



*Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black
Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area*

*Accord sur la Conservation des Cétacés de la Mer Noire,
de la Méditerranée et de la zone Atlantique adjacente*



REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Cairo (Egypt) 15-17 May 2005



M. Würtz

REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. The Third Meeting of the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS was convened in Cairo (at the Hotel Marriott) from 15 to 17 May 2005. It was attended by 9 members of the Scientific Committee, representatives from the two Sub-Regional Coordination Units and observers representing the following organisations: UNEP-MAP RAC/SPA, the Permanent Secretariat of the Black Sea Commission, WDCCS, ICRAM, the Adriatic Project Society, and the Abu Salama Society. Representatives of the Egyptian Authorities also attended the Meeting.
2. The CMS Executive Secretary, Robert Hepworth, attended the Meeting. His statement appears in Annex 1.
3. The full list of participants appears as Annex 2 to this Report.

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

4. The Interim Chair opened the Meeting at 9.00 a.m. on Sunday 15 May. He welcomed the participants and emphasised that this was the first meeting since the Second Meeting of the Parties.
5. On behalf of His Excellency Maged George, the Minister of State for Environmental Affairs, Dr. Mostapha Fouda (Director of the Biodiversity Directorate, EEAA) welcomed the participants. He said that Egypt was collaborating with ACCOBAMS on training activities for researchers and technical assistance to establish a management plan for a MPA, and announced that his country would very soon join the Agreement. He stressed furthermore that Egypt needed ACCOBAMS assistance, in particular to survey Egypt's Mediterranean coast and to create MPAs in sites of interest for cetaceans. Dr. Fouda announced the creation of an NGO dedicated to dolphin conservation, the Abu Salama Society. He also said that after a great deal of work on its Red Sea coast, Egypt was planning to develop conservation activities for the marine environment on its Mediterranean coast. He stressed that holding this Scientific Committee Meeting in Egypt was of great support to the efforts being made to promote MPAs on Egypt's Mediterranean coast.
6. He emphasized that in Egyptian tradition and culture dolphins are not attacked or hunted but on the contrary fully respected.
7. The Executive Secretary expressed her gratitude to the Egyptian Government for hosting the SC3.
8. She said that the Secretariat had received a mandate from the Parties to approach the countries to encourage them to join the Agreement. Egypt had taken many steps towards joining ACCOBAMS, and the Secretariat was ready to provide its support to the Egyptian authorities for finalising the steps for joining ACCOBAMS.

Agenda Item 2: Rules of Procedure

9. Introducing this Agenda Item, the Interim Chair emphasized that a gap exists in the Rules of Procedure regarding the mandate of the Chair between the election of a new Committee by the Parties and its first Meeting. The Executive Secretary proposed an amendment to Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure as indicated in Document SC3/Doc. 6 Rev. 1.
10. The Scientific Committee also considered a proposal for amending Rule 20 of its Rules of Procedure and changed the word "derogations" in accordance with the terms of Article 2b of the Agreement.
11. The Scientific Committee approved the proposed amendments appearing in Annex 3.

Agenda Item 3: Election of the Chair

12. The Interim Chair indicated that his mandate had ended and thanked the members for their support and for the work they had done together.
13. The Executive Secretary thanked Dr. Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara for his role in heading the work of the Scientific Committee over the past triennium and invited the Scientific Committee members to elect a Chair for the triennium 2005-2007.
14. The group unanimously re-elected Dr. Notarbartolo di Sciara as Chair of the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS for the triennium 2005-2007.
15. Dr. Notarbartolo di Sciara thanked the members for their renewed confidence.

Agenda Item 4: Adoption of the Agenda

16. The Chair presented the proposed Agenda for the Meeting, appearing in Document SC3/Doc 1. Rev 2, and invited the Meeting to review it.
17. The Meeting adopted the proposed Agenda with slight changes as to the timetable and the inclusion of the following items as other business:
 - 7.1 Discussion and adoption of the proceedings of the informal workshop on the functioning of the Scientific Committee, held on the 14 May
 - 7.2 Discussion on the opportunity for ACCOBAMS to participate in and collaborate with the European Marine Strategy
 - 7.3 Presentation of the Egyptian NGO, the Abu Salama Society
 - 7.4 Discussion on the proposal by WDCS for a questionnaire related to the educational programme, presented in Document SC3/Doc. 34.

Agenda Item 5: Implementation of the ACCOBAMS work plan

18. The members of the Scientific Committee were invited to examine the ongoing activities and the proposals for the work programme concerning the activities adopted by the MOP2 and to be developed during the triennium 2005-2007.

5.1 Comprehensive cetacean population estimates and distribution in the ACCOBAMS Area

5.1.1 Obtaining baseline cetacean abundance, distribution and population structure information

19. The Chair drew attention to Documents SC3/Doc. 8 and SC3/Doc. 9 and informed the Meeting about the workshop on obtaining baseline cetacean abundance information (Valsain, Spain, 17-19 December 2004). He invited A. Cañadas to present the results of the workshop.
20. A. Cañadas indicated that it was a technical workshop addressing the following topics: objectives of surveys, species to cover, review of current information, initial planning for the survey, methodology for survey design, and preliminary proposal. She told the Meeting that the next step would be a second workshop next winter involving representatives of countries and local groups.
21. The Meeting discussed the possibility of including aerial surveys and noted that it would be difficult to combine them with live acoustic surveys.
22. The Scientific Committee was informed about the European Integrated Projects Proposals on the Mediterranean and the Black Sea currently being prepared. Further information on one of these programs is given in Annex 4 to this Report. The Scientific Committee recommended that contacts should be established between the scientists in charge of this proposal and of coordinating the ACCOBAMS Cetacean Survey Initiative; interactions between those research projects would help harmonize them.
23. The ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee asked C. Guinet to act as a link person between this planned Mediterranean-Black Sea Integrated Project (M-BS IP) and the overall assessment of cetacean abundance and distribution within the ACCOBAMS area.

24. A. Birkun informed the Meeting that he had been asked by the Permanent Secretariat of the Black Sea Commission to prepare a common methodology and work programme for possible implementation of the Black Sea cetaceans survey tentatively in mid-2006 upon availability of funds in line with the Strategic Action Plan for the Rehabilitation and Protection of the Black Sea (1996, amended 2002). The field experience of Ukrainian, Georgian and Russian scientists was used. The proposed methodology, as presented in SC3/Doc. 9, was approved by the Joint Meeting of the specialist Advisory Groups of the Black Sea Commission, although strong comments were made that the methodology should be fully fine-tuned.

25. The Meeting welcomed the Black Sea cetacean assessment initiative as a pilot project for the ACCOBAMS survey and noted that the experience of the Black Sea survey should be integrated within preparing and implementing the ACCOBAMS cetacean survey. The Meeting noted the need for a coordinator/coordination team for the ACCOBAMS survey.

26. The Scientific Committee agreed to appoint three individuals – Birkun, Cañadas and Fortuna – as co-coordinators of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative. In general, Birkun will take the lead in the Black Sea and Cañadas and Fortuna will share the lead in the Mediterranean. The goal is to submit a LIFE proposal in September 2006.

The immediate tasks of the co-coordinators are as follows:

- Arrange and carry out informal consultation of the three co-coordinators with Hammond and/or Borchers in St Andrews (UK) during the first half of September 2005, to homogenize the methodology
- Organize and conduct a sub-regional workshop in the Black Sea in late September or October 2005 (as per plans outlined by Birkun). One goal of the workshop will be training, so it will be crucial to have at least one expert on survey methodology present (e.g. Borchers, Bart, Hammond or Donovan)
- Cañadas and Fortuna to consult with national contacts regarding logistical issues in preparation for the February 2006 planning workshop (see Terms of Reference in Annex 5). Also, Cañadas and Fortuna to draft a structure for the LIFE proposal for discussion at the workshop
- Organize and conduct the February 2006 workshop to refine methodology and study design, resolve logistical issues and discuss the above-mentioned draft
- Complete the LIFE proposal and, in collaboration with the Secretariat, seek support from national authorities.

