



CALL FOR EXPERTISE

“ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative”

Preparatory study for an information management system for Cetaceans survey data in the ACCOBAMS Agreement area

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Established under the auspices of the UNEP Convention on Migratory Species (UNEP/CMS), the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS) is an Intergovernmental Agreement aimed at achieving and maintaining a favorable conservation status for cetaceans through the implementation of coordinated measures.

The Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS, based in Monaco, ensures the coordination of the Agreement implementation and provides assistance to the Contracting Parties. In this context, the Permanent Secretariat is working on the implementation of an initiative (the “ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative” – ASI) aimed at responding to the ACCOBAMS strategic objective on improving the understanding of the conservation status of cetaceans at the Mediterranean/Black Sea macroregional level. Implemented in coordination with the riparian countries and with their participation, the ASI project will support the countries to meet their national and international commitments, in particular as regards to the regional policies related to the monitoring of the marine environment (EU MSFD, Ecosystem Approach implemented by the Barcelona and Bucharest Conventions, fisheries policies, etc.).

The final goal of the project is to improve the conservation status of the species and their habitats through appropriate management, taking into consideration that cetacean conservation is at the interface of scientific, environmental, societal and economic issues, in a context of growing development of all maritime activities (fisheries, maritime transport, industries, tourism...). In this respect, the project will contribute to strengthen international cooperation and synergies between the riparian countries, as regards knowledge, monitoring and conservation of the species, at the ecoregional level of ACCOBAMS, with the view of optimizing and increasing the efficiency of their efforts to establish a transnational approach to conserving the concerned species.

The overall coordination of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative is provided by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat, according to the mandate given by the Parties to ACCOBAMS, and under the guidance of a Steering Committee. A dedicated Project Officer has been recruited by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat in order to provide operational management of the project, under the general authority of the ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary, and a Scientific Coordinator is involved in the project for tasks / actions related to the scientific aspects of the project. In order to ensure ownership of the project by the countries, a Contact Group composed of country representatives has been established to support the development of the project and the implementation of the activities.

The ASI is conducted over 3 and a half years and is declined in several components derived from its specific objectives. Among them, **the ASI aims at establishing an integrated and coordinated monitoring system for cetaceans in the all ACCOBAMS Agreement Area, that encompasses the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area.**

To address this, one main action of this component consists in establishing a baseline framework to assess cetacean's abundance and distribution at the macroregional level. A synoptic survey will be carried out across the Agreement area combining visual survey methods (aerial- and ship-based surveys) and passive acoustic monitoring (PAM) with the participation of scientists of the area. At this stage, the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat have secured funds for implementing the survey in the Mediterranean Sea only. A first synoptic survey for the Mediterranean is thus planned for the summer 2018 and additional funds are being sought for implementing the survey in the Black Sea.

The integrated and coordinated monitoring system for cetaceans that the ASI seeks to establish indispensably requires a system for data archiving and use. Once the data are collected, it is essential to have a supporting system in place for hosting them, as well as for supporting and administrating their use, either that being for scientific publications purposes, national reports and/or for developing multilevel supportive documents for conservation management.

In this regard, a key aspect of the ASI project and the sustainability of its actions is to propose a data management system that would centralize the data obtained during the ASI synoptic surveys, and, in continuation and building on the project, would also accompany the implementation of ACCOBAMS Parties national monitoring efforts over the long-term, and support a regional vision of cetacean's status. In particular, such tool would be instrumental for the ACCOBAMS Countries involved in the implementation of the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and/or the Ecosystem Approach Process from the Barcelona Convention, as well as other similar initiatives in the Black Sea.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL

The ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat is looking for a highly skilled expert (named hereafter the "Expert") in environmental science databases / information management system development and in marine biodiversity conservation of the ACCOBAMS Agreement Area, with experience in collaborative international context, in order to conduct a preparatory study for an information management system for cetaceans survey data, considering the data collected in the context of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative project and perspectives for the medium and long terms.

3. REQUESTED TASKS

The Expert to be recruited will have to conduct a preparatory study in order to support the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat with the identification of a data management system in the context of the ASI project, that would: 1. host and administer the data to be collected during the ASI surveys 2. Support the implementation of National Monitoring Programmes in the ACCOBAMS Agreement Area and 3. Identify perspectives for developing a cetacean survey data management system to support a regional vision over the long term.

