



Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area, concluded under the auspices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Accord sur la Conservation des Cétacés de la Mer Noire, de la Méditerranée et de la zone Atlantique adjacente, conclu sous l'égide de la Convention sur la Conservation des Espèces Migratrices appartenant à la Faune Sauvage (CMS)



REPORT OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO ACCOBAMS



Monaco, 22-25 November 2016



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Introduction

1. The Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS) was held in Monaco, at the Novotel Hotel, from 22nd to 25th November 2016. This Meeting followed the entry into force of the Agreement on 1st June 2001, the First Meeting of the Parties held in Monaco in 2002, the Second Meeting of the Parties held in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, in 2004, the Third Meeting of the Parties in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in 2007, the Fourth Meeting of the Parties in Monaco in 2010, and the Fifth Meeting of the Parties in Tangier, Morocco, in 2013.

Participants

2. Representatives of the following States Party to the Agreement took part in the Meeting: Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Tunisia and Ukraine.
3. A-range State non Party, Israel, was represented by an observer. A non-range State non Party, the Slovak Republic, was also present, as representative of European Union Presidency.
4. The following inter-governmental Organizations were represented: the Black Sea Commission (BSC), the European Union, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the League of Arab States, the Pelagos Agreement, the UNEP Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (UNEP/CMS), the UNEP/CMS Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (UNEP/ASCOBANS), the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (UNEP/MAP/RAC-SPA).
5. The following Partners were represented: Association Monegasque pour la Protection de la Nature, EcoOcean Institut, EDMAKTUB, GIS3M, IFAW, Mare Nostrum, Musée Océanographique de Monaco, OceanCare, Oceanomare Delphis Onlus, Parc National de Port Cros, SOS Grand Bleu, Souffleurs d'écume, Tethys Research Institute, Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC), WWF International, WWF France.
6. Other inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions were represented: Humane Society International (HSI) and Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).
7. The Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS acted as Secretariat for the Meeting.
8. The full list of participants appears as [Annex I](#) to this Report.

AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME ADDRESSES

9. The Chair of the Bureau, Ms. Zakia Driouich, thanked His Serene Highness Prince Albert II and the Government of the Principality of Monaco for their support to ACCOBAMS. She also thanked the Permanent Secretariat for the help that she had received over this triennium since assuming the chairmanship of the Bureau from the

Fifth Meeting of the Parties. She emphasised that the triennium had seen the Agreement grow stronger in many respects with a wide range of activities undertaken. She underlined the efforts being made by the Government of her own country, the Kingdom of Morocco, in the field of the environment and sustainability; the 22nd Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change having just taken place in Marrakesh, was one example.

10. The Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (UNEP/CMS), Mr Bradnee Chambers, speaking on behalf of the entire CMS Family, paid tribute to the 20 years of advances in the field of cetacean conservation achieved by ACCOBAMS. The Agreement was an example of how countries could protect endangered animals much more effectively through international cooperation than by acting alone. The species that ACCOBAMS sought to conserve were facing a variety of human-induced threats, for marine pollution, ship-strikes, underwater noise and bycatch. These were often the same problems that CMS and its other daughter Agreements such as ASCOBANS sought to tackle, and there were therefore ample opportunities for cooperation. CMS, ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS had a joint working group on noise, and ACCOBAMS was fully involved in the elaboration of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species, adopted by the CMS Parties at their COP in Quito in 2014.
11. The Executive Secretary of ACCOBAMS, Ms. Florence Descroix-Comanducci expressed her delight that His Serene Highness, Prince Albert II of Monaco was able to be present at the opening ceremony of the Meeting, which coincided with the anniversary of the signing of the Agreement which had been concluded in Monaco 20 years before. She emphasised that the challenge for the Permanent Secretariat this triennium had been to further enhance the Agreement's tools and competencies so that the role of the Permanent Secretariat as an essential partner to both regional and international organizations and institutions dealing with the conservation of marine biodiversity could be further strengthened. As a mark of appreciation of the dedication demonstrated by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco to the cause of marine conservation, Ms. Descroix-Comanducci offered Him an artwork representing the sea. She added that CMS Parties had recognized the Principality of Monaco as a Champion *extraordinaire* at COP11 for the support it had given to ACCOBAMS since its inception.
12. His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, welcomed participants to Monaco and the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement. He reaffirmed his personal commitment to marine conservation and to ACCOBAMS, confirming that His Foundation would contribute with an amount of €100,000 to the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative, which would commence in 2017. His Serene Highness commended the Executive Secretary for having coordinated the preparatory work and emphasised that the number of threats facing cetaceans was growing and ACCOBAMS was cooperating with other international bodies and could serve as an ambassador for the cause of protecting migratory species and a model for other regions.
13. The full text of all the welcome addresses appears in [Annex II](#).
14. The participants were invited to watch a short video document recently prepared by the Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS marking the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the Agreement.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

2.1 – Rules of Procedure for the Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS

15. The Chair informed the Meeting that the Rules of Procedure of the Meeting of the Parties applied to the present Meeting.

2.2 – Granting the right to vote

16. The Chair stated that according to Article 14.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Meeting of the Parties, “Representatives of Parties which are three or more years behind in paying their subscriptions on the date of the opening session of the Meeting of the Parties shall not be eligible to vote. However, the Meeting of the Parties may allow such Parties to continue to exercise their right to vote if it is satisfied that the delay in payment arises from exceptional circumstances”. The Bureau, during the Third Meeting of the Extended Bureau (Monaco, 28-29 April 2016), recommended that each Party facing exceptional circumstances provide the Permanent Secretariat with a formal letter explaining the “exceptional circumstances” that led to the delay in payment.
17. The Executive Secretary informed the meeting that Libya, Romania and Syria were three or more years behind in paying their ordinary contribution and the Permanent Secretariat received letters from Libya and Syria explaining the exceptional circumstances behind their delay in payment. She presented Draft Resolution 6.1 (Granting the right to vote) contained in Document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Res6.1.
18. The representative of Italy requested that a legal analysis note on “Granting the right to vote” be prepared by the Permanent Secretariat and submitted to the next Meeting of the Parties.
19. The meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution and amended it taking into account the information given by the Secretariat. The Resolution 6.1 as adopted by the Meeting appears in [Annex XII](#). According to this Resolution, Libya was given the right to vote during the present Meeting.

2.3 – Election of the Bureau

20. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that, during their pre-Meeting consultations, the Heads of Delegations, taking into consideration the geographical distribution and the history of participation of the Parties in the Bureau to ensure equity and continuity in participation, had proposed that the next Bureau should be made up of representatives from the following Parties: Albania, Algeria, Cyprus, France and Ukraine.
21. The representative of Italy presented the candidature of his Country for the next Bureau.
22. The Meeting approved the suggestion of the Heads of Delegations and elected the following members of the Bureau:

- Chairperson: Mr. Xavier Sticker (France)
- Vice-Chairperson: Ms. Rahima Berkat (Algeria)
- Vice-Chairperson: Ms. Klodiana Marika (Albania)
- Vice-Chairperson: Mr. Savvas Michaelides (Cyprus)
- Vice-Chairperson: Mr. Volodymyr Domashlinets (Ukraine)

23. Mr. Xavier STICKER, the new Chair of the Bureau, thanked the Meeting for electing him and said he was certain that the discussions would be fruitful.
24. The Executive Secretary congratulated the Chair and all the members of the outgoing Bureau for their efficiency over the past three years.

2.4 – Adoption of the Agenda

25. The Executive Secretary presented the draft Agenda (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc01) and timetable (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc02Rev2) that had been proposed.
26. The Meeting reviewed the proposed agenda and timetable. The Agenda of the Meeting as adopted by the Meeting appears in [Annex III](#) to this Report.

2.5 – Admission of observers

27. In accordance with Article III, paragraph 4 of the Agreement, the Permanent Secretariat presented to the Parties the list of organizations that wished to take part in the Meeting as observers (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc05Rev1).
28. The Meeting allowed all the observers listed to be present.

2.6 – Establishment of the Credentials Committee

29. In accordance with Article IV of the Rules of Procedure for the Meeting of the Parties, a Credentials Committee was set up. Croatia chaired this Committee, with Egypt, Lebanon, Monaco and Ukraine as members.

2.7 – Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country

30. In accordance with Resolution 5.6 on Staff Regulations, the Chair explained that the Executive Secretary had prepared a proposal for Staff Regulations and, accordingly, the relevant amendments to the Headquarters Agreement in collaboration with the Government of the Principality of Monaco and in liaison with the Bureau of ACCOBAMS and the National Focal Points.

31. The Executive Secretary presented the Draft Resolution “Amendment to the Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country” highlighting the main changes proposed which addressed the implementation concerns expressed in 2011 by the Chair of the ACCOBAMS Bureau and included a procedure for the recruitment of the Executive Secretary in link with the Staff regulations.
32. Following a debate on this agenda item, a working group was established to give further consideration to the procedure for the recruitment of the Executive Secretary jointly with the proposed staff regulation (to be addressed later in the agenda). The amendments to the Headquarters Agreement were then reviewed and adopted by the Meeting.
33. The relevant Resolution was adopted later as Resolution 6.2 “Amendment to the Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country” ([Annex XII](#)).
34. The ceremony of signature of the Amendment to the Headquarters Agreement was held on 25th November 2016. The signatories were H.E.M Serge Telle, Minister of State of the Principality of Monaco, on behalf of the Host country, H.E.M Xavier Sticker, on behalf of ACCOBAMS Parties and Ms Florence Descroix-Comanducci, Executive Secretary of ACCOBAMS, on behalf of the Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – OPENING STATEMENTS

35. The Chair invited any Parties or organizations that wished to speak to do so under this Agenda item and invited those that wanted their opening statement to appear in the Appendix to the Report to provide the Permanent Secretariat with a copy of that text, in written or electronic form, in English or in French ([Annex IV](#)).
36. Mr. Gaetano Leone, representing the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan-Barcelona Convention Secretariat, reiterated the importance of ACCOBAMS in cetacean conservation over the last two decades. He commended the long-standing and far-reaching cooperation between the Secretariats of the Barcelona Convention and ACCOBAMS, making specific mention of the collaboration regarding the EcAp process and the related Integrated Monitoring Assessment Programme (IMAP) and joint efforts in revising the Barcelona Convention's Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea.
37. Mr. Khalil Attia, the director of the UNEP MAP/Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC), congratulated ACCOBAMS on its 20th Anniversary and directed his appreciation towards the Permanent Secretariat for the excellent organization. Mr. Khalil Attia highlighted the role of SPA/RAC as the ACCOBAMS' Sub-regional coordinating unit for the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Area, highlighting the umbilical link between his Centre and ACCOBAMS. He praised the productive coordination and high synergy that has taken place in the last 20 years. He concluded his remarks hoping for further collaboration in confronting the multitude of threats and challenges facing the Mediterranean marine environment.
38. Ms. Irina Makarenko, representing the Black Sea Commission, extended her gratitude to the Principality of Monaco and the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat for hosting this Meeting. She underlined the fruitful collaboration between the Black Sea Commission and ACCOBAMS, welcoming common efforts to bring political will and scientific expertise to the Black Sea Region. Mindful of the great achievements of both ACCOBAMS and

the Black Sea Commission, Mrs. Makarenko, stressed the necessity to deepen cooperation between the two Secretariats and to promote new joint projects aimed at reinforcing conservation efforts in the Black Sea region.

39. Mr. Greg Donovan, representing the International Whaling Commission (IWC), articulated the importance of not only celebrating anniversaries, but to also use the occasion as a moment of reflection. He recommended building on the successes, but not underestimating the continued threats that cetaceans face. He expressed his satisfaction about the continued cooperation between the IWC and ACCOBAMS, referring to Conservation and Management Plans, chemical pollution, marine debris, underwater noise, ship strikes as concrete examples.
40. Mr. Abdellah Srour, Executive Secretary of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), thanked the Permanent Secretariat and the Principality of Monaco for having organized the Sixth Meeting of the Parties. He briefly recalled the origins of collaboration between ACCOBAMS and GFCM, as well as the synergies achieved in matters related to the mitigation of adverse impacts of interactions between fishing activities and cetaceans. He concluded by confirming the will of his organisation to pursue and reinforce its fruitful cooperation in the future.
41. Ms. Fannie Dubois, Executive Secretary of the Pelagos Agreement, expressed her appreciation in having been extended an invitation to this Meeting, and the Agreement's continued desire to engage in close cooperation with ACCOBAMS. Ms. Dubois highlighted a number of topics of joint interest, most notably common efforts in mitigating noise and plastic pollution, as well as promoting high quality whale watching activities.
42. Mr. Bradnee Chambers, Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), likewise joined in congratulating ACCOBAMS to its 20th Anniversary and the work it has done thus far. He recalled the important role of ACCOBAMS in promoting cooperation for the conservation of cetaceans and listed some of the collaboration activities and efforts undertaken jointly by the Secretariat of CMS and ACCOBAMS, such as the active contribution of ACCOBAMS to the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species.
43. Ms. Heidrun Frisch-Nwakanma, CMS Marine Mammals Officer and ASCOBANS Coordinator, recalled a number of resolutions of relevance for cetaceans approved during the CMS COP 2014 Meeting, most notably Resolution 11.22 on Live Captures of Cetaceans from the Wild for Commercial Purposes and Resolution 11.23 on Conservation Implications of Cetacean Culture. She further summarized a number of resolutions adopted at the 8th Meeting of ASCOBANS in September of this year, making special reference to Resolution 8.4 on the Conservation of Common Dolphins that she considered as of common interest to both ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS. She concluded her statement by listing opportunities for joint activities and thanking the Principality of Monaco for its generous funding.
44. Ms. Aimee Leslie, representing WWF International, conveyed appreciation of having been extended an invitation to the Meeting by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat. She stressed the importance of the work that ACCOBAMS has set out to complete, and emphasized the WWF's concern of the threat of bycatch and the impact of marine traffic. She concluded with the hope of remaining actively engaged with the works of the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – PROGRESS REPORTS

4.1 – National Reports

a) Synthesis of the National Reports of the Parties

45. The Permanent Secretariat introduced the synthesis on the implementation of ACCOBAMS by the Parties contained in Document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc07 and presented a brief description of the relevant activities undertaken by ACCOBAMS Parties during the triennium 2014-2016 within the framework of the implementation of the Agreement. The synthesis was based on the information provided by the Focal Points using the online reporting system developed and made available by the Secretariat in accordance with Resolution 3.7.
46. The Permanent Secretariat stressed that for a number of Parties, several sections of the online report system were left empty or not updated during the triennium 2014-2016. This issue should be addressed in the revision of the online reporting format proposed in the Draft Resolution 6.12 "Format for national implementation reports".
47. The Chair invited Parties to give a brief oral report on the activities undertaken at national level since the previous Meeting of the Parties in support of the implementation of the Agreement.
48. When taking the floor, the delegations took the opportunity to express their thanks to the Government of Monaco for hosting the meeting and to the Permanent Secretariat for the remarkable preparatory work.
49. The representative of France stressed the need to focus the works of ACCOBAMS on a limited number of priorities, in particular population distribution and abundance estimates, anthropogenic underwater noise, MMO certification scheme, bycatch and stranding. He informed the Meeting that his country will provide a contribution of €400,000 to the "ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative".
50. The representative of Lebanon commended the support his country received from the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat, in particular concerning capacity building in the field of photo identification and the ACCOBAMS cetacean teaching module that is delivered in two of the country's francophone Universities. He also informed the Meeting that the national network for the monitoring of cetacean stranding was established and operational.
51. The representative of Egypt said that through ACCOBAMS and RAC/SPA more local observers had received appropriate training and his country is looking for actively participating in the basin-wide survey planned by ACCOBAMS. He emphasised that public interest had been awoken recently with sightings of cetaceans close to shore, but the reasons why the animals were coming closer to the coast more often were not understood.
52. The representative of Cyprus informed the Meeting that his country used funding from the EU to undertake monitoring activities and for the identification of critical habitats. Seasonal acoustic and visual surveys had been conducted inside and outside territorial waters of Cyprus, when sperm whales and fish and turtle aggregations had been observed. The use of military sonar was a problem and solutions were being considered.

53. The representative of Tunisia emphasised that a comprehensive policy system was in place in her country to protect natural heritage. In this context, some types of fishing gear had been banned and cetaceans were fully protected. She added that the ACCOBAMS cetacean teaching module was delivered in two universities in Tunisia and that the network of the national stranding monitoring was in place.
54. The representative of Algeria announced that Professor Zitouni Boutiba, who had led many cetacean conservation efforts in the country and contributed to the works of ACCOBAMS, had died. On behalf of ACCOBAMS, the Chair expressed deep sorrow and paid tribute to the professor's contribution to the work of the Agreement.
55. The representative of Morocco recalled that his country was one of the first Parties to ACCOBAMS and had hosted the previous Meeting of the Parties, where important decisions on the future of the Agreement had been reached. Furthermore, the 10th Meeting of the Bureau had been held in Casablanca. He added that a MoU had been signed between ACCOBAMS and the Fisheries Research Institute of Morocco (INRH) to address the issue of the mitigation of negative interactions with cetaceans. Morocco was also interested in developing appropriately managed whale-watching operations. He stressed the urgent need to minimise the impact of such interactions and for investigating non-technical solutions to help reducing their socioeconomic consequences.
56. The representative of Italy reaffirmed the full commitment of his country to ACCOBAMS and his support for a strong Secretariat to administer it. Funds would be sought to support priority actions such as mitigating bycatch and reducing plastic debris. He emphasised that Natura 2000 sites were being designated for cetaceans, and implementation of ACCOBAMS was addressed through a diverse range of activities.
57. Some representatives of Parties drew the attention of the Permanent Secretariat to a number of inconsistencies they noted in the information provided in the synthesis. The Permanent Secretariat took note their remarks and will proceed with the needed changes.

b) Range States activities

58. The representative from Israel said that despite Israel not being a Party to the Agreement, it would willingly provide information for inclusion in the synthesis of national reports. The ACCOBAMS guidelines had proved useful when seismic surveys had been conducted following the discovery of natural gas within Israel's EEZ. A fundamental review of fisheries was being undertaken and the licences of some bottom net trawlers would be bought out.

4.2 – Report of the Depositary

59. The representative of the Depositary of the Agreement (the Principality of Monaco), referring to the report presented in [Annex V](#), informed the Meeting of key points on how new Parties could join the Agreement and on the ratification of amendments during the three-year period 2014-2016. By mid July 2016, she said that there were 23 Parties to ACCOBAMS and since the Fifth Meeting of the Parties, no new Parties had joined the Agreement.

60. As to the amendments to the Agreement adopted by the Parties in 2010, relating to extending the geographical area of ACCOBAMS, four instruments of approval had been received by the Depositary, coming from the Republic of Montenegro, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Slovenia and France. The Depositary had informed the Parties, the European Commission, and the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS and Convention on Migratory Species (UNEP/CMS) about this through diplomatic channels.
61. She also said that during the 2014-2016 triennium, the Depositary, through various diplomatic officers of the Principality of Monaco, had supported the action of the Permanent Secretariat to raise awareness among other Riparian States and the European Commission with a view to their accession.
62. The representative of the Depositary called on the Parties to give priority to ratifying the amendment on extending the Agreement's geographical area, thus enabling this amendment to come into force.

4.3 – Report of the Bureau

63. Ms. Zakia Driouich, Chair of the Bureau during the period 2014-2016, presented the Bureau report contained in Document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc09. She recalled that the composition of the Bureau was as follows:
- Chairperson: Ms. Zakia Driouich (Morocco);
 - Vice-Chairperson: Ms. Ana Štrbenac (Croatia);
 - Vice-Chairperson: Ms. Martine Bigan who was replaced after her retirement by Mr. Florian Expert (France);
 - Vice-Chairperson / Rapporteur: Ms. Irina Lomashvili (Georgia);
 - Vice-Chairperson: Mr. Patrick Van Klaveren who was replaced after his retirement by Mr. Gilles Tonelli (Monaco).
64. Emphasising that the Bureau had met three times during the period mentioned above, she presented the major items with which the Bureau had had to deal. The report of the Bureau, including its decisions during the triennium 2014-2016 appears in [Annex VI](#). She thanked the Vice-Chairs for their support, and particularly mentioned Mr Patrick Van Klaveren (Monaco) and Ms Martine Bigan (France) who had both retired during the course of the triennium.

4.4 – Report of the Secretariat

65. The Executive Secretary introduced Document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc10 containing a report on the activities carried out by the Permanent Secretariat from the Fifth Meeting of the Parties. She recalled that the report was prepared in accordance with the provisions the Article IV, paragraph 2, f), of the Agreement that requested Permanent Secretariat to provide to each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties a report on the work of the Agreement Secretariat. She added that the activities of the Permanent Secretariat were guided by the Programme of Work adopted for the triennium by the Contracting Parties. The full report of the Permanent Secretariat appears as [Annex VII](#) to this report.

4.5 – Report of the Scientific Committee

66. Mr. Simone Panigada, Chair of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee during the 2014-2016 triennium, making reference to Document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc11 containing the Report of the Chair of the Scientific Committee and recommendations, informed the meeting that three Scientific Committee Meetings were held during this triennium:
- the 9th Scientific Committee Meeting (Monaco, 15-17 April 2014),
 - the 1st Operational Meeting of the Scientific Committee (Monaco, 18th December 2014),
 - the 10th Scientific Committee Meeting (Nice, 20-22 October 2015).
67. He indicated that the Scientific Committee at its 1st meeting elected:
- a Chair: Simone Panigada,
 - a Vice-Chair: Renaud de Stephanis,
 - four Task Managers (selected according to the ACCOBAMS work plan and conservation priorities).
68. He also presented the main topics discussed during the Scientific Committee meetings and provided a brief description of the recommendations prepared during the last meeting of the SC, with emphasis on those that has been turned into draft Resolutions with a list of achievements for each item. He underlined that particular emphasis has been dedicated to the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative, which has been presented in different national and international contexts, together with general information on the ACCOBAMS work-programme and ongoing efforts. The Report of the Chair of the Scientific Committee appears in [Annex VIII](#) to this report.

4.6 - Reports of the Sub-Regional Coordination Units

69. Ms. Irina Makarenko, representing the Black Sea Commission, presented the report of the ACCOBAMS Black Sea Sub-Regional Coordination Unit ([Annex IX](#)). The Permanent Secretariat of the Black Sea Commission (BSC PS) had exercised this coordinating role since 2002, and the Memorandum between the BSC PS and ACCOBAMS had last been revised in 2012. The Black Sea Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (BSIMAP 2017-2022) had been adopted at 32nd BSC Meeting (October, 2016). The draft Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans (2016-2020) was being revised and would be recommended for consideration at 33rd BSC Regular Meeting in 2017. ACCOBAMS was helping to elaborate the chapter on cetacean conservation in the report on the Black Sea State of Environment Report, while the BSC PS was helping with efforts to interest Turkey and the Russian Federation in the work of ACCOBAMS.
70. Ms. Lobna Ben Nakhla, representative of RAC/SPA, presented the report of the Mediterranean Sub-Regional Coordination Unit ([Annex X](#)). She recalled the long collaboration between the RAC/SPA and the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat for the past two decades. The main activities were assisting countries in improving their knowledge about the state of cetaceans (Tunisia, Egypt) and collaborating over the implementation of the GFCM-ACCOBAMS Project on mitigating interaction between endangered marine species and fishing activities. RAC/SPA was also implementing the initial phase of the IMAP through supporting the southern Mediterranean Parties to develop their national monitoring programme on Biodiversity (EO1) and its related common indicators. She informed the meeting about the adoption of the revised Mediterranean Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans by the last Conference of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention and the activities

undertaken within the framework of promoting marine protected areas in the Mediterranean region and the effective conservation of the critical habitats for cetaceans.

4.7 - Report of the Follow up Committee

71. Mr. Victor Escobar, Chair of the ACCOBAMS Follow-up Committee, making reference to Document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc14, presented the main recommendations issued from the First Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Follow-up Committee which was convened in Monaco on Wednesday, 2nd March 2016 ([Annex XI](#)), at which a number of questions had been considered, including (a) whether the balance of membership of the Committee was correct, (b) whether the terms of reference and rules of procedure needed to be revised, in particular with regard to the quorum, (c) whether there was a need for alternate members and (d) according speaking rights to observers.
72. The Meeting took note of the report of the ACCOBAMS Follow-up Committee and approved the six recommendations it contained, especially Recommendation 4 stating that priority is given to consideration of specific submissions and then to general issues of implementation and follow up. Recommendations 2 and 3 request to review, under Article 6, paragraph 1,d, of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Procedure, the legal and technical issues of implementation and follow up:
- of existing obligations and commitments related to seismic and military activities producing underwater noise,
 - relating to interactions between humans and dolphins addressed by Resolution 3.13 (Dolphin interaction programme).
73. The representative of OceanCare was concerned that with the Committee meeting so infrequently the cases submitted to it would not be dealt with quickly enough and requested that the arrangements should be flexible enough to allow the Committee to respond to cases faster, as it was in the interests of the Agreement that the Committee should be seen to work.
74. The Chair recalled that the Committee shall make use of the provision in Article 4.7 to consult through electronic communications as matters arise.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – REPORT BY THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

75. The representative from Croatia reported that Credential Letters received from 16 Parties (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Monaco, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia) had met the criteria of Article VI of the Rules of Procedures for the Meeting of the Parties.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – INSTITUTIONAL AND BUDGETARY ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 - Staff Regulations

76. The Fifth Meeting of the Parties having asked to elaborate regulations for the Permanent Secretariat staff during this triennium in consultation with the host country and the Bureau of ACCOBAMS, the Permanent Secretariat submitted to Sixth Meeting of the Parties for adoption a proposal of the Staff Regulations (Draft Resolution 6.3). Considering the views expressed by delegations in relation to the proposed staff regulation, the Chair invited the working group established under the Agenda Item 2.7 (Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country) to review the Draft Resolution "Staff Regulations" and report to the plenary session of the Meeting of the Parties.
77. The revised version of the Draft Resolution issued by the working group was presented to the Meeting and was later adopted as Resolution 6.3 "ACCOBAMS Staff" ([Annex XII](#)).

6.2 - Rules of Procedures for the Bureau

78. The Executive Secretary introduced Draft Resolution "Amendments to the rules of procedures for the Bureau" and emphasized that the aim of the proposed amendments was to improve the functioning of the Bureau in particular:
- the formal nomination of the ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary
 - the replacement of a member by an alternative member identified by the Party
 - allowing members to be assisted by an advisor of their choice.
79. The meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.4 "Amendments to the rules of procedures for the Bureau" ([Annex XII](#)).

6.3 - Work Programme 2017-2019

80. The Executive Secretary introduced the Work Programme suggested for the 2017-2019 period contained in the relevant draft Resolution. She emphasized that the Work Programme had been developed taking into account the ACCOBAMS Strategy (2014-2025), the results of regional workshops organised in 2015 and in consultation with the Scientific Committee for matters of conservation measures. After presenting the activities of the Programme of Work related to the management of the Agreement, she invited the Chair of the Scientific Committee to present the conservation actions of the Work Programme.
81. Following the presentation by the Executive Secretary and the Chair of the Scientific Committee, several participants commended the efforts deployed by the Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to elaborate the proposed Programme of Work. They however stressed the need for a narrower focus on priorities, suggesting the drafting of a set of priorities that would guide the work during the coming triennium.
82. The Chair invited the Executive Secretary to compile the list of key conservation issues identified by the Parties in collaboration with the Chair of the Scientific Committee.

83. The Chair invited the working group established under the Agenda Item 2 to review the Draft Resolution and propose to the Meeting a revised version of the Resolution text and revise the Programme of Work according to the activities required by the Resolutions adopted during this Meeting of the Parties.
84. The representative of Italy expressed the disagreement of his delegation on the inclusion of references to any specific NGO's in the ACCOBAMS Resolutions, thus formalizing a sort of "priority dialogue" between the Agreement and the specific NGO.
85. The draft Resolution was later adopted as Resolution 6.5 "Work Programme 2017-2019" ([Annex XII](#)).

