

Annual report on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004

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Member State: Ireland

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Author: Ronan Cosgrove, BIM

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- **Effort data - Susan Coughlan, SFPA**
- **Observer data - Macdara O’Cuaig, Cormac Nolan and Ciaran O’Donnell, MI**

Summary

A total of 24 trips comprising 113 days at sea and 240 hauls were observed across a range of fisheries in 2014. A total of 100 days were carried out on board pelagic trawlers as part of DCF work. A further 13 days were carried on set net vessels as part of a dedicated study examining interactions between set nets and protected species. No bycatch was observed in pelagic trawl fisheries. Apart from 4 common dolphins observed as bycatch by a midwater trawler engaged in research in 2006, no cetacean bycatch incidences have occurred from a total of 1170 days at sea observed since monitoring under EC 812/2004 commenced in 2005. Of these, a total of 219 days were carried out as part of dedicated independent observer programmes for bycatch of protected species conducted from 2010 to 2012 with no cetacean bycatch observed. Results to date suggest that the risk of bycatch and other protected species in Irish pelagic trawl fisheries is very low. No cetacean bycatch was observed in set net fisheries in 2014. A total of 3 grey seals were observed as bycatch in large mesh tangle and trammel nets observed off the south coast in 2014.

ACOUSTIC DETERRENT DEVICES

1. General Information

No administrative measures were taken in relation to gillnet pingers in 2014.

2. Acoustic Deterrent Devices (Article 2 and 3)

2.1 Mitigation measures

The number of Irish vessels currently using pingers is unknown

3. Monitoring and assessment

3.1 Monitoring and assessment of the effects of pinger use (Article 2.4)

Extensive research on the practicalities and spacing of gillnet pingers has previously been carried out by BIM in Ireland and has been reported in previous reports under 812/2004 and at WGBYC. BIM have also been heavily involved in the development and testing of pelagic trawl pingers as also reported previously.

3.3. Derogation

Based on pinger spacing research carried out by Ireland and Denmark, a temporary derogation under Article 3(2) of Regulation 812/2004 allowed for an increase in maximum spacing between pingers to 500m for digital devices from 13 June 2007 for a period of two years. This derogation has not yet been renewed.

3.4 Overall assessment

ADDs can reduce harbour porpoise bycatch in set net fisheries. Numerous trials have shown that pingers of several types can reduce porpoise bycatch by around 90%. ADDs are, however, expensive, where many are required (e.g. for set net fisheries), require periodic maintenance to check and replace batteries and can interfere with net setting and hauling. There is still ambivalence towards ADDs from NGOs due to perceived habitat exclusion and environmental noise effects. The seriousness of these effects is unproven. Habituation has also been cited as a reason that ADDs don't work although again there is no evidence that this is an issue. DDD devices have good potential to work in pelagic trawl fisheries where incidental bycatch of common dolphins may occur.

OBSERVER SCHEMES

4. General information on implementation of Articles 4 and 5

Four fleets/metiers >15m in size were identified as requiring observer coverage in relation to Articles 4 and 5 of 812/2004. These metiers are defined according to Appendix IV of Commission Decision 2008/949/EC as:

Metier Code	Level 4	Level 5
1.	Set gillnets (GNS)	Demersal fish
2.	Midwater otter trawl (OTM)	Small pelagic fish
3.	Midwater pair trawl (PTM)	Small pelagic fish
4	Midwater pair trawl (PTM)	Large pelagic fish

Additional metiers consisting of set net and pelagic trawl vessels <15m in size are used for Irish data, linking in with the requirement to carry out pilot observer schemes on smaller vessels under EC 812/2004. These metiers are defined as:

Metier Code	Level 4	Level 5
5.	Set gillnets (GNS) <15	Demersal fish
6.	OTM and PTM < 15	Small Pelagic fish

- Under 15m vessels

No observer coverage were carried out on pelagic trawling vessels under 15m in 2014

Eleven days at seas were carried out on gillnet vessels <15m in 2013 as part of a continued study examining interactions between set net fisheries and protected species

Provide information on:

- Legislative or administrative measures following provisions of Art.4 or 5.
- Difficulties implementing articles 4 and 5 of 812/2004

Pelagic trawl monitoring during the observer programme in accordance with the EC regulation 812/2004 resulted in zero cetacean bycatch being observed. Based on this result, it is impossible to design a sampling strategy aimed at achieving a co-efficient of variation no higher than 0.30 for the most frequently caught species. Ireland will therefore continue to implement pilot monitoring schemes in accordance with Annex III of 812/2004.

- Nature of onboard observations

Onboard observations were also carried out as part of discard and stock surveys carried out under the Data Collection Framework (DCF) by the Marine institute, dedicated monitoring under EC 812/2004 by BIM and provision of data on tuna fishing under DCF and ICCAT requirements.

