a need for more robust population estimates for some marine mammal populations with low abundance and high pollutant (esp. PCB) exposure (e.g. killer whales and bottlenose dolphins).
- 2) Research should be continued and expanded to assess trends in contaminant exposure (PCBs and newer contaminants), population structure and to conduct risk assessments for health and reproductive effects from contaminant exposure in species of highest risk (e.g. killer whales, St Lawrence belugas, polar bears, bottlenose dolphins, and Baltic marine mammals). The use of biopsy techniques would allow for simultaneous sampling for genetics and contaminant exposure.
- 3) Contaminant levels (including PCBs) should continue to be monitored in marine mammals (or marine fish) in regions of highest environmental exposure (Baltic Sea and St Lawrence Estuary).
- 4) Closer standardization of stranding network protocols for conducting necropsies, storing samples and conducting contaminant analyses across the ICES range would be beneficial.
- 5) Better integration of data on health status and contaminant exposure within the ICES range would help assess potential long-term impacts of chemical contaminants in regions and species with highest exposures (e.g. establishment of European strandings/live biopsy database and tissue bank).

Robin J. Law, Philippe Bersuder, Jon Barry, Rob Deaville, Robert J. Reid and Paul D. Jepson

Chlorobiphenyls in the blubber of harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) from the UK: Levels and trends 1991–2005

Marine Pollution Bulletin 60: (3) 470 – 473, 2010

Harbour porpoises sampled within the UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme have been analysed for 25 chlorobiphenyl congeners. In all, 440 porpoises stranded or bycaught during the period 1991–2005 were studied. There are regional differences in the trend in summed congener concentrations over time but, despite controls on PCBs having been in place for decades, they are declining only slowly. Their toxic impacts in UK porpoises – increased susceptibility to infectious disease mortality in the most contaminated individuals – looks likely to continue for some time yet. Further efforts to limit or eliminate PCB discharges to the marine environment are still needed

Law, R.J., Jon Barry, Philippe Bersuder, Jon Barber, Rob Deaville, Robert J. Reid and Paul D. Jepson (2010) Levels and trends of BDEs in blubber of harbor porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) from the UK, 1992 – 2008

Environmental Science & Technology 44, 4447–4451.

Controls were placed on the production and use of the pentamix polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) formulation within the European Union in 2004. In porpoises stranded or bycaught around the U.K., BDE congeners from this product predominate. Lipid-normalized concentrations of (summed)BDE congeners in the blubber of 415 porpoises sampled during the period 1992–2008 have been investigated for possible time trends resulting from the regulatory action. Our analysis suggests that, overall, median Σ 9BDE concentrations peaked around 1998 and have since reduced by between 53.8% and 73.5% to 2008. Our best point estimate is that the reduction has been 67.6%. This decline was highly statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and was not confounded by a range of other factors which were also considered (area, season, nutritional status, bycaught/stranded, and age class).

Eric W. Montie, Robert J. Letcher, Christopher M. Reddy, Michael J. Moore, Belinda Rubinstein and Mark E. Hahn Brominated flame retardants and organochlorine contaminants in winter flounder, harp and hooded seals, and North Atlantic right whales from the Northwest Atlantic Ocean

Marine Pollution Bulletin Article In Press

Various brominated flame retardants (BFRs), including polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) and current-use, non-PBDE BFRs, as well as organochlorine (OC) pesticides and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), were measured in winter flounder, harp and hooded seals, and North Atlantic right whales from the Eastern United States and Canada. The concentrations of PBDEs in winter flounder and right whales were similar in magnitude to the levels of PCBs, which was unlike the pattern observed in seals.

Jennifer E. Yordy, Randall S. Wells, Brian C. Balmer, Lori H. Schwacke, Teri K. Rowles and John R. Kucklick

Life history as a source of variation for persistent organic pollutant (POP) patterns in a community of common bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) resident to Sarasota Bay, FL

Science of the Total Environment 408: (9) 2163 – 2172, 2010

To assess the variation of POP mixtures that occurs among individuals of a population, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), organochlorine pesticide (OCP) and polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) concentrations were measured in blubber and milk of bottlenose dolphins resident to Sarasota Bay, FL, and principal components analysis (PCA) was used to explain mixture variations in relation to age, sex and reproductive maturity. PCA demonstrated significant variations in contaminant mixtures within the resident dolphin community.

Patricia A. Fair, Jeff Adams, Gregory Mitchum, Thomas C. Hulsey, John S. Reif, Magali Houde, Derek Muir, Ed Wirth, Dana Wetzel, Eric Zolman, Wayne McFee and Gregory D. Bossart

Contaminant blubber burdens in Atlantic bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) from two southeastern US estuarine areas: Concentrations and patterns of PCBs, pesticides, PBDEs, PFCs, and PAHs

Science of the Total Environment 408: (7) 1577 – 1597, 2010-07-16

Collectively, the current Σ PCB, Σ DDT, and Σ PBDEs blubber concentrations found in CHS dolphins are among the highest reported values in marine mammals. Both dolphin populations, particularly those in CHS, carry a suite of organic chemicals at or above the level where adverse effects have been reported in wildlife, humans, and laboratory animals warranting further examination of the potential adverse effects of these exposures.

Maria Unger, Lillemor Asplund, Göran Marsh and Örjan Gustafsson

Characterization of an abundant and novel methyl- and methoxy-substituted brominated diphenyl ether isolated from whale blubber

Chemosphere 79: (4) 408 – 413, 2010

A previously unidentified yet abundant substituted polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) was isolated from a northern bottlenose whale (*Hyperoodon ampullatus*) found dead in the Skagerrak, North Sea.