6.4 - Budgetary matters

a) Report on incomes and expenditures relevant to the Trust Fund and external contributions for 2014-2016

86. The Executive Secretary presented the report on incomes and expenditures related to the ACCOBAMS Trust Fund for 2014-2016 (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc17) and explained that the figures for 2016 covered the period up to the 31st August. Since that date there have been two further ordinary contributions paid by Portugal and the Ukraine. The balance due on 31st August 2016 was €98,370.
87. She also presented the state of the voluntary contributions and emphasised that the Permanent Secretariat was grateful for the support received from the Governments, governmental and nongovernmental organizations and other institutions regarding implementation of the Agreement. She expressed special acknowledgments to the Principality of Monaco for its contributions both in cash and in-kind during the triennium as well as to the MAVA Foundation for its substantial financial contribution to the Project on the mitigation of impacts of interaction between fishing activities and cetacean and for the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative.

b) Report on the Supplementary Conservation Fund

88. Regarding the Supplementary Conservation Fund (SCF), the Executive Secretary provided an overview of the incomes and expenditures for the Fund in 2014, 2015 and 2016 (up to 31st August 2016). She reported that this Fund had been replenished twice during the period of 2014-2016. A first replenishment of €35,000 was made to the SCF in 2015 with remaining funds from the 2014 ordinary contributions, as well as from the voluntary contribution of the Principality of Monaco. A second replenishment of €9,000 was decided by the Bureau in 2016, using an unspent amount from the voluntary contribution of Monaco.
89. Thanks to the SCF mechanism, eight projects were receiving funding during the triennium 2014-2016. On the 31st August 2016, the remaining balance was €30,348, with €27,980 allocated to on-going projects and €2,368 being available for commitment from the SCF.

c) Report by the Fund Management Controller

90. In accordance with Annex 3 of Resolution 5.16 the Permanent Secretariat presented the report of the fund management controller for the triennium 2014-2016.
91. The Meeting took note of the report.

d) Adoption of the budget for the period 2017-2019

92. The Permanent Secretariat presented the Draft Resolution “Financial matters for 2017-2019” and the explanatory note on the proposed budget. She presented two options for the budget 2017-2019 and the related ordinary contributions.
93. Following a preliminary debate on the proposed budget options, the Chair decided to establish an open-ended working group to examine the budget proposals by the Permanent Secretariat and define the budget figure for the next triennium. Following its debates, the working group presented to the plenary an amended version of the Draft Resolution including a revised budget with 0% increase and a revised table of the ordinary contributions.
94. The Draft Resolution was later adopted as Resolution 6.6 “Financial matters for the period 2017-2019” ([Annex XII](#)).
95. Following the adoption of the Resolution on financial matters, the representative of Italy made the following statement:

"Italy is pleased to announce you that for the next triennium it will allocate a voluntary contribution of €220,000 for the implementation of the Work Programme activities, and in particular for specific priorities. Italy is willing to continue to support the Agreement in the future as always done during the last 20 years, thus confirming its commitment for the protection of cetaceans and for an efficient functioning of ACCOBAMS.

With reference to the budget resolution and in particular to the proposed amount of the ordinary contribution for the 2017-2019 triennium, Italy notes that the calculated amount represents a share of 25.98% of the total annual contributions for the Trust Fund. This share exceeds the 22% maximum assessment rate to be paid by a Country, as established by point 6h of UNGA Resolution n. 70/245 of 23rd December 2015.

Italy, in order to avoid any potential negative effect on the implementation of the 2017-2019 Programme of Work and on the ACCOBAMS activities, accepted to pay for the triennium 2017-2019 the amount of the contribution as reported in Annex 2 "Annual Contributions of Parties to the Trust Fund of ACCOBAMS" with the understanding that this acceptance should be considered on an exceptional basis and that since the following triennium it will not be in the position to approve any budget proposal that does not strictly apply the UN scale of assessment in force, including the provision on the maximum assessment rate to be paid by countries".

96. The Executive Secretary took note of the statement, welcomed the announced generous voluntary contribution and thanked Italy for its support to the Agreement.

6.5 - Scientific Committee

97. The Executive Secretary presented the names of the experts designated by CIESM (Ayaka Amaha Oztürk and Aviad Scheinin) and IUCN (Ibrahim Benamer, Léa David and Simone Panigada). She emphasised that Mr. Simone Panigada and Mrs. Ayaka Amaha Oztük were respectively appointed by IUCN and by CIESM to second the Permanent Secretariat in the preparation of the first Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the triennium.
98. She added that the representatives designated by CMS, the European Cetacean Society and the IWC were respectively Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciarra, Joan Gonzalvo and Greg Donovan.
99. Following the consultation between Parties for the designation of the regional representatives in the Scientific Committee, the Meeting appointed the following members and alternates:
- for the Western Mediterranean and contiguous Atlantic area:
 - Mr Vincent Ridoux (France): Regional representative
 - Mr Kamel Larbi Doukara (Algeria): Alternate
 - for the Central Mediterranean:
 - Ms Hedia El Hilli (Tunisia): Regional representative
 - Mr Drasko Holcer (Croatia): Alternate.
 - for Eastern Mediterranean:
 - Mr Vasileios Petropoulos (Greece): Regional representative
 - Mr Mohamed Saied Abdel Warith (Egypt): Alternate
 - for the Black Sea:
 - Mr. Marian Paiu (Romania): Regional representative
 - Mr Zurab Gurielidze (Georgia) Alternate.
100. The Meeting reviewed the draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.7 “Scientific Committee” ([Annex XII](#)).

6.6 - ACCOBAMS Follow-up Committee

101. The Chair of the Follow-up Committee introduced the Draft Resolution on the amendments to the follow-up procedure.
102. The Meeting reviewed the draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.8 “Amendments to the Follow- up Procedure” ([Annex XII](#)).
103. The Meeting was invited to elect two representatives from the Parties and one representative from the Partners to serve as members of the Follow-up Committee. Sixteen Parties were eligible to take part in the election and Albania and Spain were appointed tellers.
104. The election took place according to the procedure set forth in Art. 18 of the Rules of Procedure for the Meeting of the Parties.

105. Mr Moustafa Fouda (Egypt) obtained the highest number of votes, followed by Ms Nadia Deckert (France) and Ms Imane Tai (Morocco). Ms Imane Tai would serve as the alternate.
106. Mr Tilen Genov was elected as the member representing the Partners and Mr Dimitar Popov was elected as the alternate.

6.7 - Format for National Implementation Reports

107. Presenting Draft Resolution on the national reporting format, the Permanent Secretariat explained that the aim was to better adapt the reporting format to the requirement of the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Agreement by the Parties and to improve the functioning of the online reporting system.
108. The Meeting reviewed the draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.9 “Format for national implementation reports” ([Annex XII](#)).

6.8 - Information and Communication

109. Referring to document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf15 the Permanent Secretariat described the activities it undertook and the significant efforts to enhance communication which included the development of a number of new tools, visits to local schools and the organization of the “ACCOBAMS Cetaceans Day”. A certification scheme with ACCOBAMS branding for responsible and ethical whale-watching (the “High Quality Whale-Watching[®]”) had been launched in France and later implemented in Monaco. The Permanent Secretariat added that a new ACCOBAMS website would be launched in January 2017 and invited the delegates to consult and use as appropriate the newly created ACCOBAMS Facebook page.
110. The Meeting commended the efforts of the Permanent Secretariat concerning information and communication activities.

6.9 - Extension of the ACCOBAMS Geographical Scope

a) Ratification of the Amendment to include an enlarged neighbouring Atlantic area

111. When presenting the Draft Resolution on the acceptance of the ACCOBAMS amendments on the extension of the ACCOBAMS geographical scope, the Executive Secretary explained that only eight Parties had ratified the extension of the Agreement Area adopted at the 4th Meeting of the Parties in 2010.
112. Parties needing advice on procedure were invited to seek guidance from the Permanent Secretariat and the legal Expert. However, it was pointed out that ratification procedures differed from country to country.
113. The representative of Morocco reminded and confirmed the reservation made by his country during the Fourth Meeting of the Parties in 2010 regarding this extension of the Agreement area.

114. The Draft Resolution was later adopted as Resolution 6.10 “Acceptance of the ACCOBAMS amendments on the extension of the ACCOBAMS geographical scope” ([Annex XII](#)).

b) Analysis of the added value of the Red Sea

115. The Legal Expert introduced document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf16 in which the possibility of extending the Agreement Area to cover the Red Sea was examined. Following the debate on the proposed extension, and in the light of amendments proposed by a delegation, the representative of Egypt advised that the corresponding Draft Resolution should be withdrawn. The Meeting agreed with the proposal.

6.10 - Strengthening of the ACCOBAMS collaboration strategies

a) Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity among the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN

116. The Executive Secretary presented the Draft Resolution regarding a Strategical Alliance, between the Secretariats of GFCM, RAC/SPA, and IUCN-Med in collaboration with MedPAN, concerning management and conservation measures for the Mediterranean environment. She emphasized that the draft Resolution had been prepared in response to the Parties’ regular requests that the Permanent Secretariat seeks synergies with other Organization sharing similar goals.

117. The Meeting reviewed the draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.11 “Strategical Alliance concerning management and conservation measures for the Mediterranean environment between the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and IUCN-Med, in collaboration with MedPAN” ([Annex XII](#)).

b) Implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and relevant Ecosystem Approach Processes

118. The Permanent Secretariat presented document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc25 and the associated draft Resolution on the Implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and relevant Ecosystem Approach Processes (EcAP). She emphasized that the authors of the document from the University of La Rochelle recommended the creation of a MSFD / EcAP correspondence working group on ACCOBAMS area to foster transnational initiatives and ensure the coherence of the determination of Good Environmental Status regarding marine mammals. The relevant Terms of Reference should be presented to the next ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee Meeting.

119. The Meeting reviewed the draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.12 “Implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and relevant Ecosystem Approach Processes (EcAP)” ([Annex XII](#)).

AGENDA ITEM 7 – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT: TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ISSUES

7.1 - Cetacean Population Estimates and Distribution

120. The Permanent Secretariat reported about the fund-raising process undertaken to secure the € 5 million required for the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI). Eighty per cent of the amount had been secured, with sizeable donation from some Parties and external donors. The initial phase of the project would be able to be launched with the surveying likely to start in the summer of 2018.
121. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that the ASI Project Officer had been sought through an international recruitment exercise and the Steering Committee had selected a candidate who was expected to start work in 2017.
122. The Chair of the Scientific Committee introduced Draft Resolution regarding Comprehensive Cetacean population estimates and distribution in the ACCOBAMS Area.
123. The representative of Italy requested that a note on the state of the art of the Basin Wide Survey project be prepared by the Chair of the Scientific Committee.
124. The Meeting reviewed the draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.13 “Comprehensive Cetacean population estimates and distribution in the ACCOBAMS Area (Monitoring of cetacean distribution, abundance and ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative” ([Annex XII](#)).

7.2 - Population Structure

125. The Chair of the Scientific Committee introduced Draft Resolution regarding Population Structure Studies, which contained proposals to re-establish the Scientific Committee’s Working Group on population structure and a list of priority species.
126. The Meeting reviewed the draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.14 “Population Structure Studies” ([Annex XII](#)).
127. Under this Agenda Item, the ACCOBAMS Legal Expert introduced an updated report on dolphinarium and quasi-dolphinarium (document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf21) and concluded that such facilities were incompatible with the provisions of the Agreement, as the animals contained were prevented from engaging in their natural migratory behaviour. Quasi-dolphinarium, in which the animals were kept in fenced-off areas of the sea, might have a role for the progressive release of captive animals to the wild.

7.3 - Assessment of IUCN Conservation Status of Cetaceans

128. The Chair of the Scientific Committee introduced Draft Resolution regarding the assessment of IUCN conservation status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area. He emphasised that a number of Mediterranean

populations of cetacean species were assessed as Data Deficient and that sufficient data should be collected to be able to assign all currently Data Deficient species to one of the IUCN categories.

129. The draft Resolution was later adopted as Resolution 6.15 “Assessment of IUCN conservation status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area” ([Annex XII](#)) to this report.

7.4 - Interactions between Fisheries and Cetaceans

130. The Permanent Secretariat presented Draft Resolution on interactions between fisheries and cetaceans highlighting the previous resolutions adopted on this matter and underlining the well-established collaboration with GFCM.
131. The representative of WWF International pointed out that bycatch led to the death of a high number of cetaceans each year. She also raised the issue of the large number of stranding incidents reported in the Black Sea, mainly involving young animals. WWF called on ACCOBAMS Parties to take measures to improve local and regional capacity to deal with strandings and emphasized the important role that ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS could play in the review of the EU’s technical conservation framework to ensure the proper monitoring and mitigation of cetacean bycatch.
132. Several representatives of Parties stressed that the bycatch monitoring required substantial financial resources and requested the assistance of the Permanent Secretariat to help in mobilising funds for national bycatch monitoring programmes.
133. The representative of Morocco stressed the severe socioeconomic issues related to the negative interactions between cetaceans and fisheries, emphasizing that this phenomena was growing significantly in the North of Morocco and that it was urgent to take steps to support Morocco in mitigating the growing tension between fishermen and cetaceans, that could be detrimental to the cetacean populations in the Western Mediterranean. In this context, he sought that scientific studies be carried out on (i) the behaviour of the bottlenose dolphins and the killer whales in the Western Mediterranean, in particular in Tangier, M’Diq, Nador and Al Hoceima; and (ii) the efficiency of the technical measures (acoustic devices and reinforced fishing nets) undertaken by the ACCOBAMS experts in order to mitigate the negative interactions between cetaceans and fisheries.
134. The Meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.16 “Interactions between Fisheries and Cetaceans” ([Annex XII](#)).

7.5 - Anthropogenic Noise

135. The Chair established an Open-ended Working Group to address issues relating to anthropogenic noise. This working group was chaired by France. The participants of the Working Group included Cyprus, Greece, Spain and Tunisia, as well as representatives from CMS/ASCOBANS, EDMAKTUB, WDC, OceanCare, NRDC and IFAW. The two Co-Chairs of the Joint Noise Working Group also attended the Working Group.

136. The Working Group reviewed the relevant Draft Resolution and proposed a revised version that was later adopted by the Meeting as Resolution 6.17. “Anthropogenic noise” ([Annex XII](#)).
137. The representative of Italy expressed reservation over the potential obligations resulting from the Resolution in regard to environmental impact assessments (EIAs), stating that his country should conform to the national and EU regulations only.
138. The representative of Morocco welcomed the efforts on addressing anthropogenic noise, but urged ACCOBAMS to consider the economic situation of specific countries when implementing the provisions of this Resolution.
139. Under this agenda item, the representative of CMS and ASCOBANS informed the Meeting of the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf 22). She encouraged the Parties to submit their input by the deadline of 15 February 2017, after which the document would be finalized for adoption at the upcoming Conference of the Parties to CMS in 2017.

7.6 - Marine Mammals Observers in the ACCOBAMS Area

140. Ms Léa David, from EcoOcean Institut introduced the relevant Draft Resolution, expressing the importance of providing a standardized training programme for Marine Mammals Observers (MMOs) operating during seismic surveys.
141. The representative of Morocco demonstrated particular interest in the workings proposed in the draft Resolution, and expressed the interest of his country to collaborate with ACCOBAMS on the matter.
142. The representative of France expressed the interest of his country for a label or a certification scheme for Marine Mammals Observers. He emphasized that there was a lack of clarity and simplicity in the proposed scheme and that it was desirable to ensure transparency in the process to be lead for certifying structures/operators, taking into account the involved economic interests.
143. Welcoming the presentation and the introduction of the Draft Resolution, the representative of IWC expressed its support for actions aimed at ensuring the appropriate training of MMOs. He also drew attention to work being undertaken within the IWC Scientific Committee and IUCN to evaluate the effectiveness of MMOs as a mitigation tool, suggesting that the importance of collecting data to evaluate the effectiveness be included as part of the training programme.
144. The Meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.18 “Implementation of an ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified Marine Mammals Observers” ([Annex XII](#)).
145. The representative of Italy requested that an assessment of tasks and costs of the MMO’s activities be prepared by the Permanent Secretariat.

146. The representative of Greece suggested that since civilian MMOs were not allowed to board Greek military ships, officers of national navies would be trained by ACCOBAMS to be MMOs in the ACCOBAMS area.

7.7 - Ship Strikes on Cetaceans

147. The Chair of the Scientific Committee introduced the Draft Resolution regarding ship strikes on cetaceans, prepared based on Recommendation 10.6 of the Tenth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee. He explained that the issue of ship strikes remains a concern within the ACCOBAMS area and reiterated the importance of not only submitting information to the IWC ship strike database but also the need to encourage further collaboration with CMS, ASCOBANS and other relevant organizations.
148. The Meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.19 “Ship Strikes on Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea” ([Annex XII](#)).

7.8 - Commercial Cetacean Watching Activities in the ACCOBAMS Area

149. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that the “High Quality Whale-Watching[®]” (HQWW) Certificate has become a trademark. She presented the Draft Resolution on commercial cetacean watching activities in the ACCOBAMS area and she underlined that it had been prepared based on Recommendation 10.7 of the Tenth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee in consultation with the ACCOBAMS Working Group on Whale Watching.
150. Ms Marina Sequeira, Chair of this Working Group, introduced the Working Group’s work and provided an overview of the draft Resolution aimed at pursuing both public and private implementation of the HQWW Certificate, improving the monitoring of the implementation procedure and enhancing the data collection from whale watching activities.
151. Ms Fannie Dubois, Executive Secretary of the Pelagos Agreement, recalled the cooperation between the Permanent Secretariats of the ACCOBAMS and Pelagos Agreements in the elaboration of the label, as provided for in Resolution 4.5 of the Pelagos Agreement on the establishment of a label for whale watching activities adopted during the 4th Meeting of the Parties to the Pelagos Agreement (held from 19 to 21 October 2009 in the Principality of Monaco). In particular, she referred to items 1 and 4 of the said resolution:
- “The Parties shall decide on the establishment of a label for marine mammal watching activities for tourism purposes and based on the voluntary participation of operators”
 - The Parties [...] instruct the Permanent Secretariat to work closely with the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat to finalize the procedures for granting this label by requiring, where necessary, external expertise”.
152. The Meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.20” Commercial Cetacean Watching Activities in the ACCOBAMS Area” ([Annex XII](#)).

7.9 - Species Conservation and Management Plans

153. Mr Greg Donovan (IWC) explained the background to Draft Resolution on Species Conservation and Management Plans. He noted the great value attached by the IWC to Conservation Management Plans (CMP) of which there were now three. He noted that the IWC has established a CMP Voluntary Fund related to the development, establishment and implementation of CMPs with a formal approach towards receiving funding proposals. The IWC and IUCN have established a joint CMP on western gray whales. He indicated that given the common interests, the possibility of a joint IWC/ACCOBAMS CMP on Mediterranean fin whales should be considered as a collaborative venture. He agreed to work with the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat and the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee to take these ideas further as part of the work to develop a CMP for fin whales, including a stakeholder workshop.
154. The representative of OceanCare reminded the Parties about the urgent need to engage in the conservation of short beaked common dolphins. She drew attention to a workshop held in spring 2016 in Ischia, Italy, and urged Parties to consider taking action based on guidance once the Scientific Committee reviewed the recommendations.
155. The Meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.21 “Species Conservation Management Plans” ([Annex XII](#)).

7.10 - Cetaceans Strandings

156. The Executive Secretary explained that the Bureau invited the Permanent Secretariat to undertake a review of the functioning of MEDACES taking into account the recommendations of the Scientific Committee. She stressed that the review should cover also the use of the financial support provided by ACCOBAMS and RAC/SPA, as well as the cost-effectiveness. This review was undertaken by an expert, Mr Patrick Van Klaveren, jointly agreed by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat and the RAC/SPA.
157. Mr Patrick Van Klaveren explained that the MEDACES database was hosted by the University of Valencia and was established under the auspices of the RAC/SPA in the initial framework of the UNEP/MAP Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea. Referring to document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf27, “Review of the functioning of MEDACES”, he presented the recommendations proposed in order to improve the functioning and the efficiency of MEDACES. He underlined that the necessary tasks are already covered through different actions of the programme of work and that existing Resolutions provided a sufficient mandate for the Permanent Secretariat to continue engaging with this database.
158. The Chair of the Scientific Committee introduced the Draft Resolution on cetacean live stranding.
159. The representative of Morocco expressed the interest of his country to organize trainings in connection with strandings and more particularly on the collection of samples and tissue banks.
160. The Meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.22 “Cetacean Live Stranding” ([Annex XII](#)).

7.11 - Capacity Building

161. The Permanent Secretariat presented document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc32, “Overview of capacity-building activities in the ACCOBAMS Area”, which outlined the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat, the Parties and the Partners over the past triennium. The activities included organizing workshops and producing training materials.
162. The Executive Secretary presented the relevant Draft Resolution.
163. The Meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution which was later adopted as 6.23 “Capacity Building” ([Annex XII](#)).

7.12 - New areas of conservation of cetacean habitats

164. Ms Léa David, Task manager on Cetacean Critical Habitats (CCH), introduced the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc33, “Revised Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of Marine Protected Areas for Cetaceans”, the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc34 “Progress Report on the threat based management approach” and the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc35, “Place-based conservation of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area: a handbook on management effectiveness”.
165. Introducing the relevant Draft Resolution, Ms Léa David indicated that one of the main challenge for the next triennium would be the revision of the existing CCH, taking into account (i) the candidates IMMAs proposed and the Areas of Interest identified during the first workshop on the Identification of Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) in the Mediterranean Sea, and (ii) the threat based management approach.
166. The Meeting reviewed the Draft Resolution which was later adopted as Resolution 6.24 “New Areas of Conservation of Cetacean Habitats” ([Annex XII](#)).

AGENDA ITEM 8 – CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

167. The Executive Secretary presented the Draft Resolution regarding the list of Resolutions in force, emphasizing that, for the sake of clarity, Resolutions were listed by topics.
168. The draft Resolution was approved without discussion and was later adopted as Resolution 6.25 “List of Resolutions into force” ([Annex XII](#)).

AGENDA ITEM 9 – ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

169. Further to the work of the Meeting, the Parties adopted the following Resolutions:

Resolution 6.1	Granting the Right to Vote
Resolution 6.2	Amendment to the Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country

Resolution 6.3	ACCOBAMS Staff
Resolution 6.4	Amendments to the Rules of Procedures for the Bureau
Resolution 6.5	Work Programme 2017-2019
Resolution 6.6	Financial Matters for the Triennium 2017-2019
Resolution 6.7	Scientific Committee
Resolution 6.8	Amendments to the Follow-up Procedure
Resolution 6.9	Format for National Implementation Reports
Resolution 6.10	Acceptance of the ACCOBAMS Amendments on the Extension of the ACCOBAMS Geographical Scope
Resolution 6.11	A Strategic Alliance concerning Management and Conservation Measures for the Mediterranean Environment between the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and IUCN-Med, in Collaboration with MedPAN
Resolution 6.12	Implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and Relevant Ecosystem Approach Processes (EcAP)
Resolution 6.13	Comprehensive Cetacean Population Estimates and Distribution in the ACCOBAMS Area (Monitoring of cetaceans distribution, abundance and ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative)
Resolution 6.14	Population Structure Studies
Resolution 6.15	Assessment of IUCN Conservation Status of Cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area
Resolution 6.16	Interactions between Fisheries and Cetaceans
Resolution 6.17	Anthropogenic Noise
Resolution 6.18	Implementation of an ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified Marine Mammals Observers
Resolution 6.19	Ship Strikes on cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea
Resolution 6.20	Commercial Cetacean Watching Activities in the ACCOBAMS Area
Resolution 6.21	Species Conservation Management Plans
Resolution 6.22	Cetacean Live Stranding
Resolution 6.23	Capacity Building
Resolution 6.24	New Areas of Conservation of Cetacean Habitats
Resolution 6.25	List of Resolutions into Force
Resolution 6.26	Tribute to Organisers

170. The participants wanted to pay tribute to the organizers of the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS. For this purpose, they adopted Resolution 6.26 ([Annex XII](#)).

AGENDA ITEM 10 – OTHER BUSINESS

171. The Representative of France expressed his intention of submitting written comments on Working Documents MOP6/2016/Doc27 and MOP6/2016/Doc28.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – DATE AND VENUE OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES

172. The Chair indicated that it was customary for the Parties to offer or announce their intention to consider the possibility of hosting the next Meeting of the Parties. The Permanent Secretariat indicated that it had contacted the countries on this subject. So far, no positive response had reached the Permanent Secretariat on this point. The Meeting requested that the Permanent Secretariat continue its contacts with the countries to define, in consultation with the Bureau, the place and date of the next Meeting of the Parties which should be held in 2019.
173. The Resolution 6.27 “Date of the Seventh Session of the Meeting of the Parties” was adopted ([Annex XII](#)).
174. The representative of Italy stated that, before making an offer, he would like to ask the Permanent Secretariat to forward information on logistical and financial details of hosting the next Meeting of the Parties in 2019.

AGENDA ITEM 12– ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

175. The Meeting reviewed the draft report prepared by the Permanent Secretariat and adopted it as orally amended.

AGENDA ITEM 13 – CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

176. The representative of HSI offered salutations across the years from his younger self of more than twenty years ago, noting that he had been involved in the 'conception' of both ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS when he had been working at the time for Stichting Greenpeace Council, which was involved in the early negotiations of these agreements with first the Bonn and then the Berne Conventions. He recalled that the aspiration at that time from civil society was to make the world a better and safer place for cetaceans and to ensure not just their survival but also their good health and that of their habitats and ecosystems. Since that time a lot more has been learned about these remarkable animals, their intelligences, capabilities, vulnerabilities and their cultures, and more than two decades later the aspirations remain irrevocably the same.
177. On behalf of EcoOcéan Institut, GIS3M, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Mare Nostrum, NRDC, OceanCare, Oceanomare Delphis Onlus, Whale and Dolphin Conservation and WWF, the representative of NRDC/OceanCare provided a final statement. It appears in [Annex XIII](#) of this report.
178. After exchanging of the usual civilities, the Chair closed the Meeting at 5 p.m. on Friday, 25 November 2016.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ANNEX I - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX II

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**WELCOME ADDRESS FROM MRS. ZAKIA DRIOUICH
CHAIR OF ACCOBAMS DURING THE TRIENNIUM 2013-2016**

**Votre Altesse Sérénissime Le Prince Albert II de Monaco,
Monsieur Le Ministre d'Etat,
Excellences,
Madame et Messieurs les Délégués
Mesdames et Messieurs les représentants des organisations partenaires,
Mesdames et Messieurs**

Je tiens tout d'abord à exprimer ma sincère gratitude au Gouvernement de la Principauté de Monaco pour avoir accepté de nous accueillir à l'occasion de cette 6^{ème} Réunion des Parties contractantes de l'Accord sur la Conservation des Cétacés de la Mer Noire, de la Méditerranée et de la zone Atlantique Adjacente (ACCOBAMS).

La présence parmi nous de son Altesse Sérénissime le Prince Albert II de Monaco couronne cette rencontre et lui confère une dimension plus forte et plus profonde en matière de conservation des populations des cétacés et de leur écosystème.

Permettez-moi votre Altesse de vous adresser mes vifs remerciements pour le concours moral et matériel que vous n'avez cessé d'apporter pour que l'ACCOBAMS devienne une réalité concrète.

En effet, alors que nous célébrons le 20^{ème} anniversaire de l'ACCOBAMS, nous nous félicitons que cette organisation régionale soit devenue un instrument incontournable en matière de préservation des mammifères marins vulnérables et de protection de leur écosystème qui est constamment soumis à une pression anthropique croissante et présentant une grande faculté de nuisance envers la faune et la flore qui le peuplent.

Après la 5^{ème} Réunion des Parties de l'ACCOBAMS qui s'est tenue à Tanger en 2013, j'ai eu le plaisir de présider un bureau dont les membres ont montré un dynamisme et un professionnalisme sans faille. Je profite de cette occasion pour les remercier de leurs efforts louables.

Je voudrais remercier également Madame la secrétaire exécutif et Monsieur le président du comité scientifique et leurs équipes pour l'esprit de collaboration de haut niveau ainsi que pour l'appui administratif et scientifique qu'ils ont apporté en continu au Bureau au cours des trois années qui se sont écoulées depuis la dernière Réunion des Parties.

L'ACCOBAMS est un instrument international qui a la particularité de réunir les pays du Nord, du Sud, de l'Est et de l'Ouest autour d'une problématique marine commune, la conservation des cétacés. Pour cela, plusieurs activités sont menées permettant une meilleure connaissance de ces animaux emblématiques et une atténuation des menaces que font peser sur eux les activités humaines. A travers des outils, des projets et le dialogue transparent, les interactions entre les cétacés et les hommes sont gérées au mieux.

Le triennium 2013-2016 s'est caractérisé par le développement soutenu des actions de conservation et de promotion de la mise en œuvre de l'Accord que ce soit pour les volets administratif et institutionnel ou technique. Deux thèmes ont été particulièrement développés. Tout d'abord, le projet de « l'ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative » va enfin voir le jour et les Résolutions adoptées par les pays Parties, grâce au soutien financier de la Fondation MAVIA et à l'engagement de vos gouvernements. Nous pouvons considérer qu'il s'agit là d'un très beau cadeau d'anniversaire pour les 20 ans de l'ACCOBAMS. Les données collectées ouvrent de nouveaux horizons pour des mesures de conservation adaptées. Ensuite la question du bruit sous-marin généré par les activités humaines qui représente une sérieuse menace pour la vie quotidienne des cétacés, provoquant même des échouages massifs. Ce travail, à l'échelle régionale, a fait une large part à la collaboration avec les scientifiques, les organisations et institutions compétentes. Cela mérite d'être évoqué.