5.1.2 Sighting database

27. Following A. Birkun's presentation of the Document, "The Black Sea mammals database" (SC3/Doc. 10), the opportuneness of developing a sighting database within the ACCOBAMS framework was discussed by the Meeting. Many members of the Scientific Committee remarked that for the time being, the sighting database was of lower priority than other actions, and, given the resources available, recommended that efforts focus on higher priority matters.

28. The Chair stressed that the Scientific Committee had a mandate to develop such a database and invited members to give further consideration to the subject with a view to making a proposal to the next Meeting of the Scientific Committee.

29. C. Rais introduced Document SC3/Inf. 13 concerning the Global Register Of Migratory Species (GROMS).

30. R. Hepworth presented the objectives of the ongoing process of assessing GROMS and encouraged participants to contribute to it by offering their comments as soon as possible. The Scientific Committee is invited to assess the usefulness of GROMS to ACCOBAMS and make recommendations on how to integrate it within the relevant existing information system, and on what is required to further adapt GROMS to the Agreement's information needs.

31. In the discussion, the opinion emerged that this was of low priority for the Scientific Committee, although the view was expressed that GROMS could be used for public awareness purposes. No member of the Scientific Committee had consulted GROMS before. The Scientific Committee decided to examine GROMS on the internet after this meeting and to send comments to C. Rais via the Chair within two weeks.

5.2 Conservation Plans

32. The Scientific Committee stressed that it is important for Parties that have endorsed, adopted or otherwise approved an Action or Plan to then provide the requisite resources for implementation to proceed. The Scientific Committee further insisted that Conservation Plans and Action Plans are only tools to guide and elicit actions (research and conservation) and should not be seen as end-products in their own right.

5.2.1 Common dolphin

33. G. Bearzi presented Document SC3/Inf. 2 on the Conservation Plan for short-beaked common dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea.

34. An informal workshop had been organized to discuss this item on the afternoon of 14 May; as a result of this discussion, the Meeting adopted a work programme described in Annex 6, including a three-step strategy for implementation of the Conservation Plan.

5.2.2 Bottlenose dolphin

35. G. Bearzi presented Document SC3/Doc. 12, "A Strategy for the conservation of common bottlenose dolphins *Tursiops truncatus* in the Mediterranean Sea". The group discussed ways of implementing the Action Plan and whether it was appropriate to address the conservation of a single species. An *ad hoc* working group met and discussed how to deal with the MOP's request for a Mediterranean Bottlenose Dolphin Conservation Plan. Given the relatively high priority assigned to common dolphins in the ACCOBAMS area, and considering that implementation of the Common Dolphin Conservation Plan was still pending, the Committee agreed to postpone, at least for the moment, elaboration of a similar Conservation Plan for bottlenose dolphins. It was agreed that, instead, the Committee should develop and implement a regional conservation strategy for bottlenose dolphins in the Mediterranean part of the Agreement area. This strategy would involve establishing a series of 5-10 regionally defined working groups to draft local/regional Action Plans for research on and conservation of bottlenose dolphins in their respective local areas. The draft Action Plans will be prepared in advance of a basin-wide workshop, to be held alongside the next Scientific Committee, in which representatives from the various working groups will meet to share information and set priorities.

36. The Med SRCU representative spoke about the Action Plan prepared for Cetacean Conservation in Libya by G. Bearzi (Sc3/Inf. 19), a promising region for *Tursiops truncatus* conservation, and expressed RAC/SPA's willingness to receive comments on it by the Scientific Committee.

37. Implementation of the bottlenose dolphin strategy requires that the Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat, assign an individual SC member or outside expert (the Coordinator) to begin compiling a list of individuals and teams who are involved in *Tursiops* research and conservation, in consultation with the 3 Regional Representatives of the Scientific Committee, in the Mediterranean region and the contiguous Atlantic area. This list can then be used by the Coordinator, in consultation with the Chair and Secretariat, to identify regional clusters as the basis for defining the working groups. For each working group, a coordinator or chair needs to be nominated and provided with a template or format for the Action Plans. Development of these small-scale plans can then be conducted by e-mail and/or through face-to-face meetings, but with the goal of ensuring that each draft plan has been circulated to the members of all working groups as well as the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee at least one month prior to the basin-wide bottlenose dolphin workshop.

38. Progress in developing the Action Plans will be assessed at the next meeting of the Scientific Committee, in the expectation that a schedule and draft agenda for the workshop can be agreed on at that time. The overall goal of the workshop should be to identify a small set of high-priority projects, tasks or management measures to improve the conservation status of bottlenose dolphins in the region that are in line with the needs and requests of the Parties. The workshop report should contain costed proposals and a strategy for implementing the agreed set of action items.

39. It was emphasized that implementation of this overall approach to addressing the conservation of bottlenose dolphins in the Mediterranean and the adjacent Atlantic area will require modest funding to support the Coordinator's position and the working groups' activities. Funding for the basin-wide workshop could be provided through the good offices of a State Party.

5.2.3 Black Sea cetaceans

40. A. Birkun introduced Document SC3/Doc. 13, the “Preparatory Conservation Plan for cetaceans in the Black Sea”. The document has been recently circulated to the Black Sea countries. The Secretariat has received comments from Romania and is waiting for a reply from the other countries. The members of the Scientific Committee believed that they could not finalise the Document during its third Meeting, since the Plan had to be revised where appropriate according to comments to be made on it by the Black Sea countries. The Scientific Committee members will provide their possible comments on the Document before the end of July to the Chair, with a copy for the Secretariat and for its author (A. Birkun). The Secretariat will then send the Document to the Black Sea Commission for consultation.

5.2.4 Fin whale

41. S. Panigada informed the meeting about the workshop to be organised next November in Monaco on the Conservation of Fin Whales. The Secretariat informed the Meeting that thanks to a contribution from Italy, funding for this workshop was secured. The Meeting was told that the workshop would be held at the same time as the Second International Workshop on the Detection and Localization of Marine Mammals using Passive Acoustics, organized by iSNS (University of Paris VI), the CNRS Chize and ACCOBAMS.

42. The Scientific Committee encouraged the finalization of this activity.

5.2.5 Other cetacean species

43. The Scientific Committee reviewed Document SC3/Doc. 15, “Towards a Conservation Plan for the Mediterranean Harbour Porpoise”. Following the discussion, the Scientific Committee recognized this Document as a research project that contained the elements of a valuable research programme requiring tighter focus on the research objectives (e.g. to obtain and analyse additional genetic samples, to achieve credible density estimates for porpoises in the northern Aegean, etc.). It recommended including short-beaked common dolphins and common bottlenose dolphins in this project along with harbour porpoises, obtaining and analysing genetic samples, and achieving credible density estimates in the northern Aegean for these coastal species simultaneously. Med-SRCU recalled that RAC/SPA support had been granted to the NGO ARION for the same objectives, addressed to those three species in the area, just before Greece ratified ACCOBAMS. The work is being developed in 2005; this will facilitate its further development by ACCOBAMS. The Scientific Committee also recommended making efforts (including formal and informal contacts) to facilitate collaboration with Turkey and Turkish researchers.

44. The Secretariat informed the Scientific Committee about the possibility of developing an INTERREG III A between Greece and Turkey.

5.3 Strandings

45. N. Entrup presented Document SC3/Doc. 18, “ACCOBAMS response to live strandings: improving rescue in the region; proposal for a small workshop”. The Scientific Committee encouraged the organization of the proposed workshop and recommended that the workshop also address live cetacean entanglement in fishing gear and entrapment in harbours.

46. C. Rais presented Document SC3/Doc. 16, “Strandings: Report on the ongoing activities and draft working programme”, and D. Cebrian informed the Meeting about the progress made in developing the MEDACES database. He mentioned that the current funding provided by the Spanish Government for MEDACES was finished, and although the University of Valencia was maintaining the database further funding was needed. He also said that MEDACES includes a GIS component and that MAP has developed MED GIS, a geographic information system on Mediterranean biodiversity. RAC/SPA will try to financially support the continuation of MEDACES in 2005.