Luis F. Leandro, Gregory J. Teegarden, Patricia B. Roth, Zhihong Wang and Gregory J. Doucette

The copepod *Calanus finmarchicus*: A potential vector for trophic transfer of the marine algal biotoxin, domoic acid

Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology 382: (2) 88 – 95, 2010

The marine algal biotoxin, domoic acid (DA), is produced by certain members of the diatom genus *Pseudo-nitzschia*. This neurotoxin has been responsible for several mass mortality events involving marine birds and mammals. In all cases, the toxin was transferred from its algal producers through marine food webs by one or more intermediate vectors. The ability of some copepod taxa to serve as vectors for DA has been demonstrated; however, the role played in DA trophic transfer by *Calanus finmarchicus*, which often dominates N. Atlantic

zooplankton assemblages and is a primary dietary component of the highly endangered N. Atlantic right whale (▶ *Eubalaena glacialis*), has been uncertain. The findings presented provide evidence for the potential of *C. finmarchicus* to facilitate DA trophic transfer in marine food webs where toxic *Pseudo-nitzschia* is present.

Andrew Turner

Marine pollution from antifouling paint particles

Marine Pollution Bulletin 60: (2) 159 – 171, 2010

Antifouling paint particles (APP) are generated during the maintenance of boats and are shed from abandoned structures and grounded ships. Analyses of paint fragment composites from recreational facilities in the UK reveal chemical compositions that are similar to those representing the net signal of the original formulations; significantly, dry weight concentrations of Cu and Zn of up to about 35% and 15%, respectively, are observed and, relative to ambient dusts and sediment, elevated concentrations of other trace metals, like Ba, Cd, Cr, Ni, Pb and Sn, occur. Greater caution is required by boaters and boatyards during the removal and disposal of solid wastes, and more awareness or stricter enforcement of relevant codes of practice or legislation is recommended.

K. Perner, Th. Leipe, O. Dellwig, A. Kuijpers, N. Mikkelsen, T.J. Andersen and J. Harff

Contamination of arctic Fjord sediments by Pb–Zn mining at Maarmorilik in central West Greenland

Marine Pollution Bulletin 60: (7) 1065 – 1073

This study focuses on heavy metal contamination of arctic sediments from a small Fjord system adjacent to the Pb–Zn “Black Angel” mine (West Greenland) to investigate the temporal and spatial development of contamination and to provide baseline levels before the mines re-opening in January 2009.

Liesbeth Weijs, Krishna Das, Hugo Neels, Ronny Blust and Adrian Covaci

Occurrence of anthropogenic and naturally-produced organohalogenated compounds in tissues of Black Sea harbour porpoises

Marine Pollution Bulletin 60 (5): 725 – 731, 2010

Harbour porpoises are one of the three cetacean species inhabiting the Black Sea. This is the first study to report on polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) and naturally-produced compounds, methoxylated PBDEs (MeO-PBDEs) and polybrominated hexahydroxanthene derivatives (PBHDs), in tissues (kidney, brain, blubber, liver, muscle) of male harbour porpoises (11 adults, 9 juveniles) from the Black Sea.

Lutz Ahrens, Wolfgang Gerwinski, Norbert Theobald and Ralf Ebinghaus

Sources of polyfluoroalkyl compounds in the North Sea, Baltic Sea and Norwegian Sea: Evidence from their spatial distribution in surface water

Marine Pollution Bulletin 60: (2) 255 – 260, 2010

The spatial distribution of 15 polyfluoroalkyl compounds (PFCs) in surface water was investigated in the North Sea, Baltic Sea and Norwegian Sea. In addition, an interlaboratory comparison of the sampling techniques and analysis was conducted. Highest concentration in the North Sea was found near the coast, whereas the Σ PFC concentration decreased

rapidly from 18.4 to 0.07 ng l⁻¹ towards the open North Sea. The river Elbe could identify as a local input source for PFCs into the North Sea, whereas perfluorobutanoic acid (PFBA) was transported into the sampling area with the easterly current. In contrast to the North Sea, the distribution of PFCs in the Baltic Sea was relatively homogenous, where diffuse sources dominated.

Héloïse Frouin, Michel Lebeuf, Mike Hammill, Stéphane Masson and Michel Fournier

Effects of individual polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) congeners on harbour seal immune cells *in vitro*

Marine Pollution Bulletin 60: (2) 291 – 298, 2010

The present study investigates *in vitro* the effects of BDE-47, -99 and -153, on the formation of Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) on intracellular level of thiols, on activity and efficiency of phagocytosis and on apoptosis in granulocytes of harbour seals. Compounds were tested at four different concentrations ranging from 1.5 to 12 µM. Results showed that ROS levels, thiol levels and phagocytosis were all affected when harbour seal cells were exposed to the highest concentration (12 µM) of PBDE congeners. Apoptosis was not affected by PBDEs. The observed effects were similar in adults, pups and in the 11B7501 cell line of harbour seals.

J. Germán Rodríguez, Oihana Solaun, Joana Larreta, María Jesús Belzunce Segarra, Javier Franco, J. Ignacio García Alonso, Cristina Sariego, Victoriano Valencia and Ángel Borja

Baseline of butyltin pollution in coastal sediments within the Basque Country (northern Spain), in 2007–2008

Marine Pollution Bulletin 60: (1) 139 – 145, 2010

Tributyltin (TBT), dibutyltin (DBT) and monobutyltin (MBT) were measured in surficial sediments at the ports of Pasaia and Bilbao, together with other mid- and small-size harbours of the Basque Country (northern Spain), in 2007–2008. The highest values of the sum of the three measured butyltin species (3523–3640 ng g⁻¹, as Sn) were found at sampling stations near to shipyards located within the port of Pasaia. The highest value of TBT concentration (3143 ng g⁻¹, as Sn) was found at the marina of Getxo, in the port of Bilbao. The degree of TBT degradation varied greatly between sampling stations, being found to be generally higher in those sediments with higher values of redox potential and lower values of TBT concentration (normalized by organic matter content).

Jean-Yves Cabon, Philippe Giamarchi and Stephane Le Floch

A study of marine pollution caused by the release of metals into seawater following acid spills

Marine Pollution Bulletin 60: (7) 998 – 1004, 2010

This study examined the potential metal pollution induced by the accidental spill of different acids into seawater. The acids sink to the bottom according to their densities and subsequently react with marine sediments.

