

## **ACCOBAMS Strategy (Period 2014 - 2025)**

### **Contents**

|                                                                                                |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| ACCOBAMS Factsheet .....                                                                       | 2  |
| Summary .....                                                                                  | 3  |
| 1. Introduction.....                                                                           | 5  |
| 2. Methodology of the Strategy development.....                                                | 5  |
| 3. Analysis of present state of ACCOBAMS affairs .....                                         | 6  |
| 4. Mission .....                                                                               | 6  |
| 5. Vision .....                                                                                | 6  |
| 6. Objectives.....                                                                             | 7  |
| A. MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT .....                                                           | 7  |
| B. CETACEAN CONSERVATION EFFORTS.....                                                          | 10 |
| 7. Action plan.....                                                                            | 12 |
| A. MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT .....                                                           | 12 |
| B. CETACEAN CONSERVATION EFFORTS.....                                                          | 20 |
| 8. Implementation and financing .....                                                          | 32 |
| 9. Monitoring and revision of the Strategy .....                                               | 32 |
| 10. Appendices .....                                                                           | 33 |
| Appendix 1. Working Group for the development of Strategy .....                                | 33 |
| Appendix 2. Regional workhops participants involved in the Strategy development process.....   | 34 |
| Appendix 3. Summary of Evaluation of the ACCOBAMS effectiveness for the 2002 – 2010 period.... | 35 |
| Appendix 4. SWOT analysis of present state of ACCOBAMS affairs.....                            | 38 |
| Appendix 5. Proposal of the Work Programme Format.....                                         | 41 |

## ACCOBAMS Factsheet

|                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Full name</b>                                                  | Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Mother Convention</b>                                          | Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Entered into force</b>                                         | 1 <sup>st</sup> of June 2001                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Geographical scope</b>                                         | All maritime waters of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, their gulfs and seas as well as thermal waters connected to or interconnecting to these maritime waters;<br>The Atlantic area contiguous to the Mediterranean Sea west of the Straits of Gibraltar.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Parties (23)</b>                                               | Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Partners (36) as of July 2013</b>                              | Alnilam, Alnitak, Archipelagos Institute of Marine Conservation, ATUTAX, BICREF - Biological Conservation Research Foundation, Blue World Institute of Marine Research and Conservation, BREMA Laboratory, Conservation Biology Research Group - University of Malta, Conservation Information and Research on Cetaceans (CIRCE), Corsica Mare Osservazione, CRAM Foundation, Dipartimento di Scienze della Terra dell'Ambiente e della vita – DISTAV, écoOcéan Institut, European Cetacean Society (ECS), Green Balkans, Groupe de Recherche sur les Cétacés (GREC), International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Israel Marine Mammal Research and Assistance Center (IMMRAC), IUCN - The World Conservation Union, Morigenos - Slovenian Marine Mammal Society, National Institute for Marine Research and Development "Grigore Antipa", Nature Trust, Ocean Care, Oceana Foundation, Oceanographic Museum of Monaco, ORCA, Pelagos Cetacean Research Institute, Project Ninam, Souffleurs d'écume, Syrian Society for the Conservation of Wildlife (SSCW), Swiss Cetacean Society (SCS), Tethys Research Institute, Turkish Marine Research Foundation (TUDAV), University of Valencia, Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC), WWF - Mediterranean Programme Office |
| <b>Depositary</b>                                                 | Principality of Monaco                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Secretariat's Headquarters</b>                                 | Principality of Monaco                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Organisations with signed Memorandum of Understanding (14)</b> | Association «FLORA & FAUNA», Association Nationale de Développement Durable et la Conservation de la Vie Sauvage (ANDDCVS), Black Sea Council for Marine Mammals (BSCMM), Blue World Institute, Green Balkans NGO, Institute of Fish Ressources in Varna, , Institut National des Sciences et Technologies de la Mer (INSTM), Mare Nostrum, MedPAN, National Council for Scientific Research of Lebanon, National Research Institute for Marine Research and Development "Grigore Antipa", RAC/SPA, Tethys Research Institute, TUDAV                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Average annual budget</b>                                      | 325.000 EUR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Sources of funding</b>                                         | 54%-Voluntary Contributions, 44% Ordinary Contributions, 2% - Other                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Official website</b>                                           | <a href="http://www.accobams.org">www.accobams.org</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

## Summary

ACCOBAMS was concluded as a tool to promote conservation of cetaceans through regional cooperation. After almost 10 years of operations, the Fourth Meeting of Parties decided to develop a long-term Strategy.

A special Working Group was organised to prepare a Strategy proposal, based on the analysis of the ACCOBAMS effectiveness for the 2002 – 2010 period. This Working Group included 24 members: ACCOBAMS Bureau, representatives of the Parties, Partners, Consultants and Secretariat of the Bonn Convention. In addition, 20 participants of the regional workshops, representing Parties and relevant regional agreements, actively contributed to preparation of the strategic document.

The Strategy includes seven main elements: *Analysis of present state of ACCOBAMS affairs; ACCOBAMS Mission; Vision; Objectives; Action plan; Implementation and financing; Monitoring and revision of the Strategy.*

The *Analysis of present state* encompasses results of the evaluation of the ACCOBAMS effectiveness and reflections of the Working Groups' members about the Agreement's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). According to the effectiveness analysis, ACCOBAMS has not succeed in ensuring good status of cetacean populations, but it managed to improve regional cooperation; both by linking scientists and facilitating that countries with good human and financial capacities help those with no or weak capacities. The willingness to help countries with less resources and high motivation of some members of the ACCOBAMS structure were identified as the main strengths on which the Strategy should be built upon. On the other hand, insufficient support of the sectoral stakeholders has been identified as the most relevant weakness, followed with weak compliance. The constant demand to address emerging issues and the potential for synergies with existing and operating international agreements are the best opportunities to use, while energy crisis, political instability in some regions and financial crisis are challenges that should be considered in the future.

ACCOBAMS purpose, as expressed in the *Mission* is to continue to promote and facilitate regional cooperation at all levels, providing best expertise and standards and propelling implementation of all necessary measures for conserving cetaceans in the region.

ACCOBAMS *Vision* is that cetacean populations in the ACCOBAMS area will be in a favourable conservation status, expressed as healthy populations and habitats with minimised adverse human impacts, with ACCOBAMS having a role of key regional player.

The ACCOBAMS's overall *objective* and 10 supportive specific objectives were identified and linked to the Aichi targets and targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2010-2020. The overall objective is to improve current conservation status of cetaceans and their habitats in the ACCOBAMS area by 2025, more specifically to achieve that status of at least all the regularly present species listed as endangered (EN) in the IUCN Red List downgraded to at least vulnerable (VU), with support of ACCOBAMS and ensure good environmental status (GES) as defined in the MSFD and according to the Ecosystem approach process implemented by the Mediterranean Action Plan, at least in the areas representing critical habitats. The specific objectives are grouped in two chapters: Management of the Agreement and Cetacean conservation efforts. Good management of the Agreement includes improvement of communications, better involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations, ensurance of adequate funding, improvement of compliance and implementation monitoring, as well as application of ACCOBAMS's cetacean conservation standards in the adjacent areas. Cetacean conservation efforts are focused to improvement of knowledge about state of cetaceans; reduction of human pressures, particularly those related to interaction with fisheries and

habitat loss and degradation; enhancement of public awareness; improvement of national capacities; and effective conservation of cetacean critical habitats.

The *Action plan* includes 75 activities: 28 for good management of the Agreement and 47 as part of concrete cetacean conservation efforts. The management of the Agreements' activities address information and communication, existing partnerships, new partnerships, new funding opportunities, compliance to work programme and resolutions, monitoring overall effectiveness, enter into force of already adopted geographical extensions and potential geographical extensions. Cetacean conservation efforts activities are grouped under all relevant themes: cetacean populations estimates and distribution, population structure, monitoring cetaceans status, interaction with fisheries, chemical pollution, anthropogenic noise, ship strikes, cetaceans watching, marine debris, climate change, species conservation plans, captivity related issues, public awareness, functional stranding networks and responses to emergency situations, capacities to use photo ID, undertake aerial surveys and other issues, cetacean conservation postgraduate programmes, protected areas for cetaceans.

The *implementation* of the Strategy will be based on the operational work programmes for triennial periods, elaborating Strategy Action plan in more details. The Agreement funds (trust fund, voluntary contributions) will remain as the important source of *funding*, but more emphasis should be given to use of external funding.

*Monitoring* of the Strategy implementation progress will include regular monitoring of operational work programmes and resolutions implementation. The overall effectiveness will be evaluated after 5 years of implementation and at the end of the Strategy period, as a basis for the Strategy revision.

