

RESOLUTION 6.19**SHIP STRIKES ON CETACEANS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA**

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

Recalling Resolution 5.11 “Ship strikes on large cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea”, which has replaced the previous Resolution 4.10,

Taking in consideration Recommendation 10.6 of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee based on the report and recommendations of the joint International Whaling Commission (IWC) – Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife – Caribbean (SPAW) workshop to address collisions between marine mammals and ships,

Aware that cetaceans, in particular large species such as fin and sperm whales, are threatened by impacts with ships,

Also aware that the speed, rather than the shape or displacement, of vessels is the most significant factor in ship strikes,

Aware that the volume of shipping traffic will continue increasing substantially in the near future,

Stressing that the highest priority is the collection and reporting of data, including near misses, to the Global Ship Strikes Database hosted by the IWC, which will both facilitate a proper evaluation, prioritisation and monitoring of ship strikes as a threat to various populations and regions, and assist in the development of mitigation measures,

Stressing also that mitigation measures that separate whales from vessels in space and time, or at least minimise co-occurrence, to the extent possible are the most effective measure, where this is possible (e.g. routing schemes),

1. *Strongly encourages* Parties to submit information on ship strikes to the Global Ship Strikes database hosted by the IWC which has recently streamlined the data entry process with advice from members of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and others;
2. *Encourages* the Scientific Committee and its relevant Working Group to facilitate reporting to, and feedback from IWC Global Database;
3. *Asks* the Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to continue to work with the IWC, the European Cetacean Society, ASCOBANS and other relevant organisations in finalising necropsy protocols to, *inter alia*, identify causes of death, related to ship strikes;
4. *Asks* the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee to:
 - investigate the existing data to determine the efficacy of undertaking a spatial modelling exercise for fin whales in the Mediterranean for comparison with information on shipping traffic;
 - continue to monitor high risk areas for ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea;
 - Suggest and facilitate implementation of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) or national mitigation measures (PSSA, TSS, ATBA) in selected areas;
5. *Recommends* to the Parties that they continue to support projects that will improve knowledge of ship strikes and potential mitigation strategies including telemetry and photo-id studies;

6. *Recommends* that the scientific evaluation of the efficacy of tools to prevent and mitigate ship strikes, such as the REPCET system, be undertaken in the next triennium;
7. *Encourages* Parties to give serious consideration to the possibility of introducing speed restrictions within the Cetacean Critical Habitats (*e.g.* marine protected areas, SPAMIs, etc.) at those times of the year when fin or sperm whales are present;
8. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat, with the assistance of the Scientific Committee, to evaluate the relevance and the feasibility of a “whale-safe from ship strikes” certificate for shipping Companies;
9. *Asks* the Parties to support efforts within IMO to introduce Traffic Separation Schemes where these have been demonstrated to be an effective mitigation measure, such as the Hellenic Trench, as recommended by the IWC Scientific Committee in 2015 as a result of work initially identified at the 2010 Joint ACCOBAMS/IWC Workshop on Reducing Risks of Collisions between Vessels and Cetaceans;
10. *Decides* that the present Resolution complements Resolution 5.11.