Annual report on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004[1] – for 2013

Member State: **Poland**

Reference period: **2013**

Date: May 2014

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[1] Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 of 26 April 2004 laying down measures concerning incidental catches of cetaceans in fisheries and amending Regulation (EC) No 88/98.

Summary

The use of pingers was continued in 2013. Pingers are whale acoustic deterrent devices that are placed in the bottom-set gillnets and entangling nets utilised within the ICES 24 zone by vessels with a total length amounting to 12 m or more. 32% of the ships that had a total length amounting to 12 m or more and fished within the ICES 24 zone using set nets were equipped with pingers. Pinger use controls were carried out by means of pinger detectors when the nets were in water, or they were verified visually when the nets were on board.

The implementation of pilot programmes to assess the efficiency of use of pingers (Article 2(4) of Council regulation (EC) 812/2004) was not possible because of extremely low harbour porpoise population in the Central Baltic Sea.

In addition, the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme was continued in 2013. In total, observations were conducted on twelve vessels that had a length above 15 m and operated from seven ports and six vessels that operated from three ports. As part of the Programme, the observers stayed at sea for 124 days, including 79 days on the vessels that conducted fishing using pelagic trawl and 38 days in trips (including ten days on vessels smaller than 15 m) when fishing was conducted using gillnets. As a result of re-gearing of boats during the cruise, 7 days of observations covered demersal trawl fishing activities. They are included in the report as observation days as well, despite the fact that they did not meet the conditions of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004. During each of such trips, the goal of the observations was to detect the incidental catches of cetaceans or other marine mammals,.

The monitoring was also continued for fishing by means of gillnets by fishing vessels with size ranging from 5 to 8 m, which operated within the crucial zone of the Puck Bay, which is considered the place of the most frequent harbour porpoise occurrence[2] and "should be given priority" as defined in paragraph 6 of the introduction to Regulation 812/2004. Ten observations days have been carried out.

Since 2006, that is the launch date of the implementation of the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme, irrespective of the duration, place and fishing gear type, no incidental catches of cetaceans or other marine mammals have been confirmed.

[2] Kuklik I., K. Skóra. O morświnie. „Źródło: Stacja Morska IO UG w Helu (www.morswin.pl)".

Acoustic Deterrent Devices

1. General information

Pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004, Poland is obliged to use acoustic deterrent devices on vessels measuring 12 m or more in length when using bottom-set gillnets or entangling nets within marine waters in the ICES 24 zone.

In 2008, fishing entities that flew the flag of Poland, received 500 pieces of AQUATEC AQUAMARK 100 pingers, which are intended in particular for acoustic deterrence of harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*), the only cetacean species that permanently occurs in the Baltic Sea. In 2013, 19 Polish fishing vessels were equipped with pingers and used them. Not all vessels equipped with pingers fished in 2013 in the ICES 24 zone.

1.1. Description of the fleet equipped with pingers

Metier	Fishing Area	Total fishing effort						
		No. of vessels	% of vessels using pingers	No. of trips	Days at sea	Months of operations	Total lenght of nets* (km)	Total soak time (h)
Demersal fish	27.III.d.24	19	32%	100	242	January-December	2834	2333

2. Acoustic deterrent devices, Articles 2 and 3 of Council Regulation (EW) 812/2004

Fleet segment	Fishing Area	% of vessels using pingers	Pinger characteristics	Other mitigation measures
GNS	27.III.d.24	32%	Aquatec AQUAmark 100	No other measures

3. Monitoring and evaluation

3.1. Monitoring and evaluation of the pinger use effects

Because of very low cetacean population within the zones used for fishing by the vessels flying the flag of Poland within the Baltic Sea, such an evaluation could not be carried out. Nonetheless, it is a fact that since the beginning of the pinger use by the Polish fishing vessels, i.e. since 2008, the Sea Fisheries Regional Inspectorate in Szczecin – whose jurisdiction covers the area where the use of pingers is obligatory under Annex I of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004 – has not received any reports of accidental cetacean catches.

3.2. Report on the specifications of control actions during pinger use by fishermen (Article 2(4))

The use of pingers by vessels that measure 12 m or more in length and have been granted a permit to use set nets is controlled by the Sea Fisheries Regional Inspectorate in Szczecin and foreign control services during fishing within the ICES 24 subzone, where the use of pingers is obligatory in bottom-set gillnets and entangling nets, as defined in the above-mentioned Annex of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004. Pingers in possession of the Polish fishing vessels within the ICES 24 subzone are not used by such vessels within the ICES 25 and 26 subzones.

The observations of pinger use are conducted during each control by fishery inspectors of the catches within the ICES 24 subzones. They are carried out by means of pinger detectors during controls of nets cast in water or visually through verification of the presence of pingers in the nets when pulling the nets out of the water or during controls of nets that are already on board. Furthermore, during port controls of fishing vessels that are obliged to use pingers during fishing trips, the inspectors verify whether the acoustic deterrent devices are present on board (as a rule, they are already disconnected from the fishing nets). The fishermen use only the Aquatec AQUAmark 100 pingers, which meet the technical requirements specified in Annex II of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004.

