UN environment programme

ASCOBANS

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF SMALL CETACEANS OF THE BALTIC, NORTH EAST ATLANTIC, IRISH AND NORTH SEAS

ASCOBANS/AC30/NR.10/Rev.1

09 November 2026

30th MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Bonn, Germany, 1–3 September 2026
Agenda Item 3

2025 NATIONAL REPORT: FRANCE

2025 ASCOBANS National Report

ASCOBANS

Online Reporting System

Party: France

Submitted Date: 2026-11-09

2025 ASCOBANS National Report

Creation Date: 2026-01

Deadline: 2026-05-31

Language: English

Submitted Date: 2026-11-09

Introduction

Year 2 (2025) ASCOBANS National Report

1 January to 31 December 2025.

As outlined in ASCOBANS Resolution 10.1 *National Reporting 2025-2028*, this form will cover information from 2025 (Year 2), and the following topics included in the Annex to the Resolution:

- High-level Summary of Key Messages
- General Information (Section I)
- Bycatch (Section II A1)
- Resource Depletion (Section II A2)
- Marine Debris (Section II C9)
- Surveys and Research (Section III)
- Use of Strandings Records (Section IV)
- Other Matters (e.g. burning issues) (Section VII)

The National Reports submitted will inform discussions at the 30th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee, 1-3 September 2026.

- All questions apply to the **reporting period from 1 January to 31 December 2025**.
- Region in the tables refers to the sub-regions as defined by the HELCOM and OSPAR, and Areas refers to the sub-areas as defined by ICES. An overview and maps of these can be found in Annex A. Species can be chosen from the drop-down list provided, based on ASCOBANS species list, see Annex B.
- Throughout the form, please include relevant web links and add rows where applicable.
- The deadline for the submission of National Reports is **31 May 2026**.

Where possible, National Coordinators should consult with, or delegate to, experts for particular topics so as to ease the reporting burden. The Secretariat has provided a list of potential country contacts as a starting point. Once the baseline information is in place, it should become easier to update in the future.

For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat.

High-level Summary of Key Messages

In your country, for 2025 (Year 2), what does this report reveal about the most successful aspects of implementation of the Agreement?

(List up to five items related to the topics of Year 2: bycatch, resource depletion, marine debris, surveys and research, use of strandings records)

bycatch, resource depletion, marine debris, surveys and research, use of stranding records

In your country, for 2025 (Year 2), what does this report reveal about the greatest challenges in implementing the Agreement?

(List up to five items related to the topics of Year 2: bycatch, resource depletion, marine debris, surveys and research, use of strandings records - kindly note that challenges with regards to other topics can be reported on under Section VII.B *Difficulties in implementing the Agreement)*

In your country, for 2025 (Year 2), what does this report reveal about the main priorities for future implementation of the Agreement?

(List up to five items, ideally related to the topics of Year 2: bycatch, resource depletion, marine debris, surveys and research, use of strandings records)

Section I: General Information

A. Country Information

1. Name of Party / Non-Party Range State:

2. Details of the Report Compiler

Details of the report compiler

Name	Expert Florian
Function	policy advisor marine species
Organization	Ministère de la transition écologique
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Does the Report Compiler act as ASCOBANS National Coordinator (i.e. focal point)?

Please select only one option

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

3. Details of contributor(s)

Please provide the following details per contributor: Name, Function, Organization, Postal Address, Telephone, Email, and Topic(s) contributed to.

1406/contributors_ASCOBANS NR 2026.docx

Section II: Habitat Conservation and Management (threats and pressures on cetaceans)

A. Fisheries-related Threats

1. Bycatch

AIM: to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating bycatch of small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.4, 9.2 (Rev.MOP10), **8.5 (Rev.MOP9)**, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.8, 5.7, **5.5**, **3.3**

Bycatch, the entanglement of an animal in fishing gear, is identified as a major cause of mortality in small cetaceans. Every effort should be made to reduce bycatch towards zero as quickly as possible. Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed on a number of resolutions that highlight the importance of mitigating bycatch of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area, as available data indicates that levels of bycatch pose a considerable threat to their conservation status. Parties have agreed that modifications of fishing gear and relevant practices shall be applied in order to reduce negative impacts where data indicates unacceptable interaction. The Agreement Area requires improved monitoring, collation of data, and consideration of appropriate mitigation measures, while also taking into account similar work in other areas.

To better understand the extent of the impact of bycatch on small cetaceans, monitoring and mitigation measures in place, and ongoing work in the Agreement Area, countries are requested to provide relevant information.

Note: This section includes bycatch in recreational fisheries.

1.1. How is bycatch assessed/monitored in your country?

	Used? (Yes/No)	Percentage (% by monitoring method, of total bycaught animals, by gear type if applicable)
Dedicated observer schemes	Yes	In Bay of Biscay: Reinforced ObsMer program in the Bay of Biscay in winter : 1 December to 30 April: observation on 5% on day at sea gillnets pelagic trawlersOBSCAMe+ program (cf. remote electronic monitoring)
Fisheries observes	Yes	All the year : 45% of gillnets and 60 % of trawlers,
Remote Electronic Monitoring	Yes	5925 fishing days (6539 days at sea) were observed for gillnetters progressively equiped during the year 2025 (45 in January to 104 vessels in December 2025). 30 fishing days (52 days at sea) were observed

		for trawlers mostly equiped at the end of 2025 (12 trawlers). This represents an observation effort of 18 per cent for at-risk gillnet vessels and 10 per cent for trawlers in 2025. The observation effort will be higher for the year 2026 with the completion of the total number of vessels collecting data in the sampling scheme for the whole year.
Self-reporting by fishermen	Yes	100%: bycatch reporting by fishermen became mandatory in 2019
Pathological investigation	Yes	
Assessment at stranding site	Yes	

Comments:

These data are a provisional minimum estimate, as stranding data were still being validated/consolidated at the time of reporting. There is a one year lag for data validation and thus data for 2025 cannot be made available before the end of 2026. The final estimate will be provided annually by reverse drift modelling methodology applied on common dolphin and harbour porpoise strandings.

An estimate based on observation data was made for pelagic pair trawlers : https://archimer.ifremer.fr/doc/01022/113395/127771.pdf

ICES WKEMBYC uses both onboard observer data and stranding data to estimate bycatch mortality in the Bay of Biscay. Mortality estimates obtained by either method give results in the same order of magnitude.

1.2. Which species of small cetaceans were recorded as bycatch by commercial fishing in the reporting period?

Please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Tick all that apply

- [ ] AWSD - Atlantic white-sided dolphin
- [ ] BBW - Blainville's beaked whale
- [ ] BD - Bottlenose dolphin
- [ ] CBW - Cuvier's beaked whale
- [ ] CD - Short-beaked Common Dolphin
- [ ] FKW - False killer whale
- [ ] GBW - Gervais' beaked whale
- [ ] HP - Harbour Porpoise
- [ ] KW - Killer Whale

- [ ] LFPW - Long-finned pilot whale
- [ ] NBW - Northern bottlenose whale
- [ ] PKW - Pygmy killer whale
- [ ] PSW - Pygmy sperm whale
- [ ] RD - Risso's dolphin
- [ ] RTD - Rough-toothed dolphin
- [ ] SBW - Sowerby's beaked whale
- [ ] SD - Striped dolphin
- [ ] SFPW - Short-finned pilot whale
- [ ] TBW - True's beaked whale
- [ ] WBD - White-beaked dolphin
- [ ] Not Applicable
- [ ] Others _____

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1.3. Which species of small cetaceans were recorded as bycatch by recreational fishing in the reporting period?

Please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Tick all that apply

- [ ] AWSD - Atlantic white-sided dolphin
- [ ] BBW - Blainville's beaked whale
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- [ ] SFPW - Short-finned pilot whale
- [ ] TBW - True's beaked whale
- [ ] WBD - White-beaked dolphin
- [ ] Not Applicable
- [ ] Others _____

1.4 Has there been any notable incidents/issues related to bycatch during the reporting period in your country?

Please select only one option

- ( ) No
- (•) Yes

Please provide details:

(Mass bycatch incidents, unusual species bycatch etc.)

In 2024 (01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024), a total of 1615 strandings of dead cetaceans were registered along the French seaboard (https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/rapport_echouages_2024.pdf). A provisional total of 422 small cetacean strandings were found during the winter of 2025-2026 (01/12/2025 to 30/04/2026; https://www.mer.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2026-05/20260507_bulletin_cetaces_b10_corrige.pdf). These figures for the winter of 2025-2026 are a provisional minimum estimate, as stranding data is still being validated/consolidated at the time of reporting.

Regarding OBSCAMe monitoring of bycatch with on-board cameras, the following observations were made on gillnetters:

- 21% of bycaught animals fall into the water before being brought on board.

Most may not have been observed onboard by the crew/onboard observer.

1.5. Are there any mitigation measures in place?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ◉ Yes

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1.6. Have there been changes in fishing effort (for fisheries known to have an impact) in the reporting period?

Please select only one option

- ◉ No
- ○ Unknown/not applicable
- ○ Yes

1.7. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on bycatch in your country.

List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information

With regard to the bycatch of small cetaceans in the Bay of Biscay, following lengthy and difficult consultations with the fishing industry, the Government has adopted a national action plan for 2024, 2025 and 2026, comprising:

Pursuant to Article 3 of the Order of 24 October 2023 establishing spatio-temporal measures aimed at reducing incidental catches of small cetaceans in the Bay of Biscay for the years 2024, 2025 and 2026, a 30-day winter closure of the Bay of Biscay to high-risk gear;

Under the Order of 13 December 2024 on improving the collection of data on incidental catches of marine mammals and on the trialling of technical devices to reduce incidental catches of common dolphins on board fishing vessels flying the French flag:

- a large-scale trial of technical devices and cameras on board fishing vessels
- the strengthening of on-board observation and an increase in the fishing effort monitored by observers on board.

The OBSCAMe+ project, standing for 'Observation to better understand by-catches of protected marine species through remote electronic observation', took over from the OBSCAMe project in 2023. The on-board cameras will thus enable data to be collected in order to assess the effectiveness of technical devices designed to reduce by-catches of common dolphins. The OBSCAMe+ project aims to install cameras on a significant number of fishing vessels (100 gillnetter and 15 trawler vessels equipped), and to collect and analyse data on these bycatches.