## 1. Introduction

The ACCOBAMS was developed as a cooperative tool for conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean and Black Seas and contiguous Atlantic area. The conclusion of the Agreement is a result of consultations between the Secretariats of the three Conventions: the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Mediterranean Coast (Barcelona Convention), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention) and the Convention relative to the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention), whose standing Committee decided, in 1989, to create an informal group on little cetaceans that met in Palma de Majorca in 1991 with the view of drafting an Agreement. The Bucharest Convention on the protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution joined the group of Conventions later. The Agreement has been ready for signature in Monaco since the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 1996 and entered into force the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2001.

Almost 10 years later, with 23 Parties and 36 Partners, ACCOBAMS has matured and become ready for evaluation whether invested efforts resulted with desired outcomes and how to adapt and strategically plan further work. In this regard the 4th Meeting of Parties to ACCOBAMS agreed to develop the ACCOBAMS Strategy for the next 10 years period using the participatory approach (Resolution 4.24.). During this process, a need for synergy with other relevant strategic planning processes was taken into account. It particularly refers to the Convention on Biological Diversity Strategic Plan 2011 – 2020; Aichi targets and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for the 2010 – 2020 period. The ACCOBAMS Strategy implementation period will also overlap with the "Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023", which should be adopted in 2014 at the eleventh Conference of Parties.

## 2. Methodology of the Strategy development

Process of the Strategy development started in 2011 with **initial planning** of the process itself, which included proposal of development steps pursuant to the Resolution 4.24., including timetable and responsibilities. The proposal was reviewed by the Scientific Committee, Bureau and Executive Secretary.

The **evaluation of ACCOBAMS effectiveness** for 2002-2010 period was prepared, using the existing data and where necessary, interviews with relevant representatives of ACCOBAMS bodies or other stakeholders. This document was a basis for the work of the **Working Group for preparation of the Strategy**. The Working Group consisted of 24 members including the WG coordinator, members of the Bureau, representatives of Scientific Committee, interested Parties and Partners and Consultants as well as a representative of the Bonn Convention (Appendix 1). It was opened for participation to all Focal Points, Partners and other interested participants throughout the Strategy development process. The interaction of the Working Group members was based on the e-mail correspondence.

The Working Group was coordinated through several steps leading to preparation of the Draft Strategy. The most active members were representatives of the Scientific Committee, Partners and Consultants. In addition, half day facilitated workshops were organised adjoining regional workshops in 2012, with participation of national focal points or other representatives of Parties and other organisations (Appendix 2). The participants were informed about the Strategy development progress and they actively discussed and proposed activities that represented core of the Strategy.

All suggestions and comments were compiled into the Strategy Working document and sent for review to the Working Group members, focal points and subsequently meetings of the Scientific Committee and the Bureau. All comments were integrated and this version of the document was published on the ACCOBAMS site for public consultations during one month. In that period comments were received from two organisations: Secretariat of the Bonn Convention and MedPAN, and included in the

document presented to the ACCOBAMS Extended Bureau. Resolution on the Strategy is presented to the 5th Meeting of Parties for approval.

### **3. Analysis of present state of ACCOBAMS affairs**

The Evaluation of ACCOBAMS's effectiveness 2002 – 2010 (Summary in Appendix 3) showed that ACCOBAMS has only partly fulfilled its overall objective; conservation status of cetacean populations is still poor, but at the same time it contributed to a better regional cooperation. In this regard, ACCOBAMS particularly promoted better linkages between scientists and facilitated that countries with good human and financial capacities help those lacking these capacities. The latter, as well as the high motivation of the some members of the ACCOBAMS structure, were identified by the Working Group as the main strengths on which the Strategy should be built (Appendix 4). On the other hand, insufficient support of the sectoral stakeholders has been identified as the most relevant weakness, followed with low level of compliance by Parties and low political power of the Agreement. The most important external opportunities for the Agreement to seize are the constant demand to address emerging issues (such as marine debris, climate change) and the potential for synergies with existing and operating international marine conservation agreements. Energy crisis, as a trigger for intensification of relevant activities, along with political instability in some regions and financial crisis are threats or challenges that should be taken into account.

### **4. Mission<sup>1</sup>**

“ACCOBAMS promotes and facilitates active regional cooperation at all levels, providing best expertise and standards and propelling implementation of all necessary measures for conserving cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area.”

### **5. Vision<sup>2</sup>**

„Cetacean populations in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area will be in a favourable conservation status<sup>3</sup>, expressed as healthy populations and habitats with minimised adverse human impacts, with ACCOBAMS having a role of key regional player.“

---

<sup>1</sup> Reference – Res. 4.24.

<sup>2</sup> Reference – Res.4.24

<sup>3</sup> The EU Habitats Directive provides a definition of favourable conservation status

## 6. Objectives

| Overall objective                                                                                     | Desired outcomes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Achievement indicator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Link to Aichi Strategy <sup>4</sup> (strategic goal)                     | Link to EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy <sup>5</sup> (target) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Improve conservation status of cetaceans and their habitats in the ACCOBAMS area by 2023 <sup>6</sup> | <p>Status of at least all the regularly present species listed as endangered (EN)<sup>7</sup> in the IUCN Red List downgraded to at least vulnerable (VU) with support of ACCOBAMS</p> <p>Good environmental status (GES) achieved in at least areas representing cetaceans critical habitats</p> | <p>IUCN/ACCOBAMS Cetacean Red List Status trend</p> <p>Conservation status of cetaceans trend pursuant to Article 17 of the EU Habitats Directive</p> <p>GES according to the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)</p> <p>GES according to the Ecosystem approach process implemented by the Mediterranean Action Plan</p> | <p>Strategic Goal B: Targets 6,8</p> <p>Strategic Goal C : Target 12</p> | Targets 1, 4 (action 14) and 6                              |

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1\\_EN\\_ACT\\_part1\\_v7%5B1%5D.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7%5B1%5D.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area

<sup>7</sup> Including species that are currently identified as data deficient (D.D.), but could have EN status. (Relation B.1.)

## A. MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT

| No.  | Specific objectives                                                                                       | Desired outcomes                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Achievement indicator                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Link to Aichi Strategy (strategic goal)                                  | Link to EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy (target) |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| A.1. | Improve communication across, up and down ACCOBAMS as an organisation                                     | All ACCOBAMS Bodies, national focal/contact points, Partners and other relevant national institutions, organisations and experts are familiar with activities implemented by or relevant for ACCOBAMS and share accurately information | <p>Percentage of relevant national institutions/organisation or independent experts familiar with or involved in ACCOBAMS activities</p> <p>Number of information on emerging issues shared accurately<sup>8</sup> with or via Secretariat</p> | Not applicable                                                           | Not applicable                                 |
| A.2. | Strengthen involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations, including all riparian countries | <p>All key stakeholders actively cooperate with ACCOBAMS, particularly the EC, GFCM, IMO, representatives of navy, oil and gas exploration and exploitation industry</p> <p>All riparian countries become Party to the ACCOBAMS</p>    | <p>Percentage of key stakeholders cooperating with ACCOBAMS</p> <p>Percentage of riparian countries that ratified ACCOBAMS</p>                                                                                                                 | Strategic Goal A: Target 4 and supportive to Strategic Goal E: Target 17 | Target 1: Action 3                             |

<sup>8</sup> Within 24 hours after actual occurrence

|      |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                             |                                |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A.3. | Ensure adequate funding, in particularly for conservation activities                                                                          | Real budget for conservation is increased and fulfils at least 50% of needs                                                                                                                                                                                | Percentage of the fulfilled conservation activities needs                                                                                     | Not directly applicable, although supportive to Strategic goal E: Target 20 | Target 6: Action 18, Target 20 |
| A.4. | Improve the level of implementation of and compliance with ACCOBAMS resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress                     | High level of implementation of ACCOBAMS resolutions (provisions) by Parties and overall work programmes implementation, amounting to at least 70%, with progress monitored at least once per triennium,<br><br>ACCOBAMS effectiveness is improved for 50% | Percentage of resolutions and work programme implementations evaluated at least at triennial rate<br><br>Overall ACCOBAMS effectiveness level | Not applicable                                                              | Not applicable                 |
| A.5. | Ensure implementation of the ACCOBAMS's cetacean conservation standards in the adjacent areas in close cooperation with other CMS instruments | All countries from adjacent areas implement ACCOBAMS cetacean conservation standards                                                                                                                                                                       | Level of compliance to ACCOBAMSs resolutions implementation on behalf of riparian countries not yet Parties to ACCOBAMS                       | All of the above                                                            | Not specifically addressed     |