Parallèlement, il sied également de souligner que des progrès notables ont été enregistrés dans les domaines concrets de la mise en œuvre de l'Accord. Des progrès qui portent sur le règlement du personnel et l'Accord de Siège, sur l'élaboration et le développement des différents outils de communication et les bases de données notamment NETCOBAMS, ainsi que le renforcement des stratégies de collaboration de l'ACCOBAMS avec d'autres organisations et partenaires.

La réalisation de tous ces progrès et d'autres a été garantie par l'implication forte et dynamique des Parties contractantes de l'Accord qui ont œuvré avec persévérance à apporter des éléments de réponses aux différentes problématiques identifiées par l'ACCOBAMS.

Altesse,

Chère audience,

Le Royaume du Maroc mène constamment des réformes réglementaires importantes en matière de préservation de la biodiversité, il participe activement aux efforts internationaux visant à assurer l'adaptation et l'atténuation des changements climatiques.

L'organisation, par le Royaume du Maroc de la COP22 sur les changements climatiques à Marrakech du 07 au 18 novembre 2016, témoigne de la forte conviction de mon pays à aller de l'avant dans la réalisation des Objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement, notamment l'objectif n°7 portant sur la préservation de l'environnement.

Le Maroc, qui était toujours avant-gardiste quant à la conservation des écosystèmes marins, a présenté lors de la COP22 une initiative intitulée "Ceinture bleue" qui porte sur la pêche maritime et l'aquaculture et qui s'inscrit dans la continuité de l'initiative "Croissance bleue" promue par la FAO.

Cette initiative, qui ambitionne de créer les conditions de durabilité dans des écosystèmes marins vulnérables aux changements climatiques, contribuera sans doute à préparer un cadre propice à la préservation de la faune marine dont les cétacés de la mer méditerranée et la zone atlantique adjacente font partie de l'aire de compétence de l'ACCOBAMS.

La Stratégie « Halieutis » lancée en 2009 par Sa Majesté le Roi Mohamed VI, a fait de la durabilité des ressources son cheval de bataille moyennant une gestion durable sur l'ensemble de la chaîne de valeur, pour permettre aux ressources marines de se renouveler, tout en respectant les écosystèmes.

Grace aux dispositions pertinentes de cette stratégie, le Royaume occupe le 17^{ème} rang des producteurs mondiaux de poisson de capture, et il est le premier producteur africain et arabe de poissons et de fruits de mer selon les derniers rapports de la FAO.

Altesse,

Mesdames et Messieurs

En arrivant au terme de sa présidence de l'ACCOBAMS, le Royaume du Maroc salue les initiatives nobles de son Altesse le Prince Albert II de Monaco, tournées vers la préservation d'un patrimoine mondial, celui de la biodiversité.

Tout en exprimant sa fierté d'avoir présidé l'ACCOBAMS pour le triennium 2013-2016, le Royaume du Maroc confirme sa volonté de continuer à œuvrer pour la réalisation des objectifs qui lui sont assignés.

Je vous remercie pour votre participation active et souhaite plein succès aux travaux de cette Réunion.

OPENING ADDRESS FROM MR. BRADNEE CHAMBERS, UNEP/CMS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Your Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, dear President of the Bureau Ms. Zakia Driouich, dear Executive Secretary Florence Descroix-Comanducci, (Your Excellencies) and distinguished delegates.

It is an honour for me to address all of you on behalf of the extended CMS Family at the opening of this Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Seas, Mediterranean and Contiguous Atlantic Area. This gathering presents a moment to reflect upon the many successes of the past 20 years, and to set in motion future implementation of the ACCOBAMS mission to conserve whales, dolphins and porpoises.

This is a pivotal time for many of the species listed under ACCOBAMS. Sadly, thanks to many human activities, the life of cetaceans is a daily fight to survive. For two decades, ACCOBAMS has been a strong force in helping them. Also at this 6th Meeting of the Parties, the proposed resolutions in front of you at this meeting illustrate the range of threats these animals have to struggle with: interactions with fisheries, anthropogenic noise, ship strikes, not-so-well managed whale watching activities, to name but a few. These underwater threats are multiple, cumulative and simultaneous, and demand a response.

The proposed resolutions focus on the ACCOBAMS area, but they address broad, global problems. Threats such as pollution alter the lives of migratory species in every ocean and sea, on mountains and in forests, in the desert or in the sky. Actions agreed by Parties to ACCOBAMS will not only help countries focus their efforts in the ACCOBAMS region, but will help to highlight these issues on a wider scale, and emphasize that tackling them will require global cooperation and collaboration. Together, these proposed decisions can help ensure rich, thriving oceans and seas.

In grappling with these challenges, Parties to ACCOBAMS can underline the importance of international conservation instruments such as ACCOBAMS and CMS. Multilateral Environmental Agreements such as CMS, ACCOBAMS, or your sister Agreement in the north, ASCOBANS, are vital in stimulating and fostering this much needed collaboration amongst countries to tackle the common environmental problems – they are the lifeblood of species conservation. In striving to protect animals in international waters from a range of risks, ACCOBAMS in many ways represents the highest aims of the CMS Family: to conserve migratory species of wild animals in places and ways that individual States could not.

As the Earth's population continues to grow, these multifaceted challenges will not vanish. If anything, the detrimental human impacts on our planet and its oceans are likely to intensify unless we collectively move towards a more sustainable path, one which ensures that we conserve and sustainably use the world's oceans and seas and helps to protect and restore marine biodiversity actively. In moving to do so, ACCOBAMS and the actions agreed and implemented by its Parties, play an important and active part in a global movement underway, which recognizes and alleviates the results of human actions on the natural world – the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The work of CMS, ACCOBAMS and the other instruments in the CMS Family present many opportunities for close collaboration and mutual reinforcement of our common aims. For both CMS and ASCOBANS, cooperation with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat all these years has been a real pleasure. We have planned and strategized together, learned from each other, and worked closely on many issues. Examples of this include for example the Joint Noise Working

Group of CMS, ACCOBANS and ASCOBANS, or the advice CMS received from ACCOBAMS in our efforts to develop a review mechanism for the Convention.

In 2014, Parties to CMS adopted the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species, which covers the period 2015-2023. This is not a Strategic Plan for CMS alone, but is intended for migratory species in general. The Strategic Plan for Migratory Species is based on the Aichi Targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and relates directly to the work of other biodiversity-related MEAs, as well as goals 14 and 15 of the Sustainable Development Goals, addressing biodiversity in the oceans and on land. ACCOBAMS, like the other instruments of the CMS Family, is warmly encouraged to participate in the process especially of fully developing the Companion Volume, which draws upon existing tools under other CMS instruments and identifies areas of possible cooperation.

We cherish this productive relationship, and I am confident that both Secretariats will continue to do whatever it takes to make it flourish even more. In fact, even our host for this meeting and host of the ACCOBAMS Secretariat, the Principality of Monaco, with their commitment, advice and generous support for the work undertaken in both frameworks, helps to strengthen and reinforce the synergies and common interests of CMS and ACCOBAMS. We treasure this relationship with the Principality, and are most grateful for all their support as a real champion for marine species conservation.

I applaud the work of ACCOBAMS Parties, the ACCOBAMS Secretariat, and especially the Government of Monaco as hosts in the run-up to this meeting, and wish you all a productive few days to come in this beautiful part of the world.

Thank you!

WELCOME ADDRESS FROM MRS. FLORENCE DESCROIX COMANDUCCI, ACCOBAMS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Monseigneur,
 Madame la Présidente,
 Monsieur le Secrétaire Exécutif
 Monsieur le Ministre d'Etat,
 Excellence, chers participants,

C'est un plaisir pour le Secrétariat d'être accueilli à nouveau par le Gouvernement de la Principauté de Monaco, engagé depuis 20 ans déjà dans la grande aventure de l'ACCOBAMS.

« Monseigneur,

Vous nous faites le grand honneur d'ouvrir cette Sixième réunion des Parties à l'ACCOBAMS, Réunion très particulière puisqu'elle concorde avec la célébration des 20 ans depuis la signature de l'Accord ici même à Monaco. Cette nouvelle marque d'intérêt de Votre part est un encouragement majeur pour nos travaux.

Chers représentants des Parties à l'ACCOBAMS,

Chers représentants des Organisations internationales et des Organisations partenaires de l'ACCOBAMS, c'est avec plaisir que je vous retrouve aujourd'hui à l'occasion de ma première réunion des Parties en tant que Secrétaire Exécutif. Il m'est particulièrement agréable de noter que la plupart des pays de la Méditerranée et de la Mer Noire ainsi que des organisations et des partenaires ont répondu présents et sont représentés à cette réunion qui est aussi un anniversaire.

Aujourd'hui, nous sommes à une période charnière pour l'Accord ACCOBAMS qui est arrivé à son âge adulte avec 20 ans d'existence. Selon le mandat donné au Secrétaire exécutif lors de la dernière réunion des Parties, l'Accord va maintenant être doté de tous les outils de fonctionnement structurels grâce à l'élaboration d'un règlement pour le personnel du Secrétariat, et la révision concomitante de l'Accord de siège. En parallèle, au fil des années, l'ACCOBAMS s'est aussi doté d'outils techniques issus des efforts remarquables des scientifiques qui ont épaulé l'Accord depuis son entrée en vigueur en 2001 et encore plus particulièrement durant ce triennium, comme le prouve le nombre record de projets résolutions qui vous seront présentés.

Le défi du Secrétariat pendant ce triennium a été de porter plus loin et plus haut ces outils mais aussi la compétence de l'Accord arrivé à maturité afin d'en faire un partenaire incontournable des Organisations et institutions tant régionales qu'internationales préoccupées par la conservation de la biodiversité marine.

Ainsi, « l'ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative », un projet de plusieurs millions d'euros planifié depuis plus de dix ans, va enfin être officiellement lancé et réalisé. Il faut également citer la responsabilité prise par l'ACCOBAMS en collaboration avec la Convention de Barcelone pour le développement de certains indicateurs dans le cadre de son processus d'approche écosystémique.

C'est dans ce vaste contexte que s'inscrit l'agenda chargé de cette Sixième réunion des Parties, à la hauteur des ambitions de l'Accord.

Monseigneur,

20 ans d'existence de l'Accord ACCOBAMS, c'est aussi 20 années de soutien de la Principauté de Monaco, d'ailleurs reconnu en 2014 par le programme des Champions de Convention pour les Espèces Migratrices qui a décerné à la Principauté, le prix de Champion Extraordinaire pour l'accueil du Secrétariat Permanent de l'ACCOBAMS. Mais c'est avant tout 20 années du soutien permanent du Prince Rainier III, Votre père, et de Vous-même.

Le Secrétariat a donc souhaité Vous exprimer sa sincère reconnaissance pour Votre engagement personnel.

J'ai le plaisir de Vous offrir, à l'occasion de cet anniversaire, une œuvre d'art unique, produit d'un savoir-faire d'exception de notre région. Cet objet symbolique à plusieurs titres, reflète le milieu marin fait d'azur et de transparence qui enserme cet oxygène qui fait la vie. Symbolique également car il marque le renouveau d'un artisanat régional, fortement atteint par les événements climatiques récents qui nous préoccupent tous».

ADDRESS FROM HIS SERENE HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT II OF MONACO

***Intervention de S.A.S. le Prince Souverain,
Ouverture de la MOP6 – 20^{ème} anniversaire d'ACCOBAMS
Monaco, le 22 novembre 2016***

Monsieur le Ministre d'Etat,
Madame la Présidente,
Madame et Messieurs les Secrétaires Exécutifs,
Excellences,
Mesdames Messieurs,
Chers amis,

Je suis particulièrement heureux de vous accueillir, non seulement pour cette 6^{ième} Réunion des Parties à l'ACCOBAMS, mais également pour célébrer ensemble le 20^{ème} anniversaire de la signature de cet Accord, le 24 novembre 1996, ici même en Principauté de Monaco.

Né de la convergence de besoins exprimés par diverses Organisations internationales, l'ACCOBAMS, a su garder cet esprit collaboratif dont il tire sa force.

Je tiens à vous dire que ce qui m'engage avec mon Gouvernement, à soutenir vos actions, c'est avant tout la préservation de la biodiversité et la volonté d'y affecter les structures requises pour y parvenir. En témoignent l'accueil en Principauté du Secrétariat permanent de l'ACCOBAMS - dont la mise à jour de l'Accord de siège conforte ses bases juridiques – ainsi que l'appui financier de mon pays en sa faveur.

Il est facile de cerner le coût de la protection de la biodiversité marine mais bien plus difficile de quantifier ses bénéfices.

Les actions disjointes des Organisations, qui font parfois écho aux difficultés de coordinations internes aux Etats, peuvent être un obstacle à l'efficacité et à la bonne économie du système. La mutualisation des moyens démontre la volonté de concilier les efforts de tous pour un bénéfice commun.

Dans ce contexte, l'alliance entre tous les Secrétariats des Organisations compétentes pour la gestion et la conservation de la biodiversité pélagique en eaux profondes de la Méditerranée, dont vous

aurez à débattre, est une initiative à laquelle j'attache beaucoup d'importance et qui répond aux attentes de mon pays et de ma Fondation.

Je souhaite également attirer votre attention sur le fonds spécial créé par Monaco avec la France et la Tunisie afin de soutenir la création et la gestion effective des zones marines protégées. Gageons que ces actions seront complémentaires.

Bien connaître la biodiversité marine est une nécessité. On protège ce que l'on connaît bien. Aussi, je rends hommage aux scientifiques qui parcourent nos mers pour inventorier ces espèces qui nous sont chères.

En 2010, un projet d'inventaire global des cétacés de l'aire géographique de l'ACCOBAMS - l'ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative - était soumis à votre décision. J'en soulignais alors ici l'intérêt. Ce projet, de plusieurs millions d'euros et qui prendra enfin corps en 2017, est une étape cruciale. Je sais que plusieurs bailleurs de fonds s'y sont d'ores et déjà associés, je les en remercie ainsi que tous ceux qui, sur le terrain ou dans les ministères, contribueront au succès de cette vaste entreprise.

A ce titre, je vous annonce que ma Fondation a décidé de s'engager également dans ce projet à hauteur de 100.000 Euros.

Je souhaite, associer à mes remerciements votre Secrétaire exécutif Mme Florence Descroix-Comanducci, qui a pris le flambeau en janvier 2014, et qui a su établir une stratégie globale et rassembler les compétences nécessaires pour mener cet ambitieux projet à sa concrétisation. Le lancement officiel de celui-ci se fera au cours de cette réunion et c'est un beau symbole pour ce 20ème anniversaire.

Les menaces sur les cétacés persistent. Parfois très visibles et très médiatisées, comme les collisions avec les navires, les échouages massifs, les captures accidentelles ou les micro- déchets persistants, mais parfois plus occultes, comme l'impact d'un tourisme mal pensé ou les émissions de bruits sous-marins générés par les activités humaines.

Les décideurs ont besoin de bases solides pour éclairer leurs choix. Ils ont besoin d'arguments pour convaincre à court terme ceux qui devront restreindre certaines de leurs activités au profit d'avantages sur le long terme, dont bénéficieront leurs ressources et leur profession.

Traduire les données scientifiques en mesures effectives et crédibles, est le rôle de votre institution.

Je rends hommage à l'ACCOBAMS qui s'est attelé à des problématiques importantes et complexes telles que les interactions avec les pêches. Les relations établies avec la Commission générale pour les pêches de Méditerranée et le projet soutenu par la fondation MAVA pour réduire les impacts sur les espèces marines en danger et les activités de pêche me laissent espérer une prise de conscience de cette problématique.

La question des nuisances sonores est également inquiétante. Le bruit sous-marin agit sur de grandes distances. Les sources en sont parfois diffuses comme le transport maritime ou les travaux côtiers mais parfois évidentes comme les prospections sismiques pour la recherche pétrolière et gazière ou les sonars militaires.

L'impact de cette « cacophonie sous-marine » est de plus en plus mis en évidence. Celle-ci interfère avec ce qui permet aux cétacés de se diriger, de se nourrir, de communiquer.

L'ACCOBAMS s'est engagé à cet égard, en coordination avec son homologue ASCOBANS et leur convention mère, la CMS, ce qui atteste de la volonté collaborative qui perdure fort heureusement.

De même je salue la reconnaissance du rôle de l'ACCOBAMS dans le développement d'indicateurs pour la surveillance du « bruit » du Plan d'Action pour la Méditerranée de la Convention de Barcelone, en relation avec la directive cadre sur le milieu marin de l'Union Européenne.

Plusieurs Conférences vous ont permis de progresser vers la recherche de mesures de nature à atténuer l'impact de ces perturbations.

Les cétacés sont au sommet de la pyramide trophique. Conserver les grands prédateurs, c'est faciliter la bonne santé des espèces qui leurs sont liées.

A ce titre, l'identification de « zones critiques » pour ces grands prédateurs s'intègre dans l'identification des zones d'importance écologiques et biologiques (EBSAs) méditerranéennes sous l'égide de la CBD. Sur la base de ces EBSAs, la transformation en zones de bonne gestion de l'environnement procède maintenant d'une volonté politique.

Peu de zones marines comme l'aire de l'ACCOBAMS présentent une telle diversité de populations, de territoires, de situations politiques et économiques, de potentiels scientifiques.

C'est une des richesses de votre Accord. Le pont qu'il jette entre les diverses rives de nos mers est un atout pour les échanges scientifiques et humains. La mise en place de formations, la rédaction de guides tels que celui sur la gestion des aires protégées, sont des outils essentiels dans ce cadre.

Au-delà de sa zone statutaire, le rayonnement de l'ACCOBAMS s'est étendu. En témoignent sa participation aux appels d'offres communautaires, ses relations avec les bailleurs de fonds internationaux et sa participation au groupe de travail sur la conservation de la biodiversité au-delà des juridictions nationales, à l'invitation de la Division du Droit de la Mer de l'ONU.

L'ACCOBAMS, véritable ambassadeur de la protection des océans et de la conservation des espèces migratrices, a pu en 20 ans servir d'exemple pour d'autres zones du monde, comme la mer Rouge, les côtes africaines, le Pacifique ou les Caraïbes. Je tiens à féliciter son Secrétariat pour la qualité du travail accompli et les Etats qui, par leur impulsion et leurs engagements, l'encourage à persévérer.

Mesdames, Messieurs,

La bonne et saine gestion des mers doit demeurer au cœur de vos discussions. Mon pays s'est engagé dans l'accueil de structures dédiées à cette bonne gestion et il continuera à faciliter les actions déployées à cet effet.

Je vous souhaite de fructueux débats en vue d'éclairer les Gouvernements sur les mesures effectives et efficaces à envisager pour l'avenir.

Agissons sans attendre.

Je vous remercie.

ANNEX III

AGENDA

ANNEX III - AGENDA

I. Welcome addresses**II. Organizational issues**

- 1) Rules of Procedure for the Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS
- 2) Granting the right to vote
- 3) Election of the Bureau
- 4) Adoption of the Agenda
- 5) Admission of observers
- 6) Establishment of the Credentials Committee
- 7) Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country

III. Opening Statements**IV. Progress reports of the Agreement**

- 1) National Reports
- 2) Report of the Depositary
- 3) Report of the Bureau
- 4) Report of the Secretariat
- 5) Report of the Scientific Committee
- 6) Report of the Sub Regional Coordination Units
- 7) Report of the Follow-up Committee

V. Report by the Credentials Committee**VI. Institutional and budgetary arrangements**

- 1) Staff regulations
- 2) Rules of Procedures for the Bureau
- 3) Work programme 2017-2019
- 4) Budgetary matters
- 5) Scientific Committee
- 6) ACCOBAMS Follow-up Committee
- 7) Format for National Implementation Reports
- 8) Information and Communication
- 9) Extension of the ACCOBAMS geographical scope
- 10) Strengthening of the ACCOBAMS collaboration strategies
- 11) ACCOBAMS Partners

VII. Implementation of the Agreement: technical and scientific issues

- 1) Cetacean population estimates and distribution
- 2) Population structure
- 3) Assessment of IUCN conservation status of cetaceans
- 4) Interactions between fisheries and cetaceans
- 5) Anthropogenic noise
- 6) Marine Mammals Observers in the ACCOBAMS area
- 7) Ship strikes on cetaceans
- 8) Commercial Cetacean Watching activities in the ACCOBAMS area
- 9) Species Conservation and Management Plans
- 10) Cetaceans strandings
- 11) Capacity building
- 12) New areas of conservation of cetacean habitats

VIII. Confirmation of previous Resolutions

IX. Adoption of Resolutions

X. Other business

XI. Date and venue of the Seventh Meeting of the Parties

XII. Adoption of the Report of the Meeting

XIII. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX IV

OPENING STATEMENTS

(Statements are shown in chronological order)

UNEP-MAP Statement
(Delivered by Gaetano LEONE, Coordinator)

Mr. Chair,
Executive Secretary,
Distinguished delegates,

It is a great pleasure, on behalf of the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan-Barcelona Convention Secretariat, to be here today, at this Sixth Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS that also celebrates 20 years of the signature of the Agreement.

Two decades ago, the efforts and consultations among the Secretariats of the Barcelona, Bern and Bonn Conventions and, later, of the Bucharest Convention, produced a tangible result, an Agreement whose role and importance in maintaining a favorable conservation status for cetaceans is beyond question. Two decades of achievements have contributed to the development of national legislation, protecting habitats, building capacity, producing research and knowledge, monitoring and assessment, and raising awareness on issues related to cetaceans.

We are happy therefore that the ambitious idea of establishing the Agreement has borne fruit, and we are here to confirm our full support to the role of ACCOBAMS in the conservation of marine biodiversity.

ACCOBAMS continues to be a privileged partner of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system. Only few months ago, in February 2016, on the occasion of our 19th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties, the two Secretariats signed a Memorandum of Understanding to increase and formalize the cooperation to further their shared goals on the conservation of the marine environment and ecosystems.

At the same meeting of the Parties, an ambitious Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) was adopted within the framework of the Ecosystem Approach process of the Barcelona Convention. This Programme is meant to enable a quantitative analysis of the state of the marine and coastal environment of the Mediterranean in an integrated manner, covering pollution and marine litter, biodiversity, nonindigenous species, coast, and hydrography, based on common regional indicators, targets and Good Environmental Status descriptions.

IMAP was prepared and will be implemented through collaborative efforts including with key regional organizations such as ACCOBAMS, who greatly contributed to its development. ACCOBAMS provided inputs for the biodiversity common indicators work in general and, most importantly, led the development of the monitoring programme and common indicators in relation to marine mammals and marine noise.

The implementation of IMAP involves assisting Southern Mediterranean countries in developing their national IMAP-compatible monitoring programmes, following the agreed common indicators. ACCOBAMS has already provided inputs into this capacity building effort, leading the work on common indicator fact sheets related to marine mammals. The ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative to be undertaken during 2016-2019, will provide important inputs in terms of monitoring methodologies, capacity building and reliable data on abundance and distribution of cetaceans to move this work forward.

As ACCOBAMS is undertaking an identification of noise hot spots in the Mediterranean, we are also eager to continue collaborating for the IMAP implementation related to marine noise.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The development and implementation of IMAP is just one important example of the concrete recent results that the joint work of our two institutions is producing. But cooperation has been consistent during the past two decades. ACCOBAMS and our Regional Activity Center responsible for specially protected areas and biodiversity (SPA/RAC) have been working together in implementing the Barcelona Convention SPA/BD Protocol.

In this context, joint efforts have continued in recent years to assist Contracting Parties to establish their national action for the conservation of cetaceans and their national stranding network, to identify critical cetacean habitats and the main threats affecting the cetaceans in their countries.

The level of knowledge in this field remains a challenge. Joint support has been given to Mediterranean scientists to strengthen their national capacities on the study and monitoring of cetaceans through exchanging knowledge and experiences during Mediterranean and international gatherings.

During the past couple of years, SPA/RAC and ACCOBAMS have also collaborated closely in revising the Appendix to the Barcelona Convention Action Plan for the conservation of cetacean in the Mediterranean Sea. This was also adopted at our COP 19 in February 2016 and it describes the action of the next five years towards legal and institutional measures, improvement of knowledge about cetacean populations, reduction of cetaceans-fisheries interactions, mitigation of the impact of underwater noise and habitat conservation.

These were just few examples of the positive results of the joint work that UNEP/MAP and ACCOBAMS are delivering.

Distinguished delegates,

As the Barcelona Convention celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, we wish the ACCOBAMS community continued success in the implementation of its important mandate, from which the entire region will benefit. We are committed to an ever more strategic collaboration that is not only of technical importance, but also of political significance, as higher attention is paid globally to issues of sustainable development and ocean governance and to the importance of the regional dimension of those issues.

Thank you.

UNEP/MAP - RAC/SPA Statement
(Delivered by Khalil ATTIA, Director)

Monsieur le Président du Bureau, Mme la Secrétaire Exécutive,
distinguished Delegates and Guests, dear Colleagues,

First of all, I'd like to thank the Secretariat and the Government of Monaco for the invitation and the Excellent organisation.

I'd like, also, to join the previous voices in congratulating all of you and ourselves for this 20th anniversary of ACCOBAMS.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as you may all know, since the first MOP, the Regional Activity Center for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC) was designated as a Coordination Unit for the Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area, in order to facilitate the implementation of the measures prescribed in the Conservation Plan of the Agreement.

This umbilical link between ACCOBAMS and SPA/RAC has facilitated, during the last 20 years, a good coordination and a high synergy in the implementation of ACCOBAMS and Barcelona Convention SPA/BD Protocol, towards achieving and maintaining a favourable conservation status for cetaceans.

So, let us maintain this positive momentum and continue to join forces and means, in a common action, to better serve our region which faces a multitude of challenges, among which, threats on marine biodiversity and living resources are not the least.

Thank you for your kind attention. »

STATEMENT FROM BLACK SEA COMMISSION PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

(Delivered by Irina MAKARENKO)

Your Excellences, Mr. President, ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary, distinguished participants of the Meeting, ladies and gentleman,

It is a **great honor for me to be here** today and I would like to extend my **gratitude to the Principality of Monaco and ACCOBAMS Secretariat** for hosting and excellent organization of this distinguished meeting and for this **chance to be given a floor** on behalf of the Black Sea Commission' Permanent Secretariat.

As you may know, the **Black Sea Commission was created as an executive body** to implement the provisions of the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution also known as Bucharest Convention, signed in 1992 and ratified by all the Black Sea riparian countries immediately after.

Being a Regional Sea Convention, the Black Sea Commission is **responsible for promoting the implementation of Bucharest Convention** and its Protocols, it was established to, *inter alia*, monitor and assess pollution, control pollution from land-based sources, ensure conservation of biological diversity, address environmental safety aspects of shipping, address environmental aspects of management of fisheries and other marine living resources and, last but not least, promote integrated coastal zone management and maritime policy.

I would like to mention that **being only 4 years older than the ACCOBAMS**, the Black Sea Commission was always **going hand-in-hand with ACCOBAMS Agreement**, and during these long 20 years our two organizations have been **bringing political will as well scientific expertise** to the Black Sea Region, this diverse and vulnerable region in terms of its economics, environment and sustainable development in general.

As you may know, since 2002, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant **Memorandum of Understanding between the Black Sea Commission and ACCOBAMS**, the Permanent Secretariat of the Black Sea Commission (BSC) **has an honour to serve as Black Sea Sub Regional Coordination Unit for ACCOBAMS** in regards to the conservation of the cetaceans of the Black Sea. It is my **pleasure to mark today an outstanding level of cooperation between our organizations and a solid intention to continue our efforts** in the Black Sea region together with other relevant partners.

I will be given a floor later to present the **report of our sub-regional unit**, but let me just briefly mention the **work on revision of the draft Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans (2016-2020)**, development of **capacity building activities**, including reinforcement of capability of local communities to react in the event of cetacean strandings in Bulgaria, identification and assessment of cetacean groupings in coastal waters of the north-western Black Sea, in Ukrainian sector - increasing of the regional capacity for developing cetacean distribution and abundance studies. We plan to carry out in the **coming months in Istanbul an ACCOBAMS teaching module**, where experts from other Black Sea Countries will be also invited to participate. We welcome also the launching of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative on the identification and the distribution of cetacean populations in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

Despite the achievements that I mentioned in my statement, I think there is **still a need to deepen our cooperation and launch some new joint projects or initiatives** aimed at conservation of the Black Sea cetaceans and, in this context, **let me assure you, your Excellencies, in our intention to continue cooperation in the same constructive manner and direction.**

Concluding my address, let me **extend cordial congratulations on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of ACCOBAMS!!!** Let me wish **every success as well as long years of prosperity and well-being to your distinguished organization.** Let me also wish **success to this meeting and to our future endeavors aimed at conservation of cetaceans** in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

OPENING STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION

(Delivered by Greg Donovan, IWC Head of Science)

It is a great pleasure for the IWC to attend this the sixth Meeting of Parties to ACCOBAMS. The IWC would like to thank the Government of Monaco for hosting the meeting in this beautiful venue and the Secretariat of ACCOBAMS for their tremendous and efficient work in organising this meeting of Parties - and indeed their excellent work at all times.