Eva Garnacho, Robin J. Law, Ronny Schallier and Joan Albaiges

Targeting European R&D for accidental marine pollution

Marine Policy 34: (5) 1068 – 1075, 2010

Accidental marine pollution can have major ecological and economic consequences at national and trans-national levels, and there is a need to achieve a better integration of science into actual decision-making systems to support prevention measures, response systems and management activities. Effective linking mechanisms between R&D and end-users/policy stakeholders are required to ensure the relevance of R&D, effective uptake of R&D outputs, and suitable policy development. Different issues and barriers to effectively link accidental marine pollution R&D effort to end-users concerns and needs and to develop a trans-national strategic approach are identified, analysed, and further developed into recommendations.

Christiane Zarfl and Michael Matthies

Are marine plastic particles transport vectors for organic pollutants to the Arctic?

Marine Pollution Bulletin: Article in Press

Plastic litter accounts for 50–80% of waste items stranded on beaches, floating on the ocean surface and lodged in the seabed. Organic pollutants can be absorbed onto plastic particles from sea water, attached to their surfaces or included in the plastic matrix as additives. Such chemicals may be transported to remote regions by buoyant plastics and ocean currents.

Jean-Paul Ducrotoy

The use of biotopes in assessing the environmental quality of tidal estuaries in Europe

Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science 86: (3) 317 – 321, 2010

In Europe, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) (European Commission 2000) – and the recently proposed EU Marine Strategy Directive – have established a framework for the protection of groundwater, inland surface waters, estuarine (transitional) waters and coastal waters. The WFD has several objectives: to prevent water ecosystem deterioration, to protect and to enhance the status of water resources but the most important aspect is to achieve a 'Good Ecological Status' (GES) for all waters, by 2015. In essence, the WFD requires a water body to be compared against a reference condition and then its ecological status designated – if the water body does not meet good or high ecological status, i.e. it is in moderate, poor or bad ecological status, then remedial measures have to be taken (e.g. pollution has to be removed).

Anna Sobek, Michael S. McLachlan, Katrine Borgå, Lillemor Asplund, Katrin Lundstedt-Enkel, Anuschka Polder and Örjan Gustafsson

A comparison of PCB bioaccumulation factors between an arctic and a temperate marine food web

Science of the Total Environment 408: (13) 2753 – 2760, 2010

To test how environmental conditions in the Arctic and the resulting ecological adaptations affect accumulation of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in the marine food web, bioaccumulation of four polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in an arctic (Barents Sea 77 °N–82 °N) and a temperate marine (Baltic Sea 54 °N–62 °N) food web were compared. Three

different trophic levels were studied (zooplankton, fish, and seal), representing the span from first-level consumer to top predator.

Tine Missiaen, Martin Söderström, Irina Popescu and Paula Vanninen

Evaluation of a chemical munition dumpsite in the Baltic Sea based on geophysical and chemical investigations

Science of the Total Environment 408: (17) 3536 – 3553, 2010

This paper discusses the results of geophysical and chemical investigations carried out in a chemical munition dumpsite in the southern Baltic Sea, east of the island of Bornholm. After WW2 over 32,000 tons of chemical war material was dumped here including shells and bombs as well as small drums and containers.

Panu Rantakokko, Anja Hallikainen, Riikka Airaksinen, Pekka J. Vuorinen, Antti Lappalainen, Jaakko Mannio and Terttu Vartiainen

Concentrations of organotin compounds in various fish species in the Finnish lake waters and Finnish coast of the Baltic Sea

Science of the Total Environment 408: (12) 2474 – 2481, 2010

The sum concentration of OTCs (Σ OTCs) in perch in the least contaminated areas of the Baltic Sea were around 20 ng/g fresh weight (fw) and less than 10 ng/g fw in lake areas. In heavily contaminated areas of the Baltic Sea 150–500 ng/g fw in perch were detected. In lake areas the maximum Σ OTCs in perch was only 30 ng/g fw. With regard to the other species in the Baltic Sea, salmon, sprat, flounder, whitefish, vendace and lamprey contained low concentrations (Σ OTCs mainly less than 20 ng/g fw), whereas in pike, pike-perch, burbot and bream concentrations were higher. Σ OTCs in lake fish were generally lower than in the Baltic Sea..

Candida Savage, Peter R. Leavitt and Ragnar Elmgren

Effects of land use, urbanization, and climate variability on coastal eutrophication in the Baltic Sea

Journal of Limnology and Oceanography 55: (3) 1033 – 1046, 2010

Sedimentary records of organic matter inputs (stable nitrogen isotopes [d15N], nitrogen [N], and carbon [C] content), phytoplankton abundance (pigments, stable carbon isotopes [d13C]), and community composition (pigments) were used to reconstruct the history and pathway to water-quality degradation in a Swedish Baltic coastal bay. Climate variability has become more important as a factor influencing coastal eutrophication in recent decades, explaining 14% of the variance in the algal data since 1975. Both urban and agricultural sources of nutrients have degraded water quality, illustrating the need for cooperation between stakeholders at regional levels to achieve “good ecological status” in the Baltic coastal environment.

Elin Almroth and Morten D. Skogen

A North Sea and Baltic Sea Model Ensemble Eutrophication Assessment

AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment 39: (1) 59 – 69, 2010

A method to combine observations and an ensemble of ecological models is suggested to produce a eutrophication assessment. Using threshold values and methodology from the

Oslo and Paris Commissions (OSPAR) and the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM), four models are combined to assess eutrophication for the Baltic and North Seas for the year 2006. The assessment indicates that the entire southeastern part of the North Sea, the Kattegat, the Danish Straits, the Gulf of Finland, and the Gulf of Riga as well as parts of the Arkona Basin, the Bornholm Basin, and the Baltic proper may be classified as problem areas. The Bothnian Bay and parts of the Baltic proper, the Bornholm Basin, and the Arkona Basin are classified as potential problem areas.