47. Considering that the Secretariat should extend MEDACES to also cover the Black Sea, the Executive Secretary stressed the need for her to be kept regularly updated about any new development in MEDACES status.

5.4 System of tissue banks

48. The Chair informed the Meeting that a workshop on tissue banks had taken place in 2004 in Libya. He recalled that a working group was established, and that there are two complementary tissue banks in the Agreement area (Barcelona and Padua), and stressed the need to encourage the creation of a network of tissue banks. He informed the Meeting that Alex Aguilar was finding it difficult to secure funding for the tissue bank in Barcelona.

49. The Scientific Committee proposed encouraging the tissue bank in Padua to join and support the ACCOBAMS process for tissue bank development.

The Meeting invited the Secretariat to contact the Spanish Authorities and seek their support for the tissue bank in Barcelona. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee will ask the tissue bank holders to prepare a concept paper detailing the conservation importance of tissue banks.

50. Concerning the elaboration of operational guidelines and a code of conduct to facilitate the availability of information and samples, as required by MOP Resolution 2.15, the Scientific Committee recommended that while giving priority to maintaining the existing tissue banks, elaboration of guidelines and a code of conduct will start as soon as possible.

5.5 Interactions between cetaceans and fisheries

5.5.1 Bycatch

51. C. Rais introduced Document SC3/Inf. 1, "Project for assessing and mitigating the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS area". He indicated that the Document had been prepared in consultation with GFCM and RAC/SPA, and that the relevant EU directories had been approached to investigate funding prospects.

52. The Scientific Committee was invited to comment on the proposed project and to make proposals for funding it. It agreed to integrate and harmonize the actions envisaged within the project with the similar actions of the Conservation Plans for common and bottlenose dolphins and to better clarify the objectives of the project concerning depredation issues.

53. Addressing the issue of bycatch caused by drift-netting, the Scientific Committee recalled that in 2003, the SC2 had recognized that traditional or modified gillnets, whether drifting or not, are known to be a major source of threat to cetaceans. Following this, at the MOP, the Parties adopted Res. 2.13 on pelagic gillnets that urges Parties to:

- *"Ensure that their fishing operations are conducted in full accordance with the relevant existing regulations aimed at the mitigation of cetacean bycatch;*
- *Ensure that their fishing effort, including pelagic drifting and non-drifting gillnets, be reported to the ACCOBAMS Secretariat;*
- *Invite Riparian States to join the effort of the ACCOBAMS Parties in preventing further cetacean mortality in the Agreement Area, and to provide relevant information on fishing gear, particularly driftnets, and effort to FAO".*

54. The Scientific Committee was informed that illegal drift-netting continues to occur at a substantial level, e.g. in the southern Tyrrhenian Sea, the southern Alboran Sea and the Ligurian Sea inside and outside the Pelagos Sanctuary (SC3/Doc. 35, SC3/Inf. 12, SC3/Inf. 17). Given that various international fora have banned pelagic drift-netting, the Scientific Committee expressed its strong concern about the continuation of this practise, which greatly harms cetaceans, including threatened populations in the Agreement Area based on IUCN Red List assessments.

5.5.2 Competitive interactions and deterrent acoustic devices

55. C. Fortuna presented Document SC3/Doc. 27, "Pingers – a technological update on the issue, with a view of developing common strategies on the competition issue: a pragmatic approach".

56. The Scientific Committee stressed the great importance of this issue and recommended doing a survey to assess its extent, using the proposed questionnaire on dolphin/fisheries rivalry throughout the ACCOBAMS area (SC2/Doc. 8, Annex 1) and making further investigations when a hotspot is identified.

57. The Scientific Committee encouraged implementation of the proposed activity and its harmonization with the bycatch project.

5.5.3 Prey depletion

58. G. Bearzi introduced Document SC3/Doc. 19, “Assessing and mitigating the impact of prey depletion on cetaceans: can we find a way forward?”, which envisages ways of promoting a better scientific understanding of the trophic relationship and effects of fisheries.

59. While acknowledging the importance of research in this field, the Scientific Committee stressed the role the no-take fisheries reserves could play in restoring depleted resources and recommended working in close coordination with fishery specialists. In this context, the Scientific Committee recommended establishing collaboration links with GFCM’s Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). To this end, C. Rais will contact the coordinators of the relevant SAC subcommittees (Stock Assessment and Ecosystems) and report to the Chair on the possibilities and ways of establishing links.

60. As for the workshop and the other actions proposed in the Document, the Scientific Committee invited G. Bearzi to further develop the concept, taking into account the results of the CIESM workshop, and to present a proposal to the next Scientific Committee Meeting.

61. One observer informed the Meeting that regarding the relevance of prey depletion and its relationship to cetaceans, and the need for specific studies to identify areas deserving protection to allow fish recovery, in 2004 the Italian General Directorate for Fishery and Aquaculture in the Ministry of Agricultural and Forestal Resources (MiPAF) funded a specific research project on identifying areas that could become Zone di Tutela Biologica (areas of fishing closure to manage fishing resources), provided for by Italian law. The project was funded by CoNiSma (Italian Consortium of Universities Studying the Sea) and provides for the study of many areas located in Italian waters.

5.6 Anthropogenic noise

62. The Chair presented Documents SC3/Doc. 20, “Recommendations and guidelines to address the issue of the impact of anthropogenic noise on marine mammals in the Mediterranean Sea: toward a permit system for the ACCOBAMS area”, and SC3/Inf. 15, “Impact of anthropogenic noise on marine mammals: a letter to the Secretariat”. He said that the letter was from NRDC and IFAW commenting on the report contained in Document SC3/20.

63. Some members found the information in the Report very interesting, since many decision-makers need such information. Since establishing a permit system is not required by the relevant MOP Resolution, many members expressed concern about the feasibility of the advocated measures.

64. One member told the Meeting that a debate was taking place on establishing guidelines on the subject for the Pelagos Sanctuary. The Scientific Committee asked C. Guinet to liaise with the French Authorities in charge of the Pelagos Sanctuary.

65. The Chair noted that there were three main actions for the Scientific Committee to undertake, based on Resolution 2.16:

- Identifying critical habitats of sensitive species (i.e. *Ziphius cavirostris*)
- Preparing guidelines
- Addressing the issue of permits for research on sound projection.

66. The Scientific Committee agreed that habitats would be identified through the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative and other pertinent studies. The issue of permits could be addressed under Agenda Item 5.16. Concerning guidelines, the Scientific Committee decided to prepare a programme of work and ask the Secretariat to contract an expert to prepare draft guidelines for the ACCOBAMS area, including the relevant justification and rationale. The draft guidelines will be submitted to the next Meeting of the Scientific Committee.

5.7 Collisions

67. Concerning the problem of collisions, S. Panigada informed the Meeting that the problem will be addressed at a workshop to be organized at the same time as the fin whale workshop discussed under Agenda Item 5.2.4 as described in Document SC3/Inf. 8. He said that a link had been established with the relevant IWC Sub-Committee that is dealing with this issue worldwide.

68. The Scientific Committee thanked S. Panigada and C. Guinet for their organizational effort.

5.8 Whale-watching

69. The Chair recalled that the Parties had adopted guidelines for whale-watching and recommended that they keep them up-to-date. M. Simmonds of WDCS, now with the support of E. Hoyt, agreed to continue carrying out this task. He also said that the Agreement had established a web-based database to collect information on whale-watching activities in the ACCOBAMS area.

70. C. Fortuna presented Document SC3/Doc. 21, "Whale-watching: report on ongoing activities on the whale-watching database".

71. The Scientific Committee recommended that work on the database be pursued and invited the working group to present to the next Meeting of the Scientific Committee a report on the status of whale-watching activities in the Agreement area. It stressed the importance of involving Regional Representatives and national experts in elaborating the report.