The Polish vessels sporadically fish within the Polish part of the ICES 24 zone because of absence of efficient fishing zones. Fishing with the use of set nets within this region is usually conducted within the German or Danish part of the ICES 24 zone, within the Adlergrund bank.

3.3. Derogation

Not applicable to Poland

3.4. Holistic evaluation

In the case of the area of the central Baltic Sea, where very low populations of harbour porpoises has been detected, it is very hard to evaluate the efficiency of pinger use. However, in our opinion, the use of pingers on fishing vessels measuring above 12 m in bottom-set gillnets and entangling nets should be continued within the ICES 24 zone.

At the same time, the monitoring of the incidental catches of cetaceans in the Baltic Sea should continue, while taking into account the area of catch, fishing gear and a segment of the fleet, so that the data on an accidental catch can be the basis for further activities aimed at effective protection of the Baltic harbour porpoise population in the future, for example through the introduction of an obligation to use pingers during fishing, also by smaller fishing vessels above 10 and below 12 m, or the introduction of an obligation to use pingers on all vessels fishing with the use of set nets within the Natura 2000 areas designated for the protection of small cetaceans. Besides, essential information on the distribution of cetaceans in the Baltic Sea, and hence indication of the places where pingers should be used obligatorily, should be provided by the results of the SAMBAH project[3].

It may be disturbing that on the basis of information obtained from Sea Fisheries Regional Inspectorates, owners of fishing vessels do not buy cetacean deterrent devices on their own; nonetheless more and more frequently they ask about such an opportunity, and the Department of Fisheries in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development expressed its willingness to act as intermediary and to provide assistance in the purchase thereof. Beyond the shadow of doubt, an opportunity to apply for financing of the purchase of such devices by EU funds under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 should be a significant support to shipowners in the individual purchase of pingers.

[3] Static Acoustic Monitoring of the Baltic Sea Harbour Porpoise

Observer Programme

4. General information on the implementation of Articles 4 and 5 of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004

The Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme has been carried out in 2013, just like in the previous years, by the National Marine Fisheries Research Institute in Gdynia (NMFRI). The programme has been implemented in 2013 solely for the needs of Articles 4 and 5 of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004.

In total, in 2013 observations were conducted on twelve vessels operating from seven ports and six vessels operating from three ports. As part of the Programme, the observers stayed at sea for 124 days, including 79 days on the vessels that conducted fishing using pelagic trawl and 38 days in trips (including ten days on vessels smaller than 15 m) when fishing was conducted using set nets. As a result of re-gearing of boats during the cruises, seven days of observations covered demersal trawl fishing activities, although they did not meet the conditions specified in Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004. During each of such trips, the goal of the observations was to detect the cases of fishing or entangling cetaceans or other marine mammals.

In addition, next year, monitoring of incidental catches of cetaceans in set nets was conducted on vessels smaller than 15 m. Throughout the 38 days of observations during fishing trips, 10 days took place on smaller vessels.

No cetaceans or other marine mammals have been detected on any of the 83 monitored days of fishing by means of pelagic trawl and on the 52 monitored days of fishing by means of set nets.

Furthermore, the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme included the observations of incidental catches of seabirds and threatened fish species such as twait shad (*Alosa fallax*) or the fish from the reintroduction programmes such as Atlantic/Gulf sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrhynchus*).

A full report on the Cetacean Incidental Catch Monitoring Programme in 2013 can be found in the Annex.

5. Monitoring

5.1. Description of the fishing effort and the presence of observers during fishing by means of pelagic trawl

Fleet segment (refer to code in Table 1	ICES subarea	Total fishing effort					Total observer effort achieved					Coverage % days at sea
		No of vessels	No of trips	Days at sea	No of hauls	Average towing time (hours/day)	No of vessels	No of trips	Days at sea	No of hauls	Average towing time (hours/day)	
OTM	23	0	0	0								
OTM	24	24	235	416			1	1	5	8	6.38	1.2%
OTM	25	69	982	2111			2	5	25	28	5.81	1.2%
OTM	26	91	2888	3762			7	11	34	43	7.83	0.9%
OTM	27	12	29	50			2	2	9	10	9.95	18%
OTM	28	15	97	132			2	2	10	12	9.38	7.6%
OTM	29	8	15	48			0	0	0	0	0	0%

5.2 Description of the fishing effort and the presence of observers during fishing by means of fixed nets

Fleet segment (refer to code in Table 1	ICES subarea	Total fishing effort					Total observer effort achieved					Coverage % days at sea
		No of vessels	No of trips	Days at sea	Total length of nets (km)	Average soak time (hours/day)	No of vessels	No of trips	Days at sea	Total length of nets (km)	Average soak time (hours/day)	
GNS	24	10	30	88			1	1	6	30.00		6.8%
GNS	25	20	415	913			1	5	36	240.5		3.9%
GNS	26	6	11	37			0	0	0	0		0%
GNS	28	1	1	1			0	0	0	0		0%
boats	*26*						5	10	10	23.02		

6. Estimation of incidental catches

6.1. Share of incidental catches broken down by fleet segment and fished target species

Fleet segment (refer to codein Table 1)	ICES Subarea	Main target species	Pinger in use? (yes/no)	Cetacean species bycaught	Number of incidens	Number of specimens
GNS	25	Cod	no	no	0	0
GNS	26	Cod	no	no	0	0
OTM	24	Herring, sprat	no	no	0	0
OTM	25	Herring, sprat	no	no	0	0
OTM	26	Herring, sprat	no	no	0	0

Observed cetacean by-catch broken down by fishing gear

Fleet segment or other stratum	Cetacean species (scientific name)	Bycatch expressed per unit of fishing effort *	Total bycatch estimate	CV percent
GNS (ICES 25-26)	no	0	0	
OTM (ICES 24-26)	no	0	0	

Registration of incidental catches

Since the beginning of the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme, i.e. since 2006, no incidental catches of cetaceans have been reported during the conduct of the observer programme.

