

RESOLUTION 2.23
EDUCATION STRATEGY AND PROGRAMS

The Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area:

Recognizing that civil society plays a major role in the implementation of ACCOBAMS,

Aware that the acceptance of compulsory measures will be facilitated by the increase of knowledge on cetacean role in the ecosystem by the concerned public and that the young generation must be prepared for a more participative role in the decision process,

Recognizing children and youth as key media actors in the awareness of the civil society and the stakeholders,

Desirous to fully participate in the UNEP and other Intergovernmental bodies efforts in the implementation of the Millennium Goals and the WSSD JPOA in particular, in relation with the gender issues and intergenerational relations as such,

Recalling the ten TUNZA commitments of the UNEP TUNZA International Youth Conference held in Dubna, Russia, from 25th-27th August 2003 and in particular commitment n° 2:

"I will establish communication with individuals and organizations involved in the protection of the environment in my community and in my region, and ensure that relevant information concerning them is included and shared with the TUNZA network through the UNEP website",

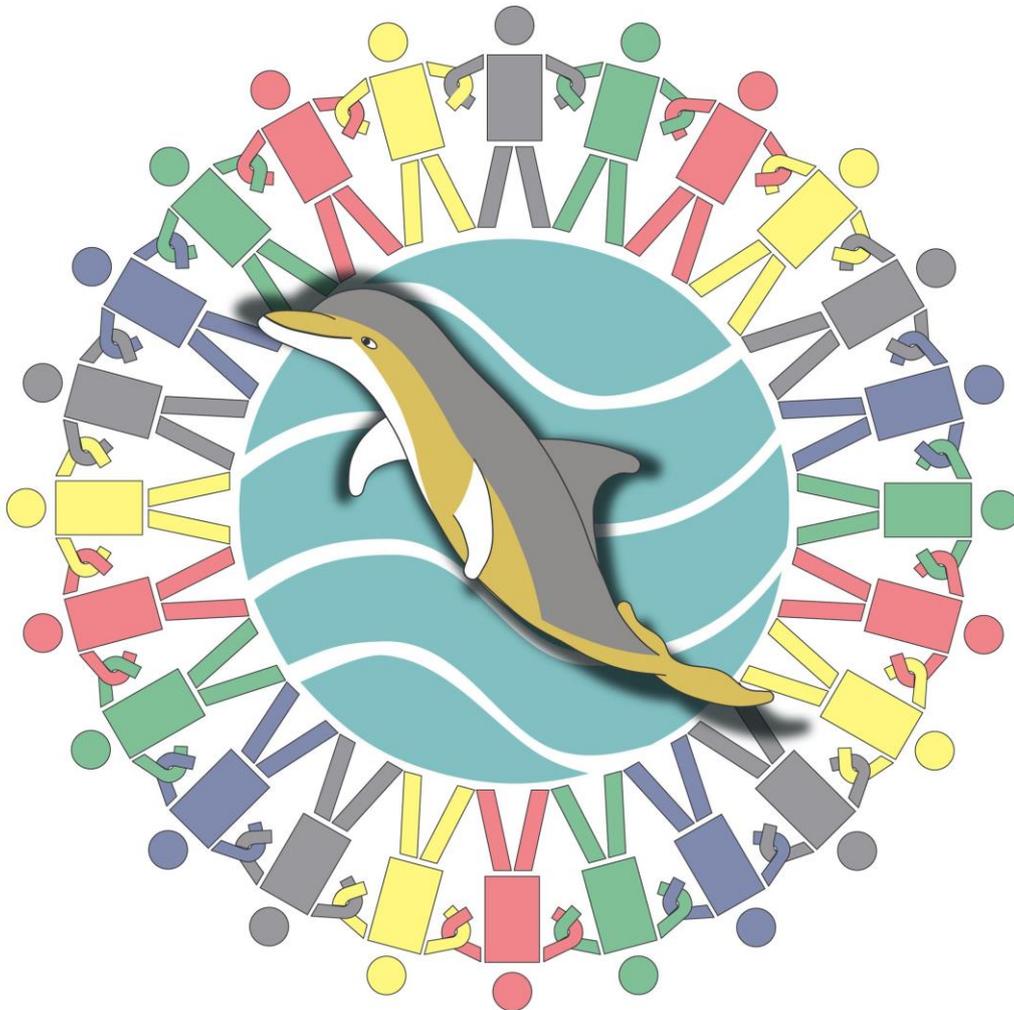
Recalling:

- Article II.3 e) of the Agreement and its Conservation Plan engaging Parties to address management measures addressing inter alia capacity building, collection and dissemination of information, training and education for the conservation of cetaceans,
- Resolution 1.11 on implementation priorities action 4 focusing on pilot conservation and management actions in well-defined key area,

