

Annual Report on Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004¹

Member State: **Poland**

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¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 of 26.4.2004 laying down measures concerning incidental catches of cetaceans in fisheries and amending Regulation (EC) No 88/98

Summary

In 2010, vessels 12 m or over in overall length continued to use cetaceans deterrent devices (i.e. pingers) in bottom-set gillnets and in entangling nets in the ICES 24 area. In 2010, 56% of all vessels 12 m or over in overall length and fishing with set nets in the ICES 24 area were equipped with pingers. In monitoring of the use of pingers, pinger detectors were employed - when a net was submerged in water, or it was done visually by the observers - when a net was on board.

The completion of pilot projects aimed at checking the effectiveness of the use of pingers was not possible due to a very low porpoise population in the central region of the Baltic Sea.

Moreover, in 2010, the Incidental Catches of Cetaceans Monitoring Programme, under the Polish National Programme for the Collection of Fisheries Data, was also continued.

In 2010, observation was carried out on 5 vessels which conform to the conditions set forth in the Regulation (EC) No 812/2004. Out of the 73 days spent on board of those vessels, the observers spent 57 days on fishing trips during which the fishing was done with the pelagic trawls and 16 days when it was done with set nets. During each of those fishing trips incidental catches or net entanglement of cetaceans and other marine mammals were observed. During the monitored 57-day of fishing operations with the use of pelagic trawl, and 16-day of fishing operations with the use of set nets no cetacean or any other marine mammals catches were reported.

Acoustic Deterrent Devices

1. General Information.

In accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004, Poland is obliged to use cetacean acoustic deterrent devices on board of vessels 12 m or over in overall length, and all other vessels which exceed this length, whenever bottom-set gillnets or entangling nets on waters belonging to the ICES 24 area are used.

In 2008, fishing vessels flying the Polish flag received 500 AQUATEC AQUAMARK 100 pingers, designed especially for deterring porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*), which is the only cetacean species living in the Baltic Sea. In 2010, 17 vessels flying the Polish flag were equipped with pingers and were using them.

Additionally, in June 2010 Regional Inspectorate of Sea Fisheries in Szczecin ordered special devices which detect the operation of pingers. The devices were received in September 2010 from Denmark. They enable a real-time monitoring of pingers operation during fishing.

1.1. Description of fleet with installed pingers.

Fleet segment	Fishing Area	Main target species	Total fishing effort					
			No. of vessels	No. of trips	Days at sea	Months of operations	Total length of nets* (km)	Total soak time (h)
GNS	27.III.d.24	COD	4	83	163	February-December	783	766
GNS	27.III.d.24	FLE	7	156	320	January-December	1146	1307
GNS	27.III.d.24	FPE	2	2	2	May-October	6	9
GNS	27.III.d.24	FPP	1	2	3	September-October	28	12
GNS	27.III.d.24	PLE	2	7	39	June-August	73	186
GNS	27.III.d.24	TRS	1	2	3	June	11	5
GNS	27.III.d.24	TUR	5	54	115	January-September	341	402

* Gear could be used to fish the other species. (e.g. in one voyage there were used 5 km of nets and they could catch other species) Therefore, in the table the total length of nets used to catch COD could be used to catch FLE or PLE or other species in the same time.

2. Acoustic deterrent devices Articles 2 and 3.

2.1. Mitigation measures

Fleet segment	Fishing Area	% of vessels using pingers	Pinger characteristics	Other mitigation measures
GNS	27.III.d.24	56%	AQUATEC AQUAMARK 100	

3. Monitoring and assessment.

3.1. Monitoring and assessment of pingers use

Due to an very low number of cetaceans in the areas of the Baltic Sea where vessels flying the Polish flag conduct fishing operations, the assessment could not be performed.

3.2. Report on measures to control specifications when pingers are in use by fishermen (Article 2.4.).

Use of pingers on board of vessels 12 m or over in overall length, which have a permit for using set nets is monitored by the Regional Inspectorate of Sea Fisheries in Szczecin, during fishing activities in the ICES 24 area, where, according to the Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004, the use of pingers in bottom-set gillnet and in entangling nets is mandatory.