7. and 8. Discussion and conclusions

In the situation of Poland, when no presence of cetaceans was detected during the pilot programme in 2006-2009 and during the continued monitoring programme in 2010-2013, it is not possible to achieve a coefficient of variation not exceeding 0.3, as defined in Annex III of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004, since it would require monitoring of approximately 80% of the fishing effort.

Therefore, given the hitherto observations and experience and the literature data[4], which indicate the threat of incidental catches posed by individual fishing gear types for small cetaceans in the Baltic Sea, we suggest that the presence of observers on fishing boats during the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme in the following years should cover at least 6% of the

4 Kuklik, I. and Skóra, K.E. 2003. Bycatch as a potential threat for harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) in Polish Baltic waters. NAMMCO Sci. Publ. 5: xx-xx.

fishing operations of the Polish fleet within the Baltic Sea, expressed as the number of days at sea for fishing by means of set nets – netters (in subzones 25 and 26) and up to 1% of fishing operations for fishing by means of pelagic trawl, expressed as the number of days at sea. Furthermore, under the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme in the following years, we plan to continue the observations of incidental catches of cetaceans on the vessels below 15 m, in particular within the areas where most information about the possibility of incidental catches of porpoises was obtained.

9. Annex

Full report on the Cetacean Incidental Catch Monitoring Programme in 2013

National Marine Fisheries Research Institute

REPORT ON THE CETACEAN INCIDENTAL CATCH MONITORING PROGRAMME IN 2013

Report ordered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

updated version, February 2014

developed by:
dr inż. Kordian Trella

Gdynia, February 2014

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1. Introduction

Cetacean incidental catch monitoring arises from the implementation of the provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 of 26 April 2004 (hereinafter referred to as Regulation 812/2004) laying down measures concerning incidental catches of cetaceans in fisheries and amending Regulation (EC) No 88/98 (OJ L 150 of 30.4.2004, p.12, as amended), according to which Poland is obliged to implement the observer programme from 1 January 2006.

The works in the programme are planned and accounted for in an annual cycle pursuant to Article 6 of Regulation 812/2004 and submitted to the Commission by 1 June of the next year. In accordance with the requirements for the preparation and implementation of the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme, since 2013 the National Marine Fisheries Research Institute (NMFRI) has been obliged to submit a report on the implementation of the Programme by 20 November 2013. Therefore, the number of fishing operations covered by observations and the description of the fishing effort in the first version of the Report covered the period from 1 January to 21 October 2013. The observation period was extended to 13 December, and the data on full-year fishing effort for 2013 have been supplemented in the current Report (Annex II). The fishing zones covered by observations during the implementation of the Programme were chosen according to the forecasts based on the analysis of fishing activities in 2012 and modified in the course of the year with the data coming from the observers and the Polish Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC).

Sampling strategy to obtain the coefficient of variation not exceeding 0.3 cannot be implemented under the Polish fishing conditions in the Southern Baltic Sea. From 2006 to 2012, under the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme, the National Marine Fisheries Research Institute collected and presented the results of 1,186 fishing days with the use of various gear, during which no presence of any porpoises was detected (which is the most popular cetacean species within the monitored fishing zones). Hence, in accordance with the provisions (Paragraph 1 of Annex III of Regulation 812/2004), the sampling strategy was developed on the basis of other existing information about the variation of the previous catch observations.

With this in mind, and given the reduced period of observation in 2013, NMFRI found it reasonable and feasible to carry out the monitoring of the 130 days of fishing: for pelagic trawl fisheries – 60 days (about 1% of the fishing effort for 2012) and for fishing with set nets (gillnets)– 70 days (approximately 6% of the fishing effort for 2012 in the implementation period for Programme tasks). The Programme implementation was approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. During the implementation of the Programme in 2013, it turned out that

some of the vessels with length above 15 m that previously fished with set nets have now re-geared and used pelagic trawl as a result of the poor fishing abundance of cod due to poor quality of fish caught (a high number of skinny cod). For the same reason, they have not commenced cod fishing after the protection period (from 1 September 2013). Adapting to dynamic changes in the fishing methods, the number of observations of pelagic fishing under the Programme increased to 79 days at the expense of observations of the fishing activities with netters. It has been completed despite the fact that fishing with pelagic trawls was not possible due to exhaustion of sprat quotas (as of May 26 this year[5]) and tracks (from 5 September this year[6]).