5.9 Specially protected areas

72. C. Rais and E. Hoyt presented Document SC3/Doc. 22, "Specially protected areas: work programme on activities to be developed during the triennium".

73. The Scientific Committee stressed the importance of elaborating criteria for the selection of sites of protection interest for cetaceans and of improving the effectiveness of the existing protected areas, i.e. by integrating consideration of cetaceans within the managing of other areas set aside for other reasons. The Scientific Committee agreed that it is important to monitor developments and help with its expertise to ensure the success of the existing Pelagos Sanctuary for Mediterranean Marine Mammals, because of its potential value for cetacean habitat conservation and its stature as a flagship tri-national and international Cetacean Protected Area and SPAMI in the ACCOBAMS region.

5.10 Emergency Task Force for special mortality and stranding events

74. The Chair noted that no progress had been made on this issue since the last Meeting. As a way forward, the Scientific Committee recommended putting this discussion on setting up a task force onto the agenda of the next workshop on live strandings.

75. One member recommended using as an example the emergency system of REMPEC (Mediterranean Action Plan's Regional centre for pollution emergency response), and establishing contacts with such a centre to explore the possibility of cooperation.

5.11 Long-term capacity-building strategy

76. Following C. Rais's presentation on establishing a Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) for cetaceans (Document SC3/Doc. 24, "Long-term capacity-building strategy: a proposal for a Clearing House Mechanism" (CHM), the Scientific Committee encouraged the Secretariat to carry out the proposed activity and apply for it to be funded by the GEF.

77. In this context, the Scientific Committee also took note of the recent initiative to develop a national network for cetacean monitoring and conservation in Ukraine, presented by A. Birkun (SC3/Inf. 5).

5.12 Photo-identification activities

78. S. Panigada presented Document SC3/Doc. 25, “Proposal for a cooperative effort between ACCOBAMS and the European Cetacean Society on the concerted promotion of cetacean photo-identification activities and training”.

79. Acknowledging MOP2 Resolution 2.28, and noting the advantages provided by photo-identification, as described in Document SC3/Doc. 25, the Scientific Committee recommended that ACCOBAMS join the ECS in continuing the Europhlukes programme.

80. To this end, Document SC3/Doc. 25 should be submitted to the Bureau, along with an extract from the SC3 Report and the Europhlukes project report.

5.13 Databases and directories

81. C. Fortuna presented Document SC3/Doc. 26 “Database on research activities: publicising and updating the web-based database and procedure to extract the information in an early report”.

82. The Scientific Committee recommended carrying out the activities proposed in the Document.

5.14 Guidelines on the Precautionary Principle

83. The Chair remarked that the document was not ready but probably in an advanced stage of preparation.

84. It was proposed to start with developing guidelines for one subject (e.g. acoustics). However, considering the complexity of the subject, the Scientific Committee decided to postpone the discussion on these guidelines to the next Scientific Committee Meeting, and to carry out inter-session work on it so that it would be ready in time for the SC4.

5.15 Workshop on methods for evaluating habitat degradation and its effect on cetacean populations

85. The Chair having said that the Report of the Meeting on the IWC workshop on habitat degradation, held in 2004 in Siena, was not yet available, the Scientific Committee decided to postpone discussion of the subject until the workshop report, to be presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, to meet in South Korea in one month, is received.

5.16 Granting of exceptions for the purpose of non-lethal *in situ* research

86. N. Entrup presented Document EC3/ Inf. 14, “Statement on guidelines on granting of exceptions for the purpose of non-lethal *in situ* research”.

87. The Scientific Committee agreed to establish a working group to give further consideration to the guidelines. It will work by exchanging e-mails and will submit a document to the next SC4.

88. The Scientific Committee, and the work of the group, will proceed as detailed in CS3/Inf. 14.

5.17 Release of cetaceans into the wild

89. N. Entrup presented Document SC3/Doc. 31 Res. 1, “Release of captive cetaceans into the wild: draft guidelines”.

90. Following a discussion on the Document, the Scientific Committee expressed its gratitude to WDCS for the work done and asked it to send the Document in Word format to the members. Comments on the Document should be sent within two months directly to N. Entrup.

91. The Scientific Committee also discussed Dolphin Assisted Therapy and the spread of aquariums in the region, reiterating its previous strong concern about this topic, in the context of its potentially leading to increased problems with the release of cetaceans into the ACCOBAMS area. The Executive Secretary emphasized that she needs the advice of the Scientific Committee on what answer should be given to the NGOs with regard to the use and the effectiveness of DAT.

92. The Scientific Committee decided to review Document SC3/Inf. 11, “Issues of the study trip to the Oceanographic Park and Mundomar”, at its next Meeting and recommended that the Executive Secretary consult with the Chair if she receives questions about the release of cetaceans into the wild or the effectiveness of DAT.

5.18 IUCN Red List of cetaceans of the Mediterranean and Black Seas

93. R. Reeves introduced Document SC3/Doc. 32 and briefed participants about IUCN procedure for assessing the status of species.

94. The Chair told the Meeting that the IUCN Centre in Malaga was ready to support the process of evaluating the status of Mediterranean and Black Sea cetacean species.

95. R. Hepworth expressed the interest of the CMS Secretariat in making a financial contribution to this activity.

96. The Scientific Committee encouraged the carrying out of the activity concerning the IUCN Red List of Mediterranean and Black Sea cetaceans.

Agenda Item 6: Proposed amendments to CMS appendices

97. The Chair introduced Document SC3/33, “Proposal for the inclusion of individual species in CMS appendices”, and explained the rationale behind this initiative, undertaken by the Principality of Monaco.

98. The Scientific Committee thought that the document needed improving and cutting before it was submitted to the CMS Secretariat.

99. R. Hepworth agreed that further work was clearly needed, and offered to initiate an e-mail correspondence group with the key actors, through Marco Barbieri of the CMS Secretariat.

100. N. Entrup indicated that, given the importance of the amendments proposed for improving cetacean conservation, WDCCS was offering financial support for hiring a consultant to revise the document and have the amendment proposal ready in the required format before the deadline.

Agenda Item 7: Any other business

7.1 Discussion and adoption of the proceedings of the informal workshop on the functioning of the Scientific Committee, held on 14 May

101. The Report of the informal workshop on Scientific Committee issues and procedure, held on 14 May, was presented to the Meeting and attached as Annex 7 to this Report.

7.2 Discussion on the opportunity for ACCOBAMS to participate in and collaborate with the European Marine Strategy

102. Although the Meeting noted that the deadline for submitting comments on the European Strategy for the Marine Environment had passed, the Scientific Committee recommended keeping up contacts with the bodies responsible for the European Marine Strategy and providing inputs for its development where possible.

7.3 Presentation of the Egyptian NGO, the Abu Salama Society

103. The representative of the Abu Salama Society presented the objectives and activities of this newly established Egyptian NGO.

7.4 Discussion of the WDCS proposal about a questionnaire related to the educational programme

104. N. Entrup presented Document SC3/Doc. 34 concerning a questionnaire prepared as part of the Education Strategy and Programme being prepared by WDCS and Ocean Care. He indicated that since the programme has to be based on scientific information, contributions from Scientific Committee members are welcome.

Agenda Item 8: Venue of next Meeting

105. In 2006, to mark the ten years of ACCOBAMS, the Fourth Meeting of the Scientific Committee will be organized in Monaco. The Secretariat will select the date of the meeting as soon as possible in consultation with the Chair.

Agenda Item 9: Adoption of Report

106. The Meeting approved the present report on the basis of a draft prepared by the Secretariat and reviewed by the participants.

Agenda Item 10: Closure of Meeting

107. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair closed the meeting at 7.40 p.m. on Tuesday, 17 May 2005.

ANNEX 1

OPENING STATEMENT BY ROBERT HEPWORTH, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES (UNEP-CMS)

First I should express my appreciation on behalf of UNEP and CMS to Egypt as the host country for this meeting as well as to the Secretariat and the Chairman for the work they have put in to convene it.

