

Agenda Item 3.1

Species Action Plans

Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour  
Porpoises (Jastarnia Plan)

Document 3.1b

**Action Points from the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
Jastarnia Group**

**Action Requested**

- Review
- Adopt

Submitted by

Jastarnia Group

## ACTION POINTS FROM THE 17<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE JASTARNIA GROUP

### Jastarnia and WBBK Plans

*(to be presented to the 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee)*

Reference	Action Point (old reference)	Jastarnia Plan		WBBK Plan	
		App lies	Mandate	App lies	Mandate
JG17/AP1	Parties shall establish or further improve local and national monitoring programmes for Harbour Porpoise abundance and occurrence and to further ensure these are aligned in terms of timing and methodology between countries, in order to complement large-scale international monitoring activities. (updated JG16/AP1)	X	<b>MON-01:</b> Implement and harmonize long-term continual acoustic Harbour Porpoise monitoring	X	<b>Objective d:</b> Monitoring the status of the population
JG17/AP2	All Parties, and other countries bordering the Baltic Sea, are strongly encouraged to support SAMBAH-II, specifically in terms of fundraising, in order for a project proposal to be submitted in 2021 and for the project to start in 2022. Noting that management authorities are required to be formal partners for a potential SAMBAH-II LIFE re-application. (updated JG16/AP2)	X			
JG17/AP3	Parties are strongly encouraged to continue to undertake and cooperate on the SCANS surveys, including the upcoming SCANS IV, planned for 2022.			X	<b>Rec.7:</b> Estimate trends in abundance of Harbour Porpoises in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat
JG17/AP4	Parties are strongly encouraged to use the data provided by SAMBAH, national monitoring programmes, and acoustic research projects, in particular in connection with the establishment evaluation of MPAs for Harbour Porpoises, as well as with regard to management plans and mitigation measures. (updated JG16/AP4)	X	<b>MIT-06:</b> Expand the network of protected areas for Harbour Porpoises, improve its connectivity, and develop and implement appropriate management plans including monitoring schemes for these areas		
JG17/AP5	Parties should investigate possible detrimental effects of	X	<b>RES-07:</b> Improve knowledge on	X	<b>Objective e:</b> Ensuring habitat

Reference	Action Point (old reference)	Jastarnia Plan		WBBK Plan	
		App lies	Mandate	App lies	Mandate
	various types of sound and disturbance on Harbour Porpoises and their detection (including pinger signals, noise from vessels, seismic surveys, underwater explosions, wind parks or construction). Parties should initiate and support studies on the effect of anthropogenic noise on the Harbour Porpoise both on the individual and on a population level. (updated JG16/AP5)		impact of impulsive and continuous anthropogenic underwater noise on Harbour Porpoises, and development of threshold limits of significant disturbance and GES indicators		quality favourable to the conservation of the Harbour Porpoise
JG17/AP6	Parties are encouraged to seek cooperation with the HELCOM EN NOISE to develop HELCOM-wide harmonized national regulations on sound emissions associated with anthropogenic activities in the marine environment. Such regulations should set upper limits to sound emissions and be consistent with the relevant Indicators for Good Environmental Status to be developed for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Parties are also encouraged to develop HELCOM-wide coordinated guidelines for noise mitigation, taking into account the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities. (updated JG16/AP6).	X	<b>MIT-05:</b> Implement regionally harmonized national threshold limits and guidelines for regulation of underwater noise	X	<b>Rec. 11:</b> Restore or maintain habitat quality
JG17/AP7	Parties are required to establish systems to effectively monitor bycatch covering all sizes of fishing vessels, in line with the HELCOM Roadmap on fisheries data in order to assess incidental bycatch and fisheries impact on benthic biotopes in the Baltic Sea and the ICES Special Request Advice on emergency measures to prevent bycatch of common dolphin and Baltic Proper harbour porpoise in the Northeast Atlantic. (JG16/AP8)	X	<b>MON-03:</b> Monitor and estimate Harbour Porpoise bycatch rates and estimate total annual bycatch	X	<b>Rec.6:</b> Estimate total annual bycatch
JG17/AP8	Parties are strongly encouraged to carry out spatio-temporal risk-	X	<b>RES-04:</b> Carry out a spatio-temporal risk	X	