In this context, the reflection on data management will include:

- A state of the art or benchmarking analysis aimed at identifying, reviewing and comparing (pros and cons) data management system developed (or to be developed) within the framework of other organizations, initiatives and projects related to marine biodiversity conservation.
- Proposals for ASI survey data management, in view of centralizing the ASI survey collected data, supporting its analysis and defining its administration modalities, in particular in view of the existing and future national monitoring efforts of the ACCOBAMS Parties;

- Long term perspectives on a sustainable system to centralize the information collected on all cetaceans' species surveyed in the macro-region, beyond the ASI survey collected data, in a unique, coherent, innovative and integrated data management platform that will meet international standards, be compatible or inter-operable with other relevant global platforms, and replicable to other eco-regional contexts.

For this study, the expert will have to take into consideration what is developed in other contexts (SCANS, SAMM surveys,...), and in particular the information management system that should be established in the framework of the Ecosystem Approach/MSFD and of the existing tools such as OBIS-SEAMAP and NETCCOBAMS. Relevant projects in development such as the EU-funded research project "ODYSSEA - operating a network of integrated observatory systems in the Mediterranean Sea", will also be identified and potential synergies assessed.

Knowing that the ASI data to be collected ultimately belongs to the ACCOBAMS Contracting Parties and thus is of publicly available nature, specific attention should be paid to data properties, data sharing, data accessibility, data use, data publishing and scientific exclusivity aspects. Those key aspects must be detailed and specific approaches proposed for the ASI data management system but also for the long-term macro regional information management system. Those key aspects, especially for the ASI data management system, should be prepared in close liaison with the Scientific Coordinator to ensure a clear common approach.

The Expert is also expected to use a consultative approach along the course of his/her study with relevant stakeholders from the ASI and from other relevant organizations, in close consultation with the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat. The modalities of this consultation should be detailed in the proposal submitted for this call. Of particular relevance, a Workshop of the ASI Contact Group will be held in October 2017 (tentatively 10-12 October 2017). This will be a key moment for the Expert to present the progress in his/her work and to consult the ASI Contact Group Members.

After the evaluation of the proposals and once the Expert is selected, the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat will organize a kick-off meeting (via Skype or a phone call) in order to review and agree on the methodological approach, in particular the consultation process proposed, and to set the schedule of the work.

The expected outputs of this expertise mission could be summarized as follows:

- a state of the art on the existing relevant data management systems and the ones in development
- a draft report including:
 - a provisional proposal for an ASI data management system
 - preparatory perspectives for the development of an ACCOBAMS Agreement Area Cetacean Data management system
- A finalized report including:
 - Finalized proposal for an ASI data management system based on previous consultation process
 - Finalized perspectives for the development of an ACCOBAMS Agreement Area Cetacean Data management system based on previous consultation process

All outputs should include an executive summary.

All the outputs produced by the expert will be reviewed by the ACCOBAMS Secretariat and circulated to the ASI Steering Committee - including the Scientific Coordinator - and to the Contact Group for consideration and advice.

The Expert will be requested to present his/her work to the ASI Steering Committee during Skype meetings. At this stage, 2 meetings of 2 hours are anticipated.

4. WORKLOAD, BUDGET AND PAYMENT DETAILS

The total workload should be distributed over 6 months maximum.

The maximum available budget for the requested tasks is **10.000,00 Euros**.

One contract will be established by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat with the Expert. Payments will be made upon presentation of invoices, based on the work achieved, within the limit of the contract budget.

The travel and accommodation costs for the eventual participation of the consultant in any relevant meetings, agreed in advance by the ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary, for presenting data and updates on the project for example, will be covered under separate budget, according to the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat internal rules.

5. CONDITIONS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF A PROPOSAL

The proposals should be submitted by individual consultants or Organizations who will be contractually the unique vis-à-vis of the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat for all tasks related to the mission.