Since its establishment after MOP1, the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS has quickly become the key motor for the development of the Agreement. Preparatory work by the Committee was undoubtedly a key element for the success of last year's Meeting of ACCOBAMS Parties in Majorca.

The high standard of work of the Committee is no doubt going to be continued at this meeting, as the thorough and indeed - as your Chairman described them - "rich" documents amply demonstrate. The CMS Secretariat is sincerely impressed by the broad spectrum of subjects to be considered by the meeting, and by the quality of the documents presented.

The Committee's work has its foundation in its diversified and balanced membership, including a geographically-balanced representation of members designated by the Parties and independent experts designated by relevant international organizations.

This well-designed structure of the Committee has also the advantage of facilitating linkages and promoting collaboration between ACCOBAMS and the other inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations appointing the Committee's members.

This makes the ACCOBAMS Committee a particularly interesting model for the design of Scientific and Technical Advisory Bodies of future CMS Agreements.

A number of items in the meeting's agenda are of particular interest to CMS within its work to address relevant cross-cutting issues at a global scale and to address similar issues in other geographic areas. Such items include for instance the interaction between cetaceans and fisheries, impact of anthropogenic noise, collision with ships, Specially Protected Areas and of course the proposals to amend the listing of several cetacean species under the CMS Appendices.

This commonality of interests suggests potential for further strengthening the links between this committee and the CMS Scientific Council. This should be facilitated by the fact that the Chair of the Sc. Committee has - since CMS COP7 - been accepted as a permanent observer of the CMS SC meeting. Building on the experience being developed within this Committee, it might be envisaged that ACCOBAMS could take a leading role within the Council in addressing certain issues at a global scale. The impact of anthropogenic noise could be a potentially interesting subject in this regard.

Another important issue to be addressed by this meeting is the gathering of baseline information concerning cetacean abundance and distribution in the Agreement Area. This relates to the critical issue of the availability of adequate information on which decisions on conservation policies should be based, and against which the success of MEAs in meeting their objectives should be measured, as well as their individual contribution to attain the global target of a significant reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss by the year 2010.

Here also I can see important opportunities of synergies between this Committee and the CMS Scientific Council, notably in the current endeavour to define indicators to determine the accomplishment of the Convention's objectives and its contribution to the attainment of the 2010 target.

Also in connection with the issue of the availability of information, I noticed with pleasure that the meeting is going to consider the utility of the CMS Global Register of Migratory Species (GROMS) to ACCOBAMS (and vice versa). This will be a valued input to the independent review of GROMS currently being undertaken for CMS by Chedly Rais.

It is also vital that the science-based, and wide-ranging, role of ACCOBAMS, alongside ASCOBANS and CMS itself, is much better understood within the machinery of the International Whaling Convention; I am hoping to obtain advice from ACCOBAMS' scientists on this matter later in the meeting.

Finally I would like to draw participants' attention to the forthcoming publication in book form of the UNEP/CMS global review of small cetaceans. This has been subject to considerable web-based consultation and peer review over the last 1-2 years. We believe it is now in a form where it will be a useful publication for several members of the CMS Family. We plan to launch it formally at the CMS Conference of Parties, which is being hosted in November 2005 at the headquarters in Kenya of UNEP, who have co-financed the costs of the review with CMS.

I look forward to seeing some of you again in Nairobi later this year at the CMS Scientific Council and our Conference of Parties.

ANNEX 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

MEMBERS of the SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Alexei BIRKUN

CIESM Expert
Brema Laboratory, Deputy Director
Eskadronnaya Str. 3-49, Simferopol - UKRAINE
Tel/Fax: +380 652 253503
E-mail: alexeibirkun@home.cris.net

Ana CAÑADAS

CIESM
Nalon 16, 28240 Hoyo de Manzanares,
Madrid - SPAIN
Tel: +34 676481284 – Fax: +34 918565199
E-mail: alnitak.ana@cetaceos.com

Christophe GUINET

CIESM
CEBC CNRS
79360 Villiers en Bois - FRANCE
Tel: +33 5 4909 7839 /4909 6526
E-mail: guinet@cebc.cnrs.fr

Myroula HADJICHRISTOPHOROU

Eastern Mediterranean Area (EASTMED)
Ministry of Agriculture Natural Resources &
Environment - Department of Fisheries and Marine
Research, Senior Fisheries & Marine Research Officer
Eolou Street 13, 1416 Nicosia – CYPRUS
Tel: + 357 22 30 39 01 – Fax: + 357 22 77 59 55
E-mail: andrecws@logos.cy.net

Giancarlo LAURIANO

Centrale Mediterranean Area (CENTRALMED)
ICRAM
Via di Casalotti 300, 00166 Roma - ITALY
Tel: +39 06 61570409 – Fax: +39 06 61550581
E-mail: g.lauriano@icram.org

Giuseppe NOTARBARTOLO DI SCIARA

CIESM
ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee, Chair
Via B. Marcello 43 Milano - ITALY
Tel: +39 02 29402867 - Mob: +39 335 6376035
Fax: +39 02 700518468
E-Mail: disciara@tin.it

Simone PANIGADA

ECS
Tethys Research Institute
Viale G. B. Gadio, 2 – 20121 Milano – ITALY
Tel: +39 02 5831 4889 – Fax: +39 02 6694114
Email: panigada@inwind.it

Gheorghe RADU

Black Sea Area (BLACKSEA)
National Institute for Marine Research and
Development “Grigore Antipa”
Blv. Mamaia, 300 Constanta - ROMANIA
Tel: +40 41 543288 – Fax: +40 41 831274
E-mail: gpr@alpha.rmri.ro

Randall REEVES

IUCN
Okapi Wildlife Associates
27 Chandler Lane, Hudson
Quebec JOP 1HO - CANADA
Tel: +1 450 458 6685 – Fax: +1 450 458 7383
E-mail: rreeves@total.net

SUB-REGIONAL COORDINATION UNITS

Daniel CEBRIAN

Mediterranean SRCU
RAC-SPA (UNEP/MAP)
Boulevard du Leader Yaser Arafat B.P. 337
1080 Tunis Cedex – TUNISIE
Tel: +216 7120 6649 – Fax: +216 7120 6490
Email: daniel.cebrian@rac-spa.org.tn

Oksana TARASOVA

Black Sea SRCU
Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against
Pollution – Permanent Secretariat
Dolmabahçe Sarayı II. Hareket Köşkü 34353
Beşiktaş Istanbul - TURKEY
Tel: +90 212 227 9927 - Fax: +90 212 227 9933
Email: otarasova@blacksea-commission.org

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Daniel CEBRIAN

RAC-SPA (UNEP/MAP)
Boulevard du Leader Yaser Arafat B.P. 337
1080 Tunis Cedex – TUNISIE
Tel: +216 7120 6649 – Fax: +216 7120 6490
Email: daniel.cebrian@rac-spa.org.tn

Robert HEPWORTH

CMS Executive Secretary
Martin Luther King Str. 8, 53175 Bonn - Germany
Tel: +49 228 815 2402 – Fax: +49 228 815 2449
E-Mail: rheworth@cms.int; cms@cms.int

EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES

M. Hamdy DARRAG

Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs
30 Misr Helwan El Zyrae Rd. Maadi Cairo - EGYPT
Tel: +20 2 10 6448186 – Fax: +20 2 25256461
E-Mail: darrag@ceaa.gov.eg

Moustapha FOUDA

Director, Nature Conservation Sector
Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
30 Misr Helwan El Zyrae Rd. Maadi Cairo - EGYPT
Tel: +2 02 5271391 - Fax: +2 02 5248792
E-mail: foudamos@link.net

Noha ZAKARIA

International Affairs Officer, EEAA
30 Misr Helwan El Zyrae Rd. Maadi Cairo - EGYPT
Tel: + 20 2 5256452/3
E-Mail: pftc@ceaa.gov.eg

INVITED EXPERTS

Giovanni BEARZI

Tethys Research Institute, President
Viale G.B. Gadio 2, 20121 Milano - ITALY
Tel/Fax: +39 02 72001947
E-mail: bearzi@inwind.it