Delmoges is an interdisciplinary research project utilising modern technologies. Its initial aim is to fill knowledge gaps with new data on dolphin habitats and movements, their relationships with prey and their environment, as well as their interactions with fishing gear. Drones, cameras, hydrophones, environmental DNA identification tools... a range of innovative techniques will thus be deployed, particularly during new winter campaigns at sea. In a second phase, the project aims to collaboratively develop a range of scenarios for reducing incidental dolphin bycatch using various levers for action, whilst assessing their ecological and socio-economic consequences (the bycatch reduction scenario component remains incomplete due to the national context surrounding this issue, which has complicated operations).

https://delmoges.recherche.univ-lr.fr/valorisation-2/.

https://delmoges.recherche.univ-lr.fr/valorisation-2/.The Delmoges project was completed in 2025. All results (in French) are available at https://delmoges.recherche.univ-lr.fr/

LICADO Project: an EMFF Measure 39-funded project aimed at developing new acoustic deterrent devices (ADDs, or *pingers*), including directional and interactive prototypes, for net fisheries, while also exploring technical and operational mitigation measures for gillnet fisheries (e.g. pingers and net reflectors). The project ran over a three-year period, covering three consecutive winter fishing seasons, and was completed in May 2022. It comprised two main components: (i) the development of acoustic deterrent systems to reduce cetacean bycatch, including the design of a new pinger prototype, and (ii) the assessment of fishing practices and bycatch avoidance strategies.

DOLPHINFREE Project: an EMFF Measure 39-funded project aimed at developing a pinger capable of emitting a signal that is understandable and interpretable by dolphins, indicating the presence of fishing nets and the associated mortality risk. In a second phase, the project seeks to develop an energy harvesting system to increase the device's autonomy by integrating a passive acoustic monitoring module (developed under the LICADO project). This module detects the presence of dolphins and triggers the emission of an acoustic signal only when necessary, thereby reducing underwater noise pollution. DolphinFree devices were tested on 27 fishing vessels as part of the French National Action Plan in the Bay of Biscay during the 2025–2026 winter high-risk bycatch season. The first scientific results on the effectiveness of the device are expected in autumn 2026.

PIFIL Project, following the LICADO project: this project aimed to develop a pinger that can be mounted on the vessel's hull and activated during net setting operations. Following its development, PIFIL pingers were tested on 106 fishing vessels as part of the French National Action Plan between 2023 and 2026, during the winter high-risk period for small cetacean bycatch. Scientific results on the effectiveness of the device are expected in autumn 2026. Additional sea trials are expected to be conducted during the 2026–2027 winter season to strengthen and, if necessary, confirm the results on the pinger's effectiveness.

Additionally, in November 2025, the French authorities launched an EMFAF (European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund) call for projects under Specific Objective 1.6 to identify new devices or methods for reducing the bycatch of small cetaceans, complementing the equipment deployment and testing framework established by the Order of 13 December 2024.

Among the projects submitted, described below, some have already been assessed and approved by the Programme Monitoring Committee. The remaining proposals are still under evaluation, with final decisions on their approval expected no later than autumn 2026.

Approved: ECHORAL Project (Testing highly acoustically visible float lines under real fishing conditions to reduce the bycatch of small cetaceans in gillnet fisheries in the Bay of Biscay), led by the French National Committee for Marine Fisheries and Marine Aquaculture (CNPMEM)

The project aims to analyse and test, under real fishing conditions, highly acoustically visible headline ropes (float lines) and floats designed to reduce the accidental capture of small cetaceans, taking into account the dimensions and composition of the headline ropes used on fishing nets. The equipment will be selected on the basis of recent scientific findings from IFREMER and technical feedback from professional organisations (producer organisations and fisheries committees).

The project also includes an assessment of the acoustic characteristics of the fishing gear currently used by gillnet vessels affected by bycatch. The project was approved by the written Programme Monitoring Committee procedure held from 1 to 12 June.

Approved: ECCO Project (Operational Avoidance of Bycatch and User Conflicts), led by the company CLS (Collecte Localisation Satellites)

The ECCO project aims to enhance an existing platform—whose scientific reliability has not yet been fully demonstrated—by improving its mapping and visualisation capabilities. The platform displays, in real time and with forecasts extending up to seven days ahead, the modelled habitat of the common dolphin together with the probability of fishing activity by gear type, in order to predict areas where interactions between dolphins and fishing activities are most likely to occur and where accidental bycatch may result.

One potential application would be to use this tool to improve the management and targeting of measures implemented by the French authorities to reduce accidental bycatch, particularly that of the common dolphin. In the longer term, the platform could also be made directly available to fishing professionals. The project was approved by the Programme Monitoring Committee on 10 July 2026.

Under evaluation: CETADATA Project, led by OCTECH

Led by OCTECH, a company already involved in the manufacture and deployment of the PIFIL pingers and Dolphinfree bio-inspired acoustic beacons, which are currently being tested under the framework of the Order of 13 December 2024, the CETADATA project aims to improve the ergonomics of acoustic beacons whose technical and scientific performance is currently under evaluation.

Improving the usability of these beacons is expected to increase their acceptance by fishers; to this end, technical specifications will be developed jointly with stakeholders. The beacons must also be robust enough to withstand the operational constraints of fishing activities and be suitable for large-scale industrial production at controlled costs.

The project includes the development of enhanced features such as increased battery life, a battery charge indicator, wireless inductive charging, simplified installation on fishing gear, and consideration of acoustic signals adapted to multiple species.

In addition, in response to one of the recommendations arising from the DELMOGES project, OCTECH proposes to develop a platform for aggregating and mapping cetacean detection data collected during trials of these new devices. This platform would provide a better understanding of cetacean distribution and density while adding value to the data collected during the testing campaigns.

The project is expected to be submitted to the October 2026 Programme Monitoring Committee, which will decide whether or not to approve it.

Papers

- Faure J., Niol J., Meheust E., Spitz J. (2025). Long-Term Changes in the Winter Diet of Common Dolphins Reflects Ecological Shifts and Bycatch Dynamics in the Bay of Biscay. Ecology and Evolution 15, no. 7: e71815. https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.71815
- Peltier H., Authier M., Dabin W., Daniel P., Dars C., Demaret F., Meheust E., Ridoux V., Spitz J., Van Canneyt O. (2025). I sink therefore I am : 20 years of tagging small cetacean carcasses in the North-East Atlantic for bycatch estimation. Journal for Nature Conservation, 87, 127005. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jnc.2025.127005
- Rouby, E., Plard, F., Ridoux, V., Mauchamp, A., Dabin, W., Spitz, J., & Authier, M. (2025). Longevity Collapse in Dolphins : A Growing Conservation Concern in the Bay of Biscay. Conservation Letters, 18(5), e13142. https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.13142
- Brevet, M., Authier, M., Peltier, H., Dubroca, L., 2026. Linking by-caught cetacean traits to fishing techniques: Insights from two species of small cetaceans. Ecol. Appl. 36, e70216. https://doi.org/10.1002/eap.70216

1.8. Is the perceived level of pressure from bycatch in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Status relative to previous years. Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable.

Species	Increasing/Decreasing/Staying the same/Unknown	Nature of the evidence (e.g. strandings, observer schemes)
CD Short-beaked Common dolphinCD Short-beaked Common dolphin	staying the same	stranding and observer schemes
HP Harbour porpoiseHP Harbour porpoise	staying the same	stranding and observer schemes

2. Resource Depletion

AIM: to determine areas where, and to what extent, depletion of fish stocks have occurred during the reporting period. In addition, identify ongoing mitigation efforts regarding detrimental implications for small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.3, **9.4**, 8.9, 8.3, 7.1, 6.1

Depletion in fish stocks due to overfishing and other factors generates pressure on the favourable conservation status of small cetaceans (through possible food shortage). More integrated management and reductions in fishing effort (also prompted by concern about fish stock depletion or other ecosystem considerations) have been encouraged, especially in areas of known risk. Further research, effective fishery regulations and innovation within certain fishing methods are considered to be helpful steps towards mitigating this pressure.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed on a number of resolutions that (1) determine the impact of the depletion of fish stocks on small cetaceans, (2) encourage fishing effort reductions and (3) review new information on these depletions to make recommendations. Resource depletion in the Agreement Area requires improved monitoring, collation of data, and consideration of appropriate mitigation measures, while also taking into account similar work in other areas.

It is of particular interest to ASCOBANS to understand the extent of prey depletions, any related ongoing work, monitoring and mitigation measures in the Agreement Area. Countries are requested to provide relevant information.

2.1 Based on the latest stock assessments, are there any notable depletions of fish species which would be a concern for small cetaceans?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

2.2. Where are these depletions in national waters occurring?

Please choose the sub-Regions from Annex A as defined by OSPAR & HELCOM.

Tick all that apply

- [ ] OI Norwegian Sea
- [ ] OII Dogger Bank
- [ ] OII Southern North Sea
- [ ] OII Northern North Sea
- [ ] OII Channel
- [ ] OII Norwegian Trench
- [ ] OII Skagerrak
- [ ] OIII Celtic Sea
- [ ] OIII Irish Sea
- [ ] OIII Irish & Scottish W. Coast
- [ ] OIV N. Bay of Biscay
- [ ] OIV Iberian Sea
- [ ] OIV Gulf of Cadiz
- [ ] OV Wider Atlantic
- [ ] H Bothnian Bay
- [ ] H Bothnian Sea
- [ ] H Archipelago Sea
- [ ] H Aland Sea
- [ ] H Gulf of Finland
- [ ] H Northern Baltic Proper
- [ ] H Western Gotland Basin
- [ ] H Eastern Gotland Basin
- [ ] H Gulf of Riga
- [ ] H Gdansk Basin
- [ ] H Bornholm Basin
- [ ] H Arkona Basin
- [ ] H Kattegat
- [ ] H Belt Sea
- [ ] H The Sound
- [ ] Not Applicable

Please choose the sub-Areas from Annex A as defined by ICES.