This seems to be a year of anniversaries. ACCOBAMS is celebrating its 20th birthday and a few weeks ago at its biennial meeting in Slovenia, the IWC was celebrating its 70th birthday. In addition, it is the 40th anniversary of the Barcelona Convention. Anniversaries are a time for celebration that we have survived but also a time for reflection. There are many positives to celebrate but it is important to remember that cetacean populations still face a number of human-induced threats. The important issue is not the conservation of organisations *per se* but the effective conservation of the animals that they were established to protect.

It is here that we believe that the IWC and ACCOBAMS can continue, and indeed develop, our long-standing and fruitful collaboration. Since the start of ACCOBAMS, this has been particularly strong in the area of science, but we can and should work together to turn scientific advice into positive and effective conservation actions. There are a wide range of issues upon which the IWC and ACCOBAMS share a common interest and where working together is of great mutual benefit. Just a few of these include Conservation and Management Plans, chemical pollution, marine debris, bycatch in fishing gear, issues related to oil and gas production and marine renewables, noise, ship strikes and sustainable whalewatching. We cannot address these issues alone, as recognised for example by a number of Resolutions and work plans agreed at our biennial meeting (www.iwc.int). Where appropriate, the IWC will intervene in discussions of these issues as they arise in the agenda, noting those areas where we can help each other develop both scientific advice, and mitigation and conservation actions.

STATEMENT FROM THE GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

(delivered by Mr. Abdellah SROUR, Executive Secretary)

Monsieur le Président du Bureau de l'ACCOBAMS,
Madame la Secrétaire exécutive de l'ACCOBAMS,
Honorables délégués,
Chers collègues,

Je tiens tout d'abord à remercier le Secrétariat de l'ACCOBAMS et les autorités monégasques pour leur chaleureuse hospitalité ainsi que pour l'excellente organisation cette réunion, qui marque un tournant important puisqu'elle coïncide avec la célébration du vingtième anniversaire de l'Accord.

La présence de la Commission générale des pêches pour la Méditerranée à cette sixième réunion des parties est particulièrement importante car elle témoigne de la collaboration renforcée entre nos deux organisations et de notre volonté de poursuivre nos efforts communs afin de relever les nombreux défis qui se posent à nous. Nos deux organisations partagent en effet de nombreux intérêts communs, à commencer par leur zone de compétence qui est la Méditerranée et la mer Noire, et une grande partie de leurs États membres sont les mêmes. En tant qu'organisation régionale de gestion des pêches compétente dans la région, la CGPM compte parmi ses 24 membres, 22 États riverains de la Méditerranée et de la mer Noire ainsi que le Japon et l'Union européenne.

La collaboration entre la CGPM et l'ACCOBAMS date de 2006, lorsque nos deux organisations ont commencé à se pencher sur les questions liées aux interactions entre la pêche et les cétacés, et plus particulièrement les captures accidentelles et la déprédation de certaines espèces en Méditerranée et en mer Noire. En mai 2012, un protocole d'accord a été signé entre la CGPM et l'ACCOBAMS, ce qui a marqué un tournant décisif pour notre coopération et notre travail en synergie, notamment dans le domaine de la collecte et l'analyse d'informations relatives à la conservation des cétacés, des interactions avec les activités humaines telles que la pêche et l'aquaculture, de la recherche et du renforcement des capacités.

C'est dans ce contexte qu'a vu le jour, en 2015, un projet sur l'atténuation des interactions négatives entre les espèces marines menacées et les activités de pêche en Méditerranée occidentale, mené avec le soutien financier de la fondation MAVA. Les résultats de ce projet sont particulièrement concluants et devraient permettre d'améliorer les connaissances et les informations sur ce phénomène et de favoriser la mise en place d'une stratégie régionale pour réduire les captures accidentelles d'espèces vulnérables et menacées et la déprédation en Méditerranée.

En 2016, une stratégie à moyen terme a été mise en place sous l'impulsion de la CGPM en vue d'améliorer, d'ici à 2020, la durabilité des pêches en Méditerranée et en mer Noire. Cette stratégie est étroitement liée à la mise en œuvre des Objectifs de développement durable des Nations Unies, en particulier l'Objectif 14 qui est de « conserver et exploiter de manière durable les océans, les mers et les ressources marines aux fins du développement durable », ainsi qu'à celle des Objectifs d'Aichi pour la biodiversité, en particulier l'Objectif 6, qui vise à une exploitation durable des stocks de poisson et d'invertébrés, et l'Objectif 11, qui concerne les aires protégées. La stratégie à moyen terme s'articule autour de cinq cibles principales qui sont : inverser l'évolution négative des stocks halieutiques grâce au renforcement des avis scientifiques à l'appui de la gestion; contribuer aux moyens d'existence des communautés côtières en favorisant une pêche artisanale durable; faire reculer la pêche illicite, non déclarée et non réglementée au moyen d'un plan d'action régional; réduire au maximum et atténuer les interactions indésirables des pêches avec les écosystèmes et l'environnement marins, et, enfin renforcer les capacités et la coopération. L'ACCOBAMS a déjà pleinement manifesté son soutien et aura un rôle non négligeable à jouer dans le cadre des objectifs fixés par cette stratégie, en particulier celui qui concerne les interactions indésirables des pêches avec les écosystèmes et l'environnement marins.

Enfin, nos efforts ne s'arrêtent pas ici puisque nous sommes également en train de travailler à un projet de stratégie de coopération sur les mesures spatiales de protection et de gestion de la biodiversité marine avec les Secrétariats de l'ACCOBAMS, de l'UICN-Med, du Plan d'Action pour la Méditerranée du PNUE, par le biais du Centre d'activités régionales pour les aires spécialement protégées SPA/RAC, et en collaboration avec MedPAN.

Nous attendons donc beaucoup de toutes ces activités communes et la CGPM espère que cette réunion des parties reconnaîtra l'importance de notre coopération et la nécessité de la consolider en vue d'atteindre nos objectifs communs.

Je terminerai en souhaitant une longue vie à l'ACCOBAMS à l'occasion de son vingtième anniversaire, et encore au moins vingt autres années de succès à venir.

Je vous remercie pour votre attention.

STATEMENT FROM THE PELAGOS AGREEMENT

(delivered by Ms. Fannie Dubois, Executive Secretary)

Monsieur le Président, Madame le Secrétaire exécutif, Mesdames et Messieurs les Représentants des Parties et des Organisations internationales, Chers collègues et amis,

Le Secrétariat permanent de l'Accord Pelagos pour la création en Méditerranée d'un Sanctuaire pour les mammifères marins est heureux de participer à cette 6^{ème} Réunion des Parties et tient à remercier l'ACCOBAMS pour son invitation.

En tant que zone pilote de l'ACCOBAMS, le Sanctuaire tend à mettre en place des initiatives innovantes en terme de protection des mammifères marins.

Plusieurs axes majeurs de coopération avec l'ACCOBAMS sont déjà actuellement en cours, dont :

- l'étude des populations dans le cadre du projet « survey initiative » ;
- la lutte contre les pollutions dont les nuisances sonores sous-marines et les plastiques ;
- l'encadrement des activités d'observation des cétacés en milieu naturel par la poursuite de la mise en œuvre du label commun « High Quality Whale Watching » ACCOBAMS/Pelagos ;
- la poursuite de la lutte contre les collisions entre les navires et les grands cétacés.

D'autres sujets de coopération sont en cours d'étude et le projet de programme de travail de l'ACCOBAMS permettra également d'affiner celui de l'Accord Pelagos prévu pour le prochain biennium et mutualiser ainsi les efforts des Parties dans la protection des cétacés.

Par ailleurs, l'installation récente du Secrétariat permanent de l'Accord Pelagos en Principauté de Monaco facilitera la coopération entre les Secrétariats des deux Accords. Nous espérons d'ores et déjà la participation du Secrétariat permanent de l'ACCOBAMS à la 7^{ème} Réunion des Parties à l'Accord Pelagos qui se tiendra à la fin de l'année 2017 en Principauté de Monaco.

Enfin, nous souhaitons un plein succès dans les travaux de cette 6^{ème} Réunion des Parties, ainsi qu'une coopération fructueuse entre les deux Accords partenaires.

STATEMENT OF CMS AND ASCOBANS

(delivered by Mr. Bradnee Chambers, Executive Secretary of the CMS and Ms. Heidrun Frisch-Nwakanma, CMS Marine Mammals Officer and ASCOBANS Coordinator)

1. As an environmental treaty under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) brings together the States through which migratory animals pass, the Range States, and lays the legal foundation for internationally coordinated conservation measures throughout a migratory range. It currently has 124 Parties.
2. ACCOBAMS is one of two legally-binding cetacean concluded under the framework of the Convention. The first was ASCOBANS (Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas), which next year will celebrate the 25th Anniversary since the treaty was signed. ACCOBAMS is this year celebrating its 20th Anniversary, and in these two decades has made an indispensable contribution to the conservation of whales, dolphins and porpoises in the Mediterranean and Black Seas.
3. CMS continues to build up its coverage and activities on cetaceans and especially small cetaceans. Forty-two cetacean-related resolutions have been passed by the Parties since the 1st CMS Conference of the Parties in October 1985, addressing issues such as species status and urgent conservation action on bycatch, captures, climate change and chemical and noise pollution.
4. The mandates that CMS, ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS all have for the conservation of cetaceans present clear opportunities for close collaboration and synergies. Below, relevant recent decisions and developments within the CMS and ASCOBANS frameworks are listed. We are looking forward to working together with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat and the ACCOBAMS Parties on these topics, and on the ones that ACCOBAMS brings to our attention.

11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS

5. The 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11, Quito, Ecuador, 4-9 November 2014) adopted a record 34 resolutions (available at www.cms.int/en/meeting/eleventh-meeting-conference-parties-cms). Several are directly relevant for cetacean conservation:
 - a. **Live Captures of Cetaceans from the Wild for Commercial Purposes** (Resolution 11.22), addressing issues of capture, transfer and import of live cetaceans
 - b. **Conservation Implications of Cetacean Culture** (Resolution 11.23), recognizing the increasing evidence that populations of some species are better delineated by cultural behaviour than genetic diversity or geographic isolation, and establishing an expert group to consider the case for all taxonomic groups covered by CMS
 - c. **Programme of Work on Climate Change and Migratory Species** (Resolution 11.26)
 - d. **Sustainable Boat-Based Marine Wildlife Watching** (Resolution 11.29), establishing basic principles to adhere to when adopting measures to promote ecologically sustainable wildlife watching, and requesting the development of guidelines for different taxonomic groups, including cetaceans
 - e. **Management of Marine Debris** (Resolution 11.30, based on three full reviews available as UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.27 “Migratory Species, Marine Debris and its Management”, UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.28 “Marine Debris and Commercial Marine Vessel Best Practice” and UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.29 “Marine Debris Public Awareness and Education Campaigns”), identifying strategies for governments to address this problem at source
 - f. **Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023** (Resolution 11.02), based on the Aichi targets and designed

to guide all efforts for migratory species conservation, both within and outside the CMS Family

6. COP11 also added many species to the Appendices of the Convention. Among these were many marine species, especially sharks and rays, and the listing of **Mediterranean population of Cuvier's beaked whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*)** on Appendix I of CMS. At the same meeting, the population was also included in the list of Concerted Action Species, signalling its need for urgent attention for their protection. The ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee was instrumental in getting this proposal prepared and it was submitted through the European Union upon the initiative of our common Parties.

7. The 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (COP12) will take place in Manila, Philippines, from 22 to 28 October 2017. More details will become available in due course on www.cms.int/en/cop12.

1st Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council

8. At the 1st Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC1, 18-21 April 2016, Bonn, Germany), progress in the implementation of these resolutions was assessed. The report of the Meeting will shortly be published here: www.cms.int/en/meeting/first-meeting-sessional-committee-scientific-council-scc-sc1.

9. The ScC-SC1 report will also contain the work plan agreed by the Sessional Committee for implementation of COP11 resolutions and the substantive preparations for the 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Manila, Philippines, 22-28 October 2017). Planned activities of particular relevance to ACCOBAMS include:

- a. Establishing collaboration with the IWC and CITES on **Live Captures of Cetaceans from the Wild for Commercial Purposes**
- b. Developing cooperation with the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management and the IWC to address the impact on CMS-listed species that are likely to be subject to utilization as **aquatic bushmeat**
- c. Finalizing the development of **CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities** (see www.cms.int/en/guidelines/cms-family-guidelines-EIAs-marine-noise)
- d. Assessing the potential impact of **dolphin swim-with programmes** on CMS-listed species
- e. Convening a second workshop on the **conservation implications of animal culture and social complexity** (tentatively planned for early 2018)
- f. Assessing relevance of the concept of **Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs)** to CMS
- g. Addressing key gaps in knowledge and future research directions relating to migratory species impacted by **climate change**, in particular through the analysis of existing long-term and large-scale datasets
- h. Review existing agreed guidelines, existing good practice and underpinning scientific evidence of the issues of concern, and based on this review develop **guidelines** as appropriate on **marine boat-based wildlife watching** for different taxonomic groups, differentiated if necessary by geographic areas
- i. Advance the Convention's work on the **marine debris** issue and investigate the feasibility of close cooperation with other biodiversity-related agreements, such as CBD, IWC, ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS, by means of a multilateral working group
- j. Producing a review of the **micro plastics** threat to migratory species
- k. Working closely with other international competent bodies such as FAO and relevant RFMOs, to ensure **bycatch management** approaches are promulgated in working fisheries
- l. Review information on **bycatch mitigation measures** for fishing methods known to impact migratory species

Joint CMS/ASCOBANS Publication “Oceans Full of Plastic”

10. Translations into French, German and Spanish of the leaflet entitled “Oceans Full of Plastic: Marine Debris – A Global Problem”, published in English in 2014 jointly with ASCOBANS, are now available as PDF for download: www.cms.int/en/publication/oceans-full-plastic. The leaflet is aimed at the general public, including children, and contains helpful tips on how everyone can be part of the solution. Print copies will become available shortly and can be requested from the CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat.

8th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS

11. The 8th Meeting of the Parties of the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS) was held in Helsinki, Finland, from 30 August to 1 September 2016. All related documents including the final resolutions are available at www.ascobans.org/en/meeting/MOP8, where the final report will also be published shortly. The following conservation-related resolutions were passed:

- a. **National Reporting** (Resolution 8.1), changing the reporting procedure so that only one comprehensive report in the four-year cycle would be required, with shorter topic-related reports in the other years, which will be reflected in the agenda for the Advisory Committee Meeting in the year in which the report is received
- b. **Work Plan for the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee and Secretariat 2017-2020 and Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023** (Resolution 8.2), outlining the activities of the AC and Secretariat as well as adopting the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023, which is based on the Aichi Targets and intended for migratory species conservation in general – containing a request to develop a joint bycatch working group with ACCOBAMS
- c. **Revision of the Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises (Jastarnia Plan)** (Resolution 8.3), which has been developed in consultation with the Jastarnia Group in the light of new data, and following a template agreed by ASCOBANS Parties in 2015, based on the format used by the IWC
- d. **Conservation of Common Dolphins** (Resolution 8.4), setting out a series of desirable actions and mandating the development of a fully-fledged conservation plan for common dolphins
- e. **Monitoring and Mitigation of Small Cetacean Bycatch** (Resolution 8.5), identifying and agreeing ASCOBANS positions and recommendations regarding the requirements of legislation to address bycatch monitoring and mitigation effectively
- f. **Ocean Energy** (Resolution 8.6), specifically focussing on tidal and wave energy devices on the impacts of which only limited data are available, but which seem to be some risk to species covered by ASCOBANS
- g. **Impacts of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)** (Resolution 8.7), setting research priorities and encouraging measures to avoid further input of PCBs into the marine environment
- h. **Addressing the Threats from Underwater Munitions** (Resolution 8.8), outlining the concerns related to conventional and chemical weapons and the threats from noise from explosions and poisoning from leakages of chemicals, and calling on UNEP and NATO to take the lead in addressing this issue
- i. **Managing Cumulative Anthropogenic Impacts in the Marine Environment** (Resolution 8.9), identifying measures aimed at minimizing the exposure of animals and impacts on the wider marine environment
- j. **Small Cetacean Stranding Response** (Resolution 8.10), encouraging the establishment of effective national strandings response networks and recommending that updated necropsy protocols and best practice guidelines for stranding responses and necropsies be developed collaboratively with the IWC, ACCOBAMS and the European Cetacean Society
- k. **CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities**

(Resolution 8.11), welcoming the progress made in developing this document and inviting the CMS Conference of the Parties, following some further consultations, to consider their adoption

ASCOBANS Advisory Committee and Working Groups

12. The **21st Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (AC21)** met from 29 September to 1 October 2014 in Gothenburg, Sweden. The report of the meeting as well as relevant documents can be accessed at www.ascobans.org/en/meeting/AC21.

13. The **22nd Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (AC22)** met from 29 September to 1 October 2015 in The Hague, Netherlands. This meeting was the last AC meeting before the 8th Meeting of the Parties and served to prepare the substantive inputs to MOP8. The report of the meeting as well as relevant documents can be accessed at www.ascobans.org/en/meeting/AC22.

14. Several standing working groups report to the Advisory Committee, including the following of mutual interest to ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS:

- **Bycatch Working Group**

Created in 2010, this group has been set specific tasks by each AC meeting and reported back to the following one. Its progress reports are all accessible through www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/bycatch-working-group.

The ASCOBANS Work Plan 2017-2020 requests the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee and Secretariat to make efforts to develop a joint working group on bycatch with ACCOBAMS. It is hoped that this proposal will meet with the approval of ACCOBAMS Parties and a similar activity can be included in the ACCOBAMS Work Programme 2017-2019.

- **Noise Working Group**

This working group jointly serves the needs of the two cetacean Agreements, ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS, as well as of the CMS Scientific Council. Established in 2009 with the terms of reference updated several times, the annual progress reports of the group can be accessed at www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/underwater-noise-working-group.

- **Extension Area Working Group & Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans**

First established in 2011, the experts supporting this activity produce joint reports, mainly related to the western extension of the Agreement Area, which came into force in 2008. This working group also considers the issue of ship strikes. Since ASCOBANS only covers small cetaceans, the work relating to large cetaceans aims to identify major issues likely to be having a negative effect upon large cetacean populations in the Agreement Area, assessing the extent to which they can be addressed alongside small cetaceans, and making informal recommendations of appropriate mitigation measures. Reports can be accessed at www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/extension-area-working-group and www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/informal-working-group-large-cetaceans.

- **Joint ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Working Group on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)**

This group was established in 2011 and is being co-chaired to cover the unique situation in the ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS Areas while allowing for synergies. Its reports and more information on its terms of reference are available at www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/marine-strategy-framework-directive-working-group.

15. The **23rd Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (AC23)** will meet in autumn 2017 (time and place to be determined). All relevant information and meeting and information documents will be made available at www.ascobans.org/en/meeting/AC23 in due course.

STATEMENT OF WWF
(delivered by Ms Aimee LESLIE)

WWF is pleased to attend the sixth Meeting of Parties to ACCOBAMS and is grateful to the Secretariat for the invitation. WWF's goal is to ensure that viable populations of all cetacean species occupy their historic range and fulfil their role in maintaining the integrity of ocean ecosystems. We believe that the establishment of ACCOBAMS set out an important set of objectives and targeted the key issues that need to be addressed if we are to secure better conservation status for cetaceans in Mediterranean and Black Sea waters. We are particularly concerned about the threat of bycatch and marine traffic impacts, and believe there is an urgent need to strengthen efforts to address these critical issues particularly in this era of blue growth.

WWF is already contributing to the ACCOBAMS strategy, particularly in the Pelagos Sanctuary: through research on cetacean PCB and microplastics contamination (activities B221 and B262), population structure (activity B121), marine traffic impacts (activities B241 and B242), and NETCCOBAMS network (activities A111 and A112).

We hope to remain engaged with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat and member Parties on these important issues in the future and look forward to a productive meeting to advance on the issues of most concern to cetacean conservation in the region and beyond.

Monitoring and Mitigation of Cetacean Bycatch (MOP6/Res6.17)

Entanglement in fishing gear has long been recognized by scientists and policy makers around the globe as the most pervasive human-induced threat to cetaceans. Efforts in the ACCOBAMS region to date have focused primarily on the collection of data to assess the scale of the problem. WWF strongly supports the draft resolution on Interactions between Fisheries and Cetaceans and we recommend all member Parties of ACCOBAMS to support the resolution. Moreover, increased international collaboration with other organizations would ensure more effective exchange of technical expertise and integration of ACCOBAMS concerns into international policy frameworks. In particular, more formal collaboration with ASCOBANS through the formation of a joint bycatch working group (as suggested in ASCOBANS Resolution 8.2, Annex 1, Activity 2) would allow both organisations to benefit from shared learning and experience, and more effectively join forces to influence European and other fisheries' management policies and regulations throughout both agreement areas.

Marine traffic impacts (MOP6/Res6.20)

Because the threat of ship strikes to cetaceans is growing with vessel traffic increasing around the globe, a number of collaborative efforts indicate mitigation measures that can reduce collision risk in areas of high vessel density like the Mediterranean. WWF fully endorses the recommendations made in the International Whaling Commission's newly drafted Ship Strikes Strategic Plan, as well as recommendations and measures put in place through regional agreements such as ASCOBANS. WWF welcomes and supports the draft resolution on Ship Strikes on Cetacean in the Mediterranean Sea and we recommend all member Parties of ACCOBAMS to support the resolution.

Concluding Remarks

Of course there are other important issues and documents to be discussed at this MoP, such as improving the number of signatory countries to ensure an optimal scale of cetaceans conservation (activity A221), assessing and mitigating whale watching impacts (MOP6/Res6.21), and encouraging ACCOBAMS to be fully involved in the marine spatial planning process at European scale, notably through the designation of areas of conservation of cetaceans habitat (MOP6/Res 6.13 and 6.25).

STATEMENT OF REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Your Serene Highness
Madam Executive Secretary
Madam/Mr. Chairperson

Honourable colleagues,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow us to extend our gratitude on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Croatia to the Principality of Monaco for hosting the Sixth Meeting of Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS). Furthermore, in the year when ACCOBAMS celebrates its 20th Anniversary, it gives us great pleasure to express our appreciation to the Principality of Monaco for its significant role in the conclusion and implementation of the ACCOBAMS Agreement, including the support provided to the Secretariat.

When joining the ACCOBAMS Agreement, countries have assumed the responsibility to undertake all necessary efforts to reach one simple goal: maintain a healthy cetacean populations in regional seas. Today, when cetaceans are under threat from various anthropogenic impacts, it is not an easy task.

Croatia is a maritime country, with almost 6,000 km of coastline and more than 1,000 islands stretching along the Adriatic Sea. The Adriatic Sea harbours various cetacean species, representing an integral part of marine biodiversity.

We have demonstrated our commitment to the conservation of cetaceans. Let us remind you that Croatia is a signatory to all relevant international treaties in the field of biological diversity conservation. A significant contribution has been given to the implementation of the ACCOBAMS Agreement since its inception. Ever since the ratification of the Agreement in July 2000, Croatian representatives participated in the Scientific Committee and the Bureau, including the chairing of the Bureau in the period from 2007 to 2010.

As a full member of the European Union since 1 July 2013, Croatia has focused its activities on harmonising its nature protection standards with those of the EU environmental *acquis*. Provisions under international nature protection agreements and under the Birds and Habitats Directives are transposed in the Nature Protection Act. Diverse secondary legislation has been adopted, which ensures the conservation of endangered species and habitats listed in the Annexes of the said European Directives. The Ecological Network of the Republic of Croatia was designated in 2007, followed by the designation of the Natura 2000 network in 2013. Assessment mechanism for plans and projects in protected areas and areas of the ecological network was set up.

Significant efforts have been invested in the enhancing of knowledge about cetaceans in cooperation with other Adriatic countries. We would particularly like to stress the implementation of the project "Network for the Conservation of Cetaceans and Sea Turtles in the Adriatic - NETCET", co-financed by the EU IP-Adriatic CBC Programme. The results of the aerial survey carried out within the scope of the project have provided a better insight into the presence of cetaceans in the Adriatic Sea. Based on the analysis of the state of cetaceans, the common strategy for

conservation of cetaceans in the Adriatic was developed, setting objectives and activities to ensure long-term conservation of these species in the region. The NETCET project fully reflects the spirit of regional cooperation promoted through ACCOBAMS.

National Cetaceans Stranding Network has been operational since 2010.

We would also like to point out that Croatia designated 6 Sites of Community Interest (SCIs) with the common bottlenose dolphin as conservation objective, including the area of the Cres-Lošinj archipelago. This area was recognised by the ACCOBAMS Agreement as a critical habitat for the common bottlenose dolphin and other valuable marine species.

Once more, we would like to emphasise Croatia's commitment to continuing its efforts towards implementing the ACCOBAMS Agreement.

We would also like to particularly commend the work of the Secretariat, as well as all the bodies of the Agreement, which have significantly contributed to its enforcement.

Madam/Mr. Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are aware of the general challenges the conservation of cetaceans and marine biodiversity places before us. There are many obstacles along the way, but even in these complex circumstances, we can make a difference. Allow us to assure you that Croatia, within its possibilities, will continue to work towards cetacean conservation and will continue to cooperate with other countries in the region, stimulating new ideas and projects and using the best available expertise.

Thank you, Madam/Mr. Chairperson.

ANNEX V

REPORT OF THE DEPOSITARY AND STATUS OF RATIFICATIONS

ANNEX V - REPORT OF THE DEPOSITARY AND STATUS OF RATIFICATIONS

The Depositary of the Agreement, the “Département des Relations Extérieures et de la Coopération” of the Principality of Monaco, has the honour of submitting this report to the State Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS).

Since the Fifth Meeting of the Parties held in Tangier from the 5th to the 8th November 2013, **no new accession to the Agreement has been recorded.**

As of 20 July 2016, there are 23 Parties to ACCOBAMS (Table 1).

Following the adoption, during the Meeting of the Parties in 2010, of the **Amendments to the Agreement text and its annexes**, regarding the geographical extension of ACCOBAMS, the Department has recorded, during the triennium 2014-2016, the deposit of **three instruments of approval**, coming from: the Republic of Montenegro, the Republic of Cyprus and the Republic of Slovenia (Table 2).

The Depositary has informed, through diplomatic ways, the Parties, the European Community, the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat and the Secretariat on the Convention for Migratory Species (CMS) of these approvals.

Moreover, during the 2014-2016 triennium, the Depositary, through the various diplomatic officers of the Principality of Monaco, has supported the action of the Permanent Secretariat to raise awareness among other Riparian States and the European Commission with a view to their accession.

Table 1

The following table presents the status of the Parties to the Agreement as of 20 July 2016.

COUNTRY / PAYS	SIGNATURES	RATIFICATIONS		ENTRY INTO FORCE ENTRÉE EN VIGUEUR
	Dates	Tool / Instrument	Deposit of the tool - Dépôt de l'instrument	
ALBANIA / ALBANIE	24/11/1996	25/05/2001	03/07/2001	01/10/2001
ALGERIA / ALGERIE		19/03/2007(AA) ***	25/09/2007	01/12/2007
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE HERZEGOVINE				
BULGARIA / BULGARIE	16/09/1999	23/09/1999	10/11/1999	01/06/2001
CROATIA / CROATIE	24/11/1996	03/05/2000	10/07/2000	01/06/2001
CYPRUS / CHYPRE	24/11/1996	30/01/2006	14/02/2006	01/05/2006
EGYPT / EGYPTE		04/03/2010	19/04/2010	01/07/2010
EUROPEAN UNION /UNION EUROPEENNE ⁽¹⁾				
FRANCE	24/11/1996	26/02/04 (AA)***	10/03/2004	01/06/2004
GEORGIA / GEORGIE	24/11/1996	30/03/2001	31/05/2001	01/06/2001
GREECE / GRECE	24/11/1996*	24/11/1996*	24/11/1996*	01/06/2001
ISRAEL				
ITALY / ITALIE	24/11/1996	10/02/2005	24/06/05	01/09/2005
LEBANON / LIBAN		05/05/2004(A)* *	13/12/2004	01/03/2005
LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA / LIBYE		12/05/2002	18/06/2002	01/09/2002
MALTA / MALTE	23/03/2001*	23/03/2001*	23/03/2001*	01/06/2001
MONACO	24/11/1996	25/04/1997	30/04/1997	01/06/2001
MONTENEGRO		17/02/2009 (AAA)****	18/05/2009	01/08/2009
MOROCCO / MAROC	28/03/1997	13/05/1999	05/07/1999	01/06/2001
PORTUGAL	24/11/1996	30/09/2004 (A) **	15/10/2004	01/01/2005
ROMANIA / ROUMANIE	28/09/1998	13/06/2000	17/07/2000	01/06/2001
RUSSIA / RUSSIE				
SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE		12/07/2006	25/09/2006	01/12/2006
SPAIN / ESPAGNE	24/11/1996	07/01/1999	02/02/1999	01/06/2001
SYRIA / SYRIE		07/02/02 (A)**	22/03/2002	01/06/2002
TUNISIA / TUNISIE	24/11/1996	31/12/2001	15/01/2002	01/04/2002
TURKEY / TURQUIE				
UKRAINE		09/07/2003	23/10/2003	01/01/2004
UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME UNI				

* Signature valid for ratification / Signature valant ratification

** A = Adherence / Adhésion

*** AA = Approval / Approbation

****AAA= Accession / Accession

(1) Instituting the European Community since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty the 1st December 2009

Table 2

The following table presents the status of the Parties having approved the Amendments as of 20 July 2016.