Caterina FORTUNA

Blue World Institute of Marine Research and
Conservation
Via Augusto Conti 33a, 00135 Roma – ITALY
Tel: +39 338 1767572
E-mail: fortuna.cm@tiscali.it

Chedly RAIS

Menzah VIII, Tunis – TUNISIE
Tel: +216 98444629 – Fax: +216 71708621
E-mail: rais.c@planet.tn

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Emad ADLY

Small Events Programme
National Coordinator
Tel: +20 2 5161519 – Fax: +20 2 5162961
E-mail: aoye@link.net

Ayman M. AFIFI

Abu Salama Society
P.O. BOX 521 Hunghada, Red Sea

Nicolas ENTRUP

Managing Director, WDCS (ACCOBAMS Partner)
Altrostr. 43, Munich 81245 - GERMANY
Tel: 49 89 61 00 23 95 - Fax: 49 89 61 00 23 94
E-mail: niki.entrup@wdcs.org

Erich HOYT

Senior Research Fellow, WDCS (ACCOBAMS Partner)
29A Dirleton Ave, North Berwick
Scotland UK EH39 4BE
Tel: + 44 162 0893644
Email: erich.hoyt@mac.com

Vanja SVETINA

Adriatic Project Society
Bratov Ucakar 100, 1000 Ljubljana - SLOVENIA
tel: 00 386 41 259 116
E-mail: vanja.svetina@siol.net

Leonardo TUNESI

ICRAM (ACCOBAMS Partner)
Via di Casalotti, 300 – 00166 Roma – Italy
Tél: +39 06 61570465 – Fax: +39 06 61561906
E-mail: ltunesi@icram.org

SECRETARIAT

Marie-Christine VAN KLAVEREN

ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO
MC-98000 MONACO
Tel: +377 9315 8010 – Fax: +377 9315 4208
Email: mcvanklaveren@accobams.net

Roberta MAZZUCCO

ACCOBAMS Secr., Administrative Assistant
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO
MC-98000 MONACO
Tel: +377 9315 4243 – Fax: +377 9315 4208
Email: rmazzucco@accobams.net

Dilara BETZ

ACCOBAMS Secretariat
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO
MC-98000 MONACO
Tel: +377 9315 2078 – Fax: +377 9315 4208
Email: dilara@accobams.net

ANNEX 3

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS OF THE BLACK SEA, THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA AND CONTIGUOUS ATLANTIC AREA (ACCOBAMS)

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

Rule 1

The Scientific Committee, established in accordance with Article VII of the Agreement, provides scientific advice and information to the Meeting of the Parties or through the Secretariat to the Parties. Its functions are defined in Article VII, paragraph 3 of the Agreement.

Rule 2

In particular, the Scientific Committee provides recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties concerning the implementation of the Agreement and of the Conservation Plan, and on further research to be carried out.

MEMBERSHIP

Rule 3

The Scientific Committee, as determined by the Meeting of the Parties (Res 1.3 as annexed), shall consist of 12 members:

a) One qualified expert representing each of the four geographical regions as in annex 1. One alternate will be designated for each of the above experts, to participate in meetings only in the absence of the corresponding delegate. b) Five qualified experts in cetacean conservation appointed by the Director General of CIESM following consultation with the Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement; c) One representative each from the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the European Cetacean Society (ECS) and the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), each of them appointed by the corresponding Organization.

REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

Rule 4

Members

4.1 The geographical region representation shall be reviewed at an ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Meeting. The terms of office of those members shall expire at the close of the ordinary Meeting following that at which they were appointed.

4.2 The same provisions shall apply with respect to alternate members.

4.3 The mandate of the five qualified cetacean conservation experts nominated by the CIESM in consultation with the Executive Secretariat shall be reviewed at each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties in the same way they have been nominated.

4.4 At each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties ECS, IUCN and IWC shall be invited to appoint a representative to the Committee.

Rule 5
Observers

5.1 The Chairperson, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, may invite observers representing riparian Countries.

5.2 Without prejudice to Rule 3, the Chairperson, in consultation with the Executive Secretary and accordance with the agenda, may admit a limited number of observers from specialised international Inter-Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations and, in extraordinary circumstances, may admit one or more special guests.

5.3 If the following disciplines are not already represented on the Scientific Committee, the Chairperson, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, may invite specialists in environmental law, fisheries and socio-economics, and in any other field relevant to the agenda.

Rule 6
Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Agreement, with the support of the Sub-Regional Co-ordination Units, shall undertake secretarial tasks during the meetings of the Scientific Committee and shall provide administrative and logistical support.

BUREAU

Rule 7

7.1 The members of the Committee shall elect their own Chairperson.

7.2 This election will take place at the first meeting of the Scientific Committee following the Meeting of the Parties. The newly elected Chair shall assume his/her functions immediately upon election and although formally his/her function expires at the end of the Meeting of the Parties, he/she shall continue as acting Chair in an advisory capacity to the Secretariat and the Committee, until the election of the new Chair.

7.3 The Chairperson shall preside all meetings of the Scientific Committee, approve the provisional agenda prepared by the Secretariat for circulation, and liaise with members between meetings of the Committee. The Chairperson may represent the Committee as required, within the limits of the Committee mandate, and shall carry out such other functions as may be delegated to him/her by the Committee.

7.4 In the event of the Chairperson being absent or unable to discharge the duties of Presiding Officer, the Committee will appoint one of its members to conduct the Meeting.

DECISIONS

Rule 8

Decisions of the Committee shall be taken by consensus unless a vote is requested by the Chairperson or by at least four members.

Rule 9
Methods of Voting

9.1 Each Committee Member shall have one vote.

9.2 The Committee shall normally vote by show of hands at a meeting, but any Committee Member may request a roll-call vote. In the event of a vote during an inter-sessional period, there will be a postal ballot.

9.3 At the election of officers, any Committee Member may request a secret ballot. If seconded, the question of whether a secret ballot should be held shall immediately be voted upon. The motion for a secret ballot may not be conducted by secret ballot.

Rule 10

Majority and voting procedures

All votes shall be taken by simple majority among members present and voting. In the case of a tie, the proposal shall be considered rejected.

MEETINGS

Rule 11

Meetings of the Committee shall be convened in general on the basis of one annual meeting by the Secretariat of the Agreement in consultation with the General Secretariat of the CIESM and the Chair of the Committee. Extraordinary meetings shall only be convened with the agreement of the Contracting Parties Bureau Members.

Rule 12

When in the opinion of the Committee an emergency arises, requiring the adoption of immediate measures to avoid deterioration of the conservation status of one or more cetacean species, the Chairperson may ask the Agreement Secretariat to contact the relevant Parties urgently.

Rule 13

Notices of meetings, including date and venue, shall be sent to all Parties by the Secretariat at least 45 days in advance and, in the case of extraordinary meetings, at least 14 days in advance.

Rule 14

A quorum for an ordinary meeting shall consist of the two third of the members of the Committee. This quorum shall be reduced to half of the members in extraordinary meetings. No decision shall be taken at a meeting in the absence of a quorum.

Rule 15

An executive summary of each meeting shall be prepared by the Secretariat as soon as possible and shall be communicated to all members of the Committee, to all Parties and non Parties, all riparian States and "ACCOBAMS Partners".

Rule 16

a) The working language is English. However, simultaneous interpretations in French and English will be provided upon availability of funds. b) The working documents are distributed in English. French translation, in some case will be possible upon availability of funds.

WORKING GROUPS

Rule 17

The Committee may establish ad hoc working groups as needed to deal with specific tasks. It shall define the terms of reference and composition of each working group. The meetings of these working groups will be held, when possible, in conjunction with other events.

Rule 18

Insofar as they are applicable, these Rules shall apply mutatis mutandis to the proceedings of working groups.