Tick all that apply

- [ ] 27.3 Skagerrak, Kattegat, Sound, Belt and Baltic Seas
- [ ] 27.3.a Skagerrak and Kattegat
- [ ] 27.3.a.20 Skagerrak
- [ ] 27.3.a.21 Kattegat
- [ ] 27.3.b,c Sound and Belt Sea
- [ ] 27.3.b.23 Sound
- [ ] 27.3.c.22 Belt Sea
- [ ] 27.3.d Baltic Sea
- [ ] 27.3.d.24 Baltic West of Bornholm
- [ ] 27.3.d.25 Southern Central Baltic – West
- [ ] 27.3.d.26 Southern Central Baltic – East

- [ ] 27.3.d.27 West of Gotland
- [ ] 27.3.d.28.1 Gulf of Riga
- [ ] 27.3.d.28.2 East of Gotland
- [ ] 27.3.d.29 Archipelago Sea
- [ ] 27.3.d.30 Bothnian Sea
- [ ] 27.3.d.31 Bothnian Bay
- [ ] 27.3.d.32 Bay of Finland
- [ ] 27.4 North Sea
- [ ] 27.4.a Northern North Sea
- [ ] 27.4.b Central North Sea
- [ ] 27.4.c Southern North Sea
- [ ] 27.6 Rockall, NW Coast of Scotland and N. Ireland
- [ ] 27.6.a NW Coast of Scotland and N. Ireland
- [ ] 27.6.b Rockall
- [ ] 27.6.b.1 Rockall / NEAFC Reg. Area I
- [ ] 27.6.b.2 Rockall / Non-NEAFC Reg. Area
- [ ] 27.7 Irish Sea, West of Ireland, Porcupine Bank, Eastern and Western English Channel, Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea North and South, and Southwest of Ireland – East and West
- [ ] 27.7.a Irish Sea
- [ ] 27.7.b West of Ireland
- [ ] 27.7.c Porcupine Bank
- [ ] 27.7.c.1 Porcupine Bank / NEAFC Reg. Area
- [ ] 27.7.c.2 Porcupine Bank / Non-NEAFC Reg. Area
- [ ] 27.7.d Eastern English Channel
- [ ] 27.7.e Western English Channel
- [ ] 27.7.f Bristol Channel
- [ ] 27.7.g Celtic North Sea
- [ ] 27.7.h Celtic Sea South
- [ ] 27.7.j SW of Ireland – East
- [ ] 27.7.j.1 SW of Ireland – East – Parts of the NEAFC Reg. Area
- [ ] 27.7.j.2 SW of Ireland – East – Non-NEAFC Reg. Area
- [ ] 27.7.k SW of Ireland - West
- [ ] 27.7.k.1 SW of Ireland – West – Part of the NEAFC Reg. Area
- [ ] 27.7.k.2 SW of Ireland – West – Part of the Non-NEAFC Area I
- [ ] 27.8 Bay of Biscay
- [ ] 27.8.a Bay of Biscay North
- [ ] 27.8.b Bay of Biscay Central
- [ ] 27.8.c Bay of Biscay South
- [ ] 27.8.d Bay of Biscay Offshore
- [ ] 27.8.d.1 Bay of Biscay Offshore – Part of the NEAFC Reg. Area
- [ ] 27.8.d.2 Bay of Biscay Offshore – Non-NEAFC Reg. Area
- [ ] 27.8.e Wet of Bay of Biscay
- [ ] 27.9 Portuguese Waters
- [ ] 27.9.a Portuguese Waters – East
- [ ] 27.9.b Portuguese Water - West
- [ ] 27.9.b.1 Portuguese waters – West Part of the NEAFC Reg. Area
- [ ] 27.9.b.2 Portuguese waters – Non-NEAFC Reg. Area

2.3 What measures are being taken to manage pressures on depleted fish stocks, including relevant regulations/guidelines (current / planned / year of implementation)?

Measure	Timeframe information	Relevant driver

2.4 Is there any evidence within your country's national waters that resource depletion may be impacting small cetaceans (e.g. evidence of starvation)?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

2.5 Are there any national efforts to evaluate cetacean body condition at sea (e.g. surveys)?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

2.6 Relevant new research/work/collaboration on resource depletion in your country.

List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information

Delmoges is an interdisciplinary research project utilising modern technologies. Its initial aim is to fill knowledge gaps with new data on dolphin habitats and movements, their relationships with prey and their environment, as well as their interactions with fishing gear. Drones, cameras, hydrophones, environmental DNA identification tools... a range of innovative techniques will thus be deployed, particularly during new winter campaigns at sea. In a second phase, the project aims to collaboratively develop a range of scenarios for reducing incidental dolphin bycatch using various levers for action, whilst assessing their ecological and socio-economic consequences (the bycatch reduction scenario component remains incomplete due to the national context surrounding this issue, which has complicated operations).

The following findings are drawn from the scientific DELMOGES study. Regarding the health status of the captured individuals, the analyses indicate that their overall condition is generally good and that chemical contamination does not appear to be a contributing factor to mortality. Stomach-content analyses show that the prey items identified consist predominantly of sardines and anchovies, which do not necessarily correspond to the species targeted by fishers. The occurrence of bycatch therefore appears to be more closely related to a trophic cascade than to dolphins feeding directly from fishing nets.

The analysis of feeding ecology, based on a comparison between contemporary stomach contents and those collected approximately 20 years ago, provides insights into the factors driving the increased proximity of dolphins to coastal areas, thereby increasing their vulnerability during winter. Bycatch appears to occur primarily during feeding activity. Whereas species contributing to the dolphins' diet 20 years ago included a greater proportion of taxa typically associated with offshore waters, such as blue whiting, the current diet contains a higher proportion of species characteristic of coastal environments, such as sandeels (Ammodytes spp.). This shift may indicate a displacement of prey populations towards coastal waters, with dolphins following small pelagic fish, primarily sardines and anchovies. The findings of WP1 are therefore particularly informative and provide the essential biological basis for understanding the research and mitigation approaches developed under WP2.

The results of WP2 further indicate that the increase in bycatch is embedded within a broader ecological cascade. Ocean warming (+0.8°C over the past 20 years) and reduced freshwater inputs have contributed to a decline in primary production and in the energetic value of plankton, thereby affecting the distribution and body size of small pelagic fish. These changes have resulted in a greater spatial concentration of prey in shallow coastal areas (<100 m), with prey occurring closer to the seabed, thereby increasing the spatial overlap between dolphins, their prey and fishing grounds. Acoustic surveys and models integrating field observations with satellite-derived data show a strong relationship between dolphin density, prey depth and fishing effort, leading to the development of the "trapped food reservoir" concept.

Overall, the findings of WP2 indicate that the phenomenon cannot be understood solely in terms of direct interactions between fishers and dolphins. Rather, they suggest a broader reconfiguration of the coastal ecosystem, in which the risk of bycatch emerges as a consequence of deeper environmental and ecological changes.

DELMOGES does not seek to identify a single solution, but rather to explore a combination of complementary measures while continuing to improve the knowledge base. Several management levers could therefore be combined, including **technical measures** (e.g. net length and soak time), **targeted spatial measures**, **measures differentiated by fleet segment**, and **economic support and incentive schemes for the fishing sector**, including compensation mechanisms and incentive-based approaches.

Two tools could help assess and better target these measures. The first would be a **predictive bycatch risk mapping tool** at an ecologically and operationally relevant spatial scale, covering the Bay of Biscay shelf. The objective would be to develop an operational tool for estimating bycatch risk by integrating spatial and behavioural data on dolphins, their prey and fishing activity. The work currently being undertaken by DGAMPA, CNES and CLS could be integrated with DELMOGES to develop a finer-scale risk map that could ultimately support fisheries management and decision-making by public authorities. At this stage, however, the tool is not yet sufficiently operational or reliable for management purposes. In the longer term, collaboration between **CLS, Ifremer and Pélagis** could combine scientific expertise with operational and technological capabilities.

The second tool would consist of adapting a **data visualisation tool** to assess different management scenarios, their potential effects, their acceptability among stakeholders and the practical modalities for their implementation.

2.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from resource depletion in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Status relative to previous years. Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable.

Species	Increasing/Decreasing/Staying the same/Unknown	Nature of the evidence

B. Disturbance (incl. potential physical impacts)

3. Noise (impulsive i.e. piling and continuous/ambient i.e. shipping)

AIM: to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating negative effects on small cetaceans from underwater noise during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.3, 9.2 (Rev.MOP10), **8.11 (Rev.MOP9)**, 8.9, 8.6 (Rev.MOP10), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, **6.2 (Rev.MOP10)**, 6.1

Small cetaceans are especially susceptible to underwater noise due to their high responsiveness to sound and wide hearing range. Good environmental status, as defined by the European Union, suggests that the introduction of energy, including underwater noise, is at levels that do not adversely affect the marine environment. Anthropogenic noise pollution has generally increased in recent times and generates a broad range of frequencies due to a wide variety of human activities. Impulsive and continuous noise present different impacts on small cetaceans, which include communicative masking, behavioural response and physiological injury. Noise in marine environments potentially impedes communication, affects distribution and hence feeding and reproduction of small cetaceans. Studies show that not only cetaceans but also fish and other marine life may be negatively impacted by anthropogenic noise.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed on implementation of measures through a number of resolutions that (1) highlight the potential impact that noise pollution may have on small cetaceans in the Agreement Area and (2) commit to reduce the pressure presented by underwater noise. The Agreement Area requires improved monitoring, collation of data, and consideration of appropriate mitigation measures.

To better understand the extent to which noise negatively impacts the health of small cetaceans, and to learn about new work relevant to the topic, countries are requested to provide related information.

3.1. To which noise registers/databases has your country contributed to date?

ICES Impulsive Noise Register (for HELCOM and OSPAR Parties)

Please select only one option

- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable

National registry

Please select only one option

- ○ Yes, please specify (e.g. JNCC noise registry) _____
- ○ No
- ○ Not Applicable

Other

Please select only one option

- ○ Yes, please specify: _____
- ○ No

3.2. Any instances/issues in the reporting period including information on planned or completed significant developments/activities, including the details of monitoring in place before, during and after the project:

If you selected 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

3.3. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on underwater noise in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)

3.4. Report on noise management for cumulative impacts, including relevant regulations and guidelines, seismic shot point densities and level of impact deemed acceptable.

3.5. Is the perceived level of pressure from underwater noise in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Status relative to previous years. To be done per species basis (Annex B) where applicable.

Species	Increasing/Decreasing/Staying the same/Unknown	Nature of the evidence

4. Ocean Energy

AIM: to understand the extent and development of current and planned ocean energy projects, and progress in monitoring and mitigation of their negative effects on small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, **8.6 (Rev.MOP10)**, 8.3, 6.2 (Rev.MOP10)

Renewable energy is a necessary component of the efforts to supply the energy needs of human populations while combatting climate change. Efforts to harness renewable energy sources, however, should be conducted in a way that does not have a harmful impact on biological diversity and the marine environment. There are potential adverse effects of ocean energy on small cetaceans from such energy projects. In regard to

small cetaceans, this can include potential lethal interactions or injury, negative behavioural impacts from displacement and changes in fecundity, calf survival and juvenile and adult mortality. There remains uncertainty regarding quantifying the (magnitude of the) pressure from ocean energy production on small cetaceans.

Parties to ASCOBANS have agreed to introduce precautionary measures and procedures for activities surrounding the development of renewable energy in marine environments in order to minimise and mitigate possible effects on small cetaceans, by following best practices. Parties have committed to investigating such pressures and robustly monitoring and mitigating them through environmental impact assessments. Addressing all aspects relevant to the conservation of protected species in regard to ocean energy and collaboration with other organizations working on or potentially interested in the issue is to the benefit of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area.

It is of particular interest to ASCOBANS to understand current and ongoing renewable energy projects in the Agreement Area, mitigation measures and procedures in use and other work relevant to the topic. Countries are requested to provide information relevant to their activities.