COUNTRY / PAYS	RATIFICATIONS		ENTRY INTO FORCE/ ENTRÉE EN VIGUEUR
	Tool / Instrument	Deposit of the tool Dépôt de l'instrument	
ALBANIA / ALBANIE			
ALGERIA / ALGERIE			
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE HERZEGOVINE			
BULGARIA / BULGARIE	08/02/2012 ³	14/03/2012	
CROATIA / CROATIE			
CYPRUS / CHYPRE	11/08/2014 ³	22/08/2014	
EGYPT / EGYPTÉ			
EUROPEAN UNION / UNION EUROPEENNE			
FRANCE/FRANCE			
GEORGIA / GEORGIE			
GREECE / GRECE			
ISRAEL/ISRAEL			
ITALY / ITALIE			
LEBANON / LIBAN			
LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA / LIBYE			
MALTA / MALTE			
MONACO/ MONACO	24/02/2011 ²	02/03/2011	
MONTENEGRO/ MONTENEGRO	03/12/2014 ³	09/07/2015	
MOROCCO / MAROC			
PORTUGAL/PORTUGAL			
ROMANIA / ROUMANIE			
RUSSIA / RUSSIE			
SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE	09/06/2016 ²	09/06/2016	
SPAIN / ESPAGNE	26/11/2012 ¹	10/01/2013	
SYRIA / SYRIE			
TUNISIA / TUNISIE			
TURKEY / TURQUIE			
UKRAINE / UKRAINE	26/11/2012 ³	02/01/2013	
UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME UNI			

1 = Ratification / ratification

2 = Approval / Approbation

3 = Acceptance / Acceptation

NB: 16 approvals are needed for the entry into force of the amendments / 16 approbations sont nécessaires pour l'entrée en vigueur des amendements

ANNEX VI

REPORT OF THE BUREAU

ANNEX VI - REPORT OF THE BUREAU
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Three Bureau Meetings were held during the last triennium:

- The Ninth Bureau Meeting (Paris, France, 9-10 December 2014),
- The Tenth Bureau Meeting (Casablanca, Morocco, 24-25 November 2015),
- The Third Meeting of the Extended Bureau (Monaco, 28-29 April 2016).

The composition of the Bureau was as follows:

- Chairperson: Mrs. Zakia DRIOUICH (Morocco);
- Vice-Chairperson: Mrs. Ana ŠTRBENAC (Croatia);
- Vice-Chairperson: Mrs. Martine BIGAN who was replaced after her retirement by Mr. Florian EXPERT(France);
- Vice-Chairperson / Rapporteur: Mrs. Irina LOMASHVILI (Georgia);
- Vice-Chairperson: Mr. Patrick Van KLAVEREN who was replaced after his retirement by Mr. Gilles TONELLI (Monaco).

All the triennium Bureau Meetings were also attended by the Chair of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee (Mr. Simone PANIGADA) and by the members of ACCOBAMS Secretariat.

The Third Meeting of the Extended Bureau was also attended by:

- A representative of the State holding the next Meeting of the Parties: Mrs. Céline Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo (Monaco);
- A representative of each of the two Sub-Regional Co-ordination Units: Mrs. Lobna BEN NAKHLA (UNEP MAP/RAC SPA) and Mrs. Iryna MAKARENKO (BSC PS);
- The three following experts nominated by the Bureau Members: Mr. Zamir DEDEJ, Mr. Simion NICOLAEV and Mr. Patrick VAN KLAVEREN.

A report was drafted after each Meeting (ACCOBAMS-BU9/2014/Doc21, ACCOBAMS-BU10/2015/Doc21and ACCOBAMS-BU_EXT3/2016/Doc 14). All these reports are presented to the Sixth Meeting of the Parties as reference documents.

The purpose of this report is to present an overview of the main issues discussed during those three Bureau Meetings.

I. INSTITUTIONAL AND BUDGETARY ARRANGEMENTS

1) Status of ratification of the Agreement Extension of the ACCOBAMS geographical scope

The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau about:

- the status of ratification of the Agreement
- the ratification of the amendment regarding the extension of the Agreement area
- the proposed extension of the ACCOBAMS area to cover the Red Sea, based on the information from the Scientific Committee.

Decisions:

The Bureau requested the Secretariat:

- to prepare a letter to be sent by the Chair of the Bureau inviting the relevant authorities to nominate a Focal Point where no Focal Point were appointed.
- to send a letter to the relevant national authorities of non-Party Countries in the ACCOBAMS area inviting them to become ACCOBAMS Parties.

The Bureau recommended that the Secretariat provides the Depository with an explanatory note on the amendment regarding the extension of the Agreement area (background, benefits and modalities for the acceptance or approval of the Amendment). This note may be useful to contact again, through diplomatic ways, Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Countries which have not yet ratified the amendments to the Agreement.

The Bureau also requested the Secretariat to send a letter to the relevant national authorities of the ACCOBAMS Parties that have not yet ratified the amendments to the Agreement in order to encourage them to speed up the ratification process with the view of having these amendments into force before the next Meeting of the Parties. This letter should be sent together with the explanatory note from the Secretariat.

The Bureau concluded that there is no scientific rationale to extend the ACCOBAMS Agreement to the Red Sea. However, the Bureau stressed the importance of establishing a scientific and technical cooperation between ACCOBAMS and the interested Red Sea riparian Countries by facilitating exchange of data and technical tools and by reinforcing capacities. In this context, the Bureau mandated the Secretariat to contact the Egyptian Focal Point to see if Egypt would be interested to implement ACCOBAMS provisions on the Egyptian coast of the Red Sea.

2) Staff regulations / Headquarters Agreement

Decisions:

The Bureau Members encouraged the Secretariat to continue working with the authorities in Monaco, keeping the Bureau informed in order to have a transparent recruitment process for the Executive Secretary in relation with the Bureau.

The Bureau recommended the Secretariat to finalize its task in relation with the authorities of the Principality of Monaco and to circulate the relevant draft Resolution to the Bureau Members as soon as they will be finalized.

3) **Budgetary matters**

In compliance with Resolution 5.16, the Secretariat regularly informed the Bureau on a regular basis about the Trust Fund and the Supplementary Conservation Fund, taking into account the Work Program adopted by the Parties.

Decisions:

The Bureau Meeting also invited the Secretariat to set in the next invoices a deadline for the payment in accordance with Resolution 5.16 that required Parties to pay their contributions as promptly as possible, but in any case no later than at the end of March of the year to which they relate.

The Bureau Members recommended that a reminder should be sent to all Parties with unpaid Contributions urging them to fulfil their obligations towards the ACCOBAMS Trust Fund and providing them with an overview of ACCOBAMS expenses for each Country.

The Bureau asked the Secretariat to contact again Parties with more than 3 years unpaid contributions, indicating that if their contributions will not be paid before the forthcoming MOP, their delegations will not have the right to vote during the MOP, except in case of exceptional circumstances. The Bureau recommended that each Party facing exceptional circumstances may provide the Secretariat with a formal letter explaining the “exceptional circumstances” that led to the delay in payment. This document will be then examined at the opening of the Meeting of the Parties in order to decide if the Party will be exceptionally granted the right to vote during the forthcoming Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS.

The Bureau agreed to support, through the Supplementary Conservation Fund, which was replenished thanks to the voluntary contribution of Monaco, the following projects:

- 1/ “Increase the regional capacity for developing cetacean distribution and abundance studies” from the NGO Mare Nostrum (Romania);
- 2/ “Tunisian Dolphin Project : population size and habitat use for bottlenose and common dolphins” from the Association Nationale du Développement Durable et de la Conservation de la Vie Sauvage (Tunisia) ;
- 3/ “Identification and initial assessment of cetacean groupings in coastal waters of the north-western Black Sea, Ukrainian sector” from the Ukrainian Scientific Center of Ecology of the Sea (Ukraine).

In accordance with the ACCOBAMS Strategy (Resolution 5.1), the Secretariat presented an overview of available funding possibilities in the region.

Decisions:

The Bureau Members recommend that the Secretariat keep the document alive without necessarily come back to the Bureau. They recommended the Secretariat to approach all National Focal Points (and/or foreign affairs and/or Ministry of Fisheries) to collect information about the ongoing projects. They also requested the Secretariat to amend the document by adding further information.

4) **Information and Communication**

The Secretariat presented the progress made in the development of the various communication tools.

Decisions:

The Bureau invited the Secretariat to contact the Bureau Members, the Focal Points, the Scientific Committee and the Partners inviting them to provide feedbacks and comments once NETCCOBAMS will be ready and before its official launch.

For the next celebrations of the “ACCOBAMS Cetaceans Day”, the Bureau recommended the Secretariat to inform the Parties and other ACCOBAMS Bodies earlier in order to ensure that enough time is provided to organize any special events.

5) Strengthening of the ACCOBAMS collaboration strategies**Decisions:**

Regarding the contribution to the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, the Bureau Members appreciated the cooperation established with UNEP/MAP that contributes to promote ACCOBAMS work and leadership on the issues related to the monitoring of cetaceans populations (for Ecological Objective 1 on biodiversity) and the monitoring of anthropogenic noise (for Ecological Objective 11 on anthropogenic noise).

The Bureau recommended that the Secretariat investigate with the UNEP/MAP options for the formalization of the contribution of ACCOBAMS in the monitoring of cetaceans populations and of anthropogenic noise within the EcAp context.

The Bureau commended the collaboration efforts and invited the Secretariat to pursue the finalisation of the joint strategy, the MOU and the agreement letter.

6) Preparation of the MOP6

The Secretariat informed the Bureau Members on the progress made in the preparation of the MOP6.

Decisions:

The Bureau:

- agreed that MOP6 will be organized in Monaco, on 22-25 November 2016 together with the 20th Anniversary (24 November);
- warmly thanked the Principality of Monaco for the significant voluntary contribution with an amount of 150.000 Euros offered to support the organization of the Meeting;
- invited the Secretariat to seize the opportunity of MOP6 to highlight and promote the results achieved by ACCOBAMS.

7) ACCOBAMS Partners

During the triennium 2014-2016, the Bureau granted the status of ACCOBAMS Partners to 8 organizations:

- The Moroccan NGO “Association de Gestion Intégrée des Ressources (AGIR)”
- The Monaco NGO “Association Monégasque pour la Protection de la Nature (AMPN)”
- The CIMA Research Foundation
- the Spanish NGO “Equinac”,
- the French NGO “Groupe d’Etude des Cétacés de Méditerranée”
- the Portuguese NGO “Portuguese Wildlife Society”
- The Spanish NGO “EDMAKTUB”;
- The Italian NGO “Oceanomare Delphis Onlus

Decisions:

Concerning the French Bureau of Engineering Consultants “Sinay”, the Bureau decided to postpone the decision about its application to the MOP6 since, at the date of the Bureau Meeting, the Secretariat was still waiting for the opinion of the French Focal Point, as required by the Rules and criteria for the status of ACCOBAMS Partners (Resolution 4.20).

The Bureau recommended to continue the organization of the ACCOBAMS Partners workshop (every two years for example). It may be planned back to back with the ACCOBAMS Scientific Meeting since most of the ACCOBAMS Partners attend it.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT: TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ISSUES**1) Cetacean population estimates and distribution**

The Secretariat provided the Bureau with an overview of the recent developments and work of the Secretariat for the development of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative and the related fundraising process.

Decisions:

The Bureau requested the Secretariat to send a letter, on behalf of the Chair of the Bureau, to the Focal points that have not yet replied in order to invite the Parties to confirm their interest for the project.

The Bureau invited:

- (i) the Secretariat to pursue its contacts with the relevant authorities in the EU Mediterranean Countries and to encourage them to support the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative at the level of the European Commission, and
- (ii) the Scientific Committee to liaise with the scientists of the entire ACCOBAMS area to stress the importance of orienting their population survey works towards the objectives of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI).

The Bureau invited the Secretariat to investigate ways and modalities for a joint Working Group SCAN-ASI and to take the needed steps for its establishment as soon as possible.

The Bureau supported the idea of having the survey as a long term program (not a one shot action), that could be conducted on a 6 years-period basis focalizing on key areas identified during the first survey.

2) Population structure

Decision: The Bureau requested the Secretariat to contact members of the relevant working group on population structure as provided in document ACCOBAMS-SC7/2011/Inf20, in order to reactivate activities on this issue.

3) Captivity related issues

Decision: Based on the information presented by the Secretariat regarding the draft Resolution on the identification of origin of cetaceans bred or kept in captivity to be presented to the CITES Secretariat before the next CITES COP in 2016, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to provide all ACCOBAMS Focal Points with the draft Resolution and to invite them to consider a submission by their Country to the next CITES COP.

The Secretariat informed the Bureau Members that it was approached by NGOs and Parties regarding the captivity issue both in dolphinarium and in their natural environment (“quasi dolphinarium”).

Decision: The Bureau requested the Secretariat to review and update, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee, the document “Taking of cetaceans and dolphinarium: a legal analysis within the framework of ACCOBAMS” (document ACCOBAMS-MOP5/2013/Inf37) in order to include the “quasi dolphinarium” together with the re-introduction issue. This document should be presented to the MOP6.

4) Interactions between fisheries and cetaceans

The Secretariat provided the Bureau with an overview of the progress made in the implementation of the project on mitigating interactions between endangered marine species and fishing activities implemented jointly by ACCOBAMS and GFCM with the financial support of the MAVA Foundation.

Decision: The Bureau invited the Secretariat to further collaborate with the Scientific Committee in assisting the Parties to address the depredation by cetaceans in the fishing gear, in accordance with the objectives of ACCOBAMS.

The Secretariat informed the Bureau Members about an official document recently issued by the European Commission on the revision of the EU legislation on cetacean bycatch. This proposal aims at ensuring, inter alia, that bycatches of marine mammals “do not exceed levels provided for in Union legislation and international agreements” (Art. 4, para. 1, b).

Decisions:

The Bureau requested the Secretariat to :

- Send a specific letter to DG Mare on this issue,
- Inform on this issue other relevant Organizations such as CMS Family, GFCM, UNEP/MAP and BSC,
- Inform on this issue ACCOBAMS Parties which are EU Members

5) Anthropogenic noise

The Secretariat presented the progress made on this issue since MOP5, especially the international and regional cooperation developed as well as the results of the project “Overview of the noise hotspots in the ACCOBAMS area”.

Decisions:

The Bureau approved the recommendations of the Scientific Committee to:

- (a) consider additional information on the Mediterranean,
 - (b) cover the other sub-regions of the ACCOBAMS area (the Black Sea and the contiguous ACCOBAMS Atlantic area).
- It recommended that (i) the results of this study will not be presented at MOP6 as a draft Resolution to be considered for adoption by the Contracting Parties but the Parties will be invited to take note of this study and (ii) if the study would have to be made public before its review by MOP6, a disclaimer specifying that this document is not yet endorsed by ACCOBAMS be included.

The Bureau requested the Secretariat to prepare a project concept on this matter.

6) Marine Mammals Observers in the ACCOBAMS area

Decisions:

The Bureau Members confirmed the importance of the issue and agreed with that there is a need: (i) of a standardized reporting protocol, (ii) of an inventory of national MMOs trainings in the ACCOBAMS area, and of the national legislation (if any) on this issue, and (iii) of a framework document on this issue, to be submitted to the MOP6, in order to assist Parties to implement relevant training for MMOs, in full compliance with ACCOBAMS.

invited the Secretariat to also prepare a tool ensuring high qualification for such training courses (for example a high quality label for training centers, including relevant Terms of Reference and requirements).

ACCOBAMS could organize courses (may be linked with the ACCOBAMS teaching module) with certificate or deliver certification in existing training centers. The Secretariat will work with the Scientific Committee on the issue. This issue will be addressed during the next Scientific Committee and a framework document will be submitted to the next MOP.

7) Species Conservation and Management Plans

Decision: The Bureau Members requested the Secretariat to liaise with the Black Sea Commission Permanent Secretariat to identify the most appropriate option to push forward with the adoption of the Conservation Plan by the Black Sea Commission. The relevant Scientific Committee Members shall be involved as appropriate.

8) Cetaceans strandings

The Secretariat informed the Meeting that it was contacted by the Spanish Focal Point for additional financial support to MEDACES.

Decisions:

The Bureau Members requested the Secretariat to send a letter to the Spanish Focal Point, asking for the budget breakdown of MEDACES. An evaluation will be requested to the Scientific Committee regarding the functioning of the current database and its utility for ACCOBAMS.

The Bureau invited the Secretariat to undertake, before the next MOP, a review of the functioning of MEDACES taking into account the recommendations of the Scientific Committee. It stressed that the review should cover also the use of the financial support provided by ACCOBAMS and RAC/SPA, as well as the cost-effectiveness of MEDACES.

9) Capacity building

The Secretariat informed the bureau that the CSMC3 was organized in Jounieh (Lebanon) from 21 to 23 October 2014 with the participation of scientists from seven South Mediterranean Countries as well as Scientists from other Parties to ACCOBAMS and representatives of the relevant regional organizations

Decisions:

The Bureau Members commended the scientific work carried out in South Mediterranean Countries. They underlined the importance of the CSMC and its role in stimulating the development of conservation actions and promoting the implementation of the ACCOBAMS Agreement.

They encouraged the Scientific Committee to facilitate and support the publication of data in peer-reviewed papers.

10) New areas of conservation of cetacean habitats

The Executive Secretary and the Chair of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee informed the Bureau Members on the efforts undertaken by the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Area Task Force in developing “Important Marine Mammal Areas”, in particular through the organization of a workshop for the Mediterranean region, and on the potential links with the current effort undertaken by ACCOBAMS for identifying new areas of importance for cetaceans (Critical Cetacean Habitats - CCH).

Decisions:

Considering that IMMAs are not included in the current ACCOBAMS work program but they represent an added value as they address the management aspects related to the conservation of Cetacean Critical Habitats, the Bureau agreed that ACCOBAMS contributes to this initiative and supports the workshop to be organized in 2016, highlighting the following points:

(i) the work already done under ACCOBAMS on the CCH will have to be taken into consideration by the workshop when identifying IMMAs;

(ii) the participation of scientists from South and East Mediterranean Parties in the workshop should be ensured in order to have geographically balanced participation of experts, in particular for the areas where information on cetaceans is rare

ANNEX VII

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

ANNEX VII - REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT
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(Since the Fifth Meeting of the Parties)

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MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT (MA)

MA 1	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION		
MA 1 a	Establish regular communication		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ¹
1- Establish regular platform of communication to inform all relevant subjects about ongoing activities, cooperation possibilities, project call of proposals and other relevant information	Active e-mailing list (regular exchange of information)	In 2015, the ACCOBAMS communication database was integrated in a more global tool: the Network on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (NETCCOBAMS: http://www.netccobams.com). The network is under development in collaboration with WWF France and GIS 3M. Workshop organised during the 2015 ECS Conference (21 March 2015, Malta).	Partially Done Please refer to the documents: ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf15
2- Maintain and regularly update ACCOBAMS database , including information about all cetacean conservation related scientists and experts operating in the region	New and updated information filled into ACCOBAMS database		ACCOBAMS-ECS-WK Common Tools/2015/Report
3- Continue organising regional workshops with representatives of Parties and introducing participation of representatives of Scientific Committee	Regional workshops organised in 2015	These workshops, were held in Menton (France) from 13 to 17 April 2015	Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-RW3/2015/Report
4- Continue organising biennial conferences for the Southern Mediterranean countries	Biennial conferences organised in 2014	3rd Biennial Conference on Cetacean Conservation in South Mediterranean Countries organised in Jounieh (Lebanon) from 21 to 23 October 2014, in cooperation with CNRS (Lebanon), the RAC/SPA -MAP-UNEP, and the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation.	Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-CSMC3/2014/Report
5- Regularly update ACCOBAMS web-site , including FINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and accurate information available on the web-site • FINS regularly published 	Web-site regularly updated FINS 6(1) published in February 2014 FINS 6(2) published in December 2015 Special Edition of FINS for ACCOBAMS 20 th Anniversary in November 2016	Done ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf15

¹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

MA 2	INVOLVEMENT OF ALL KEY STAKEHOLDERS		
MA 2 a	Strengthen involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.2/ 2.30 / 3.8 / 4.8/ 4.20			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ²
<p>1- Strengthen existing partnerships: GFCM, IMO, CMS and relevant CMS agreements such as ASCOBANS, the Barcelona Convention, RAC/SPA, the Black Sea Commission, IWC, EU Biodiversity Strategy, marine strategies in the ACCOBAMS area (MSFD³), CBD Strategy, SAP BIO, ECS, international, regional and local NGOs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the work of relevant GFCM bodies/working groups Joint project with GFCM on by-catch Joint activities with ECS Regular meetings of relevant Secretariats Cetacean conservation activities included in all relevant regional strategic documents Regular communication/meetings with representatives of the relevant international NGOs 	<p>Participation in the relevant institutional meetings and workshops of the GFCM, including the High-level Conference towards enhanced Cooperation on Black Sea Fisheries and Aquaculture (Bucharest, Romania, 24-25 October 2016)</p> <p>Implementation of the ACCOBAMS/GFCM project on mitigating interactions between endangered marine species and fishing activities ongoing</p> <p>Development of a Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity among ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN</p>	<p>Done / Ongoing</p> <p>Please refer to the documents</p> <p>ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf08</p> <p>ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf17</p>
<p>2- Establish new partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accession of all riparian states to the Agreement, Establish formal partnership with the EC jointly with ASCOBANS and as feasible with assistance from CMS, Establish formal partnership with NATO – NURC, OGP, ICES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All riparian states are Parties to ACCOBAMS Participation in the relevant fora and Meetings Contribution to the determination and monitoring of the GES (MSFD) and favourable conservation status (HD) 	<p>As September 2016, 23 Countries are Parties to ACCOBAMS⁴</p> <p>Presentation of ACCOBAMS to the EC DG ENV (M. Calleja Crespo) organised in June 2016 with the support of the CMS Executive Secretary</p> <p>ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative designed in order to contribute to the MSFD and EcAp processes</p> <p>ACCOBAMS is leading the Ecosystem Approach process (ECAP) of the Barcelona Convention, related to the Ecological Objective (EO) 11 on Energy including underwater noise</p>	<p>Done / Ongoing</p> <p>Please refer to the document</p> <p>ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc25</p>

² Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

³ EC Marine Strategy Framework Directive

⁴ Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine

		Overview of the implementation of MSFD (regarding cetaceans) in the ACCOBAMS area and recommendations	
3- Organise a workshop of Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforcement of synergy between Partners • Harmonisation of activities 	Organised back to back with the Ninth meeting of the Scientific Committee in April 2014	Done

MA 3	ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING, IN PARTICULARLY FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES			
MA 3 a	New funding possibilities			
Relevant Resolutions: 1.7/ 3.6/ 5.16/5.5				
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁵	
1- Appoint one projects preparation/ implementation assistance and fundraising officer in the Secretariat	Project and fundraising officer as a member of the Secretariat staff	Project and fundraising officer appointed on 1 st January 2014	Done	
2- Analyse available funding possibilities in the region (EU funds, private funds etc.) and develop a funding strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of available funding possibilities in the region • Funding Strategy in particular for joint projects 	Document on “Overview of available funding possibilities in the region” available	Partially done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf10	
3- Regularly inform Parties about project call of proposals and other funding possibilities	Information frequently sent via e-mailing list	Information on funding opportunities circulated by email to Focal Points, Members of the Scientific Committee and Partners	Partially done	
4 - Evaluate projects submitted for funding under the Supplementary Conservation Fund	Project proposals selected for implementation with support from ACCOBAMS	3 projects selected for funding under the SCF during the 2016 ACCOBAMS Call for proposals	Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf04	
5- Encourage development of multilateral/ transboundary projects	Project proposals prepared with assistance of ACCOBAMS bodies	<p>ACCOBAMS Partners provided with guidance and support from the Secretariat for developing project proposals</p> <p>Letters of support for project proposals that could contribute to the achievements of the ACCOBAMS objectives and priorities provided by the Secretariat</p> <p>Multi-partner project proposals developed by the Secretariat or in collaboration with the Secretariat</p> <p>CMS Champion programme</p>	Done	

⁵ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

MA 4	IMPLEMENTATION OF AND COMPLIANCE WITH ACCOBAMS		
MA 4 a	Improve the level of implementation of and compliance with ACCOBAMS resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.4			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁶
1- Evaluate work programmes implementation progress and level of resolutions implementation by Parties as a basis for new triennial work programme planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of work programme Reports on implementation by Parties Reports on implementation of the Resolutions 	First Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Committee was convened in Monaco on Wednesday 2nd March 2016	Ongoing
2- Propose remedy actions in cases of non-compliance and infringements	Proposal of remedy actions	3 submissions received by ACCOBAMS Partners	Ongoing

MA 5	ACCOBAMS EXTENSION AREA		
MA 5 a	Ensure implementation of the ACCOBAMS's cetacean conservation standards in the adjacent areas		
Relevant Resolutions: A/4.1			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Enforce ratification by Parties of the existing Amendment for geographical extension to the Atlantic	Amendment has entered into force	<p>Six Parties have deposited their acceptance of the amendments</p> <p>Explanatory note on the amendment provided to the Depositary</p>	Ongoing Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc08
2- Analyse added value of extension to the adjacent areas, particularly of the Red Sea extension	Proposal of further actions regarding extension of the Agreement	Draft Resolution to strengthen co-operation with States bordering the Red Sea in order to foster synergies in matters and activities of common interest, in particular as regards scientific and technical cooperation, as well as capacity building	Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf16

⁶ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CONSERVATION ACTIONS (CA)

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 a	Cetacean population estimates and distribution		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁷
1- Undertake a comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea using aerial surveys where possible	Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the different parts of the Mediterranean Sea based on results of the survey	Progresses in the development and fundraising of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative	Partially done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf13
2- Undertake comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Black Sea	Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the Black Sea based on results of the survey	Progresses in the development and fundraising of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative	Partially done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf13
3- Undertake regional comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans	Study reports of distribution and abundance of cetaceans	Some regional surveys undertaken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the Strait of Sicily - Close to the Nile Delta (with the support of ACCOBAMS and RAC/SPA) 	Partially done
4- Undertake a retrospective analysis of the literature and on results of the mentioned comprehensive surveys	Lists and maps of critical habitats by species (including migration routes, biological corridors, breeding/calving and feeding areas)	Review of the survey effort in the Mediterranean and gap analysis undertaken by the Duke University with the participation of scientists from the ACCOBAMS Area	Partially done

⁷ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 b	Population Structure		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.11			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁸
1- Implement population structure priorities including region-wide and local genetic studies , based on knowledge gap analysis performed in 2013, allowing to identify isolated populations (Greek waters, killer whales in Gibraltar, etc.)	Identification of isolated populations		Not Done

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 c	Monitoring cetaceans status		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.22/ 3.19			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Monitor mortality trends and cases of animals injured through human activities (e.g. ship strikes), using existing tools (such as MEDACES), at least on triennial basis	Mortality trend reports	MEDACES report presented during the SC10 Review of the functioning of MEDACES, as requested by the BU10	Partially Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf27
2- Assess IUCN threat status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and update it regularly, and more specifically gather information to assess the Data Deficient species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threat assessment reports Updates available on the IUCN and, ACCOBAMS websites 	Assessment of IUCN Conservation Status of Cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area presented during SC10	Done / Ongoing Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-SC9/2014/Doc11
3- Prepare Red Books of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Region for Mediterranean and Black Seas and communicate with European Union, including Killer whales in the cetaceans of the Mediterranean Sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Books of cetaceans Report on the state of cetaceans 		Not Done