The Programme objective was to monitor the fishing catch on fishing boats that measured 15 m or more , using set gillnets with mesh size opening larger than 80 mm and pelagic trawl in 2013 for incidental catches of cetaceans within the Polish Maritime Areas.

Nine observations within the 26 subzones were made on the basis of smaller vessels, which however operated within a quite crucial area of the water of the Gdańsk Bay and Puck Bay and the Baltic water located along the Hel Peninsula, where most information about the possibility of incidental catches of porpoises was obtained. It should be pointed out that these vessels fished with the use of gillnets and semi-driftnets with mesh size below 80 mm. Although such a measure complies with Article 4(2) of Regulation 812/2004, which obligates Member States to "take the necessary steps to collect scientific data on incidental catches of cetaceans for vessels with an overall length less than 15 m", nonetheless the mesh size parameter in the nets has to be observed. The need for catch observations for incidental catches of cetaceans on the vessels below 15 m was also indicated in the report entitled: "ICES Report of the Workshop to Evaluate Aspects of EC Regulation 812/2004, 28-30, Copenhagen, September 2010 (ICES CM 2010/ACOM:66)".

2. Materials and methods

The observations on board of fishing boats were conducted by the NMFRI staff, which were trained in and acquainted with the research methodology in terms of cetacean incidental catch

[5] After careful calculations of the used fishing quota, it turned out that suspension of only targeted fisheries is insufficient and a decision was taken on 12 July 2013 to completely close sprat fishing until the end of the year. (Ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 22 May 2013 on the introduction of the ban on sprat fishing in the Baltic Sea subzones 22-32 and the Ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development dated 9 July 2013 on the introduction of the ban on sprat fishing in subzones 22-32 of the Baltic Sea.

[6] On 5 September 2013, a total ban on central herring fishing was introduced by Ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 3 September 2013 *on the prohibition of herring fishing in subzones 25-27, 28.2, 29 and 32 of the Baltic Sea* (Dz.U. item 1021).

monitoring (Annex 1). Most of the observers listed in the Annex participated in the previous years in the fishing trips under the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme.

In total, in 2013 observations were conducted on twelve vessels measuring above 15 m in length and operating from seven ports and six vessels operating from three ports (Table 1). As part of the Programme, the observers stayed at sea for 124 days, including 79 days on the vessels that conducted fishing using pelagic trawl and 38 days in trips (including 10 days on entities smaller than 15 m) when fishing was conducted using set nets (Annex II). As a result of re-gearing of vessels during the cruise, 7 days of observations covered demersal trawl fishing activities. They are included in the report as observation days, although they did not meet the conditions specified in Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004.

It should be pointed out that in 2013 the number of days at sea differed considerably from the number of days at sea when fishing was carried out. It resulted from the movement of vessels during one fishing trip within various water areas. The actual duration of fishing operations in relation to the number of days at sea amounted to: for set net gear (gillnets) – 77.4% and for pelagic trawls – 74.3% (Table 2) respectively. As the "days at sea" formula is used in Annex II, hence the same was adopted also for the duration of the stay of observers at sea. During each of such trips, observations were carried out to detect the cases of fishing or entangling cetaceans or other marine mammals, if any.

On the basis of the fishing trip reports submitted by the observers, an analysis of the observed fishing effort by means of gillnets and pelagic trawls was conducted as compared to the fishing activities of the fleet that meets the criteria of Regulation 812/2004 in the entire 2013.

Table 1. Number of monitored fishing days broken down by entity and fishing gear type (and the entity's length)

Fishing entity	Length	Fishing gear type			Port	ICES subzone covered by observations
		Netters (GNS)	Pelagic trawl (OTM)	Demersal trawl (OTB)		
DAR-119	> 15 m	42			Darłowo	24,25
HEL-150	> 15 m		8		Hel	25
JAS-56	8 m		1		Jastarnia	26
JAS-81	7 m	1			Jastarnia	26
KOŁ-180	> 15 m		3		Kołobrzeg	24
KOŁ-5	> 15 m		19		Kołobrzeg	24,25,26
KOŁ-64	6 m		3	4	Kuźnica	25
KUŹ-88	6 m	2			Kuźnica	26
KUŹ-92	8 m	2			Rewa	26
REW-18		3				26
REW-6	8 m	2			Rewa	26
UST-45	>15 m			3	Ustka	25
WŁA-11	>15 m		2		Władysławowo	26
WŁA-139	>15 m		21		Władysławowo	25,26,27,28
WŁA-295	>15 m		6		Władysławowo	25,26
WŁA-31	>15 m		1		Władysławowo	26
WŁA-312	>15 m		5		Władysławowo	25,26
WŁA-68	>15 m		9		Władysławowo	27,28
ZAG-17	>15 m		5		Górki Zachodnie	26
		52	**83**	**7**		

Table 2. Percentage of fishing days in the number of fishing trip days

Fishing gear type	Days at sea	Number of fishing days	Percentage of fishing days in the number of fishing trip days
Gillnets (GNS)	42	31	73.8%
Pelagic trawls (OTM)	83	59	71.1%
Demersal trawl (OTB)	7	5	71.4%
Boats up to 15 m	10	10	100.0%
Total	142	105	73.9%

3. Results

3.1. Monitoring of pelagic trawl fishing

Pursuant to Annex III of Regulation 812/2004, the monitoring of pelagic trawl fishing should be carried out within the Baltic Sea area south of 59°N during the entire year and to the north of 59°N only from 1 June to 30 September. Within the ICES 24-28 subzones, Polish vessels with length of 15 metres or longer fished using pelagic trawl for 6519 days in 2013. The fishing was conducted mainly within the 25 and 26 subzones, where the fishing lasted for 5873 days (90.1%).