Monitoring of pinger use is performed by fisheries inspectors during every inspection concerning fishing in the ICES 24 area (which are quite rare due to the small number of fishermen fishing in the Polish 24 ICES zone). These inspections are carried out with pinger detectors during the monitoring of submerged nets, or visually by inspectors who - during net roll or during controlling nets that are already on board - check if nets are equipped with pingers. Fishermen use pingers AQUATEC AQUAMARK 100 only.

3.3 Derogation

Does not apply to Poland.

3.4. Overall assessment.

In the case of the central Baltic Sea area and due to the very low population of porpoises in this region, the assessment of the effectiveness of pinger use is very difficult.

However, in our opinion the use of pingers on vessels longer than 12 m and equipped with bottom-set gillnet and entangling nets in the ICES 24 area should be continued.

At the same time, the monitoring of incidental catches of porpoise in the Baltic Sea should be continued, accounting for the fishing area, fishing gear and fleet segment, so that the data on incidental catches could serve as a basis for future actions aimed at a more effective protection of the Baltic Sea porpoise population (e.g. by ordering the mandatory use of pingers on smaller vessels, i.e. vessels longer than 10m, but shorter than 12m).

Monitoring Scheme

4. General information concerning the implementation of Article 4 and Article 5.

As in previous years, in 2010 the Incidental Catches of Cetaceans Monitoring Programme was carried out by the Sea Fisheries Institute in Gdynia.

In total, in 2010 observation was carried out on 5 vessels which conform to the conditions set forth in the Regulation (EC) No 812/2004. Out of 73 days spent on board of those vessels, the observers spent 57 days on fishing trips during which the fishing was done with the pelagic trawls and 16 days when it was done with set nets. During each of those fishing trips incidental catches or net entanglement of cetaceans and other marine mammals were observed. Exceptionally, in 2010 data for the Incidental Catches of Cetaceans Monitoring Programme was gathered within the framework of the Polish National Fisheries Data Collection Programme (Narodowy Program Zbioru Danych Rybackich – NPZDR).

During the monitored 57-day of fishing operations with the use of pelagic trawl, and 16-day of fishing operations with the use of set nets no cetacean or any other marine mammals catches were reported.

The full report on the Incidental Catches of Cetaceans Monitoring Programme in 2010 can be found in the Annex.

5. Monitoring

5.1. Description of fishing effort and observer effort 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	6	17	70								0.00%
OTM	24	13	87	321								0.00%
OTM	25	54	1003	3129		3	6	22.5				0.72%
OTM	26	48	2169	3134		3	6	23.5				0.75%
OTM	27	17	74	365		1	1	3				0.82%
OTM	28	17	41	209		1	1	8				3.83%
OTM	29	3	5	33								0.00%

5.2. Description of fishing effort and observer effort 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	25	16	312	1045	9287.25		0	0	0			0.00%
GNS	26	6	213	432	4726.50		1	14	16			3.70%

6. Estimation of incidental catches.

6.1. Incidental catch rates 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 26)	no	0	0	
OTM (ICES 25-28)	no	0	0	

Recording of Incidental Catches

Since 2006, i.e. since the Incidental Catches of Cetaceans Monitoring Programme was launched, no cases of incidental catches of cetaceans were reported.

7. and 8. Discussion and Conclusions

In the case of Poland, where during the implementation of the pilot project, i.e. between 2006 and 2009, no instances of porpoises presence were reported, achieving a coefficient of variation not exceeding 0,30 - a value stipulated in Annex III to Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 - is impossible, since it would require monitoring of about 80% of the fishing effort.

Consequently, taking account of previous observations and experiences, we suggest that the observers on board of Polish vessels should monitor 5% of all fishing operations of Polish fleet on the Baltic Sea, expressed in the number of days when set nets were used (in sub-areas 25 and 26); and not less than 2% of all fishing operations expressed in the numbers of days on which pelagic trawl were used.

9. Annex

Full Report on Monitoring of Incidental Catches of Cetaceans in 2010



SEA FISHERIES INSTITUTE
Department of Fishery Resources

**RESULTS OF CETACEANS BY-CATCH OBSERVATION
IN POLISH BALTIC SEA FISHING OPERATIONS IN 2010
(BASED ON OBSERVATIONS MADE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF
NPZDR)**

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Gdynia, 2010

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1. Introduction

Between 2006 and 2009, the Sea Fisheries Institute in Gdynia implemented the Programme of Monitoring Incidental Catches of Cetaceans, financed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. In that period observations were carried out for 947 days for different kinds of fishing gear, and their results were presented.. Since the beginning of the Programme, regardless of time, place and fishing gear used, no incidental catches of porpoise, nor its presence in the vicinity of fishing area, were reported.