## B. CETACEAN CONSERVATION EFFORTS

| No. | Specific objectives                                                                                                          | Desired outcomes                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Achievement indicator                                                                                                                                | Link to Aichi Strategy (strategic goal) | Link to EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy (target)   |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| B.1 | Improve the knowledge about state of cetaceans                                                                               | <p>Sufficient data collected to be able to assign all currently D.D. species to one of the IUCN categories</p> <p>New knowledge about/related to state of other species gained with support of ACCOBAMS</p>            | <p>Updated IUCN/ACCOBAMS Cetacean Red Lists</p> <p>New literature, published articles or other references</p>                                        | Strategic Goal E: Target 19             | Target 1: Action 4                               |
| B.2 | Reduce human pressures on cetaceans, particularly those related to interaction with fisheries , habitat loss and degradation | <p>Mortality rate and number of animals injured through activities caused by humans are decreased by at least 30%</p> <p>No recorded redistribution of cetacean populations that can be linked to human pressures.</p> | <p>Mortality trends and cases of animals injured through human activities</p> <p>Trends of cetaceans redistribution in relation to human impacts</p> | Strategic Goal B: Targets 5,6 and 8     | Target 4: Actions 14, 15 and Target 6; Action 17 |

|     |                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                 |                                |                            |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| B.3 | Enhance public awareness about cetaceans                      | General public and other relevant stakeholders in at least 20% of Parties are aware about cetaceans and need for their conservation through activities supported by or linked to ACCOBAMS | Level of awareness of general public and other relevant stakeholders (public awareness index)   | Strategic Goal A:<br>Target 1  | Target 1, Action 4         |
| B.4 | Improve capacities of national organisations and experts      | Trained staff/experts at least for two topics promoted through ACCOBAMS, particularly in south Mediterranean and Black Sea countries                                                      | Number of national staff/experts with acquired knowledge about topics promoted through ACCOBAMS | Strategic Goal E:<br>Target 19 | Not specifically addressed |
| B.5 | Enhance effective conservation of cetaceans critical habitats | State of cetaceans in at least 5 areas containing critical habitats is maintained or improved with certain support by ACCOBAMS                                                            | Management effectiveness level of protected areas for cetaceans                                 | Strategic Goal C:<br>Target 11 | Target 1: Actions 1 and 2  |

## 7. Action plan

### A. MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT

#### A.1. Specific objective: *Improve communication across, up and down ACCOBAMS as an organisation*

| No.                                         | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                  | Subject(s) in charge                                 | Expected outputs                                                | Possible sources of funding <sup>9</sup> | Priority level <sup>10,11</sup> | Target species | Relation to other activities |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>A.1.1. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                      |                                                                 |                                          |                                 |                |                              |
| A.1.1.1.                                    | Establish regular platform of communication to inform all relevant subjects about ongoing activities, cooperation possibilities, project call of proposals and other relevant information | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Parties, Partners | Regularly exchanged information                                 | AF                                       | Ongoing                         | All species    | A.3                          |
| A.1.1.2.                                    | Maintain and regularly update ACCOBAMS database <sup>12</sup> , including information about all cetacean conservation related scientists and experts operating in the region              | Secretariat, Parties, Scientific Committee, Partners | New and updated information filled into ACCOBAMS database       | AF                                       | Ongoing                         | All species    | -                            |
| A.1.1.3.                                    | Maintain regular communication of ACCOBAMS Bodies                                                                                                                                         | All Bodies                                           | Regular meetings of all bodies (f.e. for SC and Bureau at least | AF                                       | Ongoing                         | All species    | A.3.                         |

<sup>9</sup> AF= Agreement Funds ( Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic , etc.... ; EF= External Funds

<sup>10</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second , Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the forth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

<sup>11</sup> Proposed prioritisation level is based on scores given during regional workshops on desired priorities for the upcoming triennium and inputs of WG members

<sup>12</sup> Note: Development of comprehensive ACCOBAMS database is in progress and it should be established by 2013 (including information about institutions, projects, experts, etc....)

|          |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                           |                                                        |    |         |             |          |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----|---------|-------------|----------|
|          |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                           | twice in each triennium)                               |    |         |             |          |
| A.1.1.4. | Continue organising regional workshops with representatives of Parties and introducing participation of representatives of Scientific Committee | Secretariat, Parties, Scientific Committee                | Regional workshops once in each triennium              | AF | Ongoing | All species | A.4.     |
| A.1.1.5. | Continue organising biennial conferences for the Southern Mediterranean countries                                                               | Secretariat, Mediterranean Sub-regional Coordination Unit | Biennial conferences once in each triennium            | AF | Ongoing | All species | -        |
| A.1.1.6. | Regularly update ACCOBAMS web-site, including FINS                                                                                              | Secretariat                                               | New and accurate information available on the web-site | AF | Ongoing | All species | A.3.1.4. |

**A.2. Specific objective: Strengthen involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations**

| No.                                 | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Subject(s) in charge              | Expected outputs                                                                                                                                                                       | Possible sources of funding <sup>13</sup> | Priority level <sup>14</sup> | Target species                                    | Relation to other activities |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>A.2.1. EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                           |                              |                                                   |                              |
| A.2.1.1.                            | Continue active cooperation with GFCM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Secretariat, Scientific Committee | Participation in the work of relevant GFCM bodies/working groups<br><br>Joint projects                                                                                                 | AF                                        | Ongoing                      | DD,GM, OO, PP, SC, TT <sup>15</sup> (depredation) | B.2.1.                       |
| A.2.1.2.                            | Start more active cooperation with IMO                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Secretariat, Scientific Committee | Joint activities/projects                                                                                                                                                              | AF                                        | Medium - High                | All species                                       | B.2.3., B.2.4.               |
| A.2.1.3.                            | Intensify collaboration with CMS and relevant CMS agreements such as ASCOBANS in line with the relevant resolutions, as well as activities with other relevant nature conservation and environmental protection agreements such as the Barcelona Convention, IWC, etc..... | Secretariat                       | Regular meetings of the Secretariats<br><br>Joint projects<br><br>Joint working groups on particular issues (such as ship strikes with IWC, anthropogenic noise with ASCOBANS, etc...) | AF                                        | High                         | All species                                       | B.2.2., B.2.3., B.2.4.       |

<sup>13</sup> AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc....;EF= External Funds

<sup>14</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second , Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the fourth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

<sup>15</sup> DD=*Delphinus delphis* – short-beaked common dolphin, GM=*Globicephala melas* – long-finned pilot whale, OO=*Orcinus orca* – killer whale, PP=*Phocoena phocena* – harbour porpoise, SC = *Stenella coeruleoalba* – striped dolphin, TT=*Tursiops truncatus* – common bottlenose dolphin,

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                 |    |           |             |                        |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| A.2.1.4.                       | Include cetacean conservation activities in the strategic documents and other planning documents of relevant stakeholders, such as EU Biodiversity Strategy, marine strategies in the ACCOBAMS area (MSFD <sup>16</sup> ), CBD Strategy, Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023, SAP BIO, GFCM, IMO, MedPAN , etc.... | Secretariat, Parties                    | Cetacean conservation activities included in all relevant regional strategic documents                                                                                          | AF | High      | All species | All B activities, A.3. |
| A.2.1.5.                       | Mobilise more actively international, regional and local NGOs for lobbying about cetacean conservation interests at decision-making level                                                                                                                                                                                     | Secretariat, Partners                   | Regular communication/meetings with representatives of the relevant international NGOs                                                                                          | AF | High      | All species | -                      |
| <b>A.2.2. NEW PARTNERSHIPS</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                 |    |           |             |                        |
| A.2.2.1.                       | Negotiate accession of all riparian states to the Agreement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Secretariat, Parties                    | All riparian states are Parties to ACCOBAMS                                                                                                                                     | AF | Very high | All species | -                      |
| A.2.2.2.                       | Establish formal partnership with the EC jointly with ASCOBANS and as feasible with assistance from CMS, having a role of expert adviser for cetacean conservation issues                                                                                                                                                     | Secretariat, relevant Parties, Partners | Formal Agreement<br><br>Participation in the relevant EC fora<br><br>Contribution to the determination and monitoring of the GES (MSFD) and favourable conservation status (HD) | AF | Very high | All species | B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.5. |

<sup>16</sup> EC Marine Strategy Framework Directive

|          |                                                                                            |                      |                                                                             |    |               |             |                  |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---------------|-------------|------------------|
|          |                                                                                            |                      | Joint projects                                                              |    |               |             |                  |
| A.2.2.3. | Establish formal partnership with NATO - NURC                                              | Secretariat, Parties | Formal Agreement<br><br>Participation in the meetings<br><br>Joint projects | AF | High          | All species | B.2.3.           |
| A.2.2.4. | Establish formal partnership with International association of oil and gas producers (OGP) | Secretariat          | Formal Agreement<br><br>Participation in the meetings<br><br>Joint projects | AF | High          | All species | B.2.2., B.2.3.   |
| A.2.2.5. | Establish connections with International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)     | Secretariat          | Participation in meetings<br><br>Joint activities                           | AF | Medium - High | All species | B.1.2.           |
| A.2.2.6. | Establish connections with the European Boating Association (EBA)                          | Secretariat          | Participation in meetings<br><br>Joint activities                           | AF | Medium        | All species | B.2.3., B.3.1.4. |
| A.2.2.7. | Establish connections with the WTO (World Tourism Organisation)                            | Secretariat          | Participation in meetings<br><br>Joint activities                           | AF | Medium        | All species | B.2.3., B.2.5.   |