4.1. Were there any new wind energy farms in development/construction during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes. Please provide details in the table.
- ○ Not Applicable.
  Comments: _____

4.2. Were there any new wave power installations in development/construction during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes. Please provide details in the table.
- ○ Not Applicable.
  Comments: _____

4.3. Were there any new tidal energy installations in development/construction during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes. Please provide details in the table.
- ○ Not Applicable.
  Comments: _____

4.4. Were there any new tidal lagoon/barrage installations in development/construction during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes. Please provide details in the table.
- ○ Not Applicable.
  Comments: _____

4.5. Has there been any other instances/issues related to ocean energy during the reporting period in your country?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

4.6. How is the pressure managed, incl. relevant regulations / guidelines and the year of implementation (current and planned)?

4.7. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on ocean energy in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)

Comments:

4.8. Mark the perceived level of pressure from ocean energy in your country to the table below.

Status relative to previous years. For example, active construction of new developments could increase the pressure, while decommissioning or addition of mitigation measures to pre-existing projects could decrease the pressure.

	Status in year relative to previous years [Increasing, Decreasing, Staying the same, Unknown, Not Applicable]	Nature of the evidence
Wind energy		
Wave power		
Tidal energy		
Tidal lagoon/barrage		

Comments:

5. Cetacean Watching Industry

AIM: to determine if the developing cetacean watching industry poses a threat to small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.3, 8.9, 6.1, 5.4

Whale and dolphin watching is a global industry that can provide socio-economic benefits to local communities by attracting tourism, as well as strengthening public awareness of conservation needs. However, it also has the potential of being harmful when it interferes with the behaviour of animals in their natural environment and may even lead to injury or death. As the cetacean watching industry is still scarcely developed in some countries, collecting this data now allows tracking the development of the industry.

It is of particular importance to ASCOBANS to obtain an overview of the current scale of the activities and to monitor the development of the industry in the future. This is done by quantifying the number and locations of operators, reporting negative interactions and providing information on the development and implementation of any guidelines regarding cetacean watching.

Filling out this section accurately and completely will help to detect any indications of potential threats, allow timely mitigation action and enable Parties and Non-Party Range States to work towards a coordinated approach regarding the development of cetacean watching guidelines in the Agreement Area.

Note: We are here only addressing commercial cetacean watching activities which take place from vessels and include viewing of small cetacean species. Operators are defined as those offering trips with a primary focus: they advertise specifically with the aim to see small cetaceans, or a secondary focus: they advertise either for other taxa, such as birds or seals, or large cetaceans, or more general for wildlife, but mention the opportunity to see small cetaceans.

5.1 Do you have any commercial small cetacean watching industry operating in your country?

Please select only one option

- No.
- Yes.

5.3. Does your country have a definition of the term 'harassment' in general and/or as it relates to the Cetacean Watching Industry?

For example, the US Marine Mammal Protection Act uses the term harassment, and defines two levels:

- Level A harassment means any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance that has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild.
- Level B harassment refers to acts that have the potential to disturb (but not injure) a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by disrupting behavioural patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.

NB. The UK uses the term 'disturbance' in its legislation.

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

5.4. Have there been any incidents of harassment towards small cetaceans in the context of commercial cetacean watching reported to authorities during the reporting period?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

5.5. Does your country have any operators that offer swimming with dolphins (or other small cetaceans)?

In some parts of the world this has become an important tourism industry with potential impacts for both small cetaceans and swimmers. Although scarcely developed, it has occurred within the ASCOBANS Agreement Area, and requires at least background monitoring. Sometimes incidents occur and can lead to harm for small cetaceans and/or swimmers.

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

5.6 List any incidents of harassment to small cetaceans during the reporting period in your country in the context of swimming with small cetaceans reported to authorities – and the outcome if known (behavioural response, injury, death, any court proceedings).

Date (dd/mm/yy)	Context of incidence	Outcome for (a) the animal or (b) human (e.g. behavioural response, injury, death)	Legal procedures/ court proceedings/ convictions that took place	Responsible authority for such reports	Link to websites or documentation of this report

5.7. Are there any solitary sociable dolphin interactions in your country?

Occasionally, individual solitary dolphins may associate with humans, resulting in increased interactions between the two which may lead to impacts upon either. Sometimes incidents occur and can lead to harm for small cetaceans and/or swimmers.

Please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes. Please provide details in the table.

5.12. Is the perceived level of pressure from commercial small cetacean watching in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Status relative to previous years. To be done per species basis (Annex B) where applicable.

Species	Increasing/Decreasing/Staying the same/Unknown	Nature of the evidence

6. Recreational Sea Use

AIM: to determine whether recreational sea use is detrimental to small cetaceans and, if so, to identify types of activity and areas of concern.

Relevant Resolutions: **10.6**, 10.3, 8.9, 8.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.4

Recreational use of the sea by humans includes a wide variety of activities, some of which are known to have a potential negative impact on small cetaceans. This includes the use of RIBs (rigid-hulled inflatable boats), hard-hulled boats exceeding 10 knots in speed, yachts and personal watercrafts such as jet skis, kayaks and surfboards; and excludes recreational fishing and sea-angling.

Interactions can cause animals to change behaviour and move away, but can also have more serious impacts, such as injury or even death due to collision. ASCOBANS has agreed on a number of resolutions that highlight the importance to review all available information on recreational use of the sea. Obtaining an overview of best practices and guidelines will enable comparisons to be made across the Agreement Area, and ultimately may lead to the provision of overall, consistent guidelines that might be developed at a regional or national level. In this section we strive to obtain an overview of potential risk areas and national sources that have data on incidents with small cetaceans related to recreational sea use.

6.1 Are data on recreational sea use available for your country?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

6.3. Were there any incidents of disturbance or harassment to small cetaceans in relation to recreational sea use in your country?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Unknown
- ○ Yes

6.4. Does your country have any mitigation measures (codes of conducts/ guidelines/ laws/ rules) in place in the event of disturbance or harassment of small cetaceans through recreational sea use?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

6.5. Relevant new research/ work/ collaboration on disturbance or harassment of small cetaceans through recreational sea use in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)

6.6. Have there been any other instances / issues related to recreational sea use in your country during the reporting period?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

6.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from recreational sea use in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Status relative to previous years. To be done per species (Annex B) where applicable.

Species	Increasing/Decreasing/Staying the same/Unknown	Nature of the evidence

7. Other Sources of Disturbance

AIM: to identify new sources of disturbance that could be a threat to small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.7, 10.3, 8.9, 8.3, 7.1, 6.1

Overlap of small cetacean and human habitat use is not covered by the questions above, while human activities in the seas are increasing, particularly in the coastal zone. Human activities can, for example, cause a small cetacean to change behaviour, or it can cause physical harm or death. This section aims to identify new sources of disturbance that could be a threat to small cetaceans. The issue of noise is covered under section B3.

7.1. Have there been any incidents of disturbance to small cetaceans in your country during the reporting period, not covered in the items above?

Any incidents of disturbance to small cetaceans not covered in Sections B5 or B6 by the report.

Please select only one option

- No
- Unknown
- Yes. Please provide information.

7.2. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on other sources of disturbance in your country.

List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information

C. Habitat Change and Degradation (incl. potential physical impacts)

8. Unexploded Ordnance

AIM: to provide information on the mitigation, management and potential negative impacts of unexploded ordnance on small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, **8.8**, 8.3

Unexploded chemical and conventional munitions present a threat to small cetaceans. Hazards exist from unexploded munitions, which release chronic contaminants, and upon detonation, which is physically hazardous from extreme underwater noise and a sudden release of toxic substances. Unexploded ordnance is a notable threat in many areas, such as the Baltic Sea, where the quantity is unknown, though estimates are high. Information on disposal, state of corrosion and quantities of dumped munition is limited, as are meaningful data on the measured environmental impacts. The significance of this pressure's impact on small cetaceans requires further quantification. However, it is clear that mitigation measures are necessary to support alternatives to detonations, and when no alternative is feasible, to reduce negative impacts on small cetaceans.

In the ASCOBANS Area, millions of tons of unexploded ordnance are present in the marine environment and thousands of sea users, such as fishermen, encounter such munitions every year. Parties have agreed on resolutions to support (1) research investigating the pressure on marine animals and habitat and (2) mitigation measures regarding effects of disintegrating submerged munitions on the marine environment. Parties are to strive towards providing relevant information to required bodies and supporting efforts to address the negative implications from this pressure in other regional and international organizations and waters.

8.1. To which registers/databases covering conventional and chemical munitions has your country contributed to date?

Please select only one option

- ○ OSPAR
- ○ HELCOM
- ○ None
- ○ Unknown
- ○ Other, please state: _____

8.2. How many UXOs were detonated / released at sea?

Provide link to database if available.

Please select only one option

- ○ 1-9 _____
- ○ 10-49 _____
- ○ 50-99 _____
- ○ 100+ _____

8.3. Have there been any other instances/issues related to the issue of unexploded ordnance during the reporting period in your country?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

8.4. How is the issue of unexploded ordnances being managed?

(incl. mitigation measures, relevant regulations/guidelines, year of implementation; may include planned management – please distinguish between a) management of single UXOs and b) management of big amounts of ammunitions in one place e.g. munition dumpsites)

8.5. Is your country monitoring the chemical contaminants released from discarded munition material and unexploded ordnance? (including at munition dumpsites, war wrecks carrying ammunition, UXO detonation zones)

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

8.6. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on the issue of unexploded ordnance in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)

8.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from unexploded ordnance in your country:

Please select only one option

- ○ Increasing
- ○ Decreasing
- ○ Staying the same
- ○ Unknown
- ○ Not applicable.
  Comments: _____

Please provide the nature of the evidence where applicable:

9. Marine Debris (ingestion and entanglement)

AIM: to illustrate progress, during the reporting period, on understanding, monitoring and mitigating impacts of marine debris on small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.3, 10.4, **9.3**, 8.8, 8.3, 7.1, 6.1

Marine debris, such as macroplastics and discarded fishing gear, poses a threat to small cetaceans due to the potential for these materials to be ingested or to cause entanglement. Commercial fishing operations, recreational fishing and cargo shipping are notable sources of this material, of which the majority is plastic and ghost nets. However, it is assumed that most of the marine litter worldwide comes from land, although this differs per region. Even small amounts of macroplastics that have been ingested may present serious effects on small cetaceans, such as detrimental influence on the gastrointestinal tract or leaching pollutants into the body, potentially leading to mortality or reduced body condition. Entanglement is well-established as a threat to small cetaceans as plastic debris continues to accumulate in aquatic environments, and may cause physical injuries, reduced survival or drowning.

To better understand the impact of marine debris on small cetaceans and measures in place to mitigate these effects, countries are requested to provide relevant information.

Note: Includes macroplastics and discarded fishing gear. Microplastics are covered under Section C10 Pollution and Hazardous Substances.