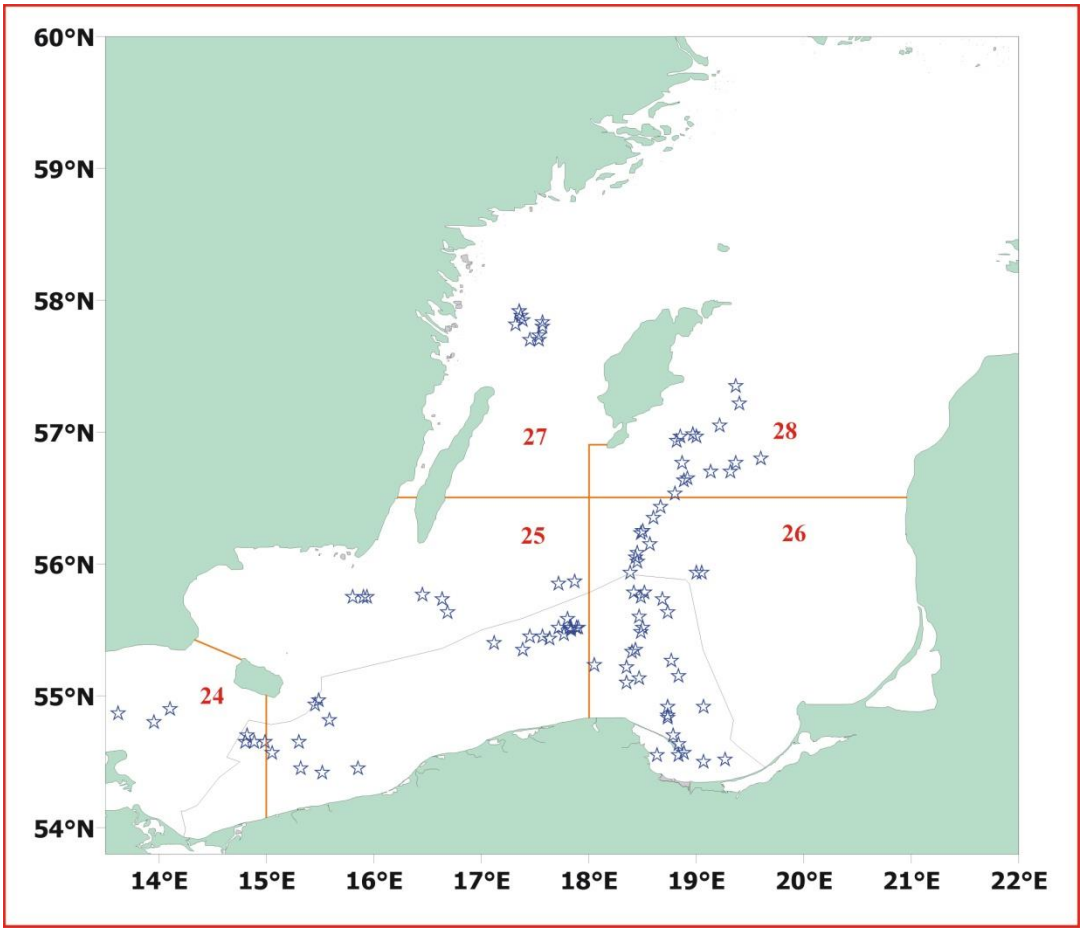


Figure 1. Pelagic trawl fishing observation places within the 24-28 ICES subzones in 2013

The total number of days when observations were carried out amounted to 83 (60 were planned), which represented 1.3% of the total days at sea. This number was increased in relation to Programme assumptions because many vessels have regeared and used pelagic trawl as a result of the poor fishing abundance of cod due to poor quality of fish caught (a high number of skinny cod).

Within the 24 subzone, the observations covered 5 days, which represented 1.2% of the total number of days at sea; within the 25 subzone – 25 days (1.2%), and within the 26 subzone – 34

days – 0.9% (Annex II), as well as within the 27 subzone (9 days –18.0%) and 28 subzone (10 days – 7.6%). The fishing zones (issue position) where observations were conducted are presented in Figure 1, and the list of fishing operations in Annex III.

During the 83 days of observation of pelagic trawl fishing, fishing boats carried out 101 draughts (hauls). The total trawling time amounted to 768.3 hours, and the average time of a single draught to approximately 7.6 hours.

No cetaceans or other marine mammals have been detected on any of the 83 monitored days of fishing by means of pelagic trawl.

