

Wadden Sea Board

**WSB 21
17 November 2017
Vester Vested, Denmark**



Agenda Item: 21/5.2
Subject: ASCOBANS letter on coverage of Harbour porpoises by TWSC
Document No. WSB 21/5.2/1
Date: 26 October 17
Submitted by: Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

Proposal: The 23rd session of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee discussed the importance of closer cooperation with the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation on the Protection of the Wadden Sea regarding harbour porpoises and decided to address the enclosed letter for the attention of the national delegations of the Trilateral Cooperation on the Protection of the Wadden Sea. The meeting is requested to consider the letter and provide related guidance.



Trilateral Cooperation on the Protection of the Wadden Sea
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat
Virchowstr.1
26382 Wilhelmshaven
Germany

Coverage of Harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) under the Trilateral Cooperation on the Protection of the Wadden Sea

Bonn, 5 October 2017

Dear National Representatives,

At its [23rd session](#) from 5 to 7 September 2017 the Advisory Committee (AC) of the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS) discussed the three action plans on Harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) under the Agreement covering the North, Belt and Baltic Seas (see [agenda item 2](#)).

The Advisory Committee (AC) notes that harbour porpoises are increasingly being registered in the tidal channels and estuaries of the Wadden Sea and appear to be an integral part of this ecosystem. As a result the AC would welcome the inclusion of the harbour porpoise under the Trilateral Cooperation on the Protection of the Wadden Sea, as well as a stronger cooperation between ASCOBANS and the Trilateral Cooperation, specifically regarding the implementation of the [ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises \(*Phocoena phocoena* L.\) in the North Sea](#). In our view, one helpful step in achieving this would be the development of the current Trilateral Seal Expert Group into a Trilateral Marine Mammal Expert Group that would include small cetaceans in its remit. We would therefore like to encourage the Parties to the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation to consider this formal inclusion of the harbor porpoise in the mandate of the Cooperation.

The AC acknowledges that at the Secretariat level both instruments have been working closely together, such as for the [6th Meeting of the North Sea Group](#) and [13th Meeting of the Jastarnia Group](#) which were hosted in Wilhelmshaven. Within the wider CMS Family there are also good examples for close collaboration, for example for migratory birds connecting ecosystems similar to that of the Wadden Sea across different continents.

The AC would herewith like to encourage the Trilateral Cooperation to discuss this matter at its forthcoming Ministerial Conference.

Yours sincerely,

ASCOBANS Advisory Committee

Cc:

Oliver Schall, ASCOBANS National Coordinator to Germany

Jeroen Vis, ASCOBANS National Coordinator to The Netherlands

Camilla Uldal, ASCOBANS National Coordinator to Denmark