

Agenda Item 8.1

Publicity and Outreach

Reports by the Secretariat, Parties and
Partners

Document 8.1

Report of the Secretariat on
Outreach and Education Activities

Action Requested

- Take Note
- Comment
- Participate in the 2019 Christmas Card competition

Submitted by

Secretariat



Note:

Delegates are kindly reminded to bring their own document copies to the meeting, if needed.

Report of the Secretariat on Outreach and Education Activities

1. The Secretariat has implemented publicity and outreach activities since the 24th Meeting of the Advisory Committee in September 2018 (see [AC24/Doc.10.1](#)), in line with [Resolution 5.8](#) (2006) on Educational and Promotional Activities and [Resolution 8.2](#) (2016) detailing the Secretariat and Advisory Committee's Work Plan for 2017-2020. This report is in response to Work Plan Activity 46, which requests the Secretariat to report on outreach and communication issues at each meeting of the Advisory Committee.

Public Events

2. The 17th celebration of the International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise (IDBHP) was held on and around 18 May 2019. Institutions were invited via the ASCOBANS Facebook page to inform the Secretariat about their events. Little was reported so the Secretariat is following up with institutions and NGOs via email. Information will be updated to the IDBHP page under ASCOBANS website in due course.

Meetings and Scientific Conferences

3. On 7-8 March 2019, the Secretariat attended a symposium in Hamburg, Germany, convened by a consortium of German museums and universities and cooperating museums in Copenhagen and Stockholm, titled 'Marine Mammals in a Changing Environment'. The symposium presented results of different parameters in time and space for changes in health condition and population status of marine mammals over long time periods and in different marine environments.
4. At the invitation of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, the ASCOBANS Secretariat delivered one of the opening remarks of a scientific symposium 'Bright Future? Harbour Porpoises in the Wadden Sea' on 11 April 2019 at the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage Visitor Centre in Wilhelmshaven, Germany. The aim of the symposium was to gather new information on the population status, monitoring and threats in the Wadden Sea specifically. The following day invited experts and policy-makers discussed recommendations for the protection management of the Harbour Porpoise in the Wadden Sea.
5. The joint ACCOBAMS-ASCOBANS workshop on 'Harmonization of the best practices for necropsy of cetaceans and for the development of diagnostic frameworks' was held on 24-25 June 2019 in Padua, Italy. The Secretariats were unable to attend but were represented by experts from both Agreement areas.

Electronic Media

6. The Secretariat continued to improve the ASCOBANS [webpage](#), regularly uploading new content, adjusting the format depending on content needs and sharing news. The joint CMS Family webpage makes it possible to issue the same news items across several pages, so on a number of occasions CMS news relevant for small cetaceans in the agreement area were also issued on the ASCOBANS page. Nine articles on activities relevant to ASCOBANS were posted on during the reporting period.
7. Since AC24, posts on activities have been shared and uploaded on the ASCOBANS [Facebook page](#), though not to the same extent as last year owing to lack of capacity. The Secretariat has shared updates from relevant meetings, general news stories of relevance to small cetaceans in the agreement area, and news items on threats to cetaceans.

8. ASCOBANS continues to be featured on **Wikipedia** in five languages: [English](#), [French](#), [German](#), [Russian](#) and [Spanish](#). Some updates are required and will be undertaken as staff capacity allows. Other language versions may follow as the opportunity arises, primarily with the help of interns.

Publications and Information Material

9. As in the past, and in line with Parties' instructions through the Work Plan, the Secretariat has continued to distribute information material upon request. The material (brochures, postcards, leaflets, pens, bags) is being used throughout the Agreement Area during ASCOBANS events and those by other institutions.
10. **Anniversary volume:** This book, 'European Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises: Marine Mammal Conservation in Practice', was commissioned by the Advisory Committee a few years ago and is now ready to be printed. It is meant to be sold through high street bookshops and aims to be the most authoritative review of northern European cetaceans and the threats they face, whilst also giving insights into how an international Agreement is created, functions, and can meet obstacles to progress. The book is anticipated to be available by end of 2019, which is the 25th anniversary of ASCOBANS coming into force. The Secretariat is currently in the process of finalizing legal paperwork for publisher selection and printing.
11. **ASCOBANS exhibition and threat banners:** The [Whale Workshop](#) continues presenting inflatable, life-sized models of cetaceans and other marine life in the Agreement Area in all its shows also showing an English version of the ten-banner exhibition about the Secretariat and its functions. Another English version of the ASCOBANS exhibition and all five threat banners are currently on display in the Lithuanian Sea Museum in Vilnius.
12. **Christmas Card:** Back in 2015 a design competition for the annual ASCOBANS Christmas card was launched in Germany at the UN day. In 2016 Poland coordinated the competition and came up with a winner. Mark Simmonds kindly provided a hand drawn Christmas card for the Secretariat in 2017. In 2018 the card was created by ASCOBANS / CMS interns. It featured the Killer Whale, one of the species included in the Agreement. In the last quarter of 2019, the Secretariat will contact Parties and stakeholders to participate in a competition to identify the 2019 ASCOBANS Christmas Card.

Action requested:

- The AC is requested to take note of the report and to provide feedback, if any.
- Parties and all stakeholders are invited to participate in the 2019 Christmas Card competition.