This Report presents the results of observations carried out between January and December 2010, within the framework of NPZDR, and concerning accidental catches of cetaceans. The Report includes data from observation performed on fishing vessels of the length 15m or higher, flying the Polish flag and fishing in the ICES areas III a, b c and III d south of 59°N with pelagic trawl (OTM) or entangling net (GNS), 9+, in the region east of 24 ICES subarea.

2. Material and Methodology

Observation on board of the fishing vessels was performed by Sea Fisheries Institute employees, who were trained in and acquainted with the methodology of research on monitoring incidental catches of cetaceans (Annex 1). Some of them participated in fishing trips in previous years. These voyages were monitored according to the Monitoring of Incidental Catches of Cetaceans Programme.

Altogether, in 2010 observations on board of 5 vessels conforming with the conditions prescribed by the Council Regulation (EC) were performed. Out of the 73 days on board of those vessels, the observers spent 57 days on fishing trips during which the fishing was done with the pelagic trawls and 16 days when it was done with set nets (Annex II). During each of those fishing trips incidental catches or net entanglement of cetaceans and other marine mammals was observed.

Table 1. Number of monitored fishing days by vessel and type of fishing gear

Smack	Fishing day		Port
	Entangling nets (GNS)	Tools Pelagic trawl (OTM)	
WŁA-18	16		Władysławowo
GDY-33		22	Gdynia
HEL-150		23	Hel
KOŁ-4		4	Kołobrzeg
KOŁ-61		8	Kołobrzeg
Total	16	57	

Based on reports from fishing trip the analysis of actual fishing effort by nets and pelagic trawls in relation to fishing activity of fleet segment and in compliance with the Regulation's criteria was performed.