9.1. Does your country have monitoring in place to assess levels of marine debris?

Please select only one option

- ○ No (Go to Question 9.3)
- ◉ Yes

Provide information below:

Include parameters provided through monitoring (e.g. type of litter (size, shape, material), amount, impacts on species, geographical location, etc.)

Include parameters provided through monitoring (e.g. type of litter (size, shape, material), amount, impacts on species, geographical location, etc.)

Strandings are the subject of systematic external observation by members of the national network, foreign bodies such as macro waste items are systematically recorded. A representative proportion of strandings are examined by dissection or necropsy. This includes a systematic examination of stomach contents. The observation of foreign bodies including plastic debris are systematically recorded.

In 202 no observations were noted on small delphinids out of 83 small delphinids examined. In 2025, one common dolphin found stranded had plastic debris in its stomach. Please note that 2025 data are still not consolidated.

9.2. Are these data publicly available?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ◉ Yes (please provide web link) https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/pelagis-2/publications/

9.3. What species of small cetaceans were found to have been impacted by marine debris? Please provide details in the table.

Please provide details: download this table and then attach it using the blue 'link' button.

9.4. Are there any mitigation measures in place?

Mitigation measures might include changes in gear to prevent loss, entanglement response, adoption of measures to reduce land-based/boat-based sources of marine debris, etc.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

9.5. How is marine debris managed?

(incl. relevant regulations / guidelines and the year of implementation, current and planned)

Within MFSD framework, Two environmental objectives have been defined to achieve good ecological status of marine waters on the four French seafronts:

- to reduce the input and presence of land-based waste found at sea and on the coast;
- reduce the input and presence of waste at sea from maritime activities, uses and developments.

In addition to the action plan defined within the framework of the DCSMM, which applies to France, in order to put an end to the dumping of plastic waste at sea by 2025 in the French overseas territories as well, the "Zero Plastic Waste at Sea" Action Plan (2020-2025) sets out the objectives of the Interministerial Committee for the Sea (CIMER) and the Biodiversity Plan in 35 actions. It aims to reduce the input of macro and micro-waste into the seas and oceans by 2025, with a view to achieving the "zero plastic waste at sea by 2025" target set by the latter. The Action Plan sets out the government's strategy for combating marine litter, both in mainland France and in the French overseas departments and regions.

9.6. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on marine debris in your country.

List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information e.g. link to OSPAR reports

9.7. Is the perceived level of pressure from marine debris in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same, or unknown?

Please select only one option

- ○ Increasing
- ○ Decreasing
- ○ Staying the same
- ○ Unknown

Not applicable.
Comments:

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable:

10. Pollution and hazardous substances (incl. microplastics)

AIM: to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating impacts of important current and emerging pollution-related hazards on small cetaceans. during the reporting period

Relevant Resolutions: 10.3, 10.4, 8.9, 8.8, **8.7**, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, **7.4**, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7

Marine environments have been subject to a wide range of different types of pollution over the last decades. Top predators, such as small cetaceans that feed on higher trophic prey, tend to accumulate many of these potentially hazardous substances. There are a number of contaminants and pathogens that are known, or suspected, to have impacts on small cetacean health, immune status or reproduction. These include, for example: polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other persistent organic pollutants (POPs), oil pollution (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), toxins from harmful algal blooms (HABs), sewage, radionuclides, toxic elements, tri-butyl tin (TBT), morbillivirus, and Brucella. In addition, micro- and nano-plastics are also present in marine environment and their impacts are presently poorly understood.

Monitoring can be done using body tissue from small cetaceans obtained from live animals through biopsies, or from dead animals that are generally found on the shore. Necropsies allow the sampling of different types of tissue such as blubber, muscle, kidney or liver and these can be analysed subsequently.

To better understand the impact of contaminants on small cetacean health, to detect new emerging hazards and to work towards a common protocol for analysing samples, countries are asked to provide information on their programs.

Note: Includes microplastics. Macroplastics and discarded fishing gear are covered under Section C 9 Marine Debris.

10.1. Does your country conduct monitoring of pollutants in small cetaceans?

Several pollutants have serious effects on individual small cetaceans and can threaten populations. The aim is to capture the nature of existing monitoring and identify gaps in terms of which pollutants are monitored, the extend of this monitoring and the establishment of securely funded long-term data series.

Please select only one option

- No. (Go to Question 10.7.)
- Yes

Comments:

10.2. Who is carrying out the pollutant monitoring program? Please provide information on the institution(s)/agencies that collect the samples and carry out the analyses.

Please provide the following information per institution(s)/agencies: name of institution/agency, role in monitoring (e.g. sample collection, analyses, other), postal address, contact person, telephone, email, weblink.

10.3. Identify the small cetacean species that were covered by your monitoring program during the reporting period.

Comments:

10.4. Select the source of your samples

(multiple answers possible)

Tick all that apply

- [ ] Necropsy from stranding
- [ ] Necropsy from bycatch
- [ ] Sample from live stranding
- [ ] Biopsy from live animal
- [ ] Other (specify in comments)

Comments:

10.5. Select the geographical coverage of your monitoring program

Tick all that apply

- [ ] OI Norwegian Sea
- [ ] OII Dogger Bank
- [ ] OII Southern North Sea
- [ ] OII Northern North Sea
- [ ] OII Channel
- [ ] OII Norwegian Trench
- [ ] OII Skagerrak
- [ ] OIII Celtic Sea
- [ ] OIII Irish Sea
- [ ] OIII Irish & Scottish W. Coast
- [ ] OIV N. Nay of Biscay
- [ ] OIV Iberian Sea
- [ ] OIV Gulf of Cadiz
- [ ] OV Wider Atlantic
- [ ] H Bothnian Bay
- [ ] H Bothnian Sea
- [ ] H Archipelago Sea
- [ ] H Åland Sea
- [ ] H Gulf of Finland
- [ ] H Northern Baltic Proper
- [ ] H Western Gotland Basin
- [ ] H Eastern Gotland Basin
- [ ] H Gulf of Riga
- [ ] H Gdansk Basin
- [ ] H Bornholm Basin
- [ ] H Arkona Basin
- [ ] H Kattegat
- [ ] H Belt Sea

- [ ] H The Sound
- [ ] Not Applicable

10.6. Select the contaminant / pathogen analyses you have conducted for small cetaceans.

Please select only one option

- ○ POPs (e.g. PCBs)
- ○ Oil (e.g. PAHs)
- ○ HAB toxins
- ○ Sewage
- ○ Radionuclides
- ○ Brucella
- ○ Toxic elements
- ○ TBT
- ○ Morbillivirus
- ○ Microplastics
- ○ Nanoplastics
- ○ Others: _____

Comments:

10.9. If applicable, list any additional evidence/ data of reduced impacts of pollutants on small cetaceans following implementation of national mitigation measures.

(e.g. decline of contaminant levels in blubber over time)

10.10. Have there been any instances/ issues related to pollution and hazardous substances in your country during the reporting period?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

10.11. Is the perceived level of pressure from pollution and hazardous substances in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Status relative to previous years.

Please select only one option

- ○ Increasing
- ○ Decreasing
- ○ Staying the same
- ○ Unknown
- ○ Not Applicable.
  Comments: _____

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable:

11. Ship Strikes

AIM: understanding the potential risk of ship strike as a cause of injury/death in small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.6, 8.9, 6.1, 5.4

Ship strikes are collisions between vessels and cetaceans. In the last decades, evidence has emerged that ship strikes might occur more often than previously thought and can have a significant impact on small resident cetacean populations. Most research so far has focused on large cetaceans as those animals are often carried visibly into port at the bow of a vessel. For small cetaceans, ship strike events are not well documented.

Ship strike occurrence is directly linked to the frequency of shipping activity, including such directed at cetaceans, i.e. cetacean watching. To quantify this pressure, it is important to know what kind of vessels are involved in the strike, as well as the type, size and speed of the vessel. But it is also important to have information on the small cetaceans involved, in particular if the animals were engaged in certain behaviour such as feeding.

Ship strike can cause direct death or injury in cetaceans. Even collisions that are non-fatal might leave individuals with a reduction in their chance of survival. To determine the occurrence of ship-strikes, different sources are used. For small cetaceans, direct observations are the rarest. Necropsies of stranded animals can find evidence of characteristic trauma and photographs of animals that survived ship strikes can show typical injuries, such as marks left by propellers. One way to quantify how many animals in a population are impacted by ship strike is to assess the percentage of animals in a photo-identification catalogue that bear ship strike marks.

As this is still a not well documented threat, this section aims to obtain an overview of what kind of data and research is available and ongoing in the countries.

11.1 Are there reports available in your country of ship strikes with small cetaceans from visual observations?

Table available here: please download, complete, and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes. Please provide details in the table.

11.2. Are there reports in your country of vessel strikes from necropsies of stranded animals for the reporting period?

Table available here: please download, complete, and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes. Please provide details in the table.

11.3. Does your country have a protocol in use to determine that a cause of death in post-mortem examination is due to a vessel strike?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

11.4. Is there evidence in your country from existing photo-identification catalogues of small cetaceans of any non-lethal ship strike during the reporting period?

For populations of small cetaceans, such as bottlenose dolphins, one can identify those animals in photo-identification catalogues of animals that show ship-strike evidence (e.g. scars). Monitoring the % of animals that show ship strike evidence can be a useful tool to monitor the development of this threat.

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'link' button below.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes. Please provide details in the table.

11.5. Do you have any other photographs or evidence of ship strikes outside of photo-identification catalogue?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

11.6. Relevant new research/work/collaboration on ship strike and its possible effects on small cetaceans in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)

11.7. List any management/ policy actions/ relevant regulations/ guidelines related to mitigating ship strike for small cetaceans (re-routing, tracking animals, ship speed limits) in your country and the year of implementation (current and planned).

Provide web links if available.

11.8. Have there been any other instances / issues of ship strike on small cetaceans in your country in the reporting period?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

11.9. Is the perceived level of pressure from ship strikes on small cetaceans in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Please select only one option

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Staying the same
- Unknown
- Not Applicable.
  Comments:

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable:

12. Climate change (incl. ocean acidification)

AIM: to illustrate progress on understanding, monitoring and mitigating negative effects of important and emerging climate change related impacts on small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.3, 8.9, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.4, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7

It is certain that climate change is altering the habitat of cetaceans. However, our understanding of how the predicted changes will impact different species and populations can be further developed by identifying issues and trends through reporting. CMS[1] highlights the importance of addressing potential issues through the engagement of (1) researchers to better understand the underlying processes, as well as (2) conservation managers and policy makers to monitor changes and to mitigate negative impacts. Focus should be given to understanding tangible climate change effects relevant to cetaceans, such as changing ocean temperatures, prey depletion / prey range shifts, ocean acidification, increased frequency and intensity of ocean storms, changes in sea ice and weakening of the North Atlantic Drift. Such occurrences require that we gather evidence on the existence and nature of climate change effects on small cetaceans and evaluate current monitoring programmes and mitigation measures.

