



**OSPAR
COMMISSION**

*Protecting and conserving the
North-East Atlantic and its resources*

**Marine Mammal Expert Group (OMMEG) under
ICG-COBAM* / BDC
Chair: Anita Gilles (DE) since July 2018**

*Intersessional Correspondence Group on Biodiversity Monitoring and Assessment

What the group has been asked for by OSPAR BDC

- deliver marine mammal indicators that are **fully operational** through, inter alia, agreed monitoring and assessment methods, and agreed arrangements for **coordinated monitoring**, data flow and data management.
- also need **draft assessment values** (e.g. thresholds, boundaries, ranges or trends as appropriate), against which the indicators could be assessed.



[Region I: Arctic Waters](#)

[Region II: Greater North Sea](#)

[Region III: Celtic Seas](#)

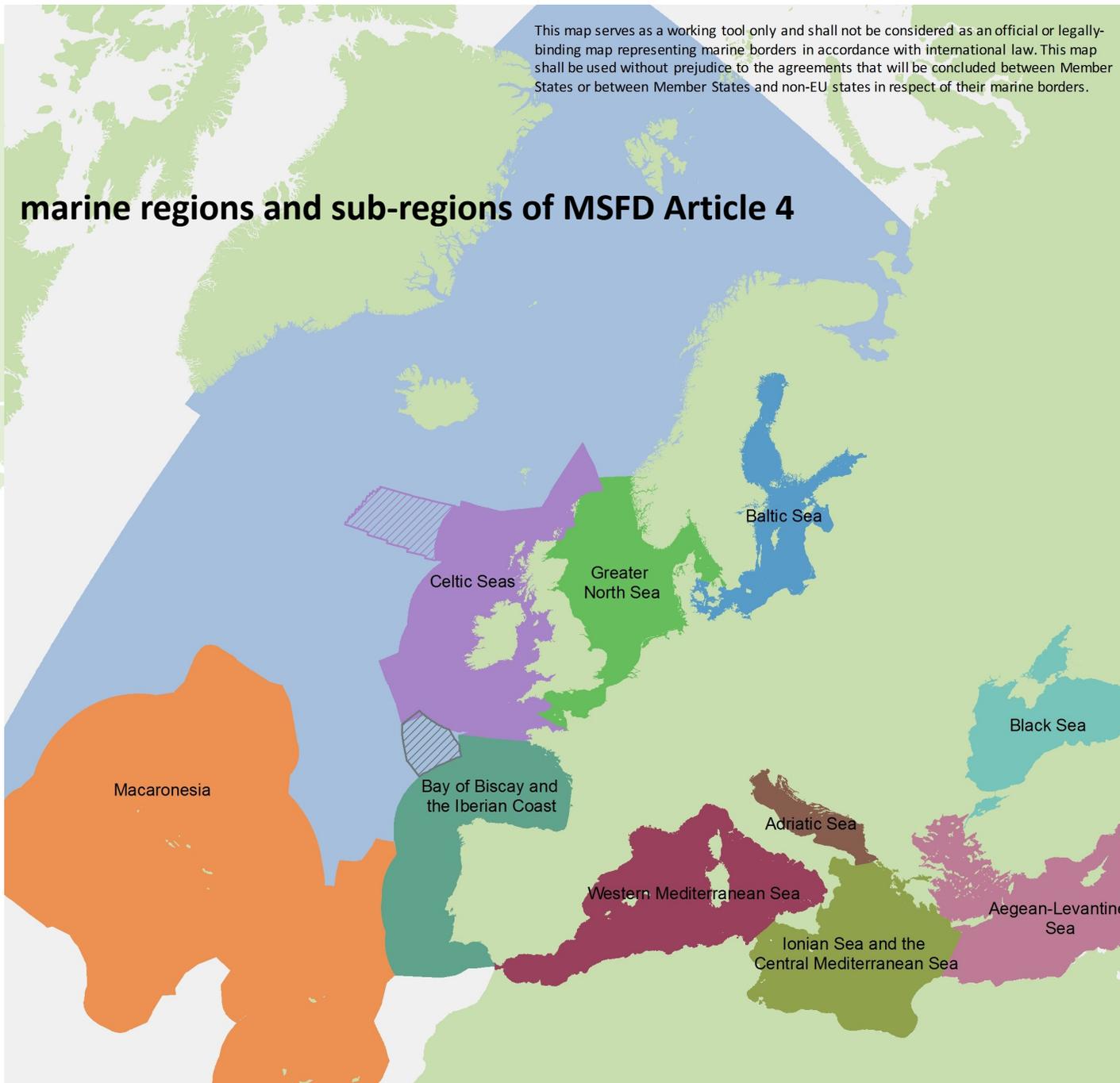
[Region IV: Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast](#)