3.2. Monitoring of gillnets

In 2013, Polish fishing vessels measuring 15 or more in length fished by means of set nets (within the regions indicated in Annex III to Regulation 812/2004) for a total of 1,039 days (ICES 24-28 subzones). The largest fishing effort was determined within the ICES 25 subzone, where gillnets fishing was conducted for 913 days (approximately 87.8%). In 2013, out of 70 observation days, 42 were conducted, which represented 4.0% of the total number of days at sea. The percentage of observations in individual subzones differed to a great extent and oscillated from 6.8% within the 24 subzone to 3.99% within the 25 subzone. No observations were made in the 26 subzone because fishing by vessels measuring above 15 m in length using gillnets terminate their fishing activity in the first quarter of 2013, that is before the launch of observations under the Programme. Table 3 presents a list of aggregated data about the quantity of gear, the time of its deployment within individual subzones and the total length of netters covered by monitoring broken down by individual subzones.

It was also planned to conduct 10 days of observations on fishing vessels in the Gdańsk Bay region. Such a decision was taken because the region where monitoring was planned (Puck Bay) is considered as a place of the most popular occurrence of the porpoise (Kuklik I., K. Skóra. O morświnie. “Source: Hel Marine Station IO UG (www.morswin.pl)” and “should be given priority” as defined in paragraph 6 of the introduction to Regulation 812/2004. Just like in 2012, during the research it turned out that the fishing gear on most vessels was not in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 812/2004 (most meshes did not comply with the Regulation).

Table 3 presents a list of aggregated data about the quantity of gear, the time of its deployment within individual subzones and the total length of netters covered by monitoring broken down by individual subzones.

Table 3. Number of gillnets, exposure time and total length in the observed catches in 2013

ICES subzone	Number of gillnets in the observed catches	Total gillnets exposure time (hours)	Total length of gillnets in the observed catches (m)
24*)	600	226.0	30,000
25*)	7,770	2,065.2	408,800
26*)	0	0.0	0
Boats up to 15 m**)	394	1,794.0	24,020
Total	8,764	4,085.2	462,820

*) fishing entities with length above 15 m
**) observations within the Puck Bay area

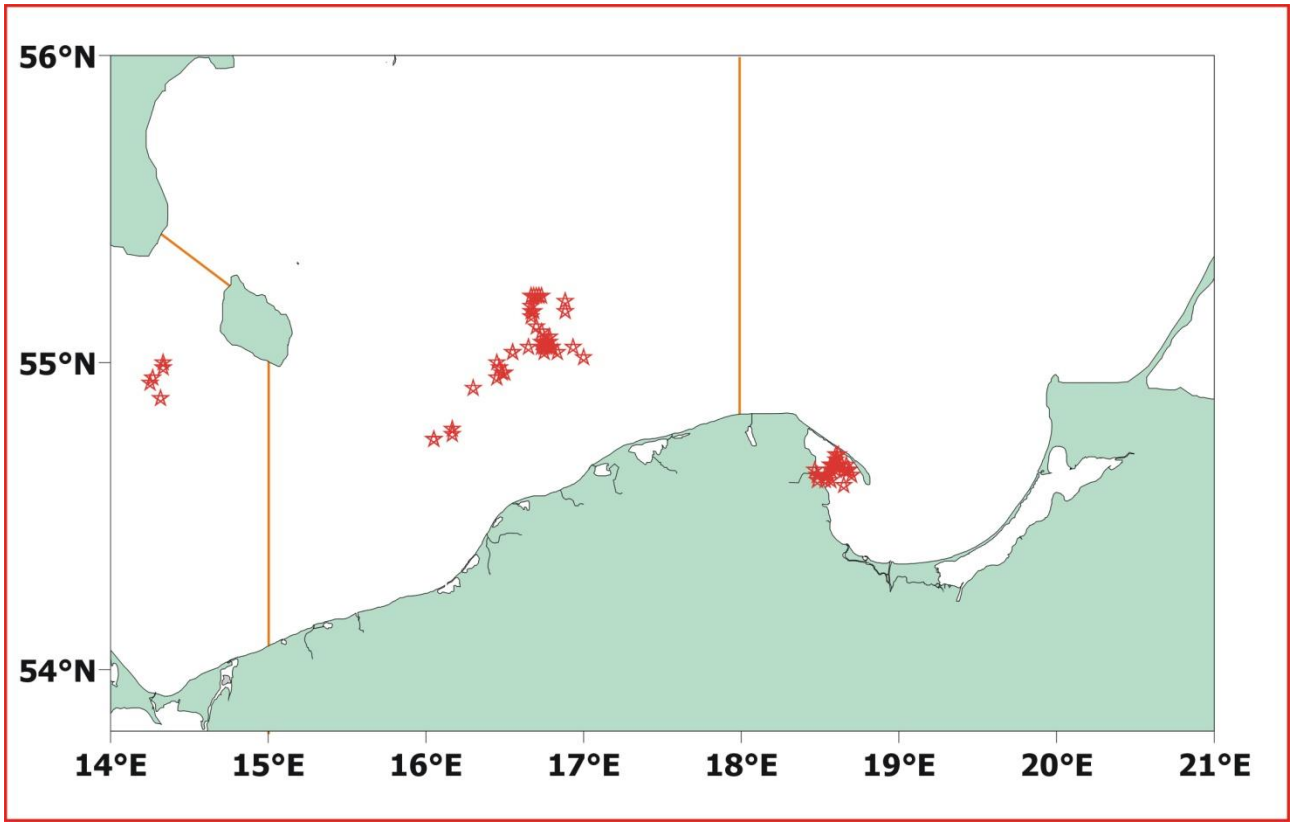


Figure 2. Gillnets fishing observation places within the 24-26 ICES subzones in 2013

No cetaceans have been detected on any of the 52 monitored days of fishing with gillnets.