Considering with appreciation the efforts by the NGO's devoted to public awareness and *recognizing* their success in this matter,

1. *Takes note* of the ACCOBAMS Educational strategy and program;
2. *Thanks* WCDCS and ASMS Ocean Care for their involvement in drafting the program;
3. *Calls upon* Parties, Riparian States, Range States, Specialized IGO and NGOs to support this program and participates to its further development at the national and international levels by providing educational material and substantive fundings;
4. *Entrusts* WCDCS, ASMS Ocean care, in synergy with other NGOs and in particular others ACCOBAMS Partners:
 - To further develop this strategy and take a key role in the implementation of the programs;
 - To develop, if requested, with the support of a limited budgetary allocation from the ACCOBAMS budget, an educational awareness section of the ACCOBAMS web site, under the supervision of the ACCOBAMS Secretariat.

ANNEX
HOW TO CONSERVE CETACEANS...
AN EDUCATION STRATEGY AND PROGRAM



A proposal by WDCS¹, the Whale and Dolphins Conservation Society and and ASM Ocean Care²

¹ In Resolution 1.13. WDCS, the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, has been recognised as an “ACCOBAMS Partner”. This has been “a consequence of the historical relationship” with the Secretariat and aims to “facilitate cooperation in assessment and management activities of man-cetacean interactions and also in activities of capacity building, collection and dissemination of information, training and education”.

² ASMS OceanCare has been recognised as an “ACCOBAMS Partner” in February 2004 with the Secretariat and will “facilitate the awareness on cetacean conservation in the region and also enhance the establishment of scientific based conservation actions”.² Both items produced in the context of education initiatives promoted by WDCS and ASMS Ocean Care.

I. Introduction

With regards Education in the context of conservation and effective management within the ACCOBAMS Agreement Area, Notarbartolo di Sciara & Birkun (2002) remark: "Education and awareness campaigns are critical elements of effective management, and need to be prepared and implemented at the highest professional level. The greater public needs to be constantly informed about the status of cetaceans in their region of residence, the possible effects of human activities on their well-being, and ways to improve their chances of survival. Awareness on the very existence of cetaceans, on their possible and real threats, and on **actions that can be taken to ensure their survival** is still very low in the Agreement area, and very inhomogeneous in its distribution. Education and awareness can be achieved both by ensuring that the media operators are trained and updated on cetacean conservation matters, and that educational material and programmes are constantly developed and **appropriately disseminated**. Such activities are particularly suited to a number of Non-Governmental Organisations concerned with cetacean conservation, and best results can be achieved through a co-operative effort between institutions and NGOs"³. Art.II. e. of ACCOBAMS and the Action Plan engages parties to address capacity building, collection and dissemination of information, training and education for the conservation of cetaceans. The Action Plan further lists that „Parties shall co-operate to develop common tools for the collection and dissemination of information about cetaceans and to organise training courses and education programmes. Such actions shall be conducted in concert at the sub-regional and Agreement level, supported by the Agreement secretariat, the Co-ordination units and the Scientific Committee and carried out in collaboration with competent international institutions or organizations. The results shall be made available to all Parties“. WDCS and ASMS perceive potential partners to be specialized IGOs (e.g. UNESCO), other NGOs and Foundations.

“Education programmes and well-designed public awareness programmes” are also recognised within the Comprehensive Assessment of cetacean status and problems as essential components of any strategy regarding the mitigation of negative effects of interactions with fisheries, mitigation of disturbance and other threats cetaceans in the Agreement area are facing⁴ and to prepare actual and future generation to accept environmental conservation constraints.

There is no doubt that education and awareness programmes are vital to achieve a wide acceptance and support for the implementation of measures, e.g. based on the International Implementation Priorities for 2002-2006 and the program of work 2005-2007, to conserve and protect cetaceans and their habitat among the public and those interest groups possibly affected by such.

II. Target Audience

Defining the Target audience for an educational programme concerning whales, dolphins and their environment is a difficult task. In one way or another we are all responsible for our activities which, on many occasions, wherever we live, affect cetaceans. For example, although perhaps different to the influence that coastal communities have on the environment, the actions of businesses and tourists can also have a negative impact. As a consequence, any educational programme should ideally reach as many people as possible to accomplish support and understanding for conservation measures.

Educational programmes targeting a young audience are particularly valuable to achieve long-term results, as these can create the necessary sensibility and understanding to support conservation measures. Targeting children is an investment in the future. They have a strong interest in becoming involved and therefore can become an inspiring example for their parents.

³ Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara and Alexei Birkun, Jr. 2002. Conservation Needs and Strategies. In: Notarbartolo di Sciara (Ed.), Cetaceans of the Mediterranean and Black Seas: State of Knowledge and Conservation Strategies. A report to the ACCOBAMS Secretariat, Monaco, February, 2002, Section 18., p.21.

⁴ Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara and Alexei Birkun, Jr. 2002. Conservation Needs and Strategies. In: Notarbartolo di Sciara (Ed.), Cetaceans of the Mediterranean and Black Seas: State of Knowledge and Conservation Strategies. A report to the ACCOBAMS Secretariat, Monaco, February, 2002, Section 18., p.21.

Another important aspect of a successful education programme is the involvement of local communities. Few conservation efforts work effectively without the support of the local stakeholders. Wherever possible, conservation measures should involve and be supported by the local communities. Capacity building of local people as volunteers should be part of the overall programme. Other opportunities involve engaging people in long-term community-based projects that are self-perpetuating.

This proposal focuses on the education and direct involvement of school children (Junior Programme) on the one hand and the development of education programmes within local communities in key areas of the Agreement range (Community Programme) on the other. To reinforce both programmes the training of teachers and other instructors has to be developed and realized.

As Target groups we define:

(1) Junior Programme:

- School children⁵ in Range States
- School children in Countries with high numbers of tourists travelling to the Mediterranean region
- Teachers / Educators

(2) Community Programme:

- Local communities⁶
- Local instructors / trainers

III. Objectives

The objectives of this programme are:

- To create awareness of the cetacean species inhabiting the Agreement Area, Their biology, their needs and habitat and the threats they face;
- To create acceptance and support for cetacean conservation measures;
- To create enthusiasm and opportunities to become engaged and join conservation efforts.

The Education Programme should offer solutions and encourage people to take part in conservation activities. Where possible, avenues for ongoing personal involvement in, or commitment to, conservation initiatives should be created. Education becomes a powerful conservation tool when commitment is over a lifetime.

IV. Methods

1. Junior Programme

The programme consists of producing a sound, practical and informative **education package** that can be attractive to both teachers and pupils. The proposed “Action Kit for Kids” will fulfil these expectations, be suitable for regular updating, and consist of different modules that focus on specific “hotspots” of different regions.

The Kit may include tools based on existing products (e.g. the webclip “Coastal Dolphins” and the documentary “Dolphin People”⁷). The “Action Kit for Kids” should be based on state-of-the-art scientific information but prepared according to sound educational principles. It should be available in the official languages of the Range states (including

⁵ It is important to distinguish between children of different age groups and recognise them as different target groups. We suggest focusing on children between the ages of 8 and 12 years.

⁶ As a starting point, we suggest conducting educational programmes with a focus on human communities living along the coasts of areas of special conservation importance for cetaceans, as recognised within Action No.4 “Development and implementation of pilot conservation and management actions in well-defined key areas containing critical habitat for populations belonging to priority species”, but not be restricted to those.

⁷ Both items produced in the context of education initiatives promoted by WDCS and ASMS Ocean Care

those not yet parties to ACCOBAMS⁸), including states whose citizens often choose the Mediterranean as a favoured holiday destination.

The aim of this programme is to provide a basic tool consisting of different modules in one or two languages as a first step. This product is open to translation and synchronization through the different Member States or Parties. The different Education systems and teaching methods of the various Countries will have to be considered while producing individual versions for each Country.

Content of the education package

- Information on the cetacean species inhabiting the Agreement Area (biology, distribution, habitat, threats etc.)
- Explanation and presentation of cetacean conservation measures and ACCOBAMS initiatives, recognising regional hot spots
- Conservation projects and initiatives to join – both inside and outside the classroom
- Presentation of key initiatives focusing on priority species, e.g. coastal dolphin species (e.g. bottlenose dolphin, common dolphin) and large whale species such as the sperm whale and the fin whale
- List of activities necessary to receive a “Whale / Dolphin Diploma” (e.g. answering a questionnaire, writing an essay, participating in a certain number of related projects)

Structure of the education package

- Introduction for teachers: how they can include the material in their lectures and structure lesson plans around whales and dolphins
- Children’s activity sheets
- Teacher’s notes with background information
- Interactive tools (educational games, learning through play)
- Education video materials
- Educational posters. These can be displayed at schools and are not, therefore, solely reliant on teachers giving a lesson
- Mechanisms for children to communicate what they have learnt to other children – most easily done with online tools⁹ and forums
- “Whale / Dolphin Diploma” package

Educational principles:

Develop problem-solving skills

Stimulate imagination and planning skills

Encourage self-responsible learning

Develop social processes within school classes

Assist to strengthen children’s self-confidence

Products:

Action Kit for Kids - Printed version (incl. CD and/or DVD with video materials etc.)