S. Murphy, G. J. Pierce, R. J. Law, P. Bersuder, P. D. Jepson, J. A. Learmonth, M. Addink, W. Dabin, M. B. Santos, R. Deaville, B. N. Zegers, A. Mets, E. Rogan, V. Ridoux, R. J. Reid, C. Smeenk, T. Jauniaux, A. López, J. M. Alonso Farré, A. F. González, A. Guerra, M. García-Hartmann, C. Lockyer and J. P. Boon

Assessing the Effect of Persistent Organic Pollutants on Reproductive Activity in Common Dolphins and Harbour Porpoises

Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science 42: 153 – 173, 2010

In order to evaluate the possible long-term effects of POPs on the continued viability of these populations, we investigated their effects on reproductive activity in females, using ovarian scars as an index of reproductive activity. In harbour porpoises, high POP burdens tended to be associated with lower ovarian scar number, possibly indicating that high contaminant levels were inhibiting ovulation, or some females may go through a number of infertile ovulations prior to a successful pregnancy, birth, and survival of their first offspring during early lactation. In contrast, initial results identified that the common dolphins with contaminant burdens above a threshold level for adverse health effects in marine mammals (17 µg g⁻¹ total PCBs lipid) were resting mature females, with high numbers of ovarian scars. This suggests that (a) due to high contaminant burdens, females may be unable to reproduce, thus continue ovulating, or (b) females are not reproducing for some other reason, either physical or social, and started accumulating higher levels of contaminants. Additional analyses were carried out on a control group of "healthy" *D. delphis*, i.e. stranded animals diagnosed as bycatch and were assessed for evidence of any infectious or non infectious disease that would inhibit reproduction. Results suggested that high contaminant burdens, above the threshold level, were not inhibiting ovulation, conception or implantation in female *D. delphis*, though the impact on the foetal survival rate (in both species) requires further examination. Investigations into accumulation and persistence of ovarian scars and use as an index of reproductive activity were also undertaken within this study.

Peter S. Ross, Catherine M. Couillard, Michael G. Ikonou, Sophia C. Johannessen, Michel Lebeuf, Robie W. Macdonald and Gregg T. Tomy

Large and growing environmental reservoirs of Deca-BDE present an emerging health risk for fish and marine mammals

Marine Pollution Bulletin Volume 58, Issue 1, January 2009, Pages 7-10

Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) have been the subject of intense scientific and regulatory scrutiny during recent years. Of the three commercial forms (Penta, Octa and Deca) of PBDEs that have been widely used as flame retardants in textiles, furniture upholstery, plastics, and electronics, only Deca-BDE remains on the general market in North America, while a recent ruling of the European Court spells an impending end to its use in Europe. We review here highlights of aquatic research documenting the rapid emergence of PBDEs as a high priority environmental concern in Canada. PBDEs are being introduced in large quantities to the aquatic environment through sewage discharge and atmospheric deposition. In certain environmental compartments, the single congener BDE-209, the main ingredient in the Deca-BDE formulation, has surpassed the legacy PCBs and DDT as the top

contaminant by concentration. Limited biomagnification of BDE-209 in aquatic food webs reflects its high log K_{ow} and preferential partitioning into the particle phase. As a result, large environmental reservoirs of BDE-209 are being created in sediments, and these may present a long-term threat to biota: BDE-209 breaks down into more persistent, more bioaccumulative, more toxic, and more mobile PBDE congeners in the environment.

Liesbeth Weijs, Alin C. Dirtu, Krishna Dasd, Adriana Gheorghe, Peter J.H. Reijnders, Hugo Neels, Ronny Blust and Adrian Covaci

Inter-species differences for polychlorinated biphenyls and polybrominated diphenyl ethers in marine top predators from the Southern North Sea: Part 1. Accumulation patterns in harbour seals and harbour porpoises

Environmental Pollution 157, Issue 2, February 2009, Pages 437-444

Harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) and harbour seals (*Phoca vitulina*) are two representative top predator species of the North Sea ecosystem. The median values of sum of 21 polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) congeners and sum of 10 polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) congeners were 23.1 µg/g lipid weight (lw) and 0.33 µg/g lw in blubber of harbour seals ($n = 28$) and 12.4 µg/g lw and 0.76 µg/g lw in blubber of harbour porpoises ($n = 35$), respectively. For both species, the highest PCB concentrations were observed in adult males indicating bioaccumulation. On the contrary, the highest PBDE concentrations were measured in juveniles, likely due to better-developed metabolic capacities with age in adults. A higher contribution of lower chlorinated and non-persistent congeners, such as CB 52, CB 95, CB 101, and CB 149, together with higher contributions of other PBDE congeners than BDE 47, indicated that harbour porpoises are unable to metabolize these compounds. Harbour seals showed a higher ability to metabolize PCBs and PBDEs. Harbour porpoises and harbour seals present differences in the accumulation of polychlorinated biphenyls and polybrominated diphenyl ethers.

B. Gouteux, D.C.G. Muir, S. Backus, E.W. Born, R. Dietz, T. Haug, T. Metcalfe, C. Metcalfe and N. Øien

Toxaphene in minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) from the North Atlantic

Environmental Pollution 153: 71-83

Toxaphene contamination of minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) from North Atlantic waters was examined for the first time. Total toxaphene and Σ CHB (sum of 11 chlorobornanes) concentrations in blubber samples ranged from 170 ± 110 and 41 ± 39 ng/g lipid weight (l.w.) for female minke whales from southeastern Greenland to 5800 ± 4100 and 1100 ± 780 ng/g l.w. for males from the North Sea, respectively. Very large variations in toxaphene concentrations among sampling areas were observed suggesting a spatial segregation of minke whales. However, much of the apparent geographical discrimination was explained by the seasonal fluctuation of animal fat mass. Patterns of CHBs in males revealed that recalcitrant CHBs were in higher proportions in animals from the more easterly areas than in animals from the more westerly areas. This trend may be influenced by the predominance of the US, over the European, input of toxaphene to North Atlantic waters. High levels of toxaphene were found in different sub-populations of minke whales from North Atlantic waters

Charles James Moore

Synthetic polymers in the marine environment: A rapidly increasing, long-term threat

Environmental Research, Volume 108, Issue 2, October 2008, Pages 131-139

Synthetic polymers, commonly known as plastics, have been entering the marine environment in quantities paralleling their level of production over the last half century. However, in the last two decades of the 20th Century, the deposition rate accelerated past the rate of production, and plastics are now one of the most common and persistent pollutants in ocean waters and beaches worldwide. Ingestion of degraded plastic pellets and fragments raises toxicity concerns, since plastics are known to adsorb hydrophobic pollutants. The potential bioavailability of compounds added to plastics at the time of manufacture, as well as those adsorbed from the environment are complex issues that merit more widespread investigation. The physiological effects of any bioavailable compounds desorbed from plastics by marine biota are being directly investigated, since it was found 20 years ago that the mass of ingested plastic in Great Shearwaters was positively correlated with PCBs in their fat and eggs.

