

11 June 2025

## Contribution from ASCOBANS to the Report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea

Activities concluded under ASCOBANS between September 2024 and June 2025 have addressed a range of marine conservation and management issues relating to UNGA Resolution 79/144.

1. The 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties (September 2024) adopted Resolutions relating to, *inter alia*:

- Marine Environment and Biodiversity: The Resolution on **Maritime Spatial Planning**<sup>1</sup> adopts *Guidelines for Cetacean-sensitive Maritime Spatial Planning* and encourages Parties to designate marine protected areas, such as Natura 2000 and Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas.
- Marine Pollution: The Resolution on the **Conservation of Beaked Whales**<sup>2</sup> calls upon Parties to mitigate, minimise and, where possible, eliminate additional threats to beaked whales such as chemical pollution. In addition, Resolution 10.2, which includes the ASCOBANS work plan for 2025-2028, instructs the Advisory Committee to review new information on other forms of pollution and hazardous substances, and their impacts on small cetaceans and cetacean habitats.
- Underwater Noise: The Resolution on **Adverse Effects of Underwater Noise on Marine Mammals during Offshore Construction Activities for Renewable Energy Production**<sup>3</sup> requests Parties to introduce precautionary guidance on measures and procedures for all activities of renewable energy production in order to mitigate impacts on small cetacean species and populations (A/Res/79/144 X, 281). Similarly, the Resolution on **Ocean Energy**<sup>4</sup> calls on Parties to investigate the risk potential of underwater noise (impulsive noise from construction, offshore windfarm, UXO removal) to cetaceans, such as displacement, physiological impacts, masking, and auditory damage (A/Res/79/144 X, 280).

2. **Joint ACCOBAMS-ASCOBANS workshop with navies on underwater noise and cetaceans**: This workshop took place in September 2024 in Toulon, France, and brought together 30 representatives from national Navies and navy-adjacent research institutions, NATO, and invited cetacean experts. The main objectives of the workshop were to exchange information on best practice experiences and activities, promote collaboration, and discuss steps towards improved exchange information. The participants worked to identify concrete recommendations and next steps to further enhance collaboration. The report of the workshop will be available [here](#).

<sup>1</sup> UNEP/ASCOBANS/Res.10.5

<sup>2</sup> UNEP/ASCOBANS/Res.10.4

<sup>3</sup> UNEP/ASCOBANS/Res.6.2 (Rev.MOP10)

<sup>4</sup> UNEP/ASCOBANS/Res.8.6 (Rev.MOP10)