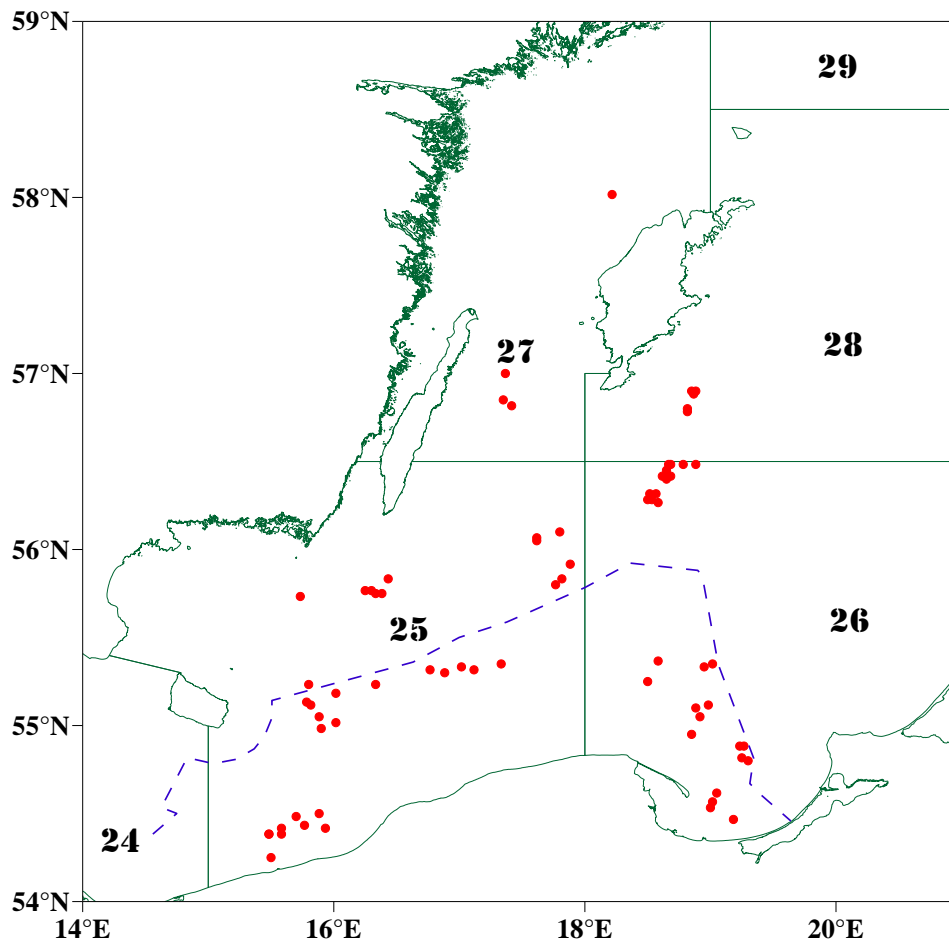
3. Results

3.1. Pelagic trawls monitoring

According to Annex III to the EC Regulation monitoring of fishing with the pelagic trawl in the Baltic Sea region should be done throughout the year south of 59°N and only between 1 June and 30 September north of 59°N. In 2010, Polish fishing vessels 15 m or over in overall length were fishing with pelagic trawl for 7261 day in total in ICES regions 23-28. Fishing was done mainly in subareas 25 and 26, where it lasted for 6263 days (over 82,6%). Total number of days during which observation was carried out amounted to 57, which accounts for 0.79% of total number of fishing days. The observations were carried out in four ICES subareas: 25-28 (Picture 1.)

During 57 days of observation fishing vessels performed 72 haul trawls, which lasted 453.7 hours in total. A single haul average time was about 6 hours.

During the monitored 57-day fishing with pelagic trawl no cetacean nor any other marine mammals catches were reported.

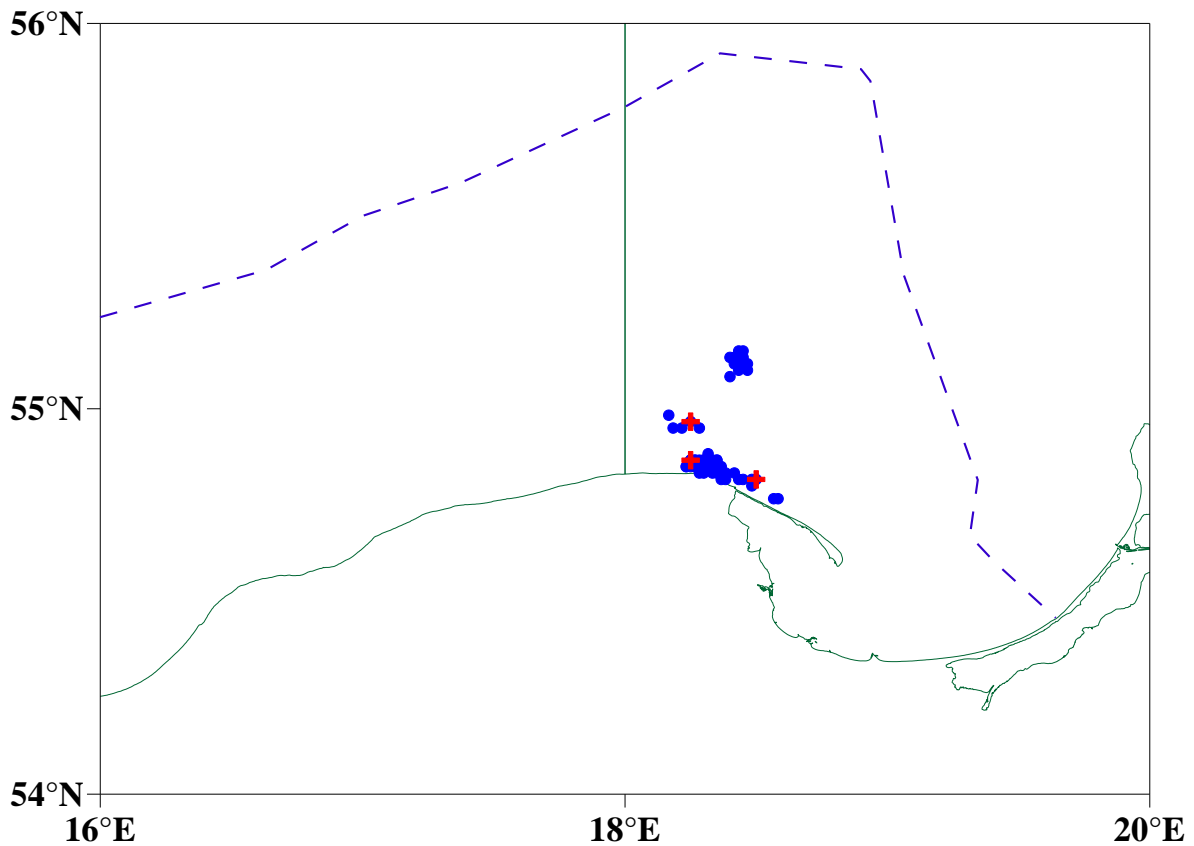


Picture 1. Observation area of fishing with the use of pelagic trawl in ICES subareas 25-28 in 2010.