M.M. Dufresne^a, H. Frouin, S. Pillet, V. Lesage, S. De Guise and M. Fournier

Comparative sensitivity of harbour and grey seals to several environmental contaminants using *in vitro* exposure

Marine Pollution Bulletin 60 Issue 3, March 2010, Pages 344-349

In this study, we investigated the effects of cadmium chloride (CdCl₂), mercury chloride (HgCl₂), methylmercury chloride (CH₃HgCl), and PCBs on lymphocyte proliferation in phocids. PBMCs isolated from harbour and grey seals were exposed *in vitro* to varying concentrations of contaminants.

Lutz Ahrens, Ursula Siebert and Ralf Ebinghaus

Total body burden and tissue distribution of polyfluorinated compounds in harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*) from the German Bight

Marine Pollution Bulletin Volume 58, Issue 4, April 2009, Pages 520-525

Total body burden and tissue distribution of polyfluorinated compounds (PFCs) were investigated in harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*) from the German Bight in 2007. A total number of 18 individual PFCs from the following groups could be quantified in the different tissues: perfluorinated carboxylic acids (PFCAs) and perfluorinated sulfonates (PFSAs) and their precursors perfluorinated sulfinates (PFSiAs), perfluorinated sulfonamides, and sulfonamido ethanols. Perfluorooctanesulfonate (PFOS) was the predominant compound in all measured seal tissues (up to 1665 ng g⁻¹ wet weight in liver tissue). The dominant PFCAs were perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA) and perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA), but their concentrations were much lower compared to PFOS. The mean whole body burden in harbor seals of all detected PFCs was estimated to be 2665 ± 1207 µg absolute. The major amount of the total PFCs burden in the bodies was in blood (38%) and liver (36%), followed by muscle (13%), lung (8%), kidney (2%), blubber (2%), heart (1%), brain (1%), thymus (<0.01%) and thyroid (<0.01%). These data suggest large differences in body burden and accumulation pattern of PFCs in marine mammals.

Lutz Ahrens, Ursula Siebert and Ralf Ebinghaus

Temporal trends of polyfluoroalkyl compounds in harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*) from the German Bight, 1999–2008

Chemosphere Volume 76, Issue 2, June 2009, Pages 151-158

Temporal trends of polyfluoroalkyl compounds (PFCs) were examined in liver samples from harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*) collected from the German Bight (1999–2008). Concentrations of various PFCs, including C4–C10 perfluoroalkyl sulfonates (PFSA), perfluorooctane sulfinate (PFOSi), perfluorooctane sulfonamide (FOSA) and C8–C15 perfluoroalkyl carboxylic acids (PFCAs) were quantified. Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) was the predominant compound with a maximum concentration of 3676 ng g⁻¹ ww (1996), making up on average 94% of the measured PFCs. Significantly higher concentrations were found in <7 month old in comparison to 7 month old harbor seals for C6–C8 PFSA, perfluorododecanoic acid (PFDDA) and FOSA, whereas perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA) showed significantly lower concentrations in the younger harbor seals ($p < 0.05$). These results suggest a transplacental transfer of PFCs to the foetus and/or consumption of different contaminated food. Regression analysis of logarithmic transformed PFC mean concentrations indicated a significant temporal trend with decreasing concentrations for C5–C7 PFSA ($p < 0.001$), PFOSi ($p = 0.028$), FOSA ($p < 0.001$) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) ($p = 0.031$) between 1999 and 2008. Furthermore, PFOS decreased by 49% between 1999 and 2008, which correspond with decreasing concentration levels of its metabolic precursors PFOSi and FOSA of 83% and 95% in the same time period. However, the decreasing trend of PFOS is not significant ($p = 0.067$). The reason for the decline during the past 10 years could be an effect of the replacement of these PFCs by shorter chained and less bioaccumulative compounds. But the observations of increasing perfluorodecane sulfonate (PFDS) levels ($p = 0.070$), the high concentrations of PFOS and constant levels of C9–C13 PFCA indicates that further work on the reduction of environmental emissions of PFCs are necessary.

Liesbeth Weijss, B, Krishna Dasc, Ursula Siebertd, Niels van Elke, Thierry Jauniauxf, Hugo Neelsb, Ronny Blusta and Adrian Covaci

Concentrations of chlorinated and brominated contaminants and their metabolites in serum of harbour seals and harbour porpoises

Environment International Volume 35, Issue 6, August 2009, Pages 842-850

Concentrations of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) and their hydroxylated metabolites (HO-PCBs and HO-PBDEs) were measured in serum of wild harbour seals ($n = 47$) and captive harbour porpoises ($n = 21$). Both species exhibit long life spans and do not have extreme situations, such as complete fasting during periods of lactation, in their annual cycles. For PCBs, concentrations in adult males were slightly higher than in juveniles and lowest in juvenile females. For PBDEs, juveniles have higher levels than adult males and females, probably as a consequence of lactational transfer. However, differences between these age–gender groups were not statistical significant, indicating that individual variation was limited within each species, even without knowing the feeding status of the animals. Body condition, particularly emaciation, has a major influence on the levels of chlorinated and brominated contaminants in serum. Profiles of PCBs were CB 153 > CB 138 > CB 187 > CB 180 and CB 153 > CB 138 > CB 149 > CB 187 > CB 180 for harbour seals and porpoises respectively. For PBDEs, BDE 47 was the predominant congener followed by BDE 100 and 99 in both species. In harbour seals, concentrations of sum PCBs (median: 39,200 pg/ml) were more than 200 times higher than levels of sum PBDEs (median: 130 pg/ml) and almost 10 times higher than concentrations of sum HO-PCBs (4350 pg/ml). In harbour porpoises, concentrations of sum PCBs (median: 24,300 pg/ml) were about 20 times higher than concentrations of PBDEs (median: 1300

pg/ml). HO-PCBs were detected in only 4 harbour porpoises and this at very low concentrations. Naturally-produced MeO-PBDEs were only found in harbour porpoises at concentrations ranging from 120 to 810 pg/ml. HO-PBDEs were not found in any species. In general, harbour seals accumulate less compounds and have mostly lower concentrations than harbour porpoises possibly as a result of a better developed metabolism.