⁸ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 a	Interaction with fisheries		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.13/ 2.21/ 2.25/ 3.13/ 4.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁹
1- Assess cetaceans bycatch and depredation impacts on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and propose mitigation measures focusing on pilot areas through a joint GFCM/ACCOBAMS project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data on cetacean bycatch in pilot areas the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea and mitigation measures Contribution to GFCM Task 1 Contribution to the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy and MSFD 	<p>ACCOBAMS/GFCM project on mitigating interactions between endangered marine species and fishing activities through pilot actions is ongoing</p> <p>Contribution to the revision of the EU legislation on by-catch through information provided to the FP from EU Member States and to the EC on the relevant ACCOBAMS provisions</p>	<p>Partially done</p> <p>Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf12</p>

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 b	Anthropogenic noise		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.16 / 3.10/ 4.17/ 5.15			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Identify anthropogenic noise /cetaceans interactions hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area	Overview of noise hot spots	Overview of the noise hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area – Part I, Mediterranean Sea	<p>Partially done</p> <p>Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc 28</p>
2- Monitor all activities in the region including noise component	Overview(s) of approved activities including noise component	<p>A basin-wide strategy for underwater noise monitoring in the Mediterranean, in the framework of the EcAP process of the Barcelona Convention</p> <p>Implementation of a noise demonstrator in the ACCOBAMS area</p>	<p>Partially done</p> <p>Please refer to the documents ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc 27 ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc 29</p>

⁹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities, developed	ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf 22
3- Map and develop a monitoring of sea ambient noise, particularly in critical habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map of sea ambient noise Monitoring protocol(s) 		Not Done
4- Update a guide for Parties to use mitigation measures	Updated guide to use mitigation measures	Guide updated, taking into account the current work on MMO issue	Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc 30

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 c	Ship strikes		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.11			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ¹⁰
1- Identify high risk areas for ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of high risk areas for ship strikes New shape file in the ACCOBAMS interactive platform 		Ongoing by the SC
2- Promote use of mitigation measures , particularly REPCET system to shipping companies in the region	Ships/boats in areas inhabiting large whales using the REPCET or other systems	ACCOBAMS Secretariat supported and participated in the annual training course for professional and student ship crews at the French National Superior School of Shipping of Marseille (March 2014, 2015,2016)	Partially Done
3- Develop a protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities	Protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities		

¹⁰ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 d	Cetacean watching		
Relevant Resolutions: 3.23/ 4.7/ 5.10			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ¹¹
1- Promote use of a ACCOBAMS / Pelagos “High quality whale watching” certificate including organisation of training for operators	All states with intensive cetacean watching use labelling	Registration at the WIPO of the "High Quality Whale Watching®" Logo and regulations governing its use "High Quality Whale Watching®" implemented in France and in Monaco	Ongoing
2- Prepare a framework document regarding national rules on the implementation of a “High quality whale watching” certificate	Framework document regarding national rules on the implementation of a “High quality whale watching” certificate	A procedure for the for the public/ private implementation of the HQWW® Certificate was prepared	Partially done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf28
3- Assess the whale watching activities and critical areas for these activities in the Mediterranean Sea	Map of areas of concern due to whale watching activities.	Assessment of whale watching activities in the Strait of Gibraltar carried out in collaboration with IUCN	Partially done Please refer to the document MOP6/2016/Inf11
4- Prepare guidelines for monitoring cetacean watching development in the Agreement Area and guidelines to develop national databases to store the information	Guidelines for monitoring cetacean watching development in the Agreement Area Guidelines to develop national databases to store the information	Guidelines for monitoring programs aimed at maximizing the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts of whale watching activities on individual cetaceans and on populations	Partially Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Res21
5- Prepare procedures and forms on data collection from cetacean watching vessels for the Agreement Area	Procedures and forms on data collection for cetacean watching vessels for the Agreement Area	Proposed common procedure (data collection system) for whale watching vessels to be implemented in the ACCOBAMS Area	Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Res21

¹¹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 e	Marine debris		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.8			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ¹²
1- Assess the impact of ghost nets on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area: undertake a joint project with MedPOL and GFCM	Assessment of ghost nets impacts on cetaceans	Exchanges occurred with MEDPOL (UNEP/MAP) on the way of collaborating for developing a regional program on ghost nets ACCOBAMS is part of Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter in the Mediterranean	Partially Done
2- Assess the impact of plastic bags , microplastic and other plastic materials ingestion on cetaceans in cooperation with existing initiatives, such as IWC : bibliographic synthesis and Scientific Committee recommendation	Assessment of plastic materials impacts on cetaceans by providing bibliographic synthesis	Secretariat collaborated with the Prince Albert II Foundation who hold an international workshop in Monaco, on 10-11 March 2015 "Plastics in the Mediterranean. Beyond observations, which solutions"	Partially Done

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 f	Climate change		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Assess the impact of climate change : bibliographic synthesis	Bibliographic synthesis	A workshop to address the climate change issues and their impacts on the marine biodiversity, in particular on the cetaceans, in the Black and the Mediterranean Seas was organized in Monaco on 11th June 201	Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-WCC/2014/Doc02

¹² Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 g	Species conservation plans		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.8/ 1.12/ 3.7/ 3.11/ 4.6/ 4.13/5.12/ 5.13/ 5.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ¹³
1- Revise regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans , in cooperation with relevant stakeholders	Revised regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans	The ACCOBAMS Secretariat, in collaboration with the Black Sea Commission Permanent Secretariat, undertook the revision of the existing Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans	Partially Done / Ongoing Please refer to the document MOP6/2016/Doc12
2- Prepare /Adopt Conservation Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuvier's beaked whales, • Fin whale, • Bottlenose dolphin • Killer whales • Long finned pilot whales 	Conservation Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuvier's beaked whales, • Fin whale, • Bottlenose dolphin • Killer whales • Long finned pilot whales 	RAC/SPA assisted the ACCOBAMS Secretariat in the revision of the Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea together with the identification of priorities for the period 2016-2020. It was adopted at the UNEP/MAP COP in February 2016 The ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee prepared a proposal to include the Mediterranean Cuvier's beaked whale (<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>) in Appendix 1 of CMS (granting to this species the endangered status). The proposal was adopted at the CMS COP 11 in November 2014	Partially Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc13 ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf26
3- Adopt / implement/ revise if necessary National Action Plans	Implementation of National Action Plans in most of the ACCOBAMS Parties	The ACCOBAMS Secretariat is collaborating with the RAC/SPA for supporting the Egyptian Environment Affairs Agency (EEAA) to implement the National Action Plan for the conservation of marine mammals in Egypt	Partially Done

¹³ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 h	Captivity related issues		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ¹⁴
1- Assess and inventory specimens of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity	Assessment of BS bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity	In the framework of the revision of the existing Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans, an inventory of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins kept in captivity was undertaken Draft CITES Resolution prepared by ACCOBAMS on the establishment of individual identification system(s) of cetaceans kept in captivity presented by Ukraine at CITES COP in September 2016	Done Please refer to the documents ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc12 ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf20

CA 3	ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT CETACEANS		
CA 3 a	Public awareness		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.23			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Introduce ACCOBAMS cetaceans day and promote annual celebration	ACCOBAMS cetaceans day regularly celebrated in the area	ACCOBAMS Cetacean Day celebrated in 2015 with a special Partners photo exhibition in Monaco ACCOBAMS Cetacean Day celebrated in 2016 in Monaco with the Yacht Club at the occasion of the "Sea Day" In 2015 and 2016 ACCOBAMS Partners celebrated ACCOBAMS Cetacean Day back to back with relevant events happening in respective countries.	Done/Ongoing Please refer to document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf15
2- Create and disseminate communication tools such as educational kit	Communication tools distributed to relevant subjects	Communication tools developed on the Agreement and on key issues (noise, interactions with fisheries, whale watching);	Done/Ongoing Please refer to document

¹⁴ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		Development of specific communication tools for kids	ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf15
3- Organise public awareness related survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey format and instructions Survey report 		Not Done

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 a	Functional stranding networks and responses to emergency situation		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.10/ 3.25/ 4.16			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ¹⁵
1- Undertake systematic trainings on necropsies , live strandings and response to emergency situation in the ACCOBAMS region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained participants from all Parties with identified needs Live stranding training in collaboration with Pelagos in 2014 	Workshop on cetacean live stranding organized in Monaco on 29-30 October 2014, in collaboration with the Pelagos Secretariat	Partially Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS- Pelagos-WLS/2014/Doc25
2- Establish (sub)regional mailing lists of participants in the stranding networks to facilitate exchange of information, in particularly in the South Mediterranean region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification and synthesis of subregional mailing lists Regularly exchanged information on stranding events in particular on the occasion of conference biennial 	Recommendation from the CSMC3	Partially Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-CSMC3/2014/Report
3- Establish a regional Emergency Task Force as advise to Parties and develop an operational protocol	Operational regional Emergency Task Force nominated		Not Done

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 b	Capacity to use cetaceans photo id and undertake aerial surveys		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.28/ 5.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Undertake trainings on the use of photo-id	Trained experts from all Parties with identified needs	A full day workshop on photo-identification techniques for cetaceans was organised during CSMC3	Done Please refer to the document

¹⁵ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

			ACCOBAMS-CSMC3/2014/Report
2- Promote the use of INTERCET	Use of INTERCET	Half-day training to the use of Intercet organized during the ECS Conference (21 March 2015, Malta)	Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-ECS-WK Common Tools/2015/Report

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 c	Capacity building for other cetacean conservation issues		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status¹⁶
1- Identify protected areas managers from the areas containing cetacean critical habitat and facilitate exchanges between areas containing cetacean critical habitats in the similar areas using good management practices (organising visits for example)	Cetacean conservation is taken into account at the regional level in the network of MPAs	Support of the Mediterranean MPA Forum from 28 November to 1 December in Tangier, Morocco	Partially Done
2- Enable practice of cetacean conservation staff on relevant issues in the ACCOBAMS Secretariat	Trained cetacean conservation staff from the Parties		Not Done

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 d	Cetacean conservation and postgraduate programmes		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status¹⁷
1- Introduce cetacean conservation modules in the existing postgraduate programmes	Post-graduate programmes with included cetacean conservation modules	Translation of courses in English	Done / Ongoing

¹⁶ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

¹⁷ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		Implementation in Malta University in March 2015.	
		Implementation in Black Sea organised and postponed to 2017	

CA 5	ENHANCE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS CRITICAL HABITATS		
CA 5 a	Protected areas for cetaceans		
Relevant Resolutions: 3.22/ 4.15			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ¹⁸
1- Update regularly a list of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS region	Lists of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans available on the ACCOBAMS web-site	Workshop on “the effectiveness of protected areas within critical habitats for cetaceans” in Gammarth, Tunisia, on 8-12 June 2015 List of Marine Areas of protection in the ACCOBAMS area, including Cetacean Habitats, partially reviewed	Partially Done Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-WKMPA/2015/Doc06
2- Develop /Disseminate tools for adequate management of areas containing critical habitat, including evaluation of management effectiveness and using examples of best practice	Guidelines on adequate management of areas containing critical habitats	Translation in French of the cetacean manual for MPAs managers prepared jointly with MedPAN and RAC/SPA Revision of Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of Marine Protected Areas for Cetaceans Handbook on the evaluation of the effectiveness of place-based conservation for cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area	Done Please refer to the documents ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc33 ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc35
3- Evaluate effectiveness of protected areas containing critical habitats for cetaceans using existing initiatives (such as MedPAN endeavours in that context)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of effectiveness of protected areas for cetaceans, fore mostly their contribution to achievement/ maintenance of favourable conservation status Joint workshop with Pelagos 	Evaluation of effectiveness postponed in 2017/2018 Threat based management approach ongoing	Not Done ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc34

¹⁸ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

ANNEX
Meetings attended by the Secretariat in 2014-2016 (up to September 2016)

- RAMOGE - Working group on ICZM (Monaco, 2 February 2014);
- GFCM working group on Marine Protected Areas (Bar, Montenegro, 3 February 2014);
- UNEP/MAP - Integrated Correspondence Groups of GES and Targets Meeting (Athens, Greece, 17-19 February 2014);
- Healthy Oceans – Productive Ecosystems : a European conference for the marine environment (Brussels, Belgium, 3-4 March 2014);
- 16th Session of the GFCM Advisory Committee (St Julian, Malta, 17-20 March 2014);
- 28th Annual Conference of the [European Cetacean Society](#) (Liege, Belgium, 21-23 March 2014);
- Training course 2014 Shipping and Cetaceans – Souffleurs d’Ecume (Marseilles, France, 28 March 2014);
- CBD - Mediterranean Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (Malaga, Spain, 7-11 April 2014);
- 65th Meeting of the IWC Scientific Committee (Bled, Slovenia, 12-24 May 2014);
- 38th Session of the GFCM (Rome, Italy, 19 - 24 May 2014);
- MedPAN – MAPMED and MPA Status Report Steering Committee meeting (Marseille, France, 5-6 June 2014);
- 4rd Meeting of the MedPAN Advisory Committee (Marseille, France, 13 June 2014);
- 18th Meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice (Montreal, Canada, 23-28 June 2014);
- 18th Meeting of the CMS Scientific Council (Bonn, Germany, 1-3 July 2014);
- IWC Conservation Committee (Bled, Slovenia, 12 September 2014);
- RAMOGE - Working group on ICZM (Monaco, 19 September 2014);
- Natura 2000 Sectorial Workshops (Malta, 26 September 2014);
- 21st ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Meeting (Gothenburg, Sweden, 29 September – 1 October 2014);
- UNEP/MAP - 4th Meeting of the EcAp Coordination Group (Athens, Greece, 9-10 October 2014);
- 11th Conference of the Parties to CMS (Quito, Ecuador, 4-9 November 2014);
- 3rd International Conference on Marine Mammals Protected Areas (ICMMPA) (Grande Adelaide, Australia, 9-11 November 2014);
- IUCN World Parks Congress (Sydney, Australia, 12-19 November 2014);
- 30th Regular Meeting of the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (Istanbul, Turkey, 20th November 2014);
- 7th Meeting of the Pelagos Sanctuary Technical and Scientific Committee (Genoa, Italy, 27-28 November 2014);

- 34th Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Strasbourg, France, 2-5 December 2014).
- SOS Grand Bleu - Conference on the impact of underwater noise on cetaceans (Saint Jean Cap Ferrat, France, 6 February 2015);
- RAMOGE - Working group on ICZM (Monaco, 11 February 2015);
- FAO - Workshop "ABNJ" on Linking Global and Regional Levels in the Management of Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (Rome, Italy, 17-20 February 2015);
- Conference "Plastic Mediterranean: Beyond the observation, what solutions? (Monaco, 10-11 March 2015);
- 29th Annual Conference of the European Cetacean Society (Malta, 21-25 March 2015);
- 17th Session of the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee (Rome, Italy, 24-27 March 2015);
- Training course 2015 Shipping and Cetaceans – Souffleurs d'Ecume (Marseilles, France, 27 March 2015);
- UNEP/MAP – Meeting of the EcAp Integrated Monitoring Correspondence Group (Integrated CORMON) (Athens, Greece, 30 March – 1st April 2015);
- UNEP/MAP/RAC-SPA - Ad hoc meeting for the elaboration of the 'Roadmap towards a comprehensive, ecologically representative, effectively connected and efficiently managed network of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas by 2020' (Tunis, Tunisia, 27-28 April 2015);
- Ocean Noise 2015 (Barcelona, Spain, 11-15 May 2015);
- IWC Scientific Committee (San Diego, USA, 22 May – 3 June 2015);
- UNEP/MAP – 12th Meeting of RAC/SPA Focal Points (Athens, Greece, 25-29 May 2015);
- UNEP/MAP - Meeting of the MED POL Focal Points (Malta, 16-19 June 2015);
- IUCN - Mediterranean Biodiversity Platform – MBP 2nd Think-tank Meeting (Malaga, Spain, 2 July 2015);
- UNEP/MAP – 5th Meeting of the EcAp Coordination Group (Roma, Italy, 14-15 September 2015);
- RAMOGE - Working group on ICZM (Monaco, 21 September 2015);
- ASCOBANS – 22nd Advisory Committee (LaHaye, Netherlands, 29 Sep.-1 Oct. 2015);
- 8th Meeting of the EU Technical Group on Underwater Noise (Copenhagen, Denmark, 30th September – 1st October 2015);
- 6th edition of the International Fisheries and Aquaculture Salon in Algeria (Oran, Algeria, 1-4 October 2015); SOS Grand Bleu - Conference on cetacean strandings (Saint Jean Cap Ferrat, France, 9 October 2015);
- 8th Scientific and Technical Committee of Pelagos Sanctuary (Genova, Italy, 14 October 2015);
- UNEP/MAP - Meeting of the MAP Focal Points (Athens, Greece, 13-16 October 2015);
- Third Meeting of the CMS Strategic Plan Working Group (Bonn, Germany, 12-13 September 2015);
- CMS – 44th Standing Committee Meeting (Bonn, Germany, 14-15 October 2015).

- UNEP / MAP - 19th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols (Athens, Greece, 9-12 February 2016)
- GFCM Regional Conference “ Building a future for sustainable small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea” (Algiers, Algeria, 7-9 March 2016)
- ECS – 30th Conference and workshops (Madeira, Portugal, 12-18 March 2016)
- GFCM Eighteenth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (Nicosia, Cyprus, 21-23 March 2016)
- Training course 2015 Shipping and Cetaceans – Souffleurs d’Ecume (Marseilles, France, 2(March 2016)
- DOALOS Preparatory Committee established by General Assembly resolution 69/292 “Development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction” -First session (New York, 28 March-8 April 2016)
- CMS Daughter Agreements and their management of bycatch – a workshop to explore synergies (22-23 April 2016)
- Mediterranean gap analysis workshop (Nice, France -18, 20 May 2016)
- GFCM Fortieth Session of the Commission (St Julian’s, Malta, 30 May–3 June 2016)
- EU Technical Group on Underwater Noise (EU TG-NOISE) Thematic Workshop: Existing and future indicators for underwater noise (Hamburg, 7- 8th June 2016)
- MedPAN Advisory Committee (Marseille, France, 13 July 2016)
- ASCOBANS 8th Meeting of the Parties (Finland, 30 August - 1 September 2016)
- UNEP/MAP Roundtable “Enhancing Regional Coordination on Marine Litter in the Mediterranean” (Athens, Greece, 6 September 2016)
- IUCN - Congrès mondial de la nature de l’UICN 2016 (Hawaii, 1_10 September 2016)
- GFCM Intersessional meeting of the Commission on the mid-term strategy (Rome, Italy, 22-23 September 2016)

ANNEX VIII

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ANNEX VIII - REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(Since the Fifth Meeting of the Parties)

During the triennium 2014-2016, the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee was composed by:

- 3 experts nominated by CIESM: Dani KEREM, Simone PANIGADA and Ayaka Amaha OZTURK
- 3 experts nominated by IUCN : Renaud DE STEPHANIS, Ibrahim BEN AMER and Léa DAVID
- 1 expert nominated by IWC: Greg DONOVAN
- 1 expert nominated by ECS : Tilen GENOV
- 1 expert nominated by CMS : William F. PERRIN and then Giuseppe NOTARBARTOLO DI SCIARA
- 4 Regional Representatives : Marina SEQUEIRA, Mehdi AISSI, Vasilios PETROPOULOS and Konstantin MIHAYLOV

The new Scientific Committee at its 1^o meeting elected:

- A Chair – Simone Panigada
- A Vice-Chair – Renaud de Stephanis
- Four Task Managers (selected according to ACCOBAMS work plan and conservation priorities)

Each Task Manager is supported by a group of colleagues and mainly operates by email.

The nominated Task Managers for the current triennium (2014-2016) are:

- Cetacean population estimates (including ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative): Simone Panigada
- Interaction with fisheries: Renaud de Stephanis
- Conservation of cetaceans critical habitats: Léa David
- Capacity Building (including public awareness and communication): Ayaka Amaha Oztürk.

Three Scientific Committee Meetings were held during this triennium:

- The 9th Scientific Committee Meeting (Monaco, 15-17 April 2014)
- The 1st Operational Meeting of the Scientific Committee (Monaco, 18th December 2014)
- The 10th Scientific Committee Meeting (Nice, 20-22 October 2015)

During the 10th Scientific Committee Meeting, 12 Recommendations have been approved by the Members. These Recommendations are presented in [Annex 1](#).

This document also presents in [Annex 2](#) a list of meeting where the Chair of the Scientific Committee or other members have participated, presenting and discussing issues related to the ACCOBAMS work-plan.

In several occasions the SC has envisaged collaborations and synergies to strengthen the conservation and mitigation effort at the ACCOBAMS level.

MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT (MA)

MA 1	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION		
MA 1 a	Establish regular communication		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ¹⁹
1- Establish regular platform of communication to inform all relevant subjects about ongoing activities, cooperation possibilities, project call of proposals and other relevant information	Active e-mailing list (regular exchange of information)		Not relevant for the SC
2- Maintain and regularly update ACCOBAMS database , including information about all cetacean conservation related scientists and experts operating in the region	New and updated information filled into ACCOBAMS database		Not relevant for the SC
3- Continue organising regional workshops with representatives of Parties and introducing participation of representatives of Scientific Committee	Regional workshops organised in 2015		Not relevant for the SC
4- Continue organising biennial conferences for the Southern Mediterranean countries	Biennial conferences organised in 2014		Not relevant for the SC
5- Regularly update ACCOBAMS web-site , including FINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and accurate information available on the web-site • FINS regularly published 		Not relevant for the SC

¹⁹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

MA 2	INVOLVEMENT OF ALL KEY STAKEHOLDERS		
MA 2 a	Strengthen involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.2/ 2.30 / 3.8 / 4.8/ 4.20			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ²⁰
<p>1- Strengthen existing partnerships: GFCM, IMO, CMS and relevant CMS agreements such as ASCOBANS, the Barcelona Convention, RAC/SPA, the Black Sea Commission, IWC, EU Biodiversity Strategy, marine strategies in the ACCOBAMS area (MSFD²¹), CBD Strategy, SAP BIO, ECS, international, regional and local NGOs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the work of relevant GFCM bodies/working groups • Joint project with GFCM on by-catch • Joint activities with ECS • Regular meetings of relevant Secretariats • Cetacean conservation activities included in all relevant regional strategic documents • Regular communication/meetings with representatives of the relevant international NGOs 		Partially done, ongoing
<p>2- Establish new partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accession of all riparian states to the Agreement, • Establish formal partnership with the EC jointly with ASCOBANS and as feasible with assistance from CMS, • Establish formal partnership with NATO – NURC, OGP, ICES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All riparian states are Parties to ACCOBAMS • Participation in the relevant fora and Meetings • Contribution to the determination and monitoring of the GES (MSFD) and favourable conservation status (HD) 		

²⁰ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

²¹ EC Marine Strategy Framework Directive

3- Organise a workshop of Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforcement of synergy between Partners • Harmonisation of activities 		Not relevant for the SC
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MA 3	ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING, IN PARTICULARLY FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES		
MA 3 a	New funding possibilities		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.7/ 3.6/ 5.16/5.5			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ²²
1- Appoint one projects preparation/implementation assistance and fundraising officer in the Secretariat	Project and fundraising officer as a member of the Secretariat staff		Not relevant for the SC
2- Analyse available funding possibilities in the region (EU funds, private funds etc.) and develop a funding strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of available funding possibilities in the region • Funding Strategy in particular for joint projects 		Not relevant for the SC
3- Regularly inform Parties about project call of proposals and other funding possibilities	Information frequently sent via e-mailing list		Not relevant for the SC
4 - Evaluate projects submitted for funding under the Supplementary Conservation Fund	Project proposals selected for implementation with support from ACCOBAMS		Done Please refer to the document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf04
5- Encourage development of multilateral/transboundary projects	Project proposals prepared with assistance of ACCOBAMS bodies		

MA 4	IMPLEMENTATION OF AND COMPLIANCE WITH ACCOBAMS		
MA 4 a	Improve the level of implementation of and compliance with ACCOBAMS resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.4			

²² Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Evaluate work programmes implementation progress and level of resolutions implementation by Parties as a basis for new triennial work programme planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of work programme • Reports on implementation by Parties • Reports on implementation of the Resolutions 		Not relevant for the SC
2- Propose remedy actions in cases of non compliance and infringements	Proposal of remedy actions		Not relevant for the SC

MA 5	ACCOBAMS EXTENSION AREA		
MA 5 a	Ensure implementation of the ACCOBAMS's cetacean conservation standards in the adjacent areas		
Relevant Resolutions: A/4.1			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Enforce ratification by Parties of the existing Amendment for geographical extension to the Atlantic	Amendment has entered into force		Not relevant for the SC
2- Analyse added value of extension to the adjacent areas, particularly of the Red Sea extension	Proposal of further actions regarding extension of the Agreement		Done by SC Please refer to the document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf16

CONSERVATION ACTIONS (CA)

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 a	Cetacean population estimates and distribution		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ²³
1- Undertake a comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea using aerial surveys where possible	Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the different parts of the Mediterranean Sea based on results of the survey	Meetings of the steering committee ToR for project officer ToR for scientific coordinator Meetings with US Navy	Ongoing. Partially funded Please refer to the document • ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf13
2- Undertake a comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Black Sea	Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the Black Sea based on results of the survey	Same as above	
3- Undertake regional comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans	Study reports of distribution and abundance of cetaceans	Aerial survey in the Strait of Sicily funded by Italy Long-term project ongoing in several areas of the Med Pilot survey in Red Sea	Ongoing
4- Undertake a retrospective analysis of the literature and on results of the mentioned comprehensive surveys	Lists and maps of critical habitats by species (including migration routes, biological corridors, breeding/calving and feeding areas)	Workshop to identify IMMAs and CCH in the Med funded by Mava Foundation	Ongoing

²³ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 b	Population Structure		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.11			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ²⁴
1- Implement population structure priorities including region-wide and local genetic studies , based on knowledge gap analysis performed in 2013, allowing to identify isolated populations (Greek waters, killer whales in Gibraltar, etc.)	Identification of isolated populations	Contacts with existing working group to redefine ToR and membership	Partially done, ongoing

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 c	Monitoring cetaceans status		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.22/ 3.19			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Monitor mortality trends and cases of animals injured through human activities (e.g. ship strikes), using existing tools (such as MEDACES), at least on triennial basis	Mortality trend reports	Ship strikes are regularly monitored and reported on the IWC online database	Ongoing
2- Assess IUCN threat status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and update it regularly, and more specifically gather information to assess the Data Deficient species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threat assessment reports Updates available on the IUCN and, ACCOBAMS websites 	Effort is ongoing to gather more data on DD and not assessed species. Recommendations by the SC. New assessment planned after ASI	Ongoing, partially done Please refer to the document • ACCOBAMS-SC9/2014/Doc11
3- Prepare Red Books of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Region for Mediterranean and Black Seas and communicate with European Union, including Killer whales in the cetaceans of the Mediterranean Sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Books of cetaceans Report on the state of cetaceans 	Planned after ASI	Not done

²⁴ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 a	Interaction with fisheries		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.13/ 2.21/ 2.25/ 3.13/ 4.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ²⁵
1- Assess cetaceans bycatch and depredation impacts on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and propose mitigation measures focusing on pilot areas through a joint GFCM/ACCOBAMS project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data on cetacean bycatch in pilot areas the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea and mitigation measures Contribution to GFCM Task 1 Contribution to the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy and MSFD 	Contacts with relevant stakeholder established Contacts with IWC bycatch WG are ongoing to prepare a CMP on bycatch	Partially done, ongoing

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 b	Anthropogenic noise		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.16 / 3.10/ 4.17/ 5.15			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Identify anthropogenic noise /cetaceans interactions hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area	Overview of noise hot spots	Map of human activities generating noise and map of noise hotspots in ACCOBAMS interactive platform	Partially done
2- Monitor all activities in the region including noise component	Overview(s) of approved activities including noise component	Ongoing by JNWG	Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf25
3- Map and develop a monitoring of sea ambient noise, particularly in critical habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map of sea ambient noise Monitoring protocol(s) 		
4- Update a guide for Parties to use mitigation measures	Updated guide to use mitigation measures		

²⁵ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 c	Ship strikes		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.11			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ²⁶
1- Identify high risk areas for ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of high risk areas for ship strikes New shape file in the ACCOBAMS interactive platform 	Map of maritime traffic and map of high risk areas for ship strikes in the ACCOBAMS interactive platform (in September 2016) Ongoing effort with IWC to monitor ship strikes in the Med is ongoing	Partially done
2- Promote use of mitigation measures , particularly REPCET system to shipping companies in the region	Ships/boats in areas inhabiting large whales using the REPCET or other systems	Need to test the system with an adequate number of equipped ships	Not done
3- Develop a protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities	Protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities	Protocols are available from the University of Padua (Cetacean stranding Emergency Response Team, CERT) in cooperation with NOAA	Ongoing, partially done