Reference	Action Point (old reference)	Jastarnia Plan		WBBK Plan	
		App lies	Mandate	App lies	Mandate
	assessments of Harbour Porpoise bycatch using Harbour Porpoise distribution and fishing effort data. (JG16/AP10)		assessment of Harbour Porpoise bycatch		
JG17/AP9	Parties should implement and where needed further develop, in cooperation with stakeholders, any available fishing gear that does not cause, or is shown to significantly reduce, harbour porpoise bycatch, and strive to replace static nets with such alternative gear, especially in MPAs, as soon as possible. (updated JG16/AP11)	X	<b>RES-05:</b> Further develop and improve fishing gear that is commercially viable with no Harbour Porpoise bycatch <b>MIT-01:</b> Implement the use of fishing gear that is commercially viable with no Harbour Porpoise bycatch	X	<b>Objective b:</b> Mitigation of bycatch
JG17/AP10	For occasions where alternative gear is not sufficient to eliminate harbour porpoise bycatch, Parties should promote the development of pingers not audible to seals and alerting devices other than pingers. (updated JG16/AP13)	X	<b>RES-05:</b> Further develop and improve fishing gear that is commercially viable with no Harbour Porpoise bycatch	X	<b>Objective b:</b> Mitigation of bycatch
JG17/AP11	Parties should monitor the use and functioning of dedicated harbour porpoise deterrent and alerting devices, including studies to assess their effect on bycatch reduction and on harbour porpoise behaviour and distribution. (updated JG16/AP11)	X	<b>MIT-03:</b> Continue or implement the use of acoustic deterrent devices (pingers) and acoustic alerting devices proven to be successful when and where deemed appropriate <b>RES-06:</b> Improve the knowledge on potential population-level effects of the use of pingers, and develop acoustic devices for bycatch mitigation further	X	<b>Rec. 9:</b> Ensure a non-detrimental use of pingers by examining habitat exclusion and long-term effects of pingers

Reference	Action Point (old reference)	Jastarnia Plan		WBBK Plan	
		App lies	Mandate	App lies	Mandate
JG17/AP12	With respect to recreational fisheries, Parties should work towards banning or limiting the use of those types of gear known to pose a threat to harbour porpoises, or introduce effective mitigation measures shown to significantly reduce or eliminate bycatch. (JG16/AP15)	X	<b>MIT-02:</b> Reduce or eliminate fishing effort with gillnets or other gear known to cause porpoise bycatch in areas with higher Harbour Porpoise density or occurrence, and/or in areas with higher risk of Harbour Porpoise bycatch, according to spatio-temporal risk assessments	X	<b>Rec.3:</b> Protect Harbour Porpoises in their key habitats in minimizing bycatch as far as possible <b>Rec.5:</b> Where possible replace gillnet fisheries known to be associated with high porpoise bycatch with alternative fishing gear known to be less harmful
JG17/AP13	Parties are encouraged to coordinate and standardize monitoring of stranded and bycaught animals, determining the appropriate number of animals to be necropsied in each country, ensuring that health, contaminant load, life-history parameters and cause of death is examined in a coherent manner, and that tissue samples are collected from all carcasses from the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise distribution range. (JG16/AP16)	X	<b>MON-04:</b> Collect dead specimens and assess health status, contaminant levels, cause of mortality and life-history parameters of Harbour Porpoises	X	<b>Rec.8:</b> Monitor population health status, contaminant load and causes of mortality
JG17/AP14	Request the Advisory Committee to consider harmonization of what kind of samples to collect based on the level of decomposition of the carcass. Possibly to be included in the ASCOBANS-ACCOBAMS <i>Best practice on cetacean post-mortem investigation and tissue sampling</i> .	X	<b>MON-04:</b> Collect dead specimens and assess health status, contaminant levels, cause of mortality and life-history parameters of harbour porpoises	X	<b>Rec.8</b> Monitor population health status, contaminant load and causes of mortality
JG17/AP15	All Parties and range states should establish programmes for recording bycatch, strandings and opportunistic sightings for inclusion in a national database, and report annually to the ASCOBANS/HELCOM database. (JG16/AP17)	X	<b>PACB-01:</b> Improve communication and education for increased public awareness and collection of live observations and dead specimens of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise	X	<b>Objective d:</b> Monitoring the status of the population