Dietz, R. Outridge, P.M., Hobson, K.A. 2009

Anthropogenic contribution to mercury levels in present day Arctic animals – A review

Science of the Total Environment 407: 6120-6131

Because of concern about the recently increasing levels of biological Hg in some areas of the Arctic, we examined the literature concerning the long-term changes of Hg in humans and selected Arctic marine mammals and birds of prey since pre-industrial times (i.e. before 1800 A.D.), to determine the anthropogenic contribution to present-day Hg concentrations and the historical timing of any changes. Wildlife hard tissue matrices provide consistent information with respect to the steep onset of Hg exposure of Arctic wildlife beginning in the latter half of the 19th Century. Today the man-made contribution was found to be above 92%. Stable isotope analyses provide important information to normalize for possible changes in diet over time, and are highly relevant to include when interpreting temporal trends, baseline concentrations as well as man-made anthropogenic contribution of Hg.

OSPAR Quality Status Report adopted by the ministers at their meeting in Bergen 20 - 24 September 2010

This QSR is issued every 10 years; it presents many issues, amongst which overviews of trends in pollutants in several media, including sediment, water, biota.

http://qsr2010.ospar.org/en/ch05_03.html

FORMAT FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE ASCOBANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Funding of projects through ASCOBANS is dependent upon availability of funds. Since ASCOBANS is not a funding agency, there is no guarantee that funds will be available each year. Please also note that the maximum sum the Agreement will spend on any one project is 15,000 Euro. Also, there is no possibility for supporting long-term projects. ASCOBANS will not fund monitoring obligations of EU member states or Parties to international conventions.

The ASCOBANS Advisory Committee, which meets annually in March/April, will consider the proposals made available to its review and select those that are a priority for funding. *Please note that only projects with a direct benefit for the conservation objectives of the Agreement can be supported.* Projects covering more than one ASCOBANS Party will be favoured.

Please provide only summary information in the form below. The Secretariat will request more detailed information for selected projects only. The purpose of this form is to assist in the review and approval of the project proposal by the Advisory Committee.

Proposals received **by 15 February** of each year will be made available to the Committee for their review. Funding applications received later will not be considered until the following year.

Title	Justification: (to be completed by the Secretariat)	Project ID: (to be completed by the Secretariat)
Implementing Agency / Applicant	Indicate the organization/institution or individual making the proposal, which would be responsible for the implementation of the project, if approved. Full contact details of the responsible individual should be provided.	
Collaborating Agencies / Other Sponsors	Indicate possible other organizations/institutions or individuals collaborating with the implementing agency in the conduct of the project.	
Background / Problem	Briefly describe issues/problems to be addressed by the project. Please indicate whether the proposed project is a new activity and its possible linkages with already ongoing/planned initiatives.	
Objectives	Briefly specify the project objective as the overall intended achievement. This part should include one or two main objectives, possibly supplemented by more specific objectives, which could provide more structure to the design of the project. Objectives are intended goals and should be clearly distinguished from outputs and activities.	
Relevance to ASCOBANS	Only projects directly relevant to the conservation objectives of ASCOBANS will be supported. Briefly explain the pertinence of the	

	project for the attainment of ASCOBANS goals and justify by explaining how the project helps to address the relevant Activities in the Agreement's Triennium Work Plan. Include references to other decisions or documents/instruments produced within the Agreement, such as the Agreement's Conservation and Management Plan, Resolutions or actions recommended by the Advisory Committee as appropriate.
Activities	Briefly describe the work or the tasks to be performed. As the main element of the project's design, this section should outline the methodologies to be employed, personnel and equipment needs, location and expected duration of individual actions. Actions should be clearly related to the outputs described below.
Outputs	Indicate the specific products or services (e.g. reports, publications) produced by the activities to achieve the project objectives, including scientific, conservation and management and educational outputs.
Work Plan and Timetable	<p>As a general rule, small-scale projects funded by ASCOBANS should be completed within one year, and their expected duration should not exceed 2-3 years. Indicate proposed beginning and end dates.</p> <p>The work plan sets out the timetable for carrying out project activities and the delivery of outputs. The timetable should include start and end dates for each activity and indicate who is responsible for its implementation. The information is best presented as a table.</p>
Project Personnel	Name, position, affiliation, contact details, role within the project and a brief profile should be given for at least the most prominent members of the project team. Succinct CV can be attached to the project proposal.
Budget Estimates	<p>Every project proposal must include a detailed project budget. A breakdown of the expected costs of the project should be prepared. Purchase of non-expendable equipment through ASCOBANS funding is accepted only exceptionally, and the equipment will remain the property of UNEP/ASCOBANS, which will decide at the closure of the project on its disposal or retention.</p> <p>The budget should include not only the funds requested of ASCOBANS, but also possible other financial resources made available by other sponsors or collaborating agencies. The budget should be presented in a tabular format and, where applicable, should clearly indicate the expected source of the various amounts budgeted.</p>

For more information please contact the ASCOBANS Secretariat at
ascobans@ascobans.org.