Rule 19

The Committee shall receive reports from other relevant meetings and working groups established under the Agreement, when necessary.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE

Rule 20

In application of Article II.2 of the Agreement, when any Party asks for advice on exceptions to the prohibition on deliberate taking of cetaceans. The Secretariat shall communicate the request to the members for advice within 30 days. The advice received within the 30 days will be immediately communicated to the requesting Party.

Rule 21

Between sessions, any member, the Sub-Regional Co-ordination Unit or the Secretariat may submit through the Secretariat a written proposal to the Chairperson for decision. The Secretariat shall communicate the proposal to members for comment within 60 days of the date of that communication. Any comments received within the 60-day period shall also be communicated to members.

Rule 22

If, by the date on which comments on a proposal were due to be communicated, the Secretariat has not received any objection from a member of the Committee, the proposal shall be adopted, and notice of the adoption shall be given to all members.

Rule 23

If any member objects to a proposal within the 60 days time limit, the proposal shall be referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

OTHER FUNCTIONS

Rule 24

To each ordinary Meeting of the Parties the Chairperson shall submit a written report on the Committee's work since the previous ordinary Meeting.

PROCEDURE

Rule 25

These Rules shall apply at the first meeting of the Committee.

AMENDMENTS

Rule 26

The Rules of Procedure may be amended as required by a decision of the Committee.

ANNEX 4

ESTABLISHING A LINK BETWEEN THE ASSESSMENT OF DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE OF CETACEANS WITHIN THE ACCOBAMS AREA AND THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATED PROGRAM ON THE MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA

A European IP on the Mediterranean and Black Sea is currently being prepared and coordinated by Dr. L. Legendre and P. Mayzaud (Villefranche sur Mer Oceanographic Station, France). This program aims at assessing signs of environmental changes occurring in the Mediterranean and the Black seas by combining several approaches.

- ❑ Collection of historical multidisciplinary data sets (physical, biological and fishery)
- ❑ Collections of existing paleo-data set
- ❑ Organization of multidisciplinary oceanographic cruise in the Mediterranean and the Black seas to collect data and for model definition and validation of sub-regional areas. These cruises will collect information about physical, bio-chemical and biological (up to the small pelagic fish) parameters.

Data collection and model definition will be used in a second stage to simulate and understand the past ecosystem variability and changes and to develop ecosystem models to connect low and higher trophic levels and assessing scenario of future environmental changes.

The time frame of this IP is 2006-2009.

Several of the work package of this IP concentrate in collecting and producing spatially explicit models of zooplankton/micronecton /higher predators groups within the Mediterranean and Black seas.

In relation to the relevance of these planned actions to the global assessment of cetacean distribution and abundance within the ACCOBAMS area, the SC recommended to promote strong interaction between these two planned research projects.

At an early stage interactions should be expected and may contribute in defining of the regional boundary of the cetacean survey and the proposed Mediterranean and Black Sea IP consistent with each other.

At a second stage, cetacean observers are likely to be invited to participate to the scientific cruise planned within the Mediterranean Black sea IP, to assess the abundance of cetacean within the different sectors covered by the cruises.

And on a longer-term basis strong benefit are expected in terms of analyzing the cetacean distribution and abundance in relation to physical and biological oceanographic factors.

ANNEX 5

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SECOND WORKSHOP ON SURVEYING THE ACCOBAMS AREA

During the first Workshop on surveying the ACCOBAMS area in December 2004, it was agreed that a second Workshop would be needed after the SC3 to progress on the development of the proposal of the ACCOBAMS cetacean survey.

Preliminary proposal of dates for the second Workshop is February 2006.

Objectives of the second Workshop

The objectives of the second Workshop are:

- a) To review and refine the survey blocks based on information collected previous to the Workshop (facilities, logistics, local groups, environmental variables, distribution of species, etc.).
- b) To set the basis for the survey design (percentage of coverage, timing, etc.)
- c) To refine and elaborate the methods for data collection and data analysis
- d) To describe platform specifications according to the survey methods to be used
- e) To define actions to be carried out during the project in addition to the survey (monitoring, capacity building, stock identity, conservation and management, etc.)
- f) Review of a draft project proposal
- g) Review of a draft budget
- h) Development of a strategy for fund-raising and for obtaining the support of national authorities

Participants

It would be advisable, for the sake of efficiency, to limit participation in this second technical Workshop, but to take advantage of the European Cetacean Society Conference planned for Poland in April 2006, and to conduct another full-day Workshop there, open to all potential participants in the project (such as representatives of local Mediterranean and Black Sea groups). This plan of holding two separate workshops should actually save money, as the February workshop would include fewer participants and the ECS workshop would only require the costs of the meeting room (it is assumed that participants would cover their own travel expenses to the ECS conference).

The preliminary proposed list of participants to the February 2006 Workshop (a total of 20-25 persons) is:

- Initial working group (3 persons)
- Large-scale survey and analysis experts (2 persons)
- Genetics expert (1 person)
- Acoustic survey expert
- Regional experts
- Expert from the Black Sea (1 person)
- Subregional Coordination Unit representatives
- Regional representatives of the Scientific Committee or their Alternates

Preparation of the Workshop

The organization of the second Workshop will involve several tasks, such as:

- Contact local researchers to update the background information on facilities, cetacean distribution, availability of platforms, possibilities of matching funds, etc.
- Compile and summarize background information
- Prepare a draft proposal including a suggested structure and organization of the project, actions to be included, coarse budget, etc.

ANNEX 6

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PLAN

The Conservation Plan for short-beaked common dolphins in the Mediterranean (MCDCP) is the first Plan developed for a cetacean species in the Agreement area and represents a potentially powerful instrument to counter the dramatic decline of the Mediterranean common dolphin population that was classified as “Endangered” in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals.

The MCDCP was “strongly welcomed” by the Parties, and there was general agreement to proceed with implementation of the appropriate parts of the Plan (MOP2, Resolution 2.20). In this regard, the Secretariat was instructed by the Parties to appoint a Coordinator in consultation with the Bureau.

Progress

A Workshop on the implementation of the MCDCP was held prior to the 3rd Meeting of the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS to discuss the most appropriate ways to move forward. It was reiterated by all participants that the appointment of a Coordinator as referred to in Resolution 2.20 is of highest importance, as is to progress immediately with the implementation of the actions described in the Plan, intended to be completed in a 5-year time frame.

Giving a mandate to produce a Conservation Plan and endorsing it also implies that once a set of conservation actions has been agreed, these actions need to be appropriately funded and politically supported by the Member States. A contribution to support implementation of the MCDCP has already been confirmed from two NGOs to the Secretariat.

Strategy

With regard to the implementation of the Conservation Plan for short-beaked common dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea, the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS recommends the following 3-step strategy.

Step 1.

Obtain appropriate funding from the Parties to appoint a Coordinator and implement the Plan

The Scientific Committee requests the Secretariat to approach the Parties to ACCOBAMS referring to Resolution 2.20, point 6., to seek financial support for the appointment of the Coordinator and towards the implementation of Actions recommended within the MCDCP.

Funding is urgently needed inter alia to support a Coordinator (a demanding full-time job and a key to the success of the Plan), much travelling and the organisation of meetings and workshops.

Step 2.

Search for LIFE or other international funding to support portions of the Conservation Plan

As an additional means of obtaining the necessary funds, for implementation of the MCDCP, the Scientific Committee recommended that the potential of external sources (e.g. LIFE Projects) should be explored. It must be noted that applications towards these programmes are time consuming and require relevant expertise and financial support.

Step 3.

Provide immediate financial and institutional support of small-scale projects for common dolphin conservation

While the two steps outlined above are being taken, the SC recommends that actions to protect Mediterranean common dolphins should continue, and that the available resources - however inadequate they may be for the basin-wide implementation of the Plan - should be used to support a set of small-scale projects, to be selected based on their high level of priority and their feasibility. This “bottom-up” approach

is intended to achieve timely progress in the conservation of common dolphin groups at least in key portions of the Agreement area. Small-scale actions will also serve as case studies to identify the most effective strategies to be adopted at a local level.. These small-scale actions should be capable of producing measurable results that are relevant for management purposes and that advance conservation in the 5-year time frame proposed by the Plan.