**A.3. Specific objective: *Ensure adequate funding, in particularly for conservation activities***

| No.                                     | Activity                                                                                                                 | Subject(s) in charge                                 | Expected outputs                                                                  | Possible sources of funding <sup>17</sup> | Priority level <sup>18</sup> | Target species | Relation to other activities |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>A.3.1. NEW FUNDING POSSIBILITIES</b> |                                                                                                                          |                                                      |                                                                                   |                                           |                              |                |                              |
| A.3.1.1.                                | Appoint one projects preparation/implementation assistance and fundraising officer in the Secretariat                    | Parties, Secretariat                                 | Project and fundraising officer as a member of the Secretariat staff              | AF, NC                                    | High                         | All species    | All B activities             |
| A.3.1.2.                                | Analyse available funding possibilities in the region (EU funds, private funds , etc....) and develop a funding strategy | Secretariat                                          | Overview of available funding possibilities in the region<br><br>Funding Strategy | AF                                        | Very high                    | All species    | All B activities             |
| A.3.1.3.                                | Regularly inform Parties about project call of proposals and other funding possibilities                                 | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Partners          | Information exchanged via e-mailing list                                          | AF                                        | Ongoing                      | All species    | A.1.1.1., all B activities   |
| A.3.1.4.                                | Encourage development of multilateral/ transboundary projects                                                            | Secretariat, Parties, Partners, Scientific Committee | Submitted project proposals prepared with assistance of ACCOBAMS bodies           | AF                                        | High                         | All species    | All B activities             |

<sup>17</sup> AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc....;EF= External Funds

<sup>18</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second , Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the fourth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

**A.4. Specific objective: Improve the level of implementation of and compliance with ACCOBAMS resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress**

| No.                                                        | Activity                                                                                                                                                 | Subject(s) in charge                     | Expected outputs                                                                    | Possible sources of funding <sup>19</sup> | Priority level <sup>20</sup> | Target species | Relation to other activities |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>A.4.1. COMPLIANCE TO WORK PROGRAMME AND RESOLUTIONS</b> |                                                                                                                                                          |                                          |                                                                                     |                                           |                              |                |                              |
| A.4.1.1.                                                   | Evaluate work programmes implementation progress and level of resolutions implementation by Parties as a basis for new triennial work programme planning | Secretariat, Bureau, Follow-up Committee | Analyses of work programmes implementation and implementation of resolutions report | AF                                        | High                         | All species    | A.1.1.4., All B activities   |
| A.4.1.2.                                                   | Propose remedy actions in cases of non-compliance and infringements                                                                                      | Follow-up Committee                      | Proposal of remedy actions                                                          | AF                                        | High                         | All species    | -                            |
| <b>A.4.2. MONITORING OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS</b>             |                                                                                                                                                          |                                          |                                                                                     |                                           |                              |                |                              |
| A.4.2.1.                                                   | Evaluate overall Agreement's effectiveness, at least prior to the Strategy revision                                                                      | Secretariat, External Assistance         | Evaluation of ACCOBAMS effectiveness                                                | AF                                        | Low                          | All species    | B.1.3., B.3.1.6., B.5.1.3.   |

<sup>19</sup> AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc....;EF= External Funds

<sup>20</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second , Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the fourth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

**A.5. Specific objective: *Ensure implementation of the ACCOBAMS's cetacean conservation standards in the adjacent areas***

| No.                                                                       | Activity                                                                                             | Subject(s) in charge                                               | Expected outputs                                                 | Possible sources of funding <sup>21</sup> | Priority level <sup>22</sup> | Target species | Relation to other activities |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>A.5.1. ENTER INTO FORCE OF ALREADY APPROVED GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENSION</b> |                                                                                                      |                                                                    |                                                                  |                                           |                              |                |                              |
| A.5.1.1.                                                                  | Enforce ratification by Parties of the existing Amendment for geographical extension to the Atlantic | Depositary, Parties                                                | Amendment entered into force                                     | NC                                        | Very high                    | All species    | -                            |
| <b>A.5.2. POTENTIAL GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENSIONS</b>                           |                                                                                                      |                                                                    |                                                                  |                                           |                              |                |                              |
| A.5.1.2.                                                                  | Analyse added value of extension to the adjacent areas, particularly of the Red Sea extension        | Secretariat, Relevant Parties, Scientific Committee, other experts | Proposal of further actions regarding extension of the Agreement | AF, NC                                    | Medium                       | All species    | -                            |

<sup>21</sup> AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc....;EF= External Funds

<sup>22</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second , Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the fourth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

## B. CETACEAN CONSERVATION EFFORTS

### B.1. Specific objective: *Improve knowledge about state of cetaceans*

| No.                                                           | Activity                                                                                                                                                               | Subject(s) in charge                                                                                                                                                             | Expected outputs                                                                                                                                                | Possible sources of funding <sup>23</sup> | Priority level <sup>24</sup> | Targeted species      | Relation to other activities |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>B.1.1. CETACEAN POPULATIONS ESTIMATES AND DISTRIBUTION</b> |                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           |                              |                       |                              |
| B.1.1.1.                                                      | Undertake two comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea using aerial surveys where possible                            | ACCOBAMS Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Parties, Partners; RAC/SPA (Mediterranean Sub-regional coordination unit); IUCN; French Marine Protected Areas Agency; other experts | Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the Western, Central, part of the South and Eastern Mediterranean Sea based on results of the survey | AF, EF,NC                                 | Very high                    | All species           | B.1.3.                       |
| B.1.1.2.                                                      | Assist in development and implementation of sub-regional (transboundary) abundance and distribution survey projects in the areas where aerial surveys are not possible | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, other experts, Parties, Partners                                                                                                              | Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans based on results of the survey                                                                          | AF,NC                                     | Very high                    | All species           | B.1.3.                       |
| B.1.1.3.                                                      | Facilitate undertaking the 2 <sup>nd</sup> survey of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Black Sea                                                          | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Parties, Partners, other experts, Black Sea Commission (Black Sea Sub-regional coordination unit)                                             | Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the Black Sea based on results of the 2nd survey                                                     | AF, NC, EF                                | Low                          | All Black Sea species | B.1.3.                       |

<sup>23</sup> AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc....; EF= External Funds

<sup>24</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second , Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the fourth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

| <b>B.1.2. POPULATION STRUCTURE</b>        |                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                        |                                                                                   |          |             |             |                           |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| B.1.2.1.                                  | Implement population structure priorities based on knowledge gap analysis                                                                                     | Scientific Committee, Partners, other experts, IWC, ASCOBANS                           | Analyses/studies of population structure                                          | AF,E     | High-Medium | All species | -                         |
| <b>B.1.3. MONITORING CETACEANS STATUS</b> |                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                        |                                                                                   |          |             |             |                           |
| B.1.3.1.                                  | Monitor mortality trends and cases of animals injured through different human activities, using existing tools (such as MEDACES), at least on triennial basis | Secretariat, RAC/SPA (Mediterranean Sub-regional coordination unit), Parties, Partners | Mortality trend reports                                                           | AF,NC EF | Ongoing     | All species | A.4.2.1., B.2.1. – B.2.7. |
| B.1.3.2.                                  | Assess IUCN threat status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and update it regularly                                                                           | Scientific Committee, Partners, IUCN, other experts                                    | Threat assessment reports<br><br>Updates available on the IUCN, ACCOBAMS websites | AF,EF    | Very high   | All species | B.1.1., B.1.2., all B.2.  |
| B.1.3.3.                                  | Prepare Red Books of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Region                                                                                                         | Scientific Committee, Partners, IUCN, other experts                                    | Red Books of cetaceans                                                            | AF, EF   | High        | All species | As above                  |
| B.1.3.4.                                  | Assess favourable conservation status of cetaceans in the entire ACCOBAMS area (link to the EU Habitat Directive reporting obligation)                        | Scientific Committee, Partners, other experts                                          | Report on the state of cetaceans                                                  | AF,EF    | High        | All species | As above                  |