DATES OF INTEREST TO ASCOBANS IN 2010-2011

Date	Organizer	Title	Venue	Participation/ Report
07/10/2010	Germany	EU strategy for the Baltic Sea Region: "To preserve natural zones and biodiversity, including fisheries"	Bonn, Germany	Penina Blankett
18-29/10/2010	CBD	10 th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (www.cbd.int)	Nagoya, Japan	
21-22/10/2010	NS RAC	General Assembly and Executive Committee (www.nsrac.org)	Aberdeen, UK	Russell Leaper
22/10/2010	European Commission / DG Environment	Marine Strategy Framework Directive Working Group on Good Environmental Status	Brussels, Belgium	Marije Siemensma
15-16/11/2010	European Commission / DG Environment	Marine Strategy Framework Directive Coordination Group	Brussels, Belgium	Marije Siemensma
27/10/2010	NWW RAC	General Assembly and Executive Committee (www.nwwrac.org)	Dublin, Ireland	
08/11/2010	European Commission / DG Environment	Workshop: "Marine Litter: Plastic Soup and More" (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/marine/pollution.htm)	Brussels, Belgium	Stefanie Werner
09-12/11/2010	ACCOBAMS	4 th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (www.accobams.org)	Monaco	Elizabeth Mrema
15-16/11/2010	OSPAR	Intersessional Correspondence Group on Marine Litter (www.ospar.org)	Texel, Netherlands	
16-18/11/2010	NABU Schleswig-Holstein, GRD, GSM	Minimizing Risks for the Environment in Marine Ammunition Removal in the Baltic and North Sea (MIREMAR) (www.miremar.de)	Neumünster, Germany	
23-24/11/2010	CMS	37 th Meeting of the Standing Committee (http://www.cms.int/bodies/StC/37th_stc_documents.htm)	Bonn, Germany	Secretariat
23-26/11/2010	Bonn Agreement	Meeting of the Contracting Parties (www.bonnagreement.org)	Dublin, Ireland	

Date	Organizer	Title	Venue	Participation/ Report
29/11- 01/12/2010	IWC	Workshop on Small Cetaceans and Climate Change (http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/scmain.htm)	Vienna, Austria	Heidrun Frisch
19/01/2011	BS RAC	Executive Meeting (www.bsrac.org)	tbd	
21-24/02/2011	ICES	Working Group on Marine Mammal Ecology (www.ices.dk)	Berlin, Germany	Stefan Bräger (?)
9-11/03/2011	HELCOM	32nd Meeting of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission - Helsinki Commission (HELCOM 32/2011) (www.helcom.fi)	Helsinki, Finland	
21-23/03/2011	European Cetacean Society	25 th Annual Conference (www.europeancetaceansociety.eu)	Cadiz, Spain	Peter Evans / Heidrun Frisch
22-23/03/2011	UK Department For Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Animal Welfare and Ethics Workshop	Eden Project, Cornwall, UK	DEFRA
March/April 2011	ICES	Working Group for Bycatch of Protected Species (www.ices.dk)	tbd	Stefan Bräger (?) / Marije Siemensma
11-15/04/2011	OSPAR	Biodiversity Committee (BDC 2011) (www.ospar.org)	Belgium	Jan Haelters
14-18/05/2011	Society for Conservation Biology & George Mason University	2nd International Marine Conservation Congress: "Making Marine Science Matter" (www2.cedarcrest.edu/imcc/theme.html)	Victoria, British Columbia, Canada	
24-27/05/2011	HELCOM	13th Meeting of the Nature Protection and Biodiversity Group (HELCOM HABITAT 13/2011) (www.helcom.fi)	Denmark	Penina Blankett
28/05- 12/06/2011	IWC	Scientific Committee Meeting (www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/scmain.htm) and associated meetings	Tromsø, Norway	Meike Scheidat (?)
03-15/07/2011	IWC	63 rd Annual Commission Meeting (www.iwcoffice.org) and sub- groups	St. Helier, Jersey	Secretariat (?)

Date	Organizer	Title	Venue	Participation/ Report
September 2011	ICES	Annual Science Conference (www.ices.dk)	Gdansk, Poland	
20-22/09/2011	HELCOM	Fifth Meeting of <i>Ad hoc</i> HELCOM Seal Expert Group (HELCOM SEAL 5/2010) (www.helcom.fi)	Tallinn, Estonia	
26-30/09/2011	Universities of Aberdeen & St Andrews	World Conference on Marine Biodiversity (www.abdn.ac.uk/marine-biodiversity/)	Aberdeen, UK	Mark Tasker
07-11/11/2011	Agence des Aires Marines Protégées	Second International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (ICMMPA 2)	Fort-de-France, Martinique	Sami Hassani (?)
12-16/11/2011	International BioAcoustic Council	XXIII Meeting of the International BioAcoustic Council (IBAC) (www.cb.u-psud.fr/ibac2011/)	La Rochelle, France	
17-18/11/2011	CMS	17 th Meeting of the Scientific Council (www.cms.int/bodies/ScC_mainpage.htm)	Bergen, Norway	Secretariat
19/11/2011	CMS	38 th Meeting of the Standing Committee (http://www.cms.int/bodies/StC_mainpage.htm)	Bergen, Norway	Secretariat
20-25/11/2011	CMS	10 th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) (http://www.cms.int/bodies/cop_mainpage.htm)	Bergen, Norway	Secretariat

ASCOBANS STYLE GUIDE FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

(based on the United Nations Editorial Manual)

1. Language to be used in ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Reports

1.1 Spelling

- The latest edition of the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press) is the spelling authority consulted for all ASCOBANS reports.
- When a word has more than one spelling, the first spelling of that word should always be used.
- The foreign words listed in the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* are not italicized. Foreign words not listed in that edition should be italicized.
- Non-English names of organizations, firms, ministries and the like are not italicized.
- Relevant spelling examples:

analyse; above-mentioned; bycatch; cooperation; coordination; counteract; death rate; decision maker; decision-making (noun and adj.); data set; ecosystem; enquire, enquiry (referring to a request for information); finalize; fund-raising; harbour; intergovernmental; offshore; on site (adv.); on-site (adj.); organization; principal (first in rank) (noun and adj.); principle (fundamental truth) (noun); policymaker; prioritize; reallocate; re-examine; stakeholder; summarize; timetable; utilize; workforce