This section aims to provide an overview of what kind of activities are already ongoing in the member states to address climate change. The focus is on those actions specifically regarding cetaceans as well as the most likely impacts on their habitat and prey. Climate change possibly represents one of the most important future threats to the status of cetaceans in the ASCOBANS region. Direct effects may arise due to ocean warming, resulting in distribution shifts (generally northward) so that the animals continue to occupy waters with temperature regimes compatible with their thermal niches. Key indirect effects will result from changes in prey distribution and abundance due to ocean warming, ocean acidification and changes in ocean current systems.

[1] CMS Resolution 12.21 (Rev.COP14) *Climate Change and Migratory Species.*

12.1. Does your country undertake monitoring that has potential to contribute to knowledge and identification of climate impacts on small cetaceans?

This refers to direct and indirect effects.

Climate change will have a multiplicity of possible direct and indirect effects on small cetaceans. Attempting to quantify this is challenging, these questions are aimed to provide an overview of the type of monitoring programmes that are conducted that may provide indirect evidence of climate change on small cetaceans.

Please select only one option

- ○ No. (Go to Question 12.3.)
- ○ Yes. (Go to Question 12.2.)

12.3. Relevant new research/ work/ collaborations which provide evidence/ data about climate change, including its emerging potential issues and effects, on small cetaceans in your country.

(List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information); include the species concerned, the climate change effect observed, who did the work)

12.4. Have there been any instances / issues related to identified trends in small cetacean populations as a result of climate change in your country during the reporting period?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

12.5. Is the perceived level of pressure from climate change to small cetaceans in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Please select only one option

- ○ Increasing
- ○ Decreasing
- ○ Staying the same
- ○ Unknown
- ○ Not Applicable.
  Comments: _____

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable:

13. Physical Habitat Change (e.g. from construction)

AIM: human activities in the Agreement Area have the potential to impact upon small cetaceans. Tracking those activities that cause physical habitat change and improving our understanding of their relative impacts will help shape any necessary mitigation action required.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.3, 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.6 (MOP10), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, 6.2, 6.1, 5.7

This section aims to review new information on physical habitat change, e.g. from construction, and its impacts on small cetaceans, their prey and their habitat, and make recommendations to Parties and other relevant authorities for further action.

The collation of this information will contribute to the development of risk maps showing the spatial and temporal (by season) distribution of activities that have an impact on small cetaceans, including information provided in National Reports, taking into account the work done by other

organizations.

Note: In the term "physical habitat change", we include a) coastal/marine construction – artificial islands, harbours, bridges, oil/gas platforms, wind turbines, tidal turbines; and b) seabed damage – dredging, bottom trawling.

13.1. Provide spatial information on locations (in form of maps and/or links) of physical habitat change in your country by activity type (dredging, marine construction, coastal construction) for the reporting period.

Many range states are mapping human activities to fulfil obligations under the EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, MSFD, OSPAR, and HELCOM; this information is relevant (though often not readily accessible) to ASCOBANS in understanding the extent and trends of human activities potentially impacting small cetaceans.

Please provide per region (Annex A): the type of information (e.g. maps, GIS, reports), whether the data is available online, and web links to data, or comment on unavailability.

13.2. Does your country have any reported cases of physical habitat change (e.g. dredging, marine construction, coastal construction) impacting small cetaceans during the reporting period?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

13.3. Does your country have any mitigation measures (regulations/guidelines) to prevent impacts on small cetaceans during physical habitat change activities (e.g. dredging, marine construction, coastal construction)?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

13.4. Relevant new initiatives/projects/publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) in your country during the reporting period on impacts from physical habitat change on small cetaceans (incl. title, organization, lead author).

Provide web links if available.

13.5. Have there been any other instances/issues in your country regarding physical habitat change during the reporting period?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

13.6 Is the perceived level of pressure from physical habitat change in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same or unknown?

Please select only one option

- ○ Increasing
- ○ Decreasing
- ○ Staying the same
- ○ Unknown
- ○ Not applicable.
  Comments: _____

13.6.1. Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable:

14. Other issues

14.1. List any other issues related to habitat change and degradation not mentioned above.

D. Management of Cumulative Impacts

15. Maritime Spatial Planning

AIM: to provide information on existing and proposed maritime spatial plans and processes during the reporting period that may impact small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions **10.5**, 10.3, 8.9, 8.6 (Rev.MOP10), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3

A growing demand for use of maritime space increases pressure on ecosystems and marine resources. Marine ecosystems with good environmental status provide notable benefits to a number of economic outputs. Implementation of an integrated spatial planning and management approach can better mitigate negative impacts from maritime activities on marine environments. Spatial planning can support sustainable marine development through coordinated, coherent and transparent decision-making and the encouragement and identification of multi-purpose uses in relevant projects. Maritime spatial planning is essential when selecting the most appropriate siting for marine-based projects. Particular attention should be given to critical habitat and relevant species, such as small cetaceans, in order to achieve good environmental status.

ASCOBANS Parties have agreed on a number of resolutions that support the integration of maritime spatial planning into development processes. Small cetaceans benefit from good maritime spatial planning, and this is highlighted in the resolutions. Countries are requested to provide information relevant to their country in this regard.

15.1.1. Please provide information in regard to current and foreseen maritime spatial planning.

National plan(s) and processes in force:

15.1.2. Please provide information in regard to current and foreseen maritime spatial planning.

National plan(s) and processes in preparation:

15.1.3. Please provide information in regard to current and foreseen maritime spatial planning.

Further information, including links to online resources and maps where available:

15.2. Does your national MSP include a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

15.3. Does your MSP include specific provisions such as reservation or priority layers for the management of one or more ASCOBANS listed species (e.g. such as the reservation areas for harbour porpoises in the German MSP)?

Please select only one option

- No

- Yes

15.4. Does your MSP include buffer zones between areas designated for particular economic use (e.g. offshore wind, shipping) and marine protected areas (including Natura 2000 sites) or areas of particular importance for ASCOBANS-listed species?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

15.5. Does your MSP include provisions for the mitigation of underwater noise with regards to ASCOBANS species (e.g. for shipping, during offshore wind park construction)?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

15.6.1. How many MSPs does your country have?

Please select only one option

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

E. Area-based Conservation / Marine Protected Areas

16. Protected areas, e.g. Natura 2000 sites

AIM: to provide information on existing and proposed marine protected areas with small cetaceans as part of the selection criteria.

Relevant Resolutions: 5.7

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are considered under numerous agreements (including the Convention on Biological Diversity, Habitats Directive, Bern Convention, Ramsar Convention, OSPAR Convention, HELCOM, ACCOBAMS, MSFD) as a tool to achieve conservation goals. Part of ASCOBANS remit is to provide expert advice on the conservation and management of small cetaceans. This includes inviting Parties and Range States to continue or initiate research aimed at locating areas of special importance to the survival (in particular breeding and feeding) of small cetaceans as suitable sites for the establishment of protected areas. This also includes advising on appropriate management measures in these areas, on their own or in the context of other intergovernmental bodies to ensure the protection of small cetaceans.

To monitor the progress of such work to fulfil the obligations of Resolution 5.7 and actions in the workplan, ASCOBANS requires information (e.g. location, species, status, spatial data, management plans and monitoring) on existing and proposed marine protected areas with small cetaceans as part of the selection criteria.

It is of particular interest to ASCOBANS to obtain an overview of the current scale of marine protected areas and to review best practice approaches to management of marine protected areas, in order to make recommendations to Parties.

16.1. Does your country have MPAs (existing or proposed) where small cetaceans are the primary reason for the (proposed) designation?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

16.2. Does your country have MPAs (existing or proposed) with small cetaceans are forming part of the selection criteria?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

16.2.1 How many? Please also provide more details in the table.

16.3. Provide information on management measures, including regulations/guidelines, particularly relevant to small cetaceans in MPAs listed above. Including any temporal/spatial restriction of activities (i.e. seasonal fishery closures).

In order to monitor implementation of MPA management measures and make recommendations on best practice, we need to understand what management measures are being used and be aware of examples of what approaches are proving effective.

Site Name	Pressure (add pressures per site as applicable)	Measure (add measures per pressure per site as applicable)

16.4. Provide details of existing or proposed monitoring schemes related to the effectiveness of MPAs / management measures listed above for small cetaceans.

16.5. Relevant new research/work/collaboration relating to MPAs in your country.

In order to plan future approaches for MPA management and monitoring we need to be aware of current gaps and emerging issues.

List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information; include the species concerned, who did the work.

Section III: Surveys and Research

A. Biological Information (per species)

1. Abundance estimates

AIM: to provide new information on abundance and life history parameters of small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.3, 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7, 5.5, **4.7**, **3.5**, 3.3

Abundance estimates and information on life history are of critical importance for the determination of broader species attributes such as populations levels, health and overall status. These parameters can contribute towards determination of GES and provide a reference for mortality events. Abundance and life history parameters are typically assessed from monitoring programmes. Fluctuations in these parameters can provide insight into trends in populations. Information on abundance and life history parameters can inform the need for mitigation measures, and regional assessment of these parameters allows for a more spatially targeted and concentrated response to support national assessments.

In the ASCOBANS Area, small cetacean abundance and life history should be monitored in response to a number of ASCOBANS resolutions. Continued monitoring of these parameters is essential to understanding current status and trends.

1.1. Did your country conduct national dedicated surveys on abundance and distribution during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Attach maps separately, clearly marking which survey they apply to.

Note: Information relevant to SCANS-IV is to be provided in Question 1.2.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ◉ Yes. Please provide details in table.

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Relevant information on distribution during the reporting period:

Include species, method, time period, weblinks, and other relevant information.

Include species, method, time period, weblinks, and other relevant information.

Boths programs MAMO and CAPECET have been conducted following the standardized protocol of Pelagis for aerial surveys, collecting seabirds other megafauna, human activities in addition to marine mammals

https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/surveys/by-plane/?lang=en

https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/pelagis/programmes/capecet/?lang=en

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1.2. Other relevant new research/work/collaboration on abundance estimates in regard to small cetaceans in your country during the reporting period.

List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study and information relevant to SCANS-IV; web links to other relevant information.

List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study and information relevant to SCANS-IV; web links to other relevant information.