3.3. Monitoring of demersal trawl fishing

The observations of demersal trawl fishery were not planned under the Programme and resulted only from the fact that fishing vessels have regeared during fishing at sea (change of set nets for demersal trawl). They covered a total of 7 observation days in subzone 25, during which 18 draughts were carried out that lasted for a total of 39.8 hours (2.2 hours per 1 trawl).

No by-catches of cetaceans have been detected during these 7 in demersal fishing.

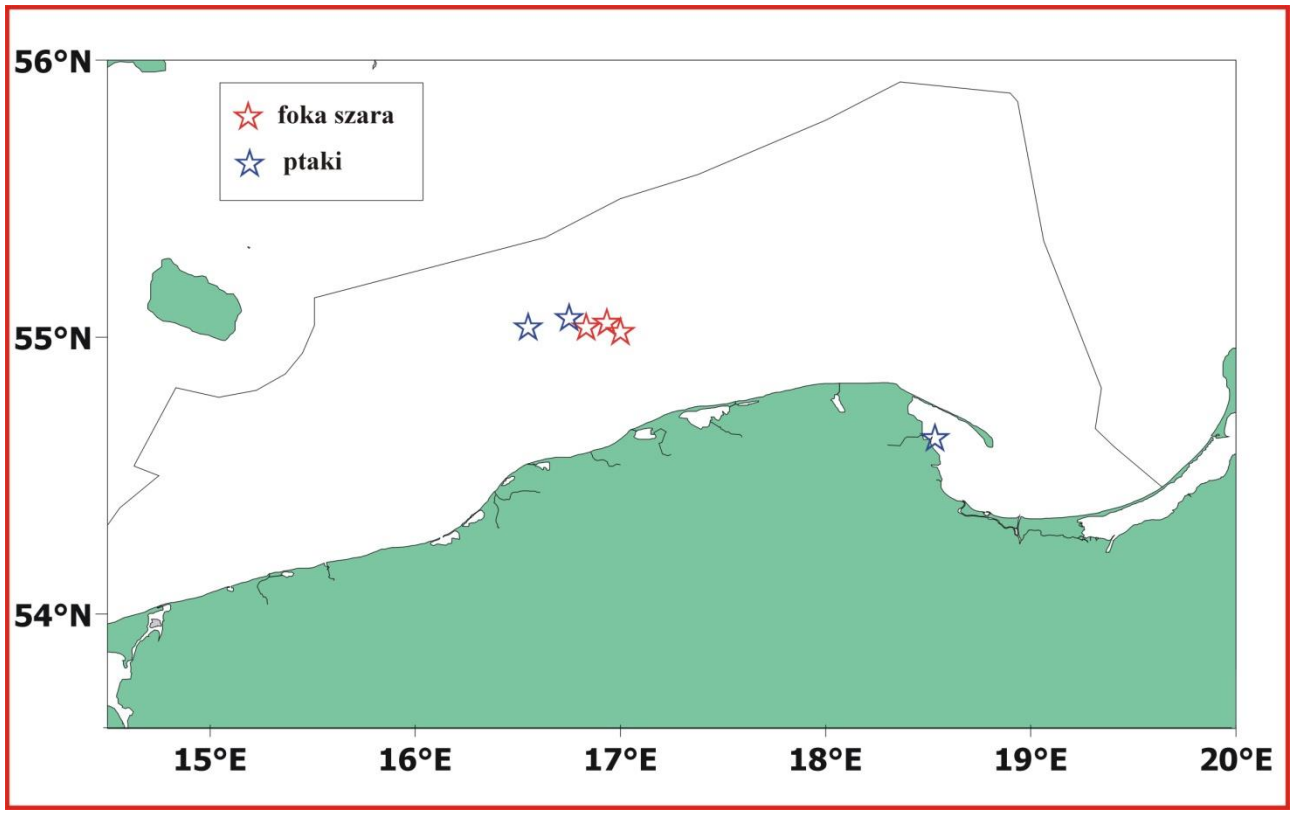
3.4. Observations of seals and birds found in fishing nets

During the gillnets fishing, the presence of 3 dead grey seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) and 4 dead birds was detected, including: 3 common murres (*Uria aalge*) and one tufted duck (*Aythya fuligula*).

Grey seals were found in subzone 25 in the nets called "turbotówka", with mesh size of #140 mm. One grey seal drowned as a result of entangling in a net. The other two died probably earlier, before the fishing trip. It is indicated by the fact that their carcasses were not entangled in the nets, but only leaned against it, therefore they drowned immediately during gear lifting.

The common murres were entangled in cod nets with mesh size of #110 mm. The presence of grey seals and common murres was detected in subzone 25 within Darłowo fishing zones. The tufted duck was entangled in cod nets with mesh size of #110 mm within Puck Bay water.