Reference	Action Point (old reference)	Jastarnia Plan		WBBK Plan	
		App lies	Mandate	App lies	Mandate
JG17/AP16	ASCOBANS should join efforts with HELCOM to liaise with the European Commission and other relevant bodies to improve the implementation by Member States of the EU Technical Measures Regulation and the Data Collection Framework to better incorporate and tackle bycatch concerns. (JG16/AP19)	X	<b>COOP-02:</b> Strive for close cooperation between ASCOBANS and other international bodies	X	<b>Rec.2:</b> Cooperate with and inform other relevant bodies about the Conservation Plan
JG17/AP17	Parties should ensure that Belt Sea and Baltic Sea populations of harbour porpoises are assessed and managed as separate populations, e.g. in management plans and national redlists. (JG16/AP21)	X	<b>Other</b>	X	<b>Other</b>
JG17/AP18	Countries who have raised concerns on possible interference of acoustic deterrent devices on military underwater acoustic activities, are urged to promptly investigate the extent of the issue, to ensure that any decisions are based on evidence that is strong enough to justify any negative impact on the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise population or the fishing industry.	X	<b>MIT-03:</b> Continue or implement the use of acoustic deterrent devices (pingers) and acoustic alerting devices proven to be successful when and where deemed appropriate		
JG17/AP19	Although it does not align fully with the ICES advice, the Jastarnia Group urges the European Commission to adopt, as an initial step, the BALTFISH Joint Recommendation (of 22 Dec 2020) on Mitigation measures to prevent bycatch of Baltic Proper harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea fisheries, without delay. Given that the ICES Special Request advice states that even 100% fulfillment of the advice is not enough to reach the PBR limit of 0.7 animals/year, the Jastarnia Group also urges for swift implementation of the recommendations on measures for bycatch mitigation made by ICES in areas of more than occasional Harbour Porpoise occurrence, in further steps as soon as possible.	X	<b>Objective:</b> Monitor, estimate and reduce bycatch		

Reference	Action Point (old reference)	Jastarnia Plan		WBBK Plan	
		App lies	Mandate	App lies	Mandate
JG17/AP20	Countries are urged to, without delay, prepare a second BALTFISH Joint Recommendation that includes effective bycatch mitigation measures outside MPAs, in areas of more than occasional harbour porpoise occurrence, noting that coastal habitats are also of high importance for harbour porpoises.	X	<b>Objective:</b> Monitor, estimate and reduce bycatch		
JG17/AP21	Parties are urged to ensure a proposal to list the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise in CMS Appendix I is brought to CMS COP14 in 2023. (JG16/AP23)	X	<b>Other</b>		
JG17/AP22	It was agreed that the delimitation between the North Sea and WBBK harbour porpoise plans should be the management unit border identified by Sveegaard et al 2015 in Kattegat at 56.95°N. The area for the WBBK should have its eastern delimitation at the management unit border identified by Sveegaard et al 2015 at 13.5°E, while the Jastarnia plan area should be east of 13.0°E, according to the ICES scientific advice of May 2020. The overlap of the WBBK and Jastarnia plans areas will be considered in the Jastarnia Group's discussions of the plans.	X	<b>Other</b>	X	<b>Other</b>