3.2. Set nets monitoring

Polish fishing vessels 15 m or over in overall length were fishing with set nets (in regions specified in Annex III of the EC Regulation) for 1477 days in total (ICES subareas 25-26). The biggest fishing effort was reported in subarea 25 where fishing with set nets was done for 1045 days (about 70.8%). Observations of catches in order to check if the tasks imposed by the Incidental Catches of Cetaceans Monitoring Programme were implemented, were carried out for 16 days in subarea 26, corresponding to 3.7% of the total number of fishing days in this region (Picture 2) and to 1.08% of the total number of set nets fishing days in both ICES subareas. During this period, 3300 set nets comprising 61 sets were hauled from the water. On average, one set consisted of 54 set nets, which approximately equals to a fence of 2704 meters. Exposure time of a set ranged between 17.0 and 35.6 hours (23.2 on average) In three cases of set net exposure, the catches included 11 twaite shads (*Alosa fallax* Lacepede). Locations where they were caught are shown on Picture 2 below.

During the monitored 16-day of fishing with the use of set nets no cetacean or any other marine mammals catches were reported.



Picture 2 Observation areas of fishing with set nets in ICES subarea 26 in 2010 (blue) Red colour indicates the locations where the twaite shad (*Alosa fallax*) was caught

4. Conclusions

- **Monitoring of pelagic trawl and set nets fishing in the Baltic Sea, performed by the Sea Fisheries Institute in 2010 (January-December), did not reveal any catches or net entanglement of cetaceans or other marine mammals.**
- Observations carried out in 2010 only partially fulfil the Programme's aims, especially as regards the observation of fishing with set nets. In 2010, as much as 70.8% of fishing effort expressed in fishing days and done with set nets was done in ICES subarea 25, where no observation was carried out. Since subareas 25-32 together constitute a single "fishing ground", this fact had no consequence for the goals set by the NPZDR. However, it could bear consequences in terms of expectations connected with the Programme.

- In the case of Poland, where during the implementation of the pilot project, i.e. between 2006 and 2009, no instances of porpoises presence were reported, achieving a coefficient of variation not exceeding 0,30 - a value stipulated the Regulation (EC) - is impossible, since it would require monitoring of about 80% of the fishing effort.

Annex

List of observers participating in 2010 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
Deluga Wojciech	Technician
Modrzejewski Grzegorz	Senior Technician
Nowakowski Marcin	Technician
Słembariski Jakub	Specialist
Trella Kordian	Assistant
Trella Stanisław	Technician
Wybierała Ireneusz	Technician
Zaporowski Radosław	Senior Specialist

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

Information which the reader expects to find in this part have been already presented in the Report.

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	25	16	312	1045	9287.25		0	0	0			0.00%
GNS	26	6	213	432	4726.50		1	14	16			3.70%

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)	
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OTM	26	48	2169	3134		3	6	23.5				0.75%
OTM	27	17	74	365		1	1	3				0.82%
OTM	28	17	41	209		1	1	8				3.83%
OTM	29	3	5	33								0.00%

Recording of bycatch

No incidental cetaceans entanglement in fishing nets was reported during the observations scheme.

Results of the observer schemes

Table 4. Bycatch by species and fleet segment

Fleet segment (refer to code in Table 1)	ICES subarea	Main target species	Pinger in use? (yes/no)	Cetacean species bycaught	Number of incidents	Number of specimens
GNS	26	COD	no	no	0	0
OTM	25	Herring, sprat	no	no	0	0
OTM	26	Herring, sprat	no	no	0	0
OTM	27	Herring, sprat	no	no	0	0
OTM	28	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 26)	no	0	0	
OTM (ICES 25-28)	no	0	0	