**B.2. Specific objective: Reduce human pressures on cetaceans, in particularly those related to bycatch, habitat loss and degradation (pollution)**

| No.                                                                | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Subject(s) in charge                                                                                                       | Expected outputs                                                                                  | Possible sources of funding <sup>25</sup> | Priority level <sup>26</sup> | Target species                       | Relation to other activities |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>B.2.1. INTERACTION WITH FISHERIES (BYCATCH and DEPREDATION)</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                   |                                           |                              |                                      |                              |
| B.2.1.1.                                                           | Assess cetaceans bycatch and depredation impacts on cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea and adjoining Atlantic area and propose mitigation measures focusing on pilot areas through a joint GFCM/ACCOBAMS project <sup>27</sup>                                                                               | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Parties in cooperation with GFCM                                                        | Analysis of cetacean bycatch in the Mediterranean Sea and proposal of mitigation measures         | EF, NC                                    | Very high - High             | DD, GM, OO, PP, SC, TT (depredation) | B.1.3., A.2.1.1.             |
| B.2.1.2.                                                           | Prepare a cetaceans bycatch reduction strategy for the Mediterranean Sea and adjoining Atlantic area, based on the results of the joint GFCM/ACCOBAMS project                                                                                                                                                | ACCOBAMS Secretariat, Scientific Committee                                                                                 | Bycatch reduction strategy for the Mediterranean Sea and adjoining Atlantic area                  | EF, NC                                    | High-Medium                  | As above                             | A.2.1.1.                     |
| B.2.1.3.                                                           | Participate in the EC research and conservation project on the Adverse Fisheries Impacts on Cetacean Populations in the Black Sea (2012-2014), addressing impacts of interaction of fisheries on cetaceans and preparing a draft Strategy for reducing cetacean bycatch in the Black Sea and adjacent waters | Other experts, Black Sea Commission (Black Sea Sub regional coordination unit), Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Parties | Analysis of cetacean bycatch in the Black Sea<br><br>Bycatch reduction strategy for the Black Sea | EF, NC                                    | Very high                    | All Black Sea species                | A.2.1.1.                     |

<sup>25</sup> AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc....;EF= External Funds

<sup>26</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second , Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the fourth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

<sup>27</sup> Development of the project started in 2012

|                                   |                                                                                                                       |                                                        |                                                                      |            |           |                                                |                                                  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| B.2.1.4.                          | Organise a connection with the EU bycatch reporting system                                                            | Secretariat, Scientific Committee                      | Joint data collection system                                         | EF,NC      | High      | As 2.1.2.                                      | A.2.2.1., A.2.2.5.                               |
| <b>B.2.2. CHEMICAL POLLUTION</b>  |                                                                                                                       |                                                        |                                                                      |            |           |                                                |                                                  |
| B.2.2.1.                          | Assess the impact of chemical pollution on cetaceans                                                                  | Scientific Committee, other experts                    | Assessment of impacts of pollution on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area | AF, EF     | Medium    | All species                                    | B.1.3., A.2.1.3.                                 |
| <b>B.2.3. ANTHROPOGENIC NOISE</b> |                                                                                                                       |                                                        |                                                                      |            |           |                                                |                                                  |
| B.2.3.1.                          | Identify anthropogenic noise/cetaceans interactions hot spots in the ACC. area                                        | Scientific Committee, other experts, Partners          | Overview of noise hot spots                                          | AF, EF     | Very high | All species, particularly ZC, PM <sup>28</sup> | A.2.2.2., A.2.2.4.                               |
| B.2.3.2.                          | Monitor all activities in the region including noise component                                                        | Secretariat, Parties                                   | Overview(s) of approved activities including noise component         | AF, NC, EF | Very high | All species                                    | A.2.1.3., A.2.2.2., A.2.2.3., A.2.2.4., A.2.2.6. |
| B.2.3.3.                          | Map and develop a monitoring of sea ambient noise, particularly in critical habitats                                  | Scientific Committee, other experts, Partners          | Map of sea ambient noise<br>Monitoring protocol(s)                   | AF, EF     | High      | All species                                    | As above                                         |
| B.2.3.4.                          | Develop and update more detailed guidelines to mitigate impacts of anthropogenic noise, using the existing guidelines | Secretariat, ASCOBANS, other experts                   | Revised guidelines to mitigate impacts of anthropogenic noise        | AF,EF      | High      | All species                                    | As above                                         |
| <b>B.2.4. SHIP STRIKES</b>        |                                                                                                                       |                                                        |                                                                      |            |           |                                                |                                                  |
| B.2.4.1.                          | Identify high risk areas for ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea                                                    | Scientific Committee, other experts, Partners, Parties | Overview of high risk areas for ship strikes                         | AF, EF     | Medium    | BP, PM <sup>29</sup>                           | A.2.1.2.                                         |

<sup>28</sup> PM = *Physeter macrocephalus* – sperm whale, ZC = *Ziphius cavirostris* – Cuvier's beaked whale

<sup>29</sup> BP= *Balaenoptera physalus* – fin whale, PM = *Physeter macrocephalus* – sperm whale

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                              |                                                                                |        |               |             |          |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------------|-------------|----------|
| B.2.4.2.                        | Promote use of mitigation measures, particularly REPCET system to shipping companies in the region                                                       | Secretariat, Partners, Parties                                               | Ships/boats in areas inhabiting large whales using the REPCET or other systems | AF, EF | High          | BP, PM      | A.2.1.2. |
| B.2.4.3.                        | Develop a protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities                                                               | Scientific Committee, IWC, other experts                                     | Protocol                                                                       | AF     | High          | BP, PM      | B.1.3.1. |
| <b>B.2.5. CETACEAN WATCHING</b> |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                              |                                                                                |        |               |             |          |
| B.2.5.1.                        | Promote use of ACCOBAMS / Pelagos cetacean watching label                                                                                                | Secretariat, Pelagos Sanctuary, Partners, Parties                            | All states with intensive cetacean watching use labelling                      | AF, EF | –Medium - Low | All species | -        |
| B.2.5.2.                        | Revise cetacean-watching guidelines when new information is available, include. data collection protocols                                                | Scientific Committee                                                         | Revised guidelines on cetacean-watching                                        | AF     | Ongoing       | All species | A.2.2.6. |
| B.2.5.3.                        | Assess and monitor cetacean watching activities in ACCOBAMS area                                                                                         | Scientific Committee, Secretariat, Parties                                   | Assessments of cetacean watching activities with monitoring protocols          | AF     | Ongoing       | All species | -        |
| <b>B.2.6. MARINE DEBRIS</b>     |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                              |                                                                                |        |               |             |          |
| B.2.6.1.                        | Assess the impact of ghost nets on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area                                                                                        | Secretariat, other experts                                                   | Assessment of ghost nets impacts on cetaceans                                  | AF, EF | High          | All species | B.1.3.   |
| B.2.6.2.                        | Assess the impact of plastic bags, microplastic and other plastic materials ingestion on cetaceans in cooperation with existing initiatives, such as IWC | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, MedPOL, IWC                               | Assessment of plastic materials impacts on cetaceans                           | AF, EF | High          | All species | B.1.3.   |
| <b>B.2.7. CLIMATE CHANGE</b>    |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                              |                                                                                |        |               |             |          |
| B.2.7.1.                        | Assess impacts of climate change on cetaceans and identify indicator species, in cooperation with existing initiatives, such as IWC, IUCN GFCM, etc....  | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Partners (IUCN), other experts, IWC, GFCM | Assessment of climate change impacts on cetaceans                              | AF, EF | Low           | All species | B.1.3.   |

| <b>B.2.8. SPECIES CONSERVATION PLANS</b> |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                             |                                                            |        |         |                                        |                                |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| B.2.8.1.                                 | Revise regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders                                  | Black Sea Commission (Sub-regional coord. unit), Secretariat, other experts, Parties                        | Revised regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans | AF, EF | High    | All Black Sea species                  | B.2.1., B.2.2., B.2.3., B.2.6. |
| B.2.8.2.                                 | Finalize conservation plans for fin whale, bottlenose dolphin and Cuvier's beaked whale                                               | Scientific Comm., Partners, other experts                                                                   | Conservation plans                                         | AF     | High    | BM, TT, ZC                             | B.1.1., B.2.3., B.2.4          |
| B.2.8.3.                                 | Assist in development and implementation of national action plans, particularly in the South Mediterranean and in Black Sea countries | Secretariat, RAC/SPA, Black Sea Commission (Sub-regional coord. units), Scientific Committee, other experts | National action plans                                      | AF     | High    | All species                            | B.1.1., B.2.1.                 |
| <b>B.2.9. CAPTIVITY RELATED ISSUES</b>   |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                             |                                                            |        |         |                                        |                                |
| B.2.9.1.                                 | Assess and monitor specimens held in captivity in the ACCOBAMS area                                                                   | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Sub-regional coordination units, Parties, Partners, Other Experts        | Assessments of specimens in captivity                      | AF     | Ongoing | All species, particularly Black Sea TT | -                              |