The places for observation of grey seals and birds in the netters are presented in Figure 3, and the pictures of two birds with descriptions can be found in Annex IV.



grey seal (red stars)
birds (blue stars)

Figure 3. Places where the presence of birds in fishing nets was confirmed

4. Comments on the Programme

The experience of the observations conducted since 2006 indicates that the incidental catches of marine mammals and birds in the catches conducted by the Polish fishing fleet occur only in fishing operations with the use of gillnets. The effectiveness of gillnet fishery depends on the size of the fishing vessel that deploys the gillnets because it is passive fishing gear. Maybe, in subsequent years of the implementation of the Programme, an observation derogation should be considered with a view to reducing the number of observations of pelagic fishing and increasing the observations of fishing carried out with gillnest covering not only vessels above 15 m in length, but also smaller vessels.

5. Conclusions:

- **No incidental fishing or entangling of cetaceans in the nets have been detected during the NMFRI monitoring of pelagic trawl and set net fishing in the Baltic Sea in 2013 (April-November).**
- **The observations did not confirm any porpoise in the catches conducted by means of gillnets within the Puck Bay waters (the internal part of the Gdańsk Bay). According to some authors, it is a water body in which it was recorded most frequently.**
- **In the similar 25 subzone, three dead grey seals have been detected, including one entangled in set nets called "turbotówka" with mesh size of #140 mm, and two with no signs of entangling.**
- **No presence of the fish covered by species protection was confirmed in the monitored catches.**
- **Four dead birds (three common murres and one tufted duck) were found in the catch conducted by means of set nets (gillnets).**
- **Since 2006, that is since the launch date of** the Incidental Catches of Cetacean Monitoring Programme **by NMFRI, irrespective of the duration, place and fishing gear type, no incidental catches of cetaceans have been confirmed.**

Annex. 1. List of observers participating In 2013 in fishing trips on board of vessels within the framework of NPZDR and meeting the requirements set by Incidental Catches of Cetaceans Monitoring Programme.

Surname and First Name	Position held
Zaporowski Radosław	Senior specialist
Celmer Zuzanna	Specialist
Dziemian Łukasz	Specialist
Ramutkowski Marcin	Specialist
Modrzejewski Grzegorz	Senior Technican
Deluga Wojciech	Technician
Gaweł Władysław	Technician
Jarek Tomasz	Technician
Nowakowski Marcin	Technician
Trella Stanisław	Technician
Wybierała Ireneusz	Technician

Annex II

Content In accordance with Recommendation 4 of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea – ICES „ACOM supplied format for National Reports for 812/2004".

4. At sea observer scheme

Observer effort

Table 3a. Description of fishing effort and observer in static gear

Fleet segment (refer to code in Table 1	ICES subarea	Total fishing effort					Total observer effort achieved					Coverage % days at sea
		No of vessels	No of trips	Days at sea	Total length of nets (km)	Average soak time (hours/day)	No of vessels	No of trips	Days at sea	Total length of nets (km)	Average soak time (hours/day)	
GNS	24	10	30	88			1	1	6	30.00		6.8%
GNS	25	20	415	913			1	5	36	240.50		3.9%
GNS	26	6	11	37			0	0	0	0		0.0%
GNS	28	1	1	1			0	0	0	0		0.00%
boats	*26*						*5*	*10*	*10*	*23.02*		

Table 3b. Description of fishing effort and observer in towed gear

Fleet segment (refer to code in Table 1	ICES subarea	Total fishing effort					Total observer effort achieved					Coverage % days at sea
		No of vessels	No of trips	Days at sea	No of hauls	Average towing time (hours/day)	No of vessels	No of trips	Days at sea	No of hauls	Average towing time (hours/day)	
OTM	23	0	0	0								
OTM	24	24	235	416			1	1	5	8	6.38	1.2%
OTM	25	69	982	2111			2	5	25	28	5.81	1.2%
OTM	26	91	2888	3762			7	11	34	43	7.83	0.9%
OTM	27	12	29	50			2	2	9	10	9.95	18.0%
OTM	28	15	97	132			2	2	10	12	9.38	7.6%
OTM	29	8	15	48			0	0	0	0	0	0.0%

Recording of bycatch

No incidental cetaceans entanglement In fishing nets was reported Turing the observations scheme.

Results of the observer schemes

Table 4. Bycatch by species and fleet segment

Fleet segment (refer to codein Table 1)	ICES Subarea	Main target species	Pinger in use? (yes/no)	Cetacean species bycaught	Number of incidens	Number of specimens
GNS	25	Cod	no	no	0	0
GNS	26	Cod	no	no	0	0
OTM	24	Herring, sprat	no	no	0	0
OTM	25	Herring, sprat	no	no	0	0
OTM	26	Herring, sprat	no	no	0	0

Table 5. Bycatch rate by fleet segment and target species

Fleet segment or other stratum	Cetacean species (scientific name)	Bycatch expressed per unit of fishing effort *	Total bycatch estimate	CV percent
GNS (ICES 25-26)	no	0	0	
OTM (ICES 24-26)	no	0	0	