1.2 Punctuation

- An apostrophe ('s or s') should not be used with an abbreviation or acronym, the name of a country, or the name of an organization.
Examples: the Government of Germany; United Nations Headquarters; the Convention on Migratory Species "Year of..." campaigns
- The final comma before *and* is not normally used in United Nations documents.
Exception: When a paragraph contains several distinct decisions of ASCOBANS, each introduced by a verb, these are separated by commas.
- A comma is not necessary after *in particular* if it separates the phrase from the person or thing to which it applies.
- A semicolon should be used at the end of a subparagraph, both in resolutions and in reports.
- With bullets, the preferred style is no punctuation or a full stop.
- Quoted words, sentences and paragraphs are enclosed within double quotation marks.
- Single quotation marks are used to enclose quotations within quotations.
- Three ellipsis points (dots) are used to mark omissions within a quotation. It is not normally necessary to use ellipsis points for omissions at the beginning or end of a quotation.
- The *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* may be consulted for basic English punctuation rules.

1.3 Reported Speech

- Reported speech (past tense) should be used in all proceedings reports to convey what was discussed during meetings.

Example:

➔ *During the meeting:* “All ASCOBANS Parties of the Baltic Sea region are participating in the project.”

➔ *In the report:* XXX reported that all ASCOBANS Parties of the Baltic Sea region were participating in the project.

- A reporting clause should be added in a report to convey whom a statement/idea belongs to as well as to signal the start of reported speech. The form to be used is: first name last name (country) or, if the same speaker is referred to in the following paragraph: Mr/Ms XYZ.
- Subsequent sentences pertaining to the first reporting clause do not need to include additional reporting clauses.
- Conclusions and recommendations put forth by the body should be in direct speech (present tense).
- Conclusions and recommendations put forth by the body should be indicated at the end of the report on each agenda item.
- Points for Action arising from the meeting should be included at the start of a report.

2. Drafting Guidelines to be used for ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Reports

2.1 Level of Detail

- Reports should be action-oriented, containing:
 - a) A brief discussion on organizational and procedural matters.
 - b) Recommendations, including resolutions and decisions adopted and draft resolutions and decisions recommended for adoption by the parent body.
 - c) Policy recommendations emanating from expert groups, panels, round tables and multi-stakeholder dialogues.
 - d) New developments, findings and recommendations, particularly for recurrent reports.
- The report will include the items discussed, a shortened version of what was stated during the discussions, and the final outcome/decisions of the discussed item.

This means that not every statement made is recorded. Instead a brief summary is used to convey the substance of the discussion along with the outcome of the summarized discussion.¹ However, participants can request the inclusion of specific

¹ It should be noted that the official UN guidelines suggest a stricter selection of statements to be included in the report (please see http://69.94.137.26/editorialcontrol/ed-guidelines/types_documents/reports_intergov_bodies.htm):

Reports should not include:

1. A summary of statements made at opening and closing meetings, unless pertinent to the conclusion reached.
2. Summaries of statements by individuals; a list of speakers for each item can be included instead.
3. A general summary of statements under each item.
4. Analysis of information provided, unless required to support policy findings.
5. A lengthy discussion of organizational and procedural matters.

interventions in the report. Participants should highlight this in their statement and where appropriate provide text to the report writer.

- Documents presented in context of a discussion will not be summarized. The report will only contain information on the presenter and the subject of the document.

Exception: More space may be given in the report if the document does not include the conclusions drawn by the presenter during the presentation.

2.2 Timing of Report Distribution

The Agreement budget does not provide sufficient funds for providing more than one report writer at each meeting of the Advisory Committee. In order to allow the single report writer sufficient rest during the meeting to be able to discharge his/her functions with the desired level of quality, overnight report production is not feasible.² Overnight report production will only be considered a realistic option if Parties make the funds for a sufficiently large team of report writers available several months before the meeting in question.

Provided only one report writer is hired for the meeting, the following provisions shall apply:

- On the last day of the meeting a short list of Points for Action and recommendations of the meeting will be circulated for approval/comment.
- After receiving initial comments from the chair and vice-chair of the meeting, a full final draft report will be circulated to all participants within two weeks after the closure of the meeting for approval/comment by email correspondence.
- Participants will be given at least one month time to comment on the report, after which the Secretariat will finalise and publish the document as soon as possible.
- In case of conflicting comments, the Secretariat in consultation with the chair and vice-chair of the meeting retains the right to decide on the final wording. Comments made by the owner of a statement will be given priority over those from others relating to the same point.

In case of any future questions or conflicts the official United Nations Editorial Manual should be consulted as the final authority online at:
<http://69.94.137.26/editorialcontrol/index.htm>

6. Repetition of already published texts or repetition of texts with only minor changes; an exception is made for draft resolutions that are submitted to an intergovernmental body but not adopted, since such texts are needed for the parliamentary record.

7. Quotations from United Nations documents, unless legislative authority is being cited.

8. Extraneous information that does not contribute to deliberations.

² Please note the official conditions of service for UN report writers (Professional Code – Annex, available online at <http://www.aitc.ch/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=13&page=1>):

LENGTH OF WORKING WEEK

Rule 4 - The length of the working week shall not exceed 40 hours spread over 5 or 6 days. If, owing to unforeseen circumstances, translators are called upon to work longer, they shall receive compensation in the form of either time off or remuneration for an equivalent length of time at the end of the contract.

PREPARATION OF SUMMARY RECORDS

Rule 5 - The précis-writer shall insist on being allowed reasonable time to prepare the record.

Except in the case of minutes, the team responsible for the record of a meeting lasting between two and three hours shall not consist of fewer than three précis-writers; the taking of notes and the subsequent drafting of the record represent at least a full day's work for each of the précis-writers concerned.

The period of the précis-writers' note-taking shall be reduced when the subject matter is particularly difficult or when the speakers read prepared statements at speed. The précis-writers shall be provided with copies of written statements.

The team or a part of it, as appropriate, shall be replaced when a meeting lasts for more than three hours.