**B.3. Specific objective: *Enhance public awareness about cetaceans***

| No.                            | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Subject(s) in charge           | Expected outputs                                                                                            | Possible sources of funding <sup>30</sup> | Priority level <sup>31</sup> | Target species | Relation to other activities |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>B.3.1. PUBLIC AWARENESS</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                |                                                                                                             |                                           |                              |                |                              |
| B.3.1.1.                       | Introduce ACCOBAMS cetaceans day and promote annual celebration                                                                                                                                                            | Secretariat, Partners, Parties | ACCOBAMS cetaceans day regularly celebrated in the area                                                     | AF, NC                                    | Medium                       | All species    | -                            |
| B.3.1.2.                       | Use new tools to communicate with public via ACCOBAMS's web-site, such as social networks, smart phone applications, Google applications, etc....                                                                          | Secretariat, Partners          | Exchanges through social networks<br><br>New applications                                                   | AF                                        | Medium                       | All species    | -                            |
| B.3.1.3.                       | Undertake public information activities targeted to future generations (children), using different tools (such as designing a special part of the web-site for children, promote educational kits <sup>32</sup> , etc....) | Secretariat, Partners          | Section for children available on ACCOBAMS web-site<br><br>Educational kit distributed to relevant subjects | AF, NC                                    | Medium                       | All species    | B.4.3.                       |

<sup>30</sup> AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc....;EF= External Funds

<sup>31</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second, Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the fourth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

<sup>32</sup> Note: Educational kit should be produced in 2013

|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                     |                                                     |        |         |             |          |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------|---------|-------------|----------|
| B.3.1.4. | Promote cetacean conservation during different events, such as meetings of parties of ACCOBAMS and other relevant international agreements, IUCN's world congress, MedPAN promoted forum of MPAs in the Mediterranean, fairs with participation of tour operators, representatives of recreational boating and leisure fishing , etc.... | Secretariat, Partners, Parties      | Side-events, such as lectures, exhibitions          | AF     | Ongoing | All species | A.1.1.4. |
| B.3.1.5. | Regularly inform media about cetacean conservation activities and other aspects of ACCOBAMS work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Secretariat, Partners, Parties      | Press releases, Web-site updates                    | AF, NC | Ongoing | All species | -        |
| B.3.1.6. | Organise public awareness related survey                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Secretariat, other experts, Parties | Survey format and instructions<br><br>Survey report | AF     | High    | All species | A.4.2.1. |

**B.4. Specific objective: *Improve capacities of national organisations and experts***

| No.                                                                               | Activity                                                                                                                                                                 | Subject(s) in charge                        | Expected outputs                                            | Possible sources of funding <sup>33</sup> | Priority level <sup>34</sup> | Target species | Relation to other activities |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>B.4.1. FUNCTIONAL STRANDING NETWORKS AND RESPONSES TO EMERGENCY SITUATIONS</b> |                                                                                                                                                                          |                                             |                                                             |                                           |                              |                |                              |
| B.4.1.1.                                                                          | Undertake systematic trainings on necropsies, live strandings and response to emergency situation in the ACCOBAMS region                                                 | Secretariat, Partners                       | Trained participants from all Parties with identified needs | AF, NC                                    | Ongoing                      | All species    | B.1.3.1.                     |
| B.4.1.2.                                                                          | Establish (sub)regional mailing lists of participants in the stranding networks to facilitate exchange of information, in particularly in the South Mediterranean region | Secretariat, Parties                        | Regularly exchanged information on stranding events         | AF, NC                                    | Ongoing                      | All species    | A.1.1.1., B.1.3.1.           |
| B.4.1.3.                                                                          | Establish a regional Emergency Task Force as advise to Parties and develop an operational protocol                                                                       | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Partners | Operational regional Emergency Task Force nominated         | AF                                        | Very high                    | All species    | B.1.3.1.                     |

<sup>33</sup> AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc....;EF= External Funds

<sup>34</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second , Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the fourth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

| <b>B.4.2. CAPACITY TO USE CETACEANS PHOTO ID AND UNDERTAKE AERIAL SURVEYS</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                               |                                                                           |        |              |             |        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------------|-------------|--------|
| B.4.2.1.                                                                      | Undertake systematic trainings on the use of photo-id and carrying out of aerial surveys designed for both cetacean professionals and non-professionals (particularly MPAs practitioners)                     | Secretariat, Partners, MedPAN | Trained experts from all Parties with identified needs                    | AF, EF | Medium       | All species | B.1.1. |
| B.4.2.2.                                                                      | Provide photo-id equipment to the Parties with least capacities                                                                                                                                               | Secretariat                   | Relevant Parties with provided equipment                                  | AF, EF | Medium       | All species | B.1.1. |
| B.4.2.3.                                                                      | Promote and facilitate exchange of expertise, such as participation of experts with less knowledge in the specific projects implemented by experienced researchers, etc...                                    | Secretariat, Parties          | Experts trained through participation in the specific projects            | AF,NC  | Low - Medium | All species | B.1.1. |
| <b>B.4.3. CAPACITY BUILDING FOR OTHER CETACEAN CONSERVATION ISSUES</b>        |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                               |                                                                           |        |              |             |        |
| B.4.3.1.                                                                      | Facilitate organisation of study tours and trainings with participation of protected areas managers from the areas containing cetacean critical habitats in the similar areas using good management practices | Secretariat, MedPAN, Parties  | Experts participated in the study tours/trainings facilitated by ACCOBAMS | AF     | Ongoing      | All species | B.5.1. |

|                                                                 |                                                                                               |                       |                                                                      |            |         |             |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------|-------------|--|
| B.4.3.2.                                                        | Enable practice of cetacean conservation staff on relevant issues in the ACCOBAMS Secretariat | Parties, Secretariat  | Trained cetacean conservation staff from the Parties                 | AF, NC     | Ongoing | All species |  |
| <b>B.4.4. CETACEAN CONSERVATION AND POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES</b> |                                                                                               |                       |                                                                      |            |         |             |  |
| B.4.4.1.                                                        | Introduce cetacean conservation modules in the existing postgraduate programmes               | Secretariat, Partners | Post-graduate programmes with included cetacean conservation modules | AF, NC, EF | Ongoing | All species |  |

**B.5. Specific objective: *Enhance effective conservation of cetaceans critical habitats***

| No.                                         | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Subject(s) in charge                                                                                             | Expected outputs                                                                                                                                          | Possible sources of funding <sup>35</sup> | Priority level <sup>36</sup> | Target species | Relation to other activities |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>B.5.1. PROTECTED AREAS FOR CETACEANS</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                           |                                           |                              |                |                              |
| B.5.1.1.                                    | Update regularly a list of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS region                                                                                                        | Scientific Committee, Partners, other experts                                                                    | Lists of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans                                                                                                  | AF                                        | High                         | All species    | B.1.1.                       |
| B.5.1.2.                                    | Develop tools for adequate management of areas containing critical habitat, including evaluation of management effectiveness and using examples of best practice                                         | Secretariat, MedPAN, Scientific Committee, other experts                                                         | Guidelines on adequate management of areas containing critical habitats                                                                                   | AF                                        | High                         | All species    | B.2.                         |
| B.5.1.3.                                    | Evaluate effectiveness of protected areas containing critical habitats for cetaceans using existing initiatives (such as MedPAN endeavours in that context), at least after 5 years of Strategy adoption | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, other experts, RAC/SPA (Mediterranean Sub-regional coordination unit), MedPAN | Evaluation of effectiveness of protected areas for cetaceans, fore mostly their contribution to achievement/maintenance of favourable conservation status | AF, EF                                    | High                         | All species    | A.4.2.1.                     |

<sup>35</sup> AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc...;EF= External Funds

<sup>36</sup> Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second , Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the forth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

## **8. Implementation and financing**

The Strategy will be implemented through operational work programmes for triennial periods. The work programmes will be prepared with active cooperation between all ACCOBAMS bodies, Parties and other stakeholders, with coordination of the Secretariat. The work programmes will elaborate activities from the Strategy (Action Plan chapter) in more details, in particular regarding concrete responsibilities of subjects in charge, sources of funding and estimation of costs of each activity (Appendix 5).

The Agreement funds (trust fund, voluntary contributions) represent steady source of funding that will be used for management of the agreement and to certain extent for actual cetacean conservation activities. However; for successful implementation of the Strategy, in particular large projects planned under cetacean conservation efforts (f.e. dedicated surveys); it is critical to use external funding such as the EU funds, private funding, etc... National co-financing/in-kind is expected as logistic for implementation of certain activities.

## **9. Monitoring and revision of the Strategy**

Monitoring of the Strategy implementation progress will include regular monitoring of operational work programmes and resolutions implementation (as described in the A.4. section of the Action Plan). The overall effectiveness will be evaluated after 5 years of Strategy implementation, taking opportunity of triennial regional workshops, and at the end of the Strategy period, as a basis for the Strategy revision. In cases of some emerging trends and developments, the evaluation of the effectiveness and Strategy revision could be undertaken before conclusion of the 12 years period. The decision will be made by the Meeting of Parties or the Bureau, after consultation with other ACCOBAMS bodies.