[Region V: Wider Atlantic](#)

for the purposes of the IA 2017 only, the OSPAR boundary between the Greater North Sea and the Celtic Seas in the English Channel has been realigned **to reflect the EU MSFD Sub-Region.**

This map serves as a working tool only and shall not be considered as an official or legally-binding map representing marine borders in accordance with international law. This map shall be used without prejudice to the agreements that will be concluded between Member States or between Member States and non-EU states in respect of their marine borders.

marine regions and sub-regions of MSFD Article 4



[Region I: Arctic Waters](#)

[Region II: Greater North Sea](#)

[Region III: Celtic Seas](#)

[Region IV: Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast](#)

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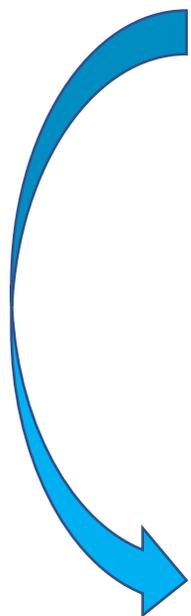
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Marine Mammals



common biodiversity indicators

Indicator	Descriptor/Criterion	Title	status
M1	D1C4 (Distribution)	Distribution seals	not priority indicator – now included in M3
M3	D1C2 (Abundance) & D1C4 (Distribution)	Seal abundance and distribution	represented in IA 2017
M4	D1C2 (Abundance) & D1C4 (Distribution)	Distribution and abundance of cetaceans	represented in IA 2017
M5	D1C3 (Demography)	Grey seal pup production	(for population condition) represented in IA 2017
M6	D1C1 (Bycatch)	Harbour porpoise bycatch	represented in IA 2017; Assessment based upon non-OSPAR data
M4-A	D1C2 (Abundance) & D1C4 (Distribution)	Killer whale abundance	IA2017 pilot assessment made for all five Regions.
M4-A1	D1C2 (Abundance) & D1C4 (Distribution)	Abundance and distribution of coastal bottlenose dolphins	IA2017 assessment made in R III, IV, not in R II where it is common.
M4-B is M4??	D1C2 (Abundance) & D1C4 (Distribution)	Abundance and distribution of cetaceans other than killer whales and coastal bottlenose dolphins	



Missing

Indicator	Descriptor/Criterion	Title	status
	D1C1 (Bycatch)	Bycatch Seal and other cetacean species	?
	D1C5 (Habitat)	Habitat Seal	?
	D1C3 (Demography)	Demography/Population Condition Cetacean	? considered not to be relevant
	D1C5 (Habitat)	Habitat Cetacean	?? considered not to be relevant

No health assessment at all!

→ new candidate indicator on PCBs in blubber of marine mammals

indicator **relevant to both, BDC and HASEC**

- HASEC would have the competence on contaminant monitoring and should, from this point of view, **have a stronger role in respect of this indicator**, whereas the
- assessment outputs would be relevant for BDC as a description of health status of marine mammals
- HASEC: indicator should address trends and status of ***persistent chemicals*** on marine mammals

Coordinated approach for monitoring cetaceans

- lack of large-scale abundance and distribution data for most cetacean species in OSPAR regions to fulfil the requirement of OSPAR assessments and the six-yearly reporting requirements for EU HD and MSFD
- data for IA 2017 mainly derived from 3 decadal large-scale SCANS surveys (1994, 2006, 2016, ?)
- currently no mechanism to collect, analyse and interpret population-level data at a European scale in a coordinated or consensual manner among Member States
- large-scale **multinational SCANS surveys backbone** for assessments of cetacean abundance & distribution
→OMMEG proposes frequency increase to at least once **every six years**
- complemented by more regular smaller scale (national) surveys using standardised survey methods to provide robust and accurate assessments
- **co-ordinated monitoring scheme would need to be established in the OSPAR area** to ensure an adequate and efficient dataflow into assessment cycles
- for **QSR 2023**, lack of new abundance and distribution data for most cetacean species in OSPAR regions I, III, IV, V, and parts of II foreseen

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