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Ms. Julie James MS,
Minster for Climate Change,
Welsh Government
Via email

14/04/2022

Re: By catch of Harbour porpoise

Dear Minster, Julie,

I hope this letter finds you and your team well.

I am writing to express my shock at recent figures that outline that the over 700 Harbour Porpoise have been accidentally caught, in what is referred to as "bycatch", by fishermen in the Celtic Sea.

Whether it be from pollution, boat collision, underwater noise or netting issues, as the Harbour Porpoise champion I am proud to have routinely highlighted the continued threat that human actions present to this species and their survival.

Data that has been published in the ICES scientific report "Workshop on Estimation of Mortality of Marine Mammals Due to Bycatch" (WKMOMA), highlights that 738 of these incredible animals have been identified as being a victim of bycatch, leading to a startling population impact assessment. This is a truly shocking statistic which highlights the continued threat that these animals are under from human activity in our waters. Please find a copy of this report enclosed for your perusal.

Given that the Senedd has already declared a nature emergency I am writing to urgently request that you investigate into this matter and advise me of what steps can be taken by the Welsh Government to safeguard Harbour Porpoises from Bycatch in the Celtic Sea.

I look forward to receiving your response at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Finch-Saunders MS/AS

Enc- Report