

ASCOBANS AC25 – Stralsund, Germany, 17-19 Sept 2019

Agenda Item 2:

Review of new information on threats to small cetaceans

2.8 OTHER SOURCES OF DISTURBANCE

Relevant Resolutions: 8.9, 8.1, 6.1



AIM: To identify new sources of disturbance that can be a threat to small cetaceans

With human activities in the seas increasing particularly in the coastal zone, overlap of cetacean and human habitat use is not entirely covered by the previous questions relating to disturbance. A human activity can, for example, cause a cetacean to change behaviour, or it can cause physical harm or death. This section aims to identify new sources of disturbance that can be a threat to small cetaceans. The issue of noise, however, is covered under another section (B3).

BE	DK	FI	FR	DE	LT	NL	PO	SE	UK
7.1. Have there been any other incidents of disturbance to small cetaceans in your country?									
no		no	unknown	unknown		no	no		no

→ No country reported any other incidents of disturbance that were not covered in earlier items

7.2. List initiatives/projects (including PhD, MSc) in 2016-18 involving studies on other sources of disturbance in your country									
yes		none	unknown	none		none	none		yes

→ **Initiatives/Projects (including MSc & PhD):**

Belgium: There is a national programme to study the disturbance due to underwater noise linked to offshore windfarm construction. Monitoring reports have been produced on an annual basis from 2009-2018.

UK – Gemma Veneruso is currently undertaking a PhD at the Centre for Applied Marine Sciences, Bangor University, on potential impacts of tidal turbines upon harbour porpoises.

BE	DK	FI	FR	DE	LT	NL	PO	SE	UK
7.3. List publications from 2016-18 involving studies on other sources of disturbance in your country									
none		none	unknown	none		none	none		yes

→ **UK: Publications:**

Blanchard, E.E. (2018) *Fine-scale use by harbour porpoise of a high energy coastal environment*. MSc Thesis, University of Bangor. 70pp.

Evans, P.G.H. (2017) Habitat pressures. Pp. 441-446. In: *Encyclopedia of Marine Mammals* (Editors B. Würsig, J.G.M. Thewissen and K.M. Kovacs). 3rd Edition. Academic Press, San Diego. 1,157pp.

Evans, P.G.H., Baines, M.E., and Anderwald, P. (2016) *Cetacean Stock Assessment in North-west Europe in relation to Exploration and Production Industry Sound*. Report to International Association of Oil & Gas Producers Joint Industry Program on Sound & Marine Life. 153pp.

Waggitt, J., Dunn, H., Evans, P.G.H., Hiddink, J., Holmes, L., Keen, E., Murcott, B., Plano, M., Robins, P., Scott, B., Whitmore, J., and Veneruso, G. (2017) Regional-scale patterns in harbor porpoise occupancy of tidal stream environments. *ICES Journal of Marine Science*, doi:10.1093/icesjms/fsx164.

National Reporting on Other Sources of Disturbance

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Encourage **all** Parties & Range States to contribute national information for a more complete picture. The lack of information from Denmark in particular, is unfortunate since they have been very active in studies of disturbance to harbour porpoise around marine constructions such as offshore wind farms and bridges
- Inevitably, it is difficult to separate disturbance from impacts of noise. This applies to all sources of disturbance under review. It may therefore be helpful to consider these together in future.