The applicants must provide evidence of the following:

- be graduated in environment sciences. A Master or a PhD on marine biology or ecology will be an asset;
- proven experience in :
 - i. data collection and analysis on marine species
 - ii. developing and/or managing databases;
 - iii. data management in international collaborative context
- be :
 - i. familiar with ACCOBAMS - previous experience within the ACCOBAMS context will be an asset;
 - ii. familiar with the regional policies related to the monitoring of the marine environment (EU MSFD and EcAp processes of the Barcelona and Bucharest Conventions);
 - iii. able to work well under pressure and to work effectively and harmoniously with people of different national and cultural backgrounds;
 - iv. able to plan and prioritize workloads and capability of meeting deadlines;
 - v. persistent when problems or challenges appear;
 - vi. able to interact with tact and diplomacy;
 - vii. fluent in English (compulsory) and orally fluent in French;
- have excellent interpersonal skills, especially within multicultural/multilingual settings.

Proposals shall provide the following information:

- a) A detailed methodology, including :
 - presentation of the applicant's background and relevant experience as regards the objective of the mission, including a CV and a list of projects and/or publications in relation to the tasks to perform;

- a detailed description of the work to be carried out during the mission (including proposal for the expected consultation approach, a roadmap and calendar/Implementation schedules) and main steps to undertake ;

In the case the applicant proposes the participation of more than one expert, the methodology document has to include a presentation of each expert/specialist who will compose the Expert group (including their CVs and references), a description of the working arrangements within the Expert group and the repartition of the tasks among the experts/specialists (including an assessment of the number of working days expected per expert/specialist and per task).

- b) A detailed budget proposal, with the number of working days and the daily rate applicable, based on the maximum budget available.

In the case the applicant proposes the participation of more than one expert, the applicant has to detail in the budget proposal the repartition of the costs between the different experts/specialists, as well as the number of working days expected per expert/specialist and the daily rate of each expert/specialist.

6. SUBMISSION OF THE PROPOSALS

Interested expert or organization should submit a proposal to the ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary (fcdescroix@accobams.net) and, in copy, to the ASI Project Officer (jbelmont@accobams.net) and Fundraising Officer (clervallec@accobams.net) **not later than 1st of September 2017**.

For additional information, clarification or any communication relating to this Call for proposals, applicants may write to jbelmont@accobams.net and, in copy, to fcdescroix@accobams.net and clervallec@accobams.net.

Contacts

<p>Florence DESCROIX COMANDUCCI ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary Jardin de l'UNESCO, Les Terrasses de Fontvieille MC-98000 MONACO Tel: +377 9898 8010 E-mail : fcdescroix@accobams.net</p>
<p>Julie BELMONT ASI Project Officer Jardin de l'UNESCO, Les Terrasses de Fontvieille MC-98000 MONACO Tel: +377 9898 9313 E-mail: jbelmont@accobams.net</p>
<p>Célia LE RAVALLEC ACCOBAMS Project and Fundraising Officer Jardin de l'UNESCO, Les Terrasses de Fontvieille MC-98000 MONACO Tel:+377 9898 4074 E-mail: clervallec@accobams.net</p>

7. SELECTION OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposals will be evaluated with reference to the scoring system included in Annex 1. The ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat will notify the result of the selection process by 1st week of September 2017.

8. CALENDAR OF THE CALL

Opening of the call	21 July 2017
Deadline for applying	1 September 2017
Selection of the expert and information to applicants	1 st week of September 2017
Signature of the contract and kick off meeting	Mid-September 2017

ANNEX
General Notation System Offers

Technical offer

The technical bid will be evaluated on 100 points, based on the following criteria:

1. Applicant general experience: 40 points

Previous experience of the applicant will be assessed in relation to the fields of expertise required to achieve the intended outcomes of the project. Recent experience is more valuable than historic experience.

2. Methodology, organization and planning: 60 points

a- Quality of the proposed methodology (40 points)

The applicant should be able to demonstrate its capability to bring the contract to a satisfactory conclusion by describing the methodology of approach to accomplish the project's required outcomes.

b- Organization and planning (20 points)

Strategy and structures proposed for organizing (i.e. work calendar), managing and coordinating the work will be assessed.

Competitors with technical offers scoring under 70 points will be automatically eliminated.