## 10. Appendices

### Appendix 1. Working Group for the development of Strategy

Coordinator: Ana Štrbenac (Croatia)

| <b>Partners and consultants</b>            |                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ana CANADAS                                | ALNILAM (ACCOBAMS Partner)                                      |
| Adriana VELLA                              | BICREF (ACCOBAMS Partner)                                       |
| Dani KEREM                                 | ICRAM (ACCOBAMS Partner)                                        |
| Alexandre GANNIER                          | GREC (ACCOBAMS Partner)                                         |
| Léa DAVID                                  | EcoOcéan Institute (ACCOBAMS Partner)                           |
| Margi PRIDEAUX                             | Migratory Wildlife Network                                      |
| Sarah MUSCAT                               | Nature Trust (ACCOBAMS Partner)                                 |
| Niki ENTRUP                                | Consultant agency                                               |
| Renaud de STEPHANIS                        | Department of Conservation Biology and CIRCE (ACCOBAMS Partner) |
| Ayaka OZTURK                               | TUDAV (ACCOBAMS Partner)                                        |
| <b>ACCOBAMS Focal Points</b>               |                                                                 |
| Mahmoud FOUAD                              | Egypt                                                           |
| Carmen MIFSUD                              | Malta                                                           |
| Celine VANKLAVEREN                         | Monaco                                                          |
| <b>Members of the Scientific Committee</b> |                                                                 |
| Alexei BIRKUN                              | Chair of the ACCOBAMS SC                                        |
| Giuseppe NOTARBARTOLO DI SCIARA            | Task manager/former Chair                                       |
| Greg DONOVAN                               | IWC representative                                              |
| Simone PANIGADA                            | ECS representative                                              |
| <b>Members of the Bureau</b>               |                                                                 |
| Cyril GOMEZ                                | Chair of ACCOBAMS (Monaco)                                      |
| Andrej BIBIC                               | Slovenia                                                        |
| Volodymyr DOMASHLINETS                     | Ukraine                                                         |
| Gaby KHALAF                                | Lebanon                                                         |
| Marina SEQUEIRA                            | Portugal                                                        |
| <b>CMS</b>                                 |                                                                 |
| Heidrun FRISCH                             | ASCOBANS Coordinator and Marine Mammals Officer for CMS         |

## Appendix 2. Regional workshops participants involved in the Strategy development process

|                                    |                                              |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Samia BENSMAIL                     | ALGERIA                                      |
| Tihomira SLAVEYKOVA                | BULGARIA                                     |
| Ana STRBENAC                       | CROATIA                                      |
| Mahmoud FOUAD                      | EGYPT                                        |
| Martine BIGAN                      | FRANCE                                       |
| Hélène LABACH                      | FRANCE                                       |
| Zurab GURIELIDZE                   | GEORGIA                                      |
| Eleni TRYFON                       | GREECE                                       |
| Robert GIANGRECO                   | ITALY                                        |
| Gaby KHALAF                        | LEBANON                                      |
| Ibrahem BENAMER                    | LIBYA                                        |
| Carmen MIFSUD                      | MALTA                                        |
| Florence DESCROIX-COMANDUCCI       | MONACO                                       |
| Abderraouf BENMOUSSA               | MOROCCO                                      |
| Marina SEQUEIRA                    | PORTUGAL                                     |
| Camelia DUMITRACHE                 | ROMANIA                                      |
| Andrej BIBIC                       | SLOVENIA                                     |
| Isabel LÓPEZ PÉREZ                 | SPAIN                                        |
| Olga LAMAS                         | SPAIN                                        |
| Mohamed HAMANI                     | TUNISIA                                      |
| Mohamed Nejmeddine BRADAI          | TUNISIA                                      |
| Ayaka Amaha OZTURK                 | TURKEY (Observer)                            |
| Volodymyr DOMASHLINETS             | UKRAINE                                      |
| Alexei BIRKUN                      | ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee                |
| Marie-Christine GRILLO-COMPULSIONE | ACCOBAMS Secretariat                         |
| Chedly RAIS                        | ACCOBAMS Secretariat                         |
| Valeria ABAZA                      | BLACK SEA COMMISSION – Permanent Secretariat |
| Lobna BEN NAKHLA                   | RAC/SPA                                      |

### Appendix 3. Summary of Evaluation of the ACCOBAMS effectiveness for the 2002 – 2010 period<sup>37</sup>

The evaluation of ACCOBAMS effectiveness was carried out using the species management effectiveness evaluation methodology. Existing written documents, mostly produced in the scope of ACCOBAMS, provided sufficient information for the assessment. Certain information was provided by the Executive Secretary, former and current Chairs of the Scientific Committee and the representative of the Mediterranean Sub-regional coordination unit – RAC/SPA.

Cetacean populations in the Black and Mediterranean Seas and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS Area) represent the main value and the ACCOBAMS overall objective is to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status of cetaceans in the Black and Mediterranean Seas and contiguous Atlantic area through coordinated effort at regional level.

The **context** of ACCOBAMS operations is rather complex. Human activities represent the source of all threats to cetacean populations in the ACCOBAMS area; the most significant are interactions with fisheries, foremostly bycatch, and habitat loss and degradation. At least 10 stakeholders groups operate in the ACCOBAMS area, ACCOBAMS being a member of the nature conservationists and environmentalists stakeholders group. The stakeholders having the most impacts of cetacean populations have the most political power, in particularly fishermen, shipping and recreational boating and navy. Nature conservationists and environmentalists are most active; they have a great interest and human potential, but least political power. International cetacean conservation related legislation framework is well established, although the implementation is weak.

**ACCOBAMS management planning** adequacy is partial. No long-term strategy was developed, but a mid-term work programmes which are adopted on regular basis (each triennium). Not all relevant stakeholders actively participate in the decision-making process, even when invited, in particularly representatives of relevant sectors. These programs are also not linked to other regional sectoral plans or strategies. They are also not clearly structured. Lack of any monitoring indicators represents a problem for evaluation of their level of implementation and effectiveness evaluation in general.

Human **inputs** at the ACCOBAMS structure level have been fairly adequate, particularly those of the Scientific Committee in a broader sense. Partners played an important role in that respect. Discontinuities of Secretariat's composition, apart from the Executive Secretary, and lack of adequate contribution of most of the regional representatives to the work of the Scientific Committee have been two problematic factors. The latter had an important share in not using the full potential of national experts and scientist. Financial needs for administration and general management issues have mostly been sufficient, particularly thanks to the support of Monaco. National focal and contact points were appointed in almost all of Parties, they are usually low or middle ranked officers and have responsibilities for a range of different activities and agreements. Although Parties staff costs are not financed from the ACCOBAMS budget, Parties human capacity is important for implementation of work programme activities. Parties' human capacities are weak, mostly in the south Mediterranean and Black Sea countries.

The work programmes **implementation process** was carried out with partial adequacy. Information basis needed for implementation of activities and consequently draft future ones were hardly adequate, but still useful. Mostly adequate research was planned at the regional level, in particularly comprehensive survey; less attention was given to socio-economic surveys. As the planning was done without participation of sectoral stakeholders, they also have not participated in the work programmes implementation. In addition, no monitoring of work programmes implementation was carried out in this phase, due to already indicated absence both of planned indicators and monitoring programmes

---

<sup>37</sup> Štrbenac A. (2012). Evaluation of the ACCOBAMS effectiveness for the 2002 – 2010 period

**Outputs** assessment showed that altogether 55% of the work programmes stipulated activities were implemented to some extent in the 2002 – 2010 periods, and 37% were not commenced. The Scientific Committee and Secretariat were responsible for implementation of the most activities. The low level of fulfilled financial needs for conservation actions; 26%, mostly contributed to that level, along with combination of human capacities issues of all ACCOBAMS structures and Parties. The whale watching was among best implemented activities. The average implementation rate amounts around 50%. Other activities as stranding networks and tissue banks, capacity building and the Emergency Task Force were implemented at different levels and the issue interaction with fisheries was the least implemented one.

Number of resolutions covering all relevant cetacean conservation issues, including guidelines to facilitate and standardise best available practices, were developed and adopted in the scope of ACCOBAMS. According to the analysis of the implementation of adopted provisions on behalf of Parties, around 38% were implemented to some extent. The average implementation rate amounts around 44%. The best implemented were those activities referring to the captivity related issues, followed with interactions with fisheries. The least implementation level is reached with the issue of anthropogenic noise. Although work programmes have foundation in adopted resolutions, resolution's provisions are formulated more generally, in terms of recommendations or guidelines without time limits. It is reflected in a discrepancy between levels of implementation of the same thematic issues. Spain, Italy, Croatia, Portugal and Monaco reached the best implementation levels when compared to the other countries. Italy, Spain, France and Monaco also ensured substantial voluntary contribution which enabled implementation of conservation activities and provided assistance to countries with the least capacities. The level of implementation is unknown for Greece and Libya, Parties which do not actively participate in ACCOBAMS work.

