

RESOLUTION 2.28**ON THE PROMOTION OF PHOTO-IDENTIFICATION ACTIVITIES**

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

Aware of the fact that «Europhlukes», a EU-funded programme having the goals of developing a European cetacean photo-identification system and related matching software, of initiating a European network of providers and end-users of the European Cetacean photo-identification system, and of ensuring the continued contribution of material and supportable use of the database, has reached the end of its term,

Considering the International Implementation Priorities adopted by the First Meeting of the Parties, and in particular Implementation Priority n. 11 (“Development of photo-identification databases and programmes encompassing the entire ACCOBAMS Area”), where it was “highly recommended that an operational link be established between ACCOBAMS and the «Europhlukes» project management, to explore possibilities for future co-operative effort, for the extension of the programme to non-European partners within the Agreement Range States, and to help ensuring the indefinite continuation of this worthy initiative after the European project is terminated”,

Convinced of the importance of providing photo-identification training in the Agreement area (as demonstrated by the successful training conducted to the benefit of Black Sea research teams), of the need to make further progress, and of integrating photo-identification techniques in current and future efforts of advancing in the understanding of comprehensive description of cetacean populations distribution and abundance in the Agreement area, and that there is a need to take this complex of activities forward with independent funding,

Considering the reports of the First and of the Second Meetings of the Scientific Committee, containing recommendations to implement pilot projects to develop capacity-building programmes on photo-identification techniques, in particular envisaging the establishment of a link between Europhlukes and Black Sea Countries, to support the involvement of Black Sea researchers and the provision of their data to «Europhlukes», thus gaining access to the deliverables «Europhlukes» will develop before the end of 2004,

Aware of the participation of ACCOBAMS in the Steering and Liaison Committees of «Europhlukes»,

Aware that the European Cetacean Society has agreed to provide initial support for the project in an interim period of one year (2005),

1. *Instructs* the Scientific Committee to present a scientific study on the results of the project and to report to the Bureau for further support;
2. *Mandates* the Secretariat, with the agreement of the Bureau, to actively support the project;
3. *Mandates* the Secretariat to encourage Parties and non-Parties to participate and to support actively the Programme, in order to guarantee the continued survival and growth of the «Europhlukes» activities in collaboration with other relevant organisations;
4. *Charges* the Secretariat in close cooperation with the Scientific Committee to report to the next meeting of the Parties the result of this collaboration and to make any proposal for the follow-up;