Aerial surveys

Blanchard A., Doremus G., Gamelin P.-L., Ouzeau, J., Poiriez G, Sanchez T., Van Canneyt O., Williams G., Spitz J., Laran S. (2025). Suivi de la mégafaune marine au sein du Parc naturel marin des estuaires picards et de la mer d'Opale - Programme MAMO - Rapport de campagne 2023-2025 pour le PNM EPMO (OFB-22-0565). 91 pp.

https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/MAMO_Rapport-Campagne-2025.pdf

Van Canneyt, O., Blanchard, A., Laran, S., Dorémus, G., Genu, M., Sanchez, T., Spitz, J., 2024. Rapport de campagne CAPECET II (campagne d'observation aérienne de la mégafaune marine). Observatoire Pelagis (UMS 3462, Université de La Rochelle / CNRS), La Rochelle. https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/L1.3.1-rapport-de-campagne-survols-aeriens.pdf

Large scale oceanographic boat survey

Dorémus, G., Van Canneyt, O., 2025. Protocole d'observation de la mégafaune marine depuis les campagnes océanographiques. Suivi MEGASCOPE (Mise à jour 2025) (Protocole), Cahier technique de l'observatoire Pelagis sur le suivi de la mégafaune marine. La Rochelle Université (France).

Dorémus, G., Vansteenberghe, C., Pessato, A., 2025. MEGASCOPE : Suivi de la distribution de la mégafaune marine en Manche, Atlantique et Méditerranée. Rapport annuel 2024 (Rapport scientifique de l'Observatoire PELAGIS). Observatoire Pelagis (UAR 3462 - La Rochelle Université et CNRS), La Rochelle Université (France).

https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Rapport_annuel_MEGASCOPE_2023-1.pdf

1.3. Is the abundance of species in your country increasing, decreasing, staying the same, or unknown?

Status relative to previous years. Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable.

Please select only one option

- ○ Increasing
- ○ Decreasing
- ○ Staying the same
- ○ Unknown
- ○ Not applicable _____

Please provide the nature of the evidence and describe per species (Annex B) where applicable:

2. New information on life history parameters

2.1. Is there new information on the following life history parameters in the reporting period?

For each life history parameters, please identify the species and provide web links and details where applicable.

	Yes/No	Describe per species
Age of sexual and physical maturity	Yes	
Inter-birth intervals		
Calf and adult mortality rates		
Potential reproductive span/capacity		
Longevity		
Diet		

Age and sex structure		
Other relevant factors		

1410/III A 2.1 ASCOBANS NR 2026.docx

1897/ASCOBANS 2026 NR III A 2.1.docx

B. Monitoring and Survey Schemes

3. Overview of current monitoring and survey schemes

AIM: to provide information on the progress of monitoring programmes, relevant methodologies and aims thereof, and status of small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.3, 8.11 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.8, 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7

Monitoring programmes provide important data on biological and environmental attributes, such as population status, abundance and spatial-temporal distribution. They create opportunities for new research and development, including potential improvements to methodology for monitoring in terms of accuracy, practicality and cost efficiency.

In the ASCOBANS Area, application of coherent monitoring programmes focused on small cetaceans, which collect and provide objective, robust and comparable data, is a key component in understanding and improving the conservation status of small cetaceans through appropriate management. Parties have agreed to design, implement and support relevant monitoring programmes through a number of resolutions. Such efforts are also supported by legislation from a number of bodies which identify monitoring as a requirement in management systems. Additionally, Parties have been encouraged to coordinate their monitoring programmes, which promotes international cooperation and synergies. Parties have also been encouraged to review such monitoring programmes and propose improvements for the betterment of conservation efforts.

It is the interest of ASCOBANS to understand the current monitoring programmes utilised, their outputs, and future activities in the Agreement Area. Countries are requested to provide information relevant to their activities as well as potential improvements to such programmes and efforts.

3.1. Did your country have national monitoring programmes that enabled assessment of the Conservation Status of small cetaceans in your waters (i.e. provides abundance estimates and/or life history parameters and information on pressures) during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button.

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ◉ Yes. Please provide an overview in the table.

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3.2. Please provide the relevant information regarding aerial surveying activities.

Provide the number of surveys, area covered, relevant species, and timeframe of the survey.

Provide the number of surveys, area covered, relevant species, and timeframe of the survey.

MAMO, Eastern Channel: 2023-2025 (https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/pelagis/programmes/mamo/?lang=en)

SPEE, Shelf of the Bay of Biscay: six 2024-2026 (https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/pelagis/programmes/capecet/?lang=en)

CAPECET, Shelf of the Bay of Biscay: six surveys from January to March 2024 (https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/pelagis/programmes/capecet/?lang=en)

3.3. Please provide the relevant information regarding Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM).

Provide the location of moored instruments, timeframe of the survey, the relevant species, and the make and model of instruments used.

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3.4. Are any of these programmes carried out in collaboration with other countries?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

Provide information below.

Please provide the collaborators and links per programme.

Anita Gilles (DE, https://www.tiho-hannover.de/en/clinics-institutes/institutes/institute-of-terrestrial-and-aquatic-wildlife-research-itaw/scans-iv-survey/winterscans-iv-survey)

3.5. Please provide details on any planned activities relevant to monitoring programmes.

Provide web links if available.

3.6. Relevant outputs/findings from monitoring programmes to note.

Per species, please identify the relevant outputs. Provide web links if available.

SCANS 4 results :

https://www.tiho-hannover.de/en/clinics-institutes/institutes/institute-of-terrestrial-and-aquatic-wildlife-research-itaw/scans-iv-survey

SCANS 4 report :

https://www.tiho-hannover.de/fileadmin/57_79_terr_aqua_Wildtierforschung/79_Buesum/downloads/Berichte/20230928_SCANS-IV_Report_FINAL.pdf

Gilles, A., Authier, M., Ramirez-Martinez, N., Araújo, H., Blanchard, A., Carlström, J., Eira, C., Dorémus, G., Fernández-Maldonado, C., Geelhoed, S., Kyhn, L., Laran, S., Nachtsheim, D., Panigada, S., Pigeault, R., Sequeira, M., Sveegaard, S., Taylor, N., Owen, K., Saavedra, C., Vázquez-Bonales, J., Unger, B., Hammond, P., 2023. Estimates of cetacean abundance in European Atlantic waters in summer 2022 from the SCANS-IV aerial and shipboard surveys (Final report published 29 September 2023. 64 pp. https://tinyurl.com/3ynt6swa.). University of Veterinary Medecine Hannover.

Open discussion at BioMonWeek 2026 :

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f1vaI9D04mA&list=PL-1YwbPvENS1bERJ_QQJrTRr3ZMTRnPkt&index=5

C. Other Research

Please provide relevant information in regard to other research (not mentioned elsewhere in Sections II, III, IV).

Per project, please provide the institution, duration, aim(s) / objective(s), and the method.

Participation in the NW Atlantic Ocean workshop (Germany 2023) for designation of Important Marine Mammal Areas:

https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org

https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org/immas-focus-the-spotlight-on-marine-mammal-species-and-special-habitats-requiring-protection-in-the-north-east-atlantic-ocean-and-baltic-sea/

EDRIM project on Risso's dolphin in the Channel (Al Lark, Pelagis) 2024-2026

https://iiem.events/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/IIEM2025_Building_bridges_for_Risso_dolphins_conservation_Juliette_Biacchi.pdf

Section IV: Use of Strandings Records

A. Stranding Networks and Strandings

AIM: to provide information on stranding events and demonstrate progress of stranding networks in understanding, monitoring and mitigating strandings of small cetaceans.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.4, 10.3, **8.10 (Rev.MOP9)**, 8.7, 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.4, 7.3, 7.1, 6.1, 5.7

Stranding of cetaceans is an ever-present occurrence and analysis through necropsy and sampling can provide indications of reason for injury and death. Stranding numbers also provide information on population status, abundance and distribution. Effective response to strandings contributes to the maintenance of favourable conservation status of small cetaceans and also has implications for animal welfare. Comprehensive stranding networks are a critical asset in managing small cetacean strandings and have resulted in large numbers of animals rescued and returned to sea. These networks also have the capacity to guide the public on animal welfare, human health and safety considerations during stranding events.

In the effort to mitigate the anthropogenic causes of these occurrences, Parties have agreed to measures through a number of resolutions. Continued monitoring of stranding causation and further developing guidance for best practices in stranding response and necropsies was identified by Parties as important tasks to pursue, as was setting up stranding response networks. This information is to align with appropriate sampling practices and countries should ensure that the data is available for researchers. Additionally, development and support of international strandings databases and regular reporting is conducted through relevant research institutes and stranding schemes. ASCOBANS Secretariat encourages the ongoing funding and support of engagement with organizations for further development of guidelines, best practices and maintaining dataflow for capacity building across stranding networks.

To better understand the extent to which stranding events occur and how these events are managed, it is the interest of ASCOBANS for countries to provide the relevant information on these occurrences within the Agreement Area, procedures undertaken in response to stranding events, necropsies and information on stranding networks.

1.1. Is there a national stranding network in place?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ◉ Yes

Please provide details:

https://www.observatoire-pelagis.cnrs.fr/stranding/french-stranding-network/?lang=en

1.2. Does the national stranding network cover the whole, or part of the reporting country's coastline?

Please select only one option

- ◉ Whole coastline
- ○ Part of the coastline

1.3. Are necropsies carried out to determine cause of death?

Please select only one option

- ◉ No
- ○ Yes

1.4. Is there a database of strandings?

Please select only one option

- ○ No
- ◉ Yes

1.5. Is the data available online or downloadable on request?

Please select only one option

- ○ No

◉ Yes

Please provide details:

Annual synthesis are provided is provided in the annual report, downloadable from the website.

In addition, raw data are available on request.

1.6. Provide details for any new institution(s) responsible for a stranding database, responding to live-strandings, collection of carcasses, and for conducting necropsies.

Please identify the new responsible institution(s) and provide their: responsibility (responding to live-strandings, collection of carcasses, necropsies, stranding database), phone number, email, and website.

1.7. Were cases photographed, measured or sampled even if not collected for necropsy during the reporting period?

Please select only one option

○ No

◉ Yes

Please provide details:

All animals examined by members of the national network are subject to systematic photography, external examination, and biometrics. Most are subject to a level 1 protocol (tooth samples), levels 2 and 3 (dissection or autopsy) concern a large proportion of fresh and very fresh animals

1.8. Were there recorded stranding events in your country during the reporting period?

If you select 'Yes', please provide details in this table - download and then attach it using the blue 'clip' button. Provide details relevant for recorded stranding events during the reporting period.

Please select only one option

○ No

◉ Yes

How many strandings occurred during the reporting period?

(Specify live and dead)

Data not yet available for 2025.