The level of achievement of specific objectives is substantially lower than work programme implementation rate. Lack of clear indicators for specific objectives and lack of data challenged their assessment in general. In addition, adequate linkages between planned work programme activities and fulfilment of desired objectives may be considered. Several objectives could not be evaluated at all in the absence of monitoring indicators evaluation; in particularly level of public awareness increase achieved through ACCOBAMS and state of critical habitats. Out of other specific objectives, the best achieved is probably the one on increased human capacities in terms of gained knowledge. ACCOBAMS has only partly fulfilled its overall objective and desired **outcome**; conservation status of cetacean populations is still poor, but ACCOBAMS contributed to a better regional cooperation. In this respect, ACCOBAMS in particular helped to improve linkages between scientists and also facilitated that countries with good human and financial capacities help those lacking these capacities.

Main ACCOBAMS's **strengths** are; established ACCOBAMS institutional framework; high motivation of some members of ACCOBAMS bodies, representatives of partners and Parties; significant knowledge and expertise; financial contribution of countries like Italy, Monaco, France and Spain and their willingness to assist less favoured countries; amount of work done so far, particularly regarding developed guidelines and formulated best practices covering all relevant cetacean conservation issues; existence of planning of ACCOBAMS work. Main **weaknesses** include weak political position; limited financial and human capacities, particularly those of Parties; lack of transparency in the selection of the Scientific Committee members; not used potential of local scientist and experts; poor involvement of many countries, in particularly those containing critical habitats of some species; weak information flow between national focal points and ACCOBAMS's bodies; lack of active involvement of the EU and representatives of the other stakeholders (fishermen, shipping and boating; navy , etc....); lack of general public and future generations involvement-, lack of long-term strategy and any programme to monitor level of implementation of the planned activities. Main general recommendations are targeted to mitigate weaknesses building up on existing strengths and they include: improvement of financial and human capacities through investigation of new funding possibilities and increase of the

relevant Secretariats capacities as well as some improvements to better use the potential of local scientists and experts and ensure better information flow between Parties and ACCOBAMS's bodies intersessionally; increase the cooperation with other stakeholders (in particular the EU) at regional levels through formalisation of relations and involvement in joint projects; improvement of implementation of ACCOBAMS resolutions through introduction of control mechanisms similar to case files and better linkages with Parties through periodical organisation of regional workshops; improvement of public awareness through planned systematic campaigns in cooperation with partners and improvement of existing planning through development of long-term strategy, amendment of existing planning documents and development of monitoring programmes both for work programmes implementation and to measure ACCOBAMS effectiveness prior to any long term planning.

#### Appendix 4. SWOT analysis of present state of ACCOBAMS affairs

| No. | Strengths                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Score (1-5) <sup>38</sup> |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| S.1 | Highly motivated members within the ACCOBAMS structure, in particular the Executive Secretary and the assisting staff, former Chair and most of the members of the Scientific Committee, several active Parties and partners (mostly NGOs), | 4,71                      |
| S.2 | Willingness of financially stronger countries like Italy, Monaco, France and Spain to contribute to implementation of conservation activities and thus to help countries with less resources,                                               | 4,71                      |
| S.3 | Significant knowledge and expertise, especially within the Scientific Committee which has members with world renowned expertise ,                                                                                                           | 4,28                      |
| S.4 | Existence of mechanism to involve civil sector directly into ACCOBAMS's structure (Partner status),                                                                                                                                         | 4,00                      |
| S.5 | Established and operating ACCOBAMS's organisational structure, comprising of ACCOBAMS bodies,                                                                                                                                               | 3,83                      |
| S.6 | Existence of work planning, as good procedural standard for an organisation,                                                                                                                                                                | 3,57                      |
| S.7 | Already started strategic partnerships with regional organisations representing fishermen and shipping, such as GFCM and IMO,                                                                                                               | 3,57                      |
| S.8 | Strategic partnerships with regional agreements competent for marine biodiversity conservation such as Barcelona Convention and Bucharest Convention (Sub-regional coordination units status),                                              | 3,43                      |
| S.9 | Number of developed and adopted resolutions, including technical documents, to assist Parties to address cetacean conservation key issues in the best possible and standardised way,                                                        | 3,43                      |

<sup>38</sup> Score range 1 to 5: 1 = not relevant

2 = low importance

3 = important

4 = high importance

5 = very high importance

| No.  | Weaknesses                                                                                                                                       | Score (1-5) |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| W.1  | Insufficient support of certain key stakeholders such as the EU and the representatives of navy, oil and gas exploitation industry,              | 4,71        |
| W.2  | Low level of compliance to provisions of adopted resolutions by Parties,                                                                         | 4,55        |
| W.3  | Low political power of ACCOBAMS as organisation,                                                                                                 | 4,33        |
| W.4  | Lack of funding for conservation activities at ACCOBAMS's level,                                                                                 | 4,28        |
| W.5  | Still significant negative impacts of human activities on cetaceans, in particularly bycatch and habitat loss and degradation                    | 4,00        |
| W.6  | Lack of knowledge about the state of cetaceans in the region (distribution, abundance, threats),                                                 | 4,00        |
| W.7  | Lack of human and financial resources, in particularly in the south Mediterranean and some Black Sea countries,                                  | 3,85        |
| W.8  | Weak information flow between national focal/contact points, Secretariat and other ACCOBAMS bodies in particularly intersessionally,             | 3,71        |
| W.9  | Lack of evaluation of ACCOBAMS's effectiveness, as a tool to adapt current management more accurately,                                           | 3,71        |
| W.10 | Weak information flow between national focal/contact points and other relevant subjects (such as competent authorities, NGOs) within each Party, | 3,57        |
| W.11 | Insufficient continuity and connection with other overlapping or similar CMS species agreements,                                                 | 3,43        |
| W.12 | Lack of defined and regular monitoring of ACCOBAMS's strategy and work programmes implementation,                                                | 3,43        |
| W.13 | Array of local scientists and experts not included in the ACCOBAMS's work,                                                                       | 2,85        |

| No. | Opportunities                                                                                                                                          | Score (1-5) |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| O.1 | Demand to accurately address emerging issues related to cetaceans (f.e. marine debris, climate change, etc....),                                       | 3,57        |
| O.2 | Complement the work with other regional nature conservation related organisations efforts to ensure more holistic conservation of marine biodiversity, | 3,57        |
| O.3 | Strategic partnership with other relevant civil society,                                                                                               | 3,43        |
| O.4 | Generally positive human perception of cetaceans as species, as potential to use for promotion of cetaceans conservation,                              | 3,28        |
| O.5 | Future generations are great potential to ensure public support in the future,                                                                         | 3,14        |
| O.6 | Need for further expertise for standardisation of cetacean conservation related practices and processes at regional level,                             | 3,14        |
| O.7 | Extension of the geographical coverage of the Agreement to the Red Sea, as the adjacent sea                                                            | 3,00        |
| O.8 | Need for technical assistance/expertise to EU countries to meet obligations stipulated in the EU Directives – in particularly Habitats Directive, MSFD | 3,00        |

| No. | Threats or Challenges                                                                                                                                                                        | Score (1-5) |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| T.1 | Energy crisis triggers intensification of related activities that already affect cetaceans, such as deep-sea oil and gas exploration and exploitation,                                       | 4,14        |
| T.2 | Political instability in some regions/countries, affecting transboundary cooperation at all levels (between scientist, decision-makers , etc....), particularly in the Easter Mediterranean, | 3,85        |
| T.3 | Financial crisis contributing to decline of national funding and other funding opportunities for nature conservation                                                                         | 3,71        |
| T.4 | Increase of regional differences/north – south, etc....,                                                                                                                                     | 3,57        |
| T.5 | Decrease of existing capacities of Parties due to financial crisis,                                                                                                                          | 3,43        |
| T.6 | Overextension of resources, in particularly those of Government institutions through competing demands from overlapping or similar CMS species agreements,                                   | 3,14        |

## Appendix 5. Proposal of the Work Programme Format

***Main specific objectives group title (f.e. B. Cetacean conservation efforts)***

| <b>Group of activities title (f.e. B.1.1. Cetacean population estimates and distribution)</b>   |                     |                                             |         |          |                 |                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------|----------|-----------------|----------------|
| Activity specified in the ACCOBAMS Strategy (f.e. B.1.1.1. Undertake a comprehensive survey...) |                     |                                             |         |          |                 |                |
| Relevant resolutions:                                                                           |                     |                                             |         |          |                 |                |
| Action                                                                                          | Responsible subject | Subject (s) participating in implementation | Outputs | Timeline | Estimated costs | Budget line(s) |