



10th MEETING OF THE PARTIES
Odense, Denmark, 10-12 September 2024
Agenda Item 6.2.6

DRAFT RESOLUTION: SHALLOW-WATER MINING AND SMALL CETACEANS

(Prepared by Finland)

1. The Secretariat received a draft Resolution *Shallow-water Mining and Small Cetaceans* from Finland. It is available in Annex 1 to this document.

Action requested:

2. The Meeting of the Parties is requested to review and adopt the draft Resolution in Annex 1.

DRAFT RESOLUTION:

SHALLOW-WATER MINING AND SMALL CETACEANS

Recognising that small cetaceans face multiple threats in the ASCOBANS area,

Recalling CMS Resolution 14.6 *Deep-seabed mineral exploitation activities and migratory species*,

Acknowledging that mining activities also occur in shallow areas and may have impacts on small cetaceans and their habitats,

Concerned that shallow-water mining causes changes in seabed structure and sediment dispersal with potential impacts on seabed habitats, increased turbidity, impacts on food webs, and prey depletion, most of which are largely understudied,

Further concerned that mineral extraction activities may impact cetaceans through noise pollution and other effects,

Noting that the exact impacts on small cetaceans will depend on the magnitude and frequency of noise pollution, which are likely to vary depending on the type of minerals extracted and the mining technique,

The Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS

1. *Calls on* Parties to coordinate and support research investigating the risk to small cetaceans from marine mineral extraction, in particular regarding potential impacts of noise, habitat changes and losses, food availability, and other types of disturbance;
2. *Calls on* industry to apply the precautionary principle in mining activities occurring in various shallow water areas, noting the potential impacts from these activities on small cetaceans and their habitats, including their food sources;
3. *Urges* Parties to use marine spatial planning, in line with the precautionary principle, in order to choose the most appropriate siting for potential seabed mining activities, avoiding important marine mammal areas and other critical habitats, including migration corridors; and
4. *Decides* to establish a small working group to review the available information on shallow-water mining and its potential impacts on small cetaceans; and
5. *Urges* the Advisory Committee, depending on the review, to develop guidelines through the working group, on how to avoid and minimize potential impacts based on the findings.