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 d	Cetacean watching		
Relevant Resolutions: 3.23/ 4.7/ 5.10			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Promote use of a ACCOBAMS / Pelagos “High quality whale watching” certificate including organisation of training for operators	All states with intensive cetacean watching use labelling		Ongoing, partially done
2- Prepare a framework document regarding national rules on the implementation of a “High quality whale watching” certificate	Framework document regarding national rules on the implementation of a “High quality whale watching” certificate		

²⁶ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

3- Assess the whale watching activities and critical areas for these activities in the Mediterranean Sea	Map of areas of concern due to whale watching activities.	Map of areas of the activity in all countries of ACCOBAMS and areas of concern for cetaceans in ACCOBAMS interactive platform	Partially done
4- Prepare guidelines for monitoring cetacean watching development in the Agreement Area and guidelines to develop national databases to store the information	Guidelines for monitoring cetacean watching development in the Agreement Area Guidelines to develop national databases to store the information	Guidelines for monitoring programs aimed at maximizing the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts of whale watching activities on individual cetaceans and on populations	Partially Done by the WG Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Res21
5- Prepare procedures and forms on data collection from cetacean watching vessels for the Agreement Area	Procedures and forms on data collection for cetacean watching vessels for the Agreement Area	Proposed common procedure (data collection system) for whale watching vessels to be implemented in the ACCOBAMS Area	Done by the WG Please refer to the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Res21

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 e	Marine debris		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.8			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status²⁷
1- Assess the impact of ghost nets on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area: undertake a joint project with MedPOL and GFCM	Assessment of ghost nets impacts on cetaceans		Not done
2- Assess the impact of plastic bags , microplastic and other plastic materials ingestion on cetaceans in cooperation with existing initiatives, such as IWC : bibliographic synthesis and Scientific Committee recommendation	Assessment of plastic materials impacts on cetaceans by providing bibliographic synthesis	Ongoing effort by the University of Siena	

²⁷ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 f	Climate change		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ²⁸
1- Assess the impact of climate change : bibliographic synthesis	Bibliographic synthesis	Workshop on Climate Change Joint working group on Climate Change with CMS	Ongoing, partially done Please refer to the document • ACCOBAMS-WCC/2014/Doc02

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 g	Species conservation plans		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.8/ 1.12/ 3.7/ 3.11/ 4.6/ 4.13/5.12/ 5.13/ 5.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Revise regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans , in cooperation with relevant stakeholders	Revised regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans	Revision is done in 2015, but the further revision requested by BS Commission to be done in 2016.	Partially done. Please refer to the document • MOP6/2016/Doc12
2- Prepare /Adopt Conservation Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuvier's beaked whales, • Fin whale, • Bottlenose dolphin • Killer whales • Long finned pilot whales 	Conservation Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuvier's beaked whales, • Fin whale, • Bottlenose dolphin • Killer whales • Long finned pilot whales 	Need to adapt Conservation Management Plan, following IWC template. Bottlenose dolphin effort ongoing. ACCOBAMS collaborative effort to map high-use areas by beaked whales in the Mediterranean Sea.	Ongoing, partially done Please refer to the document • MOP6/2016/Inf26

²⁸ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

3- Adopt / implement/ revise if necessary National Action Plans	Implementation of National Action Plans in most of the ACCOBAMS Parties		Not done
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CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 h	Captivity related issues		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ²⁹
1- Assess and inventory specimens of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity	Assessment of BS bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity	BS Commission FOMLR and CBD Advisory Groups decided to include in the annual report in 2014.	Done Please refer to the document • MOP6/2016/Doc12

CA 3	ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT CETACEANS		
CA 3 a	Public awareness		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.23			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Introduce ACCOBAMS cetaceans day and promote annual celebration	ACCOBAMS cetaceans day regularly celebrated in the area		Not relevant for the SC
2- Create and disseminate communication tools such as educational kit	Communication tools distributed to relevant subjects		Not relevant for the SC
3- Organise public awareness related survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey format and instructions Survey report 		Not relevant for the SC

²⁹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 a	Functional stranding networks and responses to emergency situation		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.10/ 3.25/ 4.16			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ³⁰
1- Undertake systematic trainings on necropsies , live strandings and response to emergency situation in the ACCOBAMS region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained participants from all Parties with identified needs Live stranding training in collaboration with Pelagos in 2014 	Ongoing effort by Sandro Mazzariol to develop, in cooperation with ECS, IWC and ASCOBANS, regional stranding and necropsy protocols.	Ongoing Please refer to the documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACCOBAMS- Pelagos-WLS/2014/Doc25 MOP6/2016/Doc12
2- Establish (sub)regional mailing lists of participants in the stranding networks to facilitate exchange of information, in particularly in the South Mediterranean region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification and synthesis of subregional mailing lists Regularly exchanged information on stranding events in particular on the occasion of conference biennial 		
3- Establish a regional Emergency Task Force as advise to Parties and develop an operational protocol	Operational regional Emergency Task Force nominated		

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 b	Capacity to use cetaceans photo id and undertake aerial surveys		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.28/ 5.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Undertake trainings on the use of photo-id	Trained experts from all Parties with identified needs	Training during the Third Biennial Conference in Jounieh (Lebanon) in October 2014	Done Please refer to the document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACCOBAMS-CSMC3/2014/Report
2- Promote the use of INTERCET	Use of INTERCET	Training during the Third Biennial Conference in	Ongoing, partially done

³⁰ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		Jounieh (Lebanon) in October 2014 Workshop was organized at Annual conf of ECS 2015 in Malta.	• ACCOBAMS-ECS-WK Common Tools/2015/Report
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CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 c	Capacity building for other cetacean conservation issues		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status³¹
1- Identify protected areas managers from the areas containing cetacean critical habitat and facilitate exchanges between areas containing cetacean critical habitats in the similar areas using good management practices (organising visits for example)	Cetacean conservation is taken into account at the regional level in the network of MPAs		
2- Enable practice of cetacean conservation staff on relevant issues in the ACCOBAMS Secretariat	Trained cetacean conservation staff from the Parties		

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 d	Cetacean conservation and postgraduate programmes		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Introduce cetacean conservation modules in the existing postgraduate programmes	Post-graduate programmes with included cetacean conservation modules	Module in Malta (March 2015)	Done

³¹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 5	ENHANCE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS CRITICAL HABITATS		
CA 5 a	Protected areas for cetaceans		
Relevant Resolutions: 3.22/ 4.15			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ³²
1- Update regularly a list of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS region	Lists of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans available on the ACCOBAMS web-site	The list of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans has been updated + Threat based approach Workshop on assessing IMMAs in the Med planned for October 2016	Partially Done Please refer to the document • ACCOBAMS-WKMPA/2015/Doc06
2- Develop /Disseminate tools for adequate management of areas containing critical habitat, including evaluation of management effectiveness and using examples of best practice	Guidelines on adequate management of areas containing critical habitats	Creation of the tool : “Evaluation of the effectiveness of place-based conservation for cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area: a handbook” + Revised Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of Marine Protected Areas for Cetaceans	Done Please refer to the documents • ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc33 • ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc35
3- Evaluate effectiveness of protected areas containing critical habitats for cetaceans using existing initiatives (such as MedPAN endeavours in that context)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of effectiveness of protected areas for cetaceans, foremostly their contribution to achievement/maintenance of favourable conservation status • Joint workshop with Pelagos 	The ACCOBAMS Workshop on the effectiveness of marine protected areas within Cetacean Critical Habitats (CCH) (Gammarth, Tunisia, 9-12 June 2015) during the Joint RAC/SPA-GFCM-ACCOBAMS meetings decided to postpone the evaluation of the effectiveness for the next trienium , taking into account the handbook cited here above	Not done • ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc34

³² Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

ANNEX 1 – Recommendations from the Tenth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee

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RECOMMENDATION 10.1 - RECOMMENDATION ON CETACEAN POPULATION ESTIMATES

In 2003, the Scientific Committee first drew the attention of the ACCOBAMS Parties to the fundamental importance of obtaining baseline population estimates and distributional information of cetaceans within the Agreement area as soon as possible through a synoptic summer survey. Without such information (and a suitable subsequent monitoring programme) it is impossible to *inter alia* (1) determine whether ACCOBAMS is meeting its conservation objectives, (2) properly assess and prioritise risk from potential threats and (3) identify and evaluate appropriate mitigation measures and the associated determination of priority actions. The SC agreed then, and has frequently strongly reiterated since, that such work represents the highest priority for research within the ACCOBAMS area and a number of workshops and iterations of the programme, known as the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI), have taken place.

Despite several resolutions adopted by the Parties, the ASI has still not occurred and once again the Scientific Committee **strongly recommends** that the Parties ensure that the ASI is undertaken within the next triennium. This survey is fundamental to the ability of ACCOBAMS to meet its objectives and the ACCOBAMS strategy. It will also make a fundamental contribution to initiatives outside ACCOBAMS, including for example the MSFD of the European Commission and the EcAp process of the Barcelona Convention.

In this context, the Scientific Committee makes the following additional and/or reiterated recommendations:

- a) it **commends** the effort by the Secretariat to secure funding for the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative, **recommends** that these continue and **urges** Parties to contribute with financial or in-kind support to facilitate the implementation of this effort as soon as possible;
- b) it **recommends** that the Parties, Secretariat and Partners actively promote the visibility of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative, underlining its scientific, conservation, education and capacity building components;
- c) it **reiterates** the urgent need to hire a scientific co-ordinator, to work in close co-operation with the fund-raiser and the ASI Steering Committee;
- d) it **urges** Parties to facilitate the release of research permits for research activities to be conducted in the Agreement area in line with the actions presented in the ACCOBAMS work-plan;
- e) it **endorses** the document 'Monitoring guidelines to assess cetacean's distributional range, population abundance and population demographic characteristics' (Annex), **stressing** the importance of having standardized protocols for data collection and analysis.
- f) **recognising** that monitoring methodologies evolve and new techniques become available, it also **recommends** that these guidelines be considered as a living document to be reviewed at least every triennium and updated as necessary; and
- g) it **recommends** that Parties and Range States ensure that any proposed national programmes on the study of abundance and distribution of cetaceans are compatible with the development of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative and the guidelines given in Annex.

ANNEX

MONITORING GUIDELINES TO ASSESS CETACEANS' DISTRIBUTIONAL RANGE, POPULATION ABUNDANCE AND POPULATION DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Introduction

The Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS) has been working for several years on defining an exhaustive program for estimating abundance of cetaceans and assessing their distribution and habitat preferences in the Mediterranean Sea (the "ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative"). This initiative consists in a synoptic survey to be carried out in a short period of time across the whole Mediterranean Sea and it will combine visual survey methods (boat- and ship-based surveys) and passive acoustic monitoring (PAM).

This document was elaborated based on the documents prepared by the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee that has worked for several years on the definition of the most appropriate methodologies for collecting data on cetaceans at the Mediterranean Sea scale, taking into account the protocols used in other regional contexts³³. It presents specific information on monitoring by visual line transect surveys (conducted from boat and airplane) and by acoustic survey. It should be noted that it does not address all the tools and methods that could be used for cetacean survey, neither new technologies that are currently experimented (i.e. drones and satellite imagery). Significant information also comes from stranding networks. Lastly, this document is considering surveys using large ships, but the shipboard cetacean surveys conducted from small vessels would also make use of this document.

Monitoring cetacean species may be addressed at two spatial scales:

- 1) **Regional monitoring** - if the requirement is to monitor the use of a specific area by a particular species, e.g. monitoring the status of relative abundance between and within years in national waters or marine protected areas.
- 2) **Population level monitoring** - if the requirement is to monitor the status of a whole population, e.g. estimate density and abundance of cetaceans in the whole ACCOBAMS area.

Before conducting any type of monitoring of animal populations, it is important to define the objectives. The main aim in both aerial and vessel-based surveys is to assess density and abundance and, if systematic monitoring programs are in place, assess potential trends over time. Monitoring at the regional level may require data collection throughout the year, to better understand seasonal patterns in distribution, whereas monitoring at the population level would mainly address inter-annual changes.

Cetaceans generally occur in low densities and are highly mobile. They are difficult to spot and to follow at sea, even during good survey conditions, because they typically only show part of their head, back and dorsal fin while surfacing and spend the majority of their time underwater.

There are a number of actions that need to be taken when initiating any type of monitoring, either for species distributional range or to estimate population abundance of selected species.

³³ *e.g.* in the Atlantic waters within the framework of (i) the SCANS surveys undertaken to assess the populations of Small Cetaceans in the European Atlantic and North Sea, and (ii) the CODA surveys (Cetacean Offshore Distribution and Abundance in the European Atlantic) aiming to estimate cetacean abundance in European Atlantic waters.

1. Select the target species (surveys can be multi-species or single-species).
2. Determine whether to monitor an entire population or a portion of it (in a given region).
3. Define the population or area to monitor and the time-window.
4. Define monitoring objectives.
5. Consider logistics for the monitoring (e.g. size of area, weather, depth of area, available survey platforms).
6. Conduct statistical power analysis to find the best method to meet the monitoring objectives.
7. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis.

Currently, there are at least five potential approaches to be used in monitoring cetaceans:

1. Visual surveys from ship, aircraft or land observation platforms (LOP).
2. PAM carried out during ship surveys with towed hydrophones.
3. PAM performed by means of static acoustic monitoring, e.g. using T-PODs.
4. Photo-identification and mark-recapture analysis.
5. Satellite telemetry to track individual animals.
6. A combination of all or some of the above methodologies.

When deciding which monitoring method to implement, it is important to consider the limitations of each approach and compare the different methodologies. In general, surveys from ship or aircraft have a low temporal resolution, ship surveys may have bias due to responsive movements of animals, stationary acoustic systems have low spatial resolution and logistical problems with deployment, photographic identification relies on visual differences between individuals to allow identification, and telemetry typically only allows small samples resulting in much inter-individual variation.

There are different types of platforms and methods of detection that can be used for each approach, e.g. fixed observation points such as headlands or moving survey platforms such as ships and aircraft, or direct visual or acoustic detections of vocalizing animals, respectively. The methods can therefore range from very basic, yielding simple indices of abundance in limited areas, to very advanced providing accurate (how close the estimate is to the true value) and precise (the statistical variation in estimates generated from repeated samples) estimates of absolute abundance across wide areas.

Target species

Cetaceans

Eleven species of cetaceans are considered to regularly occur in the Mediterranean area: short-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*), striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*), common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), long-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala melas*), rough-toothed dolphin (*Steno bredanensis*), Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*), fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*), sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*), Cuvier's beaked whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*) and killer whale (*Orcinus orca*).

Knowledge about the ecology, abundance and habitat preferences of some of these species, including the most abundant ones, is in part scant and limited to specific sectors of the Mediterranean region, due to the uneven distribution of research effort during the last decades. In particular, the south-eastern portion of the basin, the coasts of North Africa and the central offshore waters are amongst the areas with the most limited knowledge on cetacean presence, occurrence and distribution.

Other marine endangered species

Even if cetacean species are the first targets of this monitoring effort, the observations of other marine endangered species, such as marine turtles, giant devil rays, monk seals and sea birds, and other elements such as marine debris, could be reported during the surveys. Specific protocols have to be designed for these opportunistic observations, bearing in mind that the primary objective is to collect data on cetaceans.

Dedicated vessel or aircraft visual surveys

For monitoring programmes involving dedicated visual surveys both ship-based and aerial methods are well established. Although in some situations the choice of platform will be determined by logistical constraints, and despite the fact that a full and comprehensive comparison of aerial and vessel-based surveys has not yet been carried out, generally the method which provides an estimate with the required precision for the lowest cost should be chosen.

For visual surveys, it is important to consider observer skill and experience. Observers may vary in sighting efficiency and observer training is important to obtain consistent results. Furthermore, consistency in data collection protocols, observers, survey design and planning is essential to guarantee reliable and robust results in the long term, especially when systematic monitoring programmes are scheduled.

Line transect sampling is typically used to estimate abundance and assess density. In line transect sampling, a survey area is defined and surveyed along pre-determined transects. The distance to each detected animal is measured and consequently used to obtain a detection function, from which an estimate of the effective width of the strip that has been searched can be calculated. This is necessary because the probability of detecting an animal decreases the further away it is from the transect line. Abundance is then calculated by extrapolating estimated density in the sampled strips to the entire survey area. The calculated number is therefore an estimate of abundance in a defined area at a particular time.

On ships, distances are either estimated by naked eye (observers should be trained in distance estimation and use individually calibrated tools) or using binoculars with distance calibrated reticules. Video range measuring methods allow distance to be accurately measured. To calculate the perpendicular distance to a sighting the radial angle should be recorded using an angle board. If an aircraft is used, an inclinometer reading, taken when the sighting is abeam of the aircraft, and the altitude of the aircraft allow precise calculation of the perpendicular sighting distance to the transect. Animals occur in groups in many cetacean species so the target for detection in a line transect survey is often a group rather than individuals. Hence, data on the group size and composition must also be accurately collected.

When estimating absolute abundance using the line transect distance sampling method, it is assumed that all animals on the track line are detected, ie. probability to detect an animal or a group of animals is maximum ($g(0)=1$).

There are two potential categories of bias that may invalidate the assumption that $g(0)=1$:

- availability bias (when the animal is underwater or, in general, not available to be seen during the period it is within visual range) and
- perception bias (when for whatever reason an observer misses an animal that is available at the surface).

To address the availability bias, data on diving behaviour of the target species could be taken into consideration and used as a correction factor. With trained observers and large cetaceans, perception bias can be considered equal to

or approximately equal to 1. However, if $g(0)$ is significantly lower than one (as is often the case for small cetaceans) then this will result in a considerably negatively biased estimate and the true value of $g(0)$ must be estimated. For shipboard surveys, the double-platform approach has been successfully used to address this problem. Availability bias is a particular problem for animals with very long dives; in the case of the sperm whale, acoustic techniques can overcome this problem.

The logistics of aerial surveys often prevent the use of two independent platforms to allow estimation of the proportion of animals missed on the transect line, however, recently Partenavia P-68 planes have been equipped with two sets of bubble windows, to allow double-platform data collection by means of independent observers on board of the same aircraft. Data collection protocols implementing aircraft circling back after a sighting to simulate the second research platform can be also used.

Relative abundance using only one platform may be sufficient for detecting population trends, reducing surveys cost considerably and may be used to monitoring the status of the target population between large-scale absolute abundance surveys based on larger budgets.

Another assumption for line transects methodology is that animals do not move prior to detection. This is not a problem for aerial surveys, but may bias shipboard surveys that typically survey at speeds around 10 knots. Evasive movements lead to negative bias in estimates of abundance, while attractive movements lead to positively biased estimates. Double-platform methodology can be applied to assess responsive movements. According to this method, observations are carried out from two platforms. Observers from the secondary or 'tracking' platform search an area ahead of the 'primary' survey area and sufficiently wide to ensure that animals are detected prior to any responsive movement to the ship, and to allow the tracking of animals until they are detected by the primary platform. The observers from the primary platform search independently of the tracking platform.

To assist in planning a line transect survey and to analyse the data there is a comprehensive analysis program available called DISTANCE.

DISTANCE provides software for estimating detection functions, density and abundance, and can be used to design the surveys. The latest version also includes mark-recapture distance sampling which allows analysis of dual observer distance sampling surveys, where the probability of detection on the trackline can be estimated. All versions of DISTANCE can be downloaded free from <http://www.ruwpa.st-and.ac.uk/distance/>.

It is clear from the above examples that proper design of the survey is critical to address monitoring issues of cetacean populations, and in particular that a large enough area is covered so that shifts in distributions can be accounted for when analyzing the data.

The areas to be surveyed are usually divided into survey blocks and the transects are designed to ensure equal coverage probability, using the dedicated software.

Survey design

The basic requirement for a line transect survey is that it provides representative coverage of the area for which an abundance estimate is desired (*i.e.* each point in the area has an equal or quantifiable probability of being sampled). A common design for vessel-based surveys at sea is a set of zig-zag lines following a regular pattern, starting from a random point along one edge of the survey area. In aerial surveys, 'parallel transects' are to be preferred and the coverage should be allocated according to target species' density: more coverage where their density is higher.

Survey blocks

The development of appropriate survey blocks is a combination of biological factors (species, distribution/stock structure and abundance, habitat types etc.) and pragmatism associated with the logistics (numbers of vessels/planes; port/airport facilities; transit times; national borders etc.).

Effort required per block

The effort required per block is determined as a function of ship/airplane time available in each block, available information on density of species and logistical constraints. The higher the level of coverage the better, as it allows for a larger sample size and therefore for more precise and robust abundance estimates.

There are some practical points needing attention when designing a survey. Transects should, as far as possible, run perpendicular to any density gradient; for example, coastal surveys typically have transects that run more or less perpendicular to the shore line.

Closing mode versus passing mode

In order to confirm certain information (species identification, group size and, historically, distance to sighting), cetacean surveys could be operated in 'closing mode'. In this mode, once a sighting has been made and the initial distance and angle been recorded, the vessel then approaches the animal(s) to identify the species and group size. It is also used if, for example, it is desired to obtain biopsy samples or photographs.

Nevertheless, operating in 'closing' mode can result in biased abundance and estimates. The preferred approach is thus to operate in 'passing mode' whenever possible (*i.e.* once a sighting is made the vessel remains on the designated course). However, this too has its problems, if, for example, many sightings are unidentified to species (the use of cameras with large stabilized zoom lenses may facilitate species identification).

Deciding between vessel and aerial surveys

Visual line transects surveys can be operated from a ship and from an aircraft. When deciding which platform to use, the relative merits of each approach for the species and areas to be covered must be considered. These include:

- aerial surveys are usually more cost-efficient per area than large vessel surveys, provided that the area to be covered is within the range of the aircraft from an airport and taking safety considerations into account (this often means not travelling more than 200 nautical miles or so offshore);
- aerial surveys can take better advantage of good weather conditions, in that they can cover much larger areas in the same period;
- aerial surveys are more efficient (and trackline design is easier) if the area to be covered has complex coastlines, many islands or large areas of shallow waters;
- aerial surveys can be more tolerant of swell but less tolerant of sea state and low cloud – they can also be affected by poor weather at the airport even if survey conditions are acceptable at sea;
- animals are less disturbed (if at all) by aircraft at normal flying altitudes and thus the problem of responsive movement is minimal;
- for multispecies aerial surveys, compromises must be made in terms of the optimum altitude for flying e.g. flying at the optimum altitude for a harbour porpoise survey means that the searching area for larger species such as fin whales is considerably reduced;
- vessels are generally better platforms for photo-identification and aircraft are unsuitable for biopsy sampling and acoustic recording;
- availability bias is much greater for aerial surveys;

- it is generally easier to obtain a suitable vessel than a suitable aircraft.

Platforms of opportunity

Platforms of opportunity are a potentially valuable resource for monitoring but it is usually not possible to choose the time or area of operation. Survey coverage is therefore typically extremely uneven and some areas, crucial for the presence of a target species, may not be covered; such unrepresentative coverage may introduce bias into assessment of distribution and abundance.

Platforms of opportunity using visual and/or acoustic methods are the cheapest way to monitor cetaceans. However, the success of using such vessels depends on finding the right platform that can cheaply and effectively accommodate observers and equipment and that cover appropriate areas at suitable speeds. These criteria are seldom fulfilled, especially since long term monitoring ideally requires the conditions to be consistent. Ferries may be suitable in some areas but spatial coverage is likely to be poor because of the fixed routes covered. Research vessels conducting annual monitoring of e.g. oceanography or fish resources have the potential to be valuable platforms of opportunity for monitoring if they take place at the right time(s) in the right place(s).

Acoustic surveys

The collection of acoustic data for cetaceans has some significant advantages over visual methods. Acoustic methods can be automated, data can be collected 24-hrs a day and data collection is not dependent on observer's skills, is less sensitive to weather conditions and can detect the presence of diving animals not available for visual observations. Disadvantages are that these methods rely on animals making sounds within a useful detection range and are identifiable to the species level. Furthermore, with exception of some species such as the sperm whale, methods to estimate abundance are not well established yet.

All odontocetes (toothed whales) have the ability to echolocate by producing and listening to particular "click" sounds. This allows them to navigate during night time or in murky waters, and to find and catch preys. Most toothed whales such as most dolphins (e.g. bottlenose and common dolphins) also produce other frequency modulated sounds (whistles) used for intraspecific communication. The monitoring of these sounds allows for the collection of information on spatial and temporal habitat use, as well as estimation of relative density.

Ship-board line transect acoustic survey is the most effective way of surveying sperm whales in the open sea and to collect the data required for accurate and robust estimation of absolute abundance in these waters. Visual-only survey techniques could introduce biases due to the long dive duration abilities demonstrated by the species and the little time generally spent at the surface, which makes them mostly unavailable for visual detection.

Acoustic data from sperm whales can be used to assess both relative and absolute abundance provided that the appropriate equipment and survey design is followed. Sperm whales produce loud regular clicks, which can be detected at ranges of tens of kilometres. Sperm whale click characteristics are generally easily recognisable. Thus, software automatization has been developed and used on a number of surveys resulting into real-time tracking and location to single animals or groups. By tracking a whale for a period of time, crossed bearings to successive clicks give a position for each whale, which can be used in a distance-based analysis.

A major task in this type of analysis is the assignment of clicks to individual whales when many animals are vocalizing simultaneously. Often, clicks from different whales are easily resolved using bearing information with dedicated software implementing beamforming. The regularity of the click train on each bearing indicates that they represent a

single whale. On occasions where more than one whale is on the same bearing, clicks can be assigned to individuals using spectral and amplitude information, inter-click intervals and inter-pulse intervals. By identifying the most obvious whale in a group and removing those clicks from the analysis, identification of successive whales becomes progressively easier until all clicks are assigned.

Since acoustic detection ranges are generally ~10 km, a survey vessel travelling at 18 km per hour (10 knots) will be in acoustic range of a sperm whale close to the track line for over an hour. Typically, sperm whales dive for approximately 30-50 minutes followed by 10-15 minutes at the surface. Clicking is generally continuous when the whales are submerged and they are silent while resting at the surface.

On occasion, whales cease clicking regularly for periods of 2-3 hours, but evidence from tagging and observational studies suggests this is infrequent. The probability of a whale to remain silent for the entire time that the vessel is in range is therefore considered to be small, indicating that $g(0)$ for acoustic surveys is close to 1. However, calves (which may represent up to 20% of the population) do not make long foraging dives and are not clicking regularly. Consequently, their detection may have low efficiency and a correction factor calculated from existing data should be applied.

Acoustic survey data for sperm whales can generally be collected simultaneously with visual data for other species particularly if the survey is operating primarily in passing mode. Survey vessels can also continue acoustic sampling in conditions unsuitable for visual survey (bad weather and night time).

Abundance estimates, based on acoustic methods, are only possible for sperm whales. Potentially, information on distribution can be obtained from acoustic data for all species, although with much more uncertainties for common and striped dolphins, given the difficulties in distinguishing their vocalizations.

A hydrophone array is towed behind each vessel. The equipment consists of a desktop computer running automatic detection software, the towed hydrophone, and various interface cards for getting sounds into the computer. The computer is running all the time, and one scientist is in charge of the acoustic system on each vessel.

Photo-identification

Photo-identification is a widely used technique in cetacean research that can provide estimates of abundance and population parameters e.g. survival and calving rate. It has been used for monitoring purposes for common bottlenose dolphins and killer whales since the 1970s. The technique relies on being able to obtain good quality photos of animals' body parts that constitute unique recognizable markings.

This method can be used for population level monitoring of species with appropriate markings, if data can be collected across the distribution of the population. This approach cannot be applied to species that lack suitable individual identification marks.

Using photo-identification, it is sometimes possible to census the whole population when all individuals can be encountered at any given time in an area, all are well marked and no individuals seem to be moving in or out of the population. This is however unusual and has only been accomplished for a few populations of bottlenose dolphin, e.g. Sado Estuary, Portugal and Doubtful Sound, New Zealand, and for killer whales off Vancouver Island. More commonly, mark-recapture models must be applied to photo-identification data to estimate abundance (rather than a census the

whole population) for specific areas that populations or part of populations occupy during one or more seasons of the year.

Information on the proportion of the population possessing recognisable markings is also required to allow estimation of population size.

The standard software program for mark-recapture analysis is program MARK (<http://www.cnr.colostate.edu/~gwhite/mark/mark.htm>), which includes a wide range of models to estimate population size and survival rates. There are models that can take account of heterogeneity of capture probabilities, a common problem in mark-recapture studies. These include program CAPTURE, a widely used multi-sample closed population model. If animals are believed to emigrate temporarily from the study area, there are also methods available for taking this into account in analysis.