5. Monitoring

5.1 Description of fishing effort and observer effort in towed gear

Metier Number	Fishing Area	Season	Days at Sea		No of		Days at Sea		No of	
			Trips Ef	Ef	Hauls Ef	Trips Ob	Ob	Hauls Ob		
2	Ila	All year	2	16	7					
2	IVa	All year	29	149	74					
2	IVa	Winter	0	0	1					
2	VIa	All year	12	65	57	2	22		38	
2	VIa	Winter	42	164	154		4		8	
2	VIIb	All year	14	89	49					
2	VIIb	Winter	37	201	143					
2	VIIc	All year	2	14	2	1	2		2	
2	VIIc	Winter	12	47	32	1	1		4	
2	VIIg	All year	9	22	13		15		22	
2	VIIg	Winter	2	2	2					
2	VIIh	All year	8	94	41	1	5		8	
2	VIIh	Winter	3	29	9					
2	VIIIa	All year	1	12	3		2		4	
2	VIIj	All year	5	44	20	1	11		24	
2	VIIj	Winter	11	46	63					
2	VIIk	Winter	2	8	4					
3	Ila	All year	3	16	5	1	2		3	
3	IVa	All year	52	200	151					
3	IVb	Winter	1	1	1					
3	VIa	All year	23	96	45					
3	VIa	Winter	64	259	102	4	11		12	
3	VIIa	All year	1	3	1					
3	VIIb	All year	13	60	24					
3	VIIb	Winter	59	239	122	4	13		20	
3	VIIc	Winter	5	28	11					
3	VIIg	All year	73	202	97	2	5		8	
3	VIIg	Winter	10	27	14					
3	VIIh	All year	5	71	104					
3	VIIh	Winter	3	26	7					
3	VIIj	All year	4	12	13					
3	VIIj	Winter	39	158	143					
3	VIIk	All year	1	2	1					
3	VIIk	Winter	3	14	6					
4	VIIg	All year	1	5	1					
4	VIIIe	All year	1	5	1					
4	VIIj	All year	9	75	16					
4	VIIk	All year	23	216	87	1	6		11	
4	Xb	All year	1	11	5					
4	XIIb	All year	1	4	1					
4	XIIc	All year	3	26	11					
6	VIa	All year	13	17	26					
6	VIa	Winter	4	4	7					
6	VIIa	All year	117	130	771					

6	VIIa	Winter	113	123	191
6	VIIg	All year	6	8	9
6	VIIg	Winter	9	13	16
6	VIIj	All year	3	3	4

5.2 Description of fishing effort and observer effort in static gear

Metier	Fishing Area	Season	Trips Ef	Days at Sea Ef	No of Hauls Ef	Trips Ob	Days at Sea Ob	No of Hauls Ob
1	VIIa	All year	6	35	31			
1	VIIb	All year	26	154	398			
1	VIIc	All year	0	0	45			
1	VIIg	All year	100	549	5216	1	2	10
1	VIIh	All year	6	41	82			
1	VIIj	All year	119	554	2071			
5	VIa	All year	19	28	54			
5	VIIa	All year	23	39	333			
5	VIIb	All year	144	203	3697			
5	VIIg	All year	643	1171	7019	4	9	60
5	VIIj	All year	315	379	2652	1	2	4

6. Estimation of incidental catches

6.1 Incidental catch rates by fleet segment and target species

Metier	Fishing		Species	No of specimens without pingers	Bycatch Mesh Size (mm)
	Area	Season			
5	VIIg	All year	Halichoerus grypus	3	270

8. Conclusions

Results to date suggest that the risk of bycatch and other protected species in Irish pelagic trawl fisheries is very low. Cetacean bycatch has been sporadic in observed set net operations in recent years with seal bycatch occurring relatively frequently in large meshed set nets.

9. Annexe I

Table 9.1 Summary of Irish Fishing Effort and Observer Coverage in relation to requirements under 812/2004

Metier Code	Level 4			Level 5		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Set gillnets (GNS) >15			Demersal fish		
	Midwater otter trawl (OTM)			Small pelagic fish		
	Midwater pair trawl (PTM)			Small pelagic fish		
	Midwater pair trawl (PTM)			Large pelagic fish		
	Set gillnets (GNS) <15			Demersal fish		
	OTM and PTM <15			Small pelagic fish		

Total Effort (Days at sea)						
Year	1	2	3	4	5	6
2005	1870	716	1100	118	845	16
2006	1537	393	995	75	1036	50
2007	1772	380	1056	103	1232	41
2008	1603	440	1014	218	1486	40
2009	1474	629	1013	350	1733	21
2010	1454	872	1257	302	1547	41
2011	1268	534	1221	237	1142	96
2012	1339	775	1518	628	1402	397
2013	1349	699	1397	321	2430	207
2014	1333	1002	1409	341	1820	298

Observed effort (Days at sea)						
Year	1	2	3	4	5	6
2005	63	8	12	14	16	
2006	45	40		11	6	
2007	10	24	14	7		
2008		43	17			
2009		46	31	5		2
2010		52	40	59		5
2011	71	60	157	48	10	8
2012	33	74	143	15	8	3
2013	9	65	43	19	31	5
2014	2	63	31	6	11	
Total	233	475	488	184	82	23

Annual observer coverage (%)						
Year	1	2	3	4	5	6
2005	3.37	1.12	1.09	11.91	1.89	
2006	2.93	10.18		14.77	0.58	
2007	0.56	6.32	1.33	6.80		
2008		9.77	1.68			
2009		7.31	3.06	1.43		9.52
2010		5.96	3.18	19.57		12.20
2011	5.60	11.24	12.86	20.30	0.88	8.33
2012	2.46	9.55	9.42	2.39	0.57	0.76
2013	0.67	9.30	3.08	5.93	1.28	2.42
2014	0.15	6.29	2.20	1.76	0.60	