Action Kit for Kids - DVD only

Action Kit for Kids - Downloadable online version

Dissemination of the education package:

- Online: dedicated section of the ACCOBAMS website

⁸ Albanian, Arabic, Bulgarian, Croatian, English, French, Georgian, German, Greek, Italian, Maltese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian

⁹ This can be restricted to access problems in large portions of the Agreement Range

At present the ACCOBAMS website contains of two key sections: Institutional web site and scientific web site. This programme recommends creating a new “Education & Awareness” section¹⁰.

In the future this third section may include education and awareness subsections targeting the wider public, including interest groups identified as prime targets (e.g. fishermen, whale watching tour operators etc.). The “Action Kit for Kids” could act as a “kick start” for such a section.

The “Kit” section could be linked to the websites of various organisations. A concept for online promotion will be required and could be developed by the proponents of this programme in co-ordination with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat. It is also possible to create chat-lines, email forums or galleries to allow children to communicate their learning process to other children, encouraging an exchange on different initiatives and projects

- Distribution in schools and integration in national educational programmes

The “Action Kit” will be created in order that it is suitable for integration in national education programmes.

Examples of distributors:

- National ministries;
- Federal, regional and local authorities responsible for educational initiatives;
- Institutions focusing on environmental education and conservation (e.g. UNEP¹¹ or UNESCO);
- Teacher-training colleges;
- ACCOBAMS partners;
- NGOs;
- Organisations that deliver learning resources to schools across the Countries as well as to libraries and other learning centres.

2. Community Programme: Events and Mobile Exhibitions

As described in Chapter II (Target groups), a starting point could be to conduct educational programmes with a focus on human communities living along the coasts of areas of conservation importance for cetaceans, as recognised within Action No. 4 “Development and implementation of pilot conservation and management actions in well-defined key areas containing critical habitat for populations belonging to priority species”¹², but not be restricted to those.

The diversity and variety of field projects in the Agreement area will be instrumental for the development of such programmes. In some areas field projects (conducted by institutions, NGOs, individual researchers, etc.) already have awareness-raising activities as an integrated part. For instance, successful public awareness initiatives linked to local research projects have been conducted by Blue World in Croatia, Studiomare in Italy, Tethys Research Institute in Italy, Croatia and Greece, Tudav in Turkey, etc. Whenever public awareness programmes are already in place, such programmes should be supported, complemented, and coordinated to integrate them in the wider effort to promote awareness in the ACCOBAMS region. In other cases where existing field projects do not include public awareness activities, an attempt should be made to develop such activities by taking advantage of the existing local expertise (e.g. Training courses could be implemented. In addition capacity building initiatives could be planned in areas where no field work is undertaken currently, or new programmes developed to launch education and awareness-raising activities in these regions. All these initiatives should aim to involve the local communities.

At present, the proposed programme cannot include a complete list of the possible activities, as their number and range will depend on the available budget.

Public events:

Organising or supporting public events in areas close to where dolphins or whales live can be an effective tool in making people aware of the importance of protecting the animals.

¹⁰ One of the implications could be that there will be a need to revise the entire website to make it consistent in format.

¹¹ E.g. as part of the UNEP TUNZA Programme (see www.unep.org/children-youth/tunza/)

¹² ACCOBAMS: International Implementation Priorities for 2002-2006

- Dolphin Day / Whale Day:

Some ACCOBAMS Partners have successfully established an annual “Dolphin Day” which includes a variety of public awareness events. The institutionalization of such “Dolphin [or Whale] Days is an effective way of creating and maintaining awareness among local communities as well as stakeholders and tourists. Depending on the available resources, various activities could be organized, which the local authorities could then promote. A “Dolphin Day” may include public seminars and presentations, video projections, dolphin sounds, music events, beach cleaning, drawing competitions for children, production of whale and dolphin artwork, distribution of dedicated information and public awareness materials, etc.

Targets: Institutionalisation of “Dolphin and/or Whale Days”

Increase number of public events within local communities

Reporting of such events (e.g. online)

- Mobile exhibition:

While the creation of exhibitions and/or exhibition centers is a reasonable objective, resources may be restricted on some occasions and in some areas. An alternative and/or complementary activity for raising awareness could be a mobile exhibition that, for example, displays inflatable cetacean species. This type of “event” could be an added attraction to a “Dolphin Days” and help raising awareness among the public.

Targets:

Develop a mobile exhibition and tour with a selection of inflatable cetacean species of the Agreement area for 2005/2006

Identifying priority regions and communities benefiting from such attraction

Co-ordination with other ACCOBAMS initiatives and activities