An expert appointed by the Secretariat should be charged to prepare a list of feasible and fundable projects that can be implemented immediately, based on the rationale and guidelines provided by the Conservation Plan. This list will be reviewed by the Scientific Committee, which will advise with regard to the merit and level of priority of the proposed projects. Solicited proposals should then be reviewed by the SC and their advice, channelled through the Chair, should be used by the Secretariat as a basis for contracting for the work. The Scientific Committee encourages the Secretariat to explore ways to fund small-scale projects through collaborations with ACCOBAMS Partner organisations and other potential supporters.

Recommended Time Frame

June 2005: ACCOBAMS Secretariat to approach Parties

July 2005: identify suitable funding schemes and possibilities for submission of relevant applications (voluntary basis by Partners to ACCOBAMS)

August – December 2005: preparation and submission of funding applications

August – onwards: define and implement small-scale actions

January 2006: re-evaluation of situation, feedback to the Secretariat, the Scientific Committee and Parties

ANNEX 7

MINUTES OF THE INFORMAL WORKSHOP ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Introduction

The meeting began at 9.00 at the Marriott Hotel in Cairo and lasted until 13.30. Participants to the meeting were: G. Notarbartolo di Sciara, M.C. Van Klaveren, A. Birkun, A. Cañadas, C. Guinet, G. Radu, R. Reeves, D. Cebrian, O. Tarasova, R. Mazzucco.

The Chair opened the workshop and explained the reasons for it and the need to discuss the functioning of the Scientific Committee. The idea was to examine how the Scientific Committee has worked since its inception, identify any areas of concern or practical difficulties, and consider improvements to ensure that the Committee operates in an efficient, scientifically rigorous, consistent, fair and transparent manner. The workshop also provided an opportunity for the members present to exchange views with the Secretariat and to better understand ACCOBAMS procedures and mechanisms, thus facilitating future interactions and cooperation between the Secretariat and the Scientific Committee. The workshop was particularly opportune in view of the presence of a number of new members of the Committee.

The Chair introduced the draft agenda and some comments provided by Greg Donovan (who was unable to attend SC3) on the issues and the procedures of the Scientific Committee. It was agreed that a summary of the workshop conclusions would be submitted for adoption under item 7 to the plenary session of the Scientific Committee.

Overview of the Rules of Procedure

A gap exists in the Rules of Procedure regarding the mandate of the Chair between the election of a new Committee by the Parties and its first meeting being remarked. The Executive Secretary proposed an amendment to extend the Chair's mandate and thus close the gap. With regards to Rule 20 it was proposed to change the word "derogations" in accordance with the terms of Article 2b of the Agreement. The workshop took note of the proposals and anticipated further discussion during the plenary session.

Date and place of meetings

The Executive Secretary informed the group that the choice of meeting venues, made in consultation with the Chair, is determined by both political and logistical considerations. With regards to the dates, she stressed the need to be informed by SC members on the calendar of major events, which would influence their ability to participate. Also, some participants emphasized the need to know the meeting dates as far in advance as possible. The Secretary welcomed input and suggestions from SC members concerning meeting dates and locations, and the Chair will undertake to ensure that such input is provided in a timely way.

Attendance at SC Meetings by non-members

The issue was raised as to whether the Committee should promote the participation of observers and experts in its meetings. A clear distinction was made between invited experts and observers. The group recognized the importance of the contributions by invited experts, and the value of their interventions even in subject areas that are not immediately or obviously related to the field of expertise for which they have been invited to attend. With respect to observers, inviting them individually could lead to a problem of arbitrariness. Allowing observers to attend without restriction, however, could result in lengthy discussions that do not necessarily reflect the priorities, interests or views of Committee members. The Secretary also observed that large meetings have financial implications (room size, coffee breaks, etc.). It was decided to encourage the Chair to invite observers sparingly, e.g. mostly representatives of Organisations and Institutions from the host Country, and otherwise only in exceptional circumstances.

The Scientific Committee proposed that some scientific documents prepared for the Scientific Committee meeting be made accessible on the ACCOBAMS web site for public comments over a two-month hearing period in advance of the meeting.

Neither the Scientific Committee, the chair of the Scientific Committee nor the Executive Secretary of ACCOBAMS will be in a position to reply on a comment basis. Comments will be collected and attached to the document and addressed in relation to that document during the meeting. The documents could then be amended in the light of the comment received.

The comments should be submitted via a web-based pro format on the ACCOBAMS web site.

To be addressed by the Scientific Committee comments will have to:

- Refer to one scientific document, clearly identify and open to public comments.
- Individuals, NGO or government representatives providing the comment will have to identify themselves.

Priorities

Priorities are established based on the Working Programme adopted by the Parties, which also reflects the needs of the countries. The Executive Secretary stressed that Regional Representatives are the best source of such information. Considering the limited financial and human resources of the Agreement, the group recognised the need for the establishment of priorities among agenda items. The Chair reminded the group that for the time being, the SC should carefully consider all items included in the Working programme adopted by the Parties, although some prioritising will be unavoidable given the circumstances. He also mentioned that it will be possible for the Committee to provide input on scientific aspects and priorities for the Working Programme in the future, including that submitted for adoption to MoP3, because such document will be drafted with the cooperation of the Scientific Committee.

Request for advice

The workshop considered how to address, in an effective manner, requests for advice submitted to the SC. The Chair drew attention to the relevant Operational Procedures that were adopted by the previous SC (2003) and are posted on the Agreement's website. It was noted that a distinction should be made between requests for advice on the scientific or practical merits of proposals related to cetacean conservation in the Agreement area, and requests for advice from the Secretariat, Parties or other institutions on how to deal with specific activities that may have an impact on the conservation status of cetaceans in the Agreement area. The Chair agreed to re-draft the Operational Procedures in order to incorporate such a distinction, and proposed that the new draft should be included in the SC Rules of Procedure submitted for adoption to SC4.

Reporting

The group recognized that the adoption of the report by the end of each meeting is a practice that should be continued.

Proposal for a Vice-chair

The group saw no need for a vice-chair.

Advice to the MOP

Following a discussion on how the findings and recommendations of the Scientific Committee are communicated to the Contracting Parties, several proposals were made. The Executive Secretary explained that the concepts expressed in the Recommendations from the SC are carefully incorporated into the draft Resolutions prepared by the Secretariat and submitted to the Parties for adoption. Nevertheless, the Resolutions do not always include the verbatim text of the Scientific Committee Recommendations because, in addition to scientific considerations, they may contain political or other elements. Workshop participants stressed the need for the SC to be assured that its Recommendations are being transmitted to the Parties verbatim and not only encapsulated and sometimes paraphrased within Resolutions. On this basis, the Chair proposed, and all participants agreed, that all Scientific Committee Recommendations would be presented by the Chair along with his/her Report to the MoP.

Allocation of funds for scientific activities, choice of scientists and institutions, contract studies and reports. Although the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS is not responsible for budgetary matters, the participants felt that an explanation of the financial mechanisms and procedures involved (i.e. how the budget for

scientific activities is determined, and how scientific priorities are developed) would greatly help the efficiency of its advisory role. A balance needs to be found between ensuring that the needed work gets done as quickly as possible by competent scientists without endless bureaucracy and tenders, and achieving ‘transparency’. The Executive Secretary clarified that there is no intention of favouring one scientific area with respect to another; furthermore, funds are allocated to launch conservation activities and not to support research.

It was decided that in the future the Secretariat will receive support from the SC for the identification of experts to approach for elaborating scientific documents. The Chair will, in turn, propose to, or solicit proposals from, the Committee concerning names of experts for the Secretariat to approach as candidates for undertaking such work. Finally, it was agreed that the time allocated to the SC for reviewing commissioned reports should be adequate, i.e. at least as much as detailed in the Operation Procedures mentioned under “Request for Advice” (above).