Data will be available in october 2025

1.9. Were any necropsies conducted during the reporting period?

Please select only one option

○ No

○ Yes

1.10. Other relevant new research/work/collaboration on strandings and stranding networks in your country.

List initiatives/ projects (incl. PhD, MSc); publications (reports, theses, papers in journals, books) from any study; web links to other relevant information)

Petitguyot, Marie A. C. / Fariñas-Bermejo, Andrea / Brownlow, Andrew / Ahola, Markus P. / Álvarez Neches, Elena / Arbelo, Manuel / Authier, Matthieu / Balsera Riesgo, Ramón / Berrow, Simon / Bjørge, Arne / Brackmann, Jens / Brasseur, Sophie / Carreira, Gilberto / Cervin, Linnea /

Claver, Cristina / Covelo, Pablo / Crespo-Picazo, Jose Luis / Dabin, Willy / Dähne, Michael / Davison, Nicholas J. / Deaville, Rob / ten Doeschate , Mariel T. I. / Domingo Álvarez, Mariano / Escribano Cánovas, Fernando / Evans, Peter G. H. / Fayos Martínez, Manena / Fernández, Antonio / Fernández, Ruth / Fernández-Maldonado, Carolina / Freitas, Luís / Galatius, Anders / García de los Ríos, Álvaro / Garrido Sánchez, Lucia / Geut, Machteld I. M. / Gilles, Anita / Gozalbes Aparicio, Patricia / Grilo, Miguel / Haelters, Jan / Halldórsson, Sverrir Daníel / Hamm, Thea / Havermans, Jarco / IJsseldijk, Lonneke L. / Jacinto, David / Jussi, Mart / Kamminga, Pepijn / Jensen, Tim Kåre / Kavanagh, Ailbhe Sarah / Keijl, Guido / Leopold, Mardik / López, Alfredo / Marçalo, Ana / Marques, Nuno / Martínez Cedeira, Jose Antonio / Mikkelsen, Bjarni / Miodonski, Joana / Monasterio Iglesias, Juana Maria / Montes Gómez, Jose Eugenio / Neimanis, Aleksija / Neves, Francisco / Pardal, Sofia I. / Pawliczka, Iwona / Peña Pascucci, Ignacio / Petersen, Heidi Huus / Plikshs, Maris / Puig-Lozano, Raquel / Raga, Juan Antonio / Robalo, Joana I. / Roos, Anna / Ruiz Sancho, Leire / Saavedra, Camilo / Sigurðsson, Guðjón Már / Simião, Susana / Solomando Marti, Antonia / Stavenow Jerremalm, Jasmine / Stejskal, Ole / Survilienė, Vaida / Bie Thøstesen, Charlotte / van der Hiele , Jaap / Varas, Jesús / Verdaat, Hans / Verheul, Dylan / Víkingsson, Gisli Arnór / Villalón, Juanjo / Williams, Rosie S. / Woodlock, Johnny / Pierce, Graham John (2025) European stranding networks as a tool for monitoring marine mammal populations (Part I): towards optimising the functioning of networks. ICES Journal of Marine Science , Vol. 82, No. 11, p. fsaf194

Fariñas-Bermejo, Andrea / Petitguyot, Marie A. C. / Brownlow, Andrew / Ahola, Markus P. / Neches, Elena Álvarez / Arbelo, Manuel / Authier, Matthieu / Balsera Riesgo, Ramón / Berrow, Simon / Bjørge, Arne / Brackmann, Jens / Brasseur, Sophie / Carreira, Gilberto / Cervin, Linnea / Claver, Cristina / Covelo, Pablo / Crespo-Picazo, Jose Luis / Dähne, Michael / Davison, Nicholas J. / Deaville, Rob / ten Doeschate , Mariel T. I. / Domingo Álvarez, Mariano / Escribano Cánovas, Fernando / Evans, Peter G. H. / Fayos Martínez, Manena / Fernández, Antonio / Fernández, Ruth / Fernández-Maldonado, Carolina / Freitas, Luís / Galatius, Anders / García de los Ríos, Álvaro / Garrido Sánchez, Lucia / Geut, Machteld I. M. / Gilles, Anita / Gozalbes Aparicio, Patricia / Grilo, Miguel / Haelters, Jan / Daníel Halldórsson, Sverrir / Hamm, Thea / Havermans, Jarco / IJsseldijk, Lonneke L. / Jacinto, David / Jussi, Mart / Kamminga, Pepijn / Kåre Jensen, Tim / Sarah Kavanagh, Ailbhe / Keijl, Guido O. / Lagoa, João / Leopold, Mardik / López, Alfredo / Marçalo, Ana / Marques, Nuno / Martínez Cedeira, Jose Antonio / Mikkelsen, Bjarni / Miodonski, Joana / Monasterio Iglesias, Juana Maria / Montes Gómez, Jose Eugenio / Neimanis, Aleksija / Neves, Francisco / Pardal, Sofia I. / Pawliczka, Iwona / Peltier, Hélène / Peña Pascucci, Ignacio / Huus Petersen, Heidi / Plikshs, Maris / Puig-Lozano, Raquel / Antonio Raga, Juan / Robalo, Joana I. / Roos, Anna / Ruiz Sancho, Leire / Saavedra, Camilo / Már Sigurðsson, Guðjón / Solomando Marti, Antonia / Stavenow Jerremalm, Jasmine / Stejskal, Ole / Survilienė, Vaida / Bie Thøstesen, Charlotte / van der Hiele , Jaap / Varas, Jesús / Verdaat, Hans / Verheul, Dylan / Arnór Víkingsson, Gisli / Villalón, Juanjo / Williams, Rosie S. / Woodlock, Johnny / John Pierce, Graham (2026) European stranding networks as a tool for monitoring marine mammal populations (Part II): assessing their utility to monitor bycatch mortality. ICES Journal of Marine Science , Vol. 83, No. 7, p. fsag119

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Section V: Legislation

A. Overview of Legislative Framework

AIM: to provide information on national, regional and international legislation and guidelines relevant to small cetaceans during the reporting period.

Relevant Resolutions: 10.5, 10.3, 9.2 (Rev.MOP10), 8.10 (Rev.MOP9), 8.9, 8.8, 8.6 (Rev.MOP10), 8.5 (Rev.MOP9), 8.4 (Rev.MOP9), 8.3, 7.1, 6.2 (Rev.MOP10), 6.1, 5.7, 5.4

Legislation and guidelines are a key component of efforts to support favourable conservation status of small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area. A number of existing legislation and guidelines bear relevance to conservation efforts for small cetaceans on national, regional and international scales. Regular updating and adaptation of guidelines and legislation (where applicable) can ensure ongoing prevention, minimization and reduction of negative impacts of marine activities on small cetaceans. In addition, these actions support transparent and reliable management.

Parties to ASCBOANS have agreed to support the requisition, development and the implementation of legislation and guidelines to assess, minimize and mitigate pressures on favourable conservation status of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area. Parties have committed to these actions through a number of resolutions regarding pressures known to be detrimental to small cetaceans. It is in the interest of ASCOBANS for countries to provide information on current and foreseen national, regional and international legislation and guidelines relevant to small cetaceans in the Agreement Area.

1.1. Please provide the applicable information regarding legislation and guidelines relevant to small cetaceans for the following questions.

1.1.1. Are national guidelines relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

1.1.2. Is national legislation relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

1.1.3. Are regional and/or international guidelines relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

1.1.4. Is regional and/or international legislation relevant for small cetaceans currently in place in your country?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

1.2. Have there been any instances/issues related to national, regional and/or international legislation during the reporting period in your country?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

Section VI: Information and Education

A. Education and outreach

AIM: to determine if there are gaps in the outreach and education activities and if additional material should be produced in your country or by the Secretariat (e.g. on certain themes, species, regions, languages, for certain target audiences).

Relevant Resolutions: 10.2, 5.8

The revised ASCOBANS Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan (see ASCOBANS/MOP9/Doc.5.3 Annex 1) was endorsed by the 9th Meeting of the Parties (2020). The purpose of the CEPA Plan is to identify realistic activities relevant to ASCOBANS and mandated by Parties, to be undertaken by the Secretariat, Parties, and relevant partners. It seeks a clearer focus amongst Secretariat, Parties, Partners, and stakeholders regarding objectives. The purpose of this section is to highlight successes and to identify potential gaps in outreach and education activities and related materials.

1.1. List education/outreach activities in the reporting period in your country, which are of relevance to conservation of small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area.

e.g. activities during the International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise in May

Organizer	Name of activity (incl. translation to English, where applicable)	Date(s)	Location	Target audience (general public, scientists, children, fishers; other – please state)	Links (for further information)

1.2. List current information/outreach materials produced in your country, which are of relevance to ASCOBANS Area and species.

Name of publication (incl. translation into English, where applicable)	Author(s)	Publisher	Year	Links (to download publication)	Can ASCOBANS distribute the link to publication for outreach purposes? (Yes/No)

1.3. List other organizations engaged in outreach relevant to the ASCOBANS Area.

Please include web links where applicable.

1.4. List other initiatives/work/collaboration relevant to the ASCOBANS Area that are not included above.

1.5. List any gaps in your country's outreach relevant to the ASCOBANS Area. What would be needed to fill these gaps?

1.6. Resources permitting, are there any materials that you think the ASCOBANS Secretariat should produce?

Please select only one option

- No
- Yes

Section VII: Other Matters

A. Other information or comments important for the Agreement:

Opportunity to include other information missing from the form.

B. Difficulties in implementing the Agreement:

Opportunity to describe any other issues that were not covered by the 2025 (Year 2) form - i.e. other topics than bycatch, resource depletion, marine debris, surveys and research, use of strandings records.

C. Burning Issues:

Opportunity to highlight urgent or emerging issues.

Annex A: Overview of the sub-regions as defined by OSPAR and HELCOM, and areas as defined by ICES

Please find Annex A here.

Annex B: Species covered by ASCOBANS

Species covered by ASCOBANS

Code	Common name	Scientific name
AWSD	Atlantic white-sided dolphin	*Lagenorhynchus acutus*
BBW	Blainville's beaked whale	*Mesoplodon densirostris*
BD	Bottlenose dolphin	*Tursiops truncatus*
CBW	Cuvier's beaked whale	*Ziphius cavirostris*
CD	Short-beaked Common Dolphin	*Delphinus delphis*
FKW	False killer whale	*Pseudorca crassidens*
GBW	Gervais' beaked whale	*Mesoplodon europaeus*
HP	Harbour Porpoise	*Phocoena*
KW	Killer Whale	*Orcinus orca*
LFPW	Long-finned pilot whale	*Globicephala melas*
NBW	Northern bottlenose whale	*Hyperoodon ampullatus*
PKW	Pygmy killer whale	*Feresa attenuata*
PSW	Pygmy sperm whale	*Kogia breviceps*
RD	Risso's dolphin	*Grampus griseus*
RTD	Rough-toothed dolphin	*Steno bredanensis*
SBW	Sowerby's beaked whale	*Mesoplodon bidens*
SD	Striped dolphin	*Stenella coeruleoalba*
SFPW	Short-finned pilot whale	*Globicephala macrorhynchus*
TBW	True's beaked whale	*Mesoplodon mirus*
WBD	White-beaked dolphin	*Lagenorhynus albirostris*