Satellite tracking

Information on the movements and distribution of individual animals can help to identify important habitats, migration routes and to define boundaries between populations. Effective conservation of animal populations is enhanced by this information, which can also be valuable when designing monitoring programmes. In recent years satellite tagging of cetaceans has been increasingly used to obtain information on seasonal movements, distribution and diving behaviour.

To make inferences about large populations ranging over a wide area, many animals must be tagged, especially in species with high individual variation in behaviour. For some areas and species this would be a significant logistical challenge.

Many kinds of tags have been used in studies of cetaceans, including VHF transmitters, satellite tags and GPS data loggers. Satellite telemetry has the advantage that because data are transmitted to an earth based station via a satellite, it is possible to follow animals all over the world without retrieval of the tag.

Each tagged animal can provide a wealth of information but the limitation is that typically only a few animals can be tagged in a study due to limited funding or access to live animals. General conclusions are therefore often difficult especially if all members of the population are not equally available for tagging.

Power analysis

For any type of monitoring it is necessary to ensure that the chosen method and the study design will be able to provide an answer to the question posed with a useful level of precision. A power analysis can indicate the ability of the statistical procedure and the available or planned data to reveal a certain level of change i.e. the ability to detect a trend of a given magnitude. Power analysis can be used in two situations: firstly for interpretation of results of analysis of existing data; and secondly to plan studies to calculate the necessary sample size e.g. the length of time series of abundance estimates, or the coefficient of variation (CV) of those estimates, needed to detect specified rates of population change in a trend analysis.

TRENDS is a freely available program designed to carry out a power analysis of linear regression, particularly in the context of monitoring populations in wildlife studies

(<http://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division=PRD&ParentMenuId=228&id=4740>). TRENDS summarises the power analysis in five parameters: duration of study, rate of change, precision of estimates, Type 1 error rate, and power (1 - Type 2 error rate). The value of any one of these can be estimated if the other four are specified. TRENDS is therefore designed to help answer such questions as:

- How many years are required to detect a trend?
- How much effort would be required to detect a certain level of change in a certain time period? What is the probability of detecting a trend?

RECOMMENDATION 10.2 - RECOMMENDATION ON POPULATION STRUCTURE

The Scientific Committee **reiterates** the importance of understanding population structure to contribute to the interpretation of abundance estimates, the assessment of threats and the evaluation of mitigation measures. All of these are important if ACCOBAMS is to meet its conservation objectives.

The Committee **welcomed** the report of the Joint ECS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Workshop on Cetacean Population Structure (27th ECS Conference, 6th April 2013, Setubal, Portugal). That Workshop had identified a number of priorities for immediate attention given conservation concerns:

- (1) short-beaked common dolphins, particularly in Greek waters;
- (2) Risso's dolphin, given some evidence that they may occur in small, local 'management units';
- (3) killer whales in the Strait of Gibraltar and Gulf of Cadiz with a focus on the relationship with the Atlantic waters outside the Mediterranean;
- (4) harbour porpoises in the Black and Aegean Seas;
- (5) Cuvier's beaked whales;
- (6) Fin whales.

The Committee **recommends** that work on population structure be accorded high priority within the next triennium. To assist in this process it **re-establishes** a population structure Working Group (co-chairs Gaspari and Natoli). It **reiterates** the Terms of Reference agreed at SC7 and provided in ACCOBAMS-SC7/2011/Inf20. The working group will determine its workplan based upon discussions at the Tenth Scientific Committee meeting and the workshop referred to above.

RECOMMENDATION 10.3 - RECOMMENDATION ON THE ASSESSMENT OF IUCN CONSERVATION STATUS

The Scientific Committee received a progress report of the IUCN Red List for ACCOBAMS. It was noted that the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean cooperation has not received new or updated assessments in the last two years for the species categorised as Data Deficient for the IUCN Red List in the Mediterranean Sea.

The Scientific Committee **recommends:**

- (1) consideration is given by the initial assessors as to whether there is sufficient new information to re-asses the species that are still Data Deficient, and if so, submit new assessment for consideration by the appropriate evaluators;
- (1) consideration is given whether there is sufficient information to evaluate species within the region not previously assessed (e.g. the rough-toothed dolphin) and if so, an assessment is submitted for consideration by the appropriate evaluators;
- (2) as killer whales are still not included in the Mediterranean IUCN Red List, despite the evaluation done in collaboration between IUCN and ACCOBAMS in 2006 (Res 3.19), a re-assessment of the species is undertaken by the initial assessors , taking into account the Agreement area and submit it for consideration by the appropriate evaluators.

RECOMMENDATION 10.4 - RECOMMENDATION ON MEDACES

MEDACES is the ‘Mediterranean Database of Cetacean Strandings’. It was established to assist with the compilation of data to co-ordinate all national and regional efforts for riparian countries. Originally created under the Barcelona Convention, it was later extended to the complete ACCOBAMS area. For primarily financial reasons, the Scientific Committee was asked by the ACCOBAMS Bureau to evaluate its usefulness.

The Scientific Committee **agreed** on the great overall importance and value of a central database such as MEDACES to cetacean conservation. The need for a comprehensive database for information derived from the efforts of national and regional stranding networks is great. It is clear that the ability to combine data for analyses is key to providing the best scientific advice, recognising that cetaceans do not adhere to national boundaries. When, ideally, basin-wide stranding data flow in regularly and are integrated promptly, synoptic views, so sought after re ACCOBAMS’s Survey initiative, are readily and cheaply available. Thus, whenever the latter materializes, co-temporal basin-wide stranding rate data provided by MEDACES could complement and be correlated with basin-wide distribution and abundance estimates. Just some of other important topics that such data can help to address include: ship strikes, entanglements, disease, marine debris etc. This information will be greatly improved if cause of death is determined in a standardised manner (e.g. see Item *necropsy*) and submitted, when available to the database.

Given the short timeframe allowed for advice to the Bureau, the Scientific Committee **recommends** that:

- ACCOBAMS ensures MEDACES’s future operation by securing and allocating funds to the host institution (University of Valencia) at least until the next Meeting of Parties in 2016.

In addition, the Scientific Committee **recommends** that in advance of the Meeting of Parties:

- A thorough review should be undertaken by the Secretariat in conjunction with the Chair of the Scientific Committee (or his nominee(s)) and in consultation with those running MEDACES into the working of MEDACES within the region with a special focus on:
 - contact with focal points and stranding network organisers who do not submit data to MEDACES, asking them to indicate why they do not do so (this may be practical reasons, such as time, or more fundamental reasons such as data confidentiality/access) and what might encourage them to do so, including MEDACES acting as both a full database and, where good local databases exist, a metadatabase;
 - contact with focal points and stranding network organisers who have agreed to submit data but who do not do so promptly or who have not done so for a long time to determine why and what might be done to improve the process (again these may be for practical or more fundamental reasons);
 - contact with the University of Valencia to determine the incidence of the use of the database by scientists and the nature of the analyses undertaken;
 - the level of ‘advertising’ undertaken to identify the value of the contained data and the use of the facility for new stranding networks as part of capacity building efforts (see Item *capacity building*);
 - developing mechanisms to allow the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee to recommend analyses to be undertaken using MEDACES.

RECOMMENDATION 10.5 - RECOMMENDATION ON NOISE

The Scientific Committee considered a number of issues in its discussion of noise: (1) the development of a noise registry; (2) Environmental Impact Assessments and related matters; (3) military exercises; (4) noise indicators; (5) 'quiet areas'; and (6) research permit requests.

The development of a noise registry

As shown in ACCOBAMS.SC10.Doc13, a large portion of the Mediterranean area is subject to noise-producing human activities and it seems likely such activities will increase. This initial examination has illustrated the need for the development of a comprehensive registry on anthropogenic noise in the Agreement Area in order to assist in developing noise 'hot spots' to assist with mitigation measures. As this is in accordance with the Ecosystems Approach (EcAp) initiative within the Barcelona Convention, the Committee **recommends** that such a noise registry mechanism be developed and that this is submitted to the Barcelona Convention for endorsement.

The Scientific Committee **reiterates** its previous recommendation that Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), SIA (Strategic Impact Assessment) and AA (Appropriate Assessment) to be undertaken prior to projects that may affect cetaceans and especially those involving impulsive noise³⁴.

It **agrees** that at a minimum EIAs, SIAs and AAs should (based upon the expert advice of the Joint Noise Working Group developed for and submitted to the *CBD Expert Workshop on Underwater Noise and its Impacts on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity* (25-27 February 2014), in response to CBD Notification 2014-001):

- (1) provide adequate information on baseline biological and environmental information to describe the area being impacted;
- (2) fully characterise operations and their acoustic components – this should include professional modelling of the sound propagation features and the spatial region that will experience anthropogenic noise above natural ambient sound levels;
- (3) assess the impact on cetaceans within this area and consider the potential cumulative effects from other anthropogenic activities;
- (4) describe how the impacts are proposed to be mitigated and effectiveness monitored before, during and after the operation; and
- (5) provide an objective consideration of the risk posed by the proposed activity against alternatives.

The Scientific Committee **recommends**:

- (1) that Parties, when conducting an EIA process in line with Resolution 4.17, also apply the minimum standards for EIAs described above;
- (2) that Parties work with the Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to develop best practice guidelines for an EIA review process that considers *inter alia* involvement of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee in an advisory capacity to Parties on the cetacean component of EIAs, as well as opportunities for comments by civil society;
- (3) that Parties support the development of an ACCOBAMS-hosted online depository of ACCOBAMS noise related documents and decisions made by Parties with respect to EIAs with a cetacean component, as well as documents evaluating the success or otherwise of mitigation approaches – this can become a resource for expert working groups and ACCOBAMS Parties to enable the evolution of the ACCOBAMS best practice as it evolves.

³⁴ And see *inter alia* EU EIA Directive 2014/52, Espoo (EIA) Convention Principle 17, CBD Decision XII/23, CMS Resolution 10.24, and ACCOBAMS Resolution 5.15

Military activities

The Scientific Committee also **reiterated** its concerns over the risks to cetaceans posed by military manoeuvres and especially active sonar (including discussion of a mass stranding of Cuvier's beaked whales attributed to NATO activities off Sicily in 2011). This is particularly true for sensitive species (e.g. Cuvier's beaked whales) in critical habitats identified by ACCOBAMS (Resolution 4.15). It noted that the US Navy has recognised the importance of not using active sonar in areas and at times when marine mammals are vulnerable. The Committee was therefore concerned to learn of a major NATO exercise in the Sicilian Channel in September 2015 (an area identified to be of special significance by ACCOBAMS and an EBSA).

The Scientific Committee **recognises** the sensitivity surrounding military exercises but is concerned that the safety of cetaceans is not adequately addressed during such exercises, particularly in light of ACCOBAMS Resolutions 4.15, 4.17, 5.13 and CMS Resolutions 9.19 and 10.24.

In order to be able to obtain lessons from the September 2015 NATO exercise and thus enable the Scientific Committee to provide advice to improve the situation in the future, the Scientific Committee **recommends that:**

(1) ACCOBAMS Parties, through the Secretariat, request NATO to provide information for the September 2015 exercise on:

- (a) active sonar use (or other noise sources including explosions) during the 2015 exercise (time, area, source levels);
- (b) sightings of cetaceans, if any, during the exercise;
- (c) approaches adopted, if any, to evaluate (e.g. through sound modelling and examination of data on likely cetacean occurrence) potential adverse effects on cetaceans;
- (d) mitigation measures taken, if any, and the basis for these and

(2) ACCOBAMS Parties, through the Secretariat, **advise** NATO and national navies that the Scientific Committee is ready to provide advice and assistance with respect to mitigating adverse effects on cetaceans for any future exercises.

Quiet areas

Furthermore, in the light of Resolution 5.13 on Cuvier's beaked whales and a document written by ACCOBAMS partner OceanCare (ACCOBAMS.SC10.Inf33) suggesting the need for 'quiet zones', the Scientific Committee **recommends** that this issue be addressed in the next triennium with a focus on a quantitative elaboration of the concept of 'quiet zones' and a more thorough evaluation of the scientific evidence for establishing such areas (in space and time) as discussed under Item 4.2.2 of the meeting.

Research permits

The Scientific Committee **recommends** that research institutes and organisation wishing to undertake monitoring programmes on noise that require permits from national authorities, consider submitting those to the ACCOBAMS Secretariat for advice and assistance in submitting permit requests.

Finally,

- with respect to MSFD and noise indicators (see Item 5.3.1), the Scientific Committee **advises** Parties that it is available to develop a noise impact indicator on cetaceans, should they request it.
- with respect to the EcAp process and noise indicators, the Scientific Committee advises Parties that it is available to further develop the two candidate noise indicators on cetaceans, should they request it.

RECOMMENDATION 10.6 - RECOMMENDATION ON SHIP STRIKES

The Scientific Committee **reiterated** that the issue of ship strikes, particularly of large whales such as fin and sperm whales, remains of concern within the ACCOBAMS region. These concerns span the issues of conservation, animal welfare and human safety. It noted the present effective collaborative work with the IWC Scientific and Conservation Committees on this issue and **recommended** that this continues, along with collaboration with CMS and ASCOBANS and other International Organizations.

In addition to the work identified at the 2010 Joint IWC-ACCOBAMS workshop that is still ongoing, the Scientific Committee also reviewed the relevant recommendations of the 2014 report of the joint IWC-SPAW workshop to address collisions between marine mammals and ships with a focus on the wider Caribbean, which was attended by two of its members. The Scientific Committee **endorsed** the conclusions and recommendations of that Workshop, highlighting the following:

- (1) The highest priority is to place emphasis on the collection and reporting of data (including near misses) to the Global Ship Strikes Database which will both: (1) facilitate a proper evaluation, prioritisation and monitoring of ship strikes as a threat to various populations and regions; and (2) assist in the development of mitigation measures.
- (2) In tandem with this, refined species distribution modelling exercises (where sufficient data exist) are essential to identify the important areas for cetaceans at appropriate temporal and geographical scales to compare with potential threats, including ship strikes; where insufficient data exist efforts to obtain this at the regional level are essential. This information is required both to evaluate and prioritise efforts as well as to assist with mitigation and monitoring measures.
- (3) Mitigation that separates whales from vessels (or at least minimise co-occurrence) in space and time to the extent possible are the most effective, where this is possible (e.g. routing schemes).
- (4) The most effective and only demonstrated general method to reduce lethal strikes available at present is reduced speed. The efficacy of other measures (e.g. alerting mariners that whales may be in the area, such as having observers on-board or systems such as REPCET) including technical solutions requires careful evaluation before they can be endorsed. At present, apart from recommending that vessels go slowly, it is not possible to provide advice on simple avoidance strategies in the presence of whales.
- (5) The issue requires co-operation with a variety of stakeholders ranging from intergovernmental bodies (such as IMO, IWC, ACCOBAMS, ASCOBANS and CMS), the marine sector, national and local authorities, scientific institutions and NGOs. Co-operation with the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Area Task Force was also highlighted.

In terms of future priority actions, the Scientific Committee **recommends that:**

- (1) ACCOBAMS Parties strongly encourage the submission of information on ship strikes to the Global Ship Strikes database hosted by the IWC which has recently streamlined the data entry process with advice from members of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and others - where regional/national databases exist, exchange of information with the Global Database is essential.

- (2) ACCOBAMS continues to work with the IWC, ASCOBANS and other relevant organisations to finalise necropsy protocols to *inter alia* identify causes of death (including ship strikes and bycatch in fishing gear).
- (3) ACCOBAMS Parties ensure that the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative, that was first recommended in 2003, be undertaken as soon as possible to provide the necessary baseline data on abundance, as well as density and distribution in the summer.
- (4) The ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee investigates the existing data to determine the efficacy of undertaking a spatial modelling exercise for fin whales in the Mediterranean for comparison with information on shipping traffic.
- (5) ACCOBAMS Parties continue to support projects that will improve our knowledge of ship strikes and potential mitigation strategies including telemetry and photo-id studies.
- (6) The scientific evaluation of the efficacy of the REPCET system first recommended at the 2010 Workshop and further recommended at the 2014 Workshop be undertaken in the next triennium.
- (7) ACCOBAMS Parties give serious consideration to the possibility of introducing speed restrictions within Conservation Based Areas (e.g. Marine Protected Areas, SPAMIs, etc.) at those times of the year when fin or sperm whales are present.
- (8) ACCOBAMS supports efforts to introduce a Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Hellenic trench as recommended by the IWC Scientific Committee in 2015 as a result of work initially identified at the 2010 Workshop.

RECOMMENDATION 10.7 - RECOMMENDATION ON CETACEAN WATCHING

The ACCOBAMS region is an important area for a great number of cetacean species, whether as a permanent habitat, a breeding or feeding ground or a migratory corridor. The presence of such a diversity of cetaceans has led to the development of whale watching activities, both on a commercial and recreational basis, which until present still maintains a steady and regular growth within the region. Whale watching is an important economic activity in many places of the ACCOBAMS area. Although several countries in the region have already implemented specific codes of conduct and national legislation aimed at regulating and monitoring the activity, this particular tourism activity is not necessary benign. In addition, efforts are made by other International Organisations, i.e. IWC and CMS to manage the development of whale watching.

If well managed, and within a suitable management framework, whale watching can provide a valuable educational tool, contribute to the local economy and can promote research on cetaceans and their conservation. However, in the absence of such a framework, whale watching can increase pressure on the environment including cetaceans and adversely affect populations.

In an effort to minimize the risk of adverse impacts of cetacean watching and to ensure the sustainable development of such activities, effective management strategies need to be implemented. The Scientific Committee noted that the development of guidance for sustainable whale watching is a priority topic for the IWC (the IWC Whalewatching Working Group has produced a five year whale watching strategy and is developing a Handbook for Whale Watching.).

In light of the above and based on the discussions, **the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee recommends** that the Working Group on Whale Watching reviews and advises on the following points **before April 2016 in order to allow the preparation of a draft Resolution** in the light of work undertaken by other Organisations including the IWC:

- 1) definition on the different types of whale watching operators (commercial, research, others);
- 2) revision of the technical details in the ACCOBAMS code of conduct (ACCOBAMS-SC10/2015/Doc14) associated with the use of the logo High Quality Whale Watching (including swim-with programmes, aerial spotting and use of drones);
- 3) consider issues related to data collection, validation, storage and access, etc.... (ACCOBAMS-SC10/2015/Doc15);
- 4) Test the revised data form in some pilot areas and a variety of operation types (e.g. the Pelagos Sanctuary with the co-operation of CIMA Research Foundation, Gibraltar Strait, and south Portugal);
- 5) Collaborate with ongoing effort by the IWC and CMS.

The Scientific Committee also recommends that Parties adapt their national legislation on whale watching in order to meet, at minimum, the requirements of the ACCOBAMS code of conduct.

RECOMMENDATION 10.8 - RECOMMENDATION ON CONSERVATION PLANS

The Scientific Committee has recognised the importance of conservation plans to fulfilling ACCOBAMS conservation objectives. However, it also recognised that a lack of structure and focus has hindered the development and effectiveness of such plans. It noted that the IWC has developed a process for the development of 'Conservation Management Plans (CMPs)' through its Scientific and Conservation Committees. At the request of the Secretariat, the Scientific Committee summarised the IWC approach to CMPs in the context of ACCOBAMS and also presented a workplan for the development of a CMP following this template for fin whales (ACCOBAMS-SC10/2015/Doc 16&18). Key components of CMPs include:

- (1) support of national authorities;
- (2) involvement of stakeholders at an early stage of development;
- (3) recognition that CMPs complement not replace existing measures;
- (4) overview of present status of the species;
- (5) clear, achievable goals and objectives;
- (6) practical, prioritized mitigation actions;
- (7) regular monitoring and reporting;
- (8) clear governance structures to coordinate the engagement of key stakeholders.

The Scientific Committee **recommends:**

- (1) Adoption of the CMP framework and template (Annex) given in document ACCOBAMS-SC10/2015/Doc 16&18 for use by ACCOBAMS for new plans (e.g. bottlenose dolphins – see Item 4);
- (2) Establishment of a Steering Group (Chaired by Panigada and including representatives of IWC, Pelagos Sanctuary) to develop a preliminary draft CMP for fin whales following the new template (see Resolution 5.12), consideration by stakeholders (e.g. by a workshop), with a view to submitting a CMP for consideration at the 2019 Meeting of Parties (e.g. see Fig. 1);
- (3) Support by Parties for the ASI (see Item 4.1.) and the work on population structure (see Item 4.1.2) and ship strikes (see Item 4.2.3) with respect to fin whales that will produce important information for the development (and subsequent implementation) of a CMP;
- (4) Review and possible revision of existing plans (e.g. that for common dolphins) in the light of the template given in Annex.

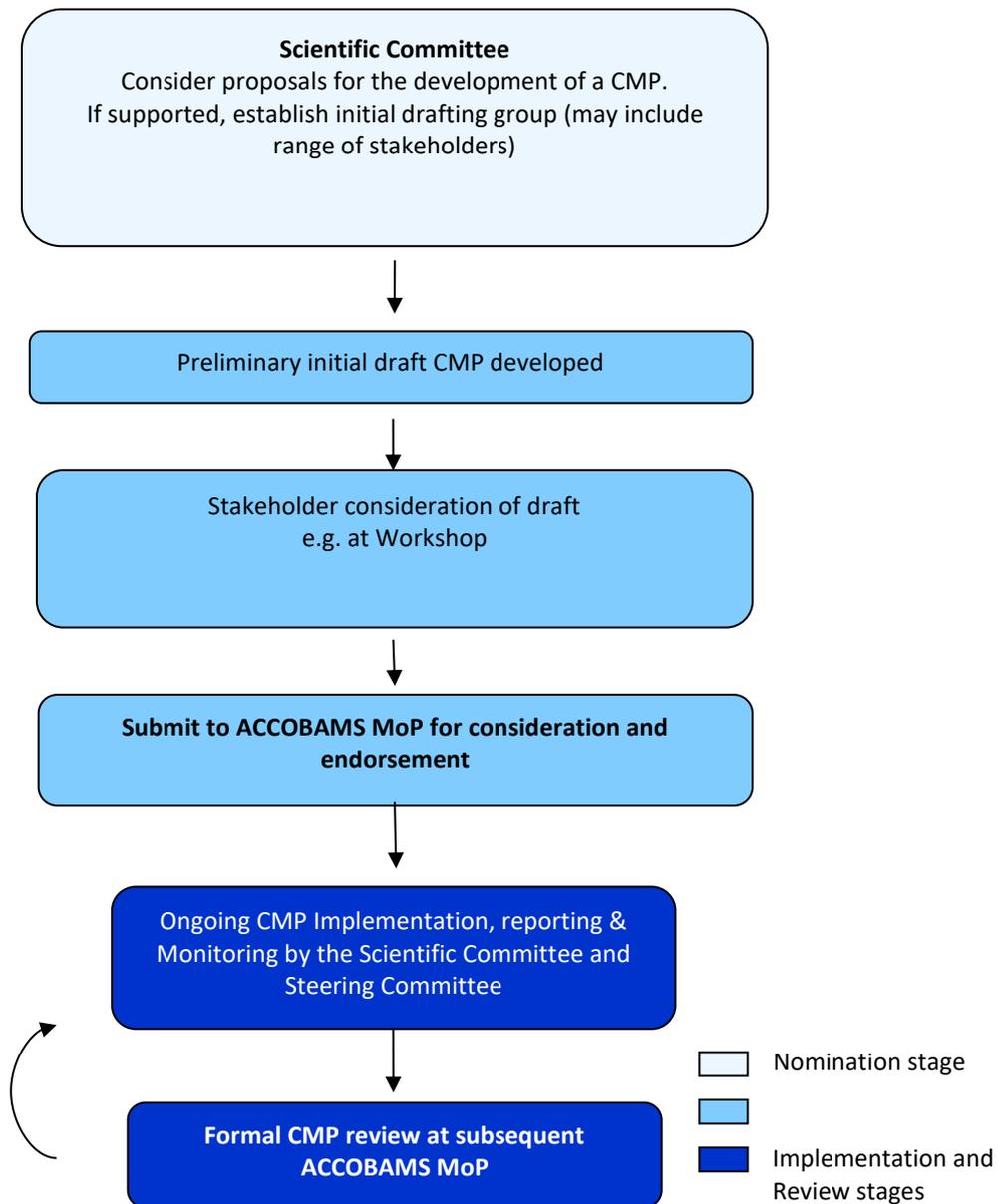


Fig. 1 Process for developing/implementing CMPs

Annex TEMPLATE FOR A CMP

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide a general overview of the plan. This section should include:

- Why a CMP is needed: Scene setting for a CMP – including a brief description of the target population, its habitat, and threats that impact the population.
- An overall goal of the CMP which would act as the mission statement for the plan.
- An overview of how the CMP is structured and what is detailed in each section.
- A *Summary Table of High Priority Actions* could also be included. High priority actions usually fall into the following categories:
 - co-ordination (COORD);
 - public awareness and capacity building (PACB);
 - research essential for providing adequate management advice or filling in knowledge gaps (RES);
 - monitoring (MON); and
 - mitigation measures (MIT).

1. INTRODUCTION

This section should briefly address the following questions:

- Why is active management needed for the identified cetacean population, threat or critical habitat?
- Why is a CMP the most appropriate management tool to achieve the stated conservation objectives?

This section should include:

- The scope, context and policy setting of the CMP.
- A detailed map of the known distribution of the population/critical habitat
 - If a CMP is being designed for a particular threat the map should include an outline of the area where the threat is encountered by the target cetacean population.
 - If the CMP is being designed for a particular critical habitat, the map should include the extent of the critical habitat.
- This section should also reference any current or previous conservation management actions relating to the draft CMP including conservation plans, legislation as well as any relevant peer reviewed papers or related documentation.

1.1 Overall Objectives of the CMP

To maximise the success of a plan and to ensure that required changes are identified promptly; the measurable short, medium and long-term objectives should be identified. Thus, the monitoring of the target population, human activities affecting it, mitigation measures, and the effectiveness of those measures is essential.

Objectives of a CMP will not only relate to the conservation of the population but also to the interests of relevant stakeholders.

Insert the overall short, medium and long term objectives of the CMP.

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Insert a list of relevant international conventions, agreements and legislation and management arrangements that the plan may relate to. Supporting information can be contained on Appendices.

[Please note that the below are examples only]

2.1 International Conventions and Agreements

2.2 National Legislation and Management Arrangements

2.2.1 Participating Range State A

National legislation with respect to the population of X whales

2.2.2 Participating Range State B

National legislation with respect to the population of X whales

2.2.3 Participating Range State C

National legislation with respect to the population of X whales

2.2.4 Participating Range State A

Area X Fisheries Management Plan

2.2.5 Participating Range State B

Marine Protected Area X Operational Management Plan

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1 Coordination of a CMP

As a CMP may cover a large geographical area and involve several jurisdictions, it is important to establish an appropriate management structure for the CMP that identifies key stakeholders, their roles and responsibilities and the interaction between them during the development, implementation and review stages of the plan.

Insert an outline of the governance framework under which the CMP would be conducted, from the development stage through to the implementation and review stages.

3.2 Timeline for a CMP

Identify the various stages of a CMP with tasks and indicative timings for each stage as well as outlining which parties may be involved with the tasks identified.

4. SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND

4.1 Biology, Status and Environmental Parameters

Insert concise background information on the nominated population(s), including:

- population structure;
- abundance and population trends;
- distribution, migration and movements; and
- basic biology (feeding, reproduction and survivorship).

Identify any knowledge gaps that exist in current data.

4.2 Critical Habitats

If habitats are identified that are deemed as critical for the recovery and/or protection of a target cetacean population, the extent of these habitats and the purposes that they are used for should be outlined here.

4.3 Attributes of the Population to be Monitored

The ultimate success or failure of any CMP depends on improvements in the conservation status of the target population(s) – this can only be achieved by monitoring. Depending on the objectives of the CMP and the nature of the threats a population faces, a variety of candidate ‘attributes’ of the population can be considered for monitoring over time, to determine the success of the overall plan and/or individual actions and to amend the CMP where necessary.

This section should include a description of the attributes of the population that will be monitored (e.g.: abundance (relative and/or absolute), reproductive rates, survivorship, health, prey status, range) and an evaluation of the feasibility of detecting trends with current methods given that changes occur (e.g. using power analyses).

5. THREATS, MITIGATION MEASURES AND MONITORING

5.1 Identification of Threats

This section should provide a summary of the known or suspected threats (both direct and incidental) to the nominated cetacean population/critical habitat. This should be summarised in tabular form (such as that seen below) but should also include a discussion of each explaining the rationale behind the summary. Where appropriate, reference should be made to actions within the CMP. Note: the first five columns in the table will form part of the nomination process.

Table: Summary of actual and potential threats to the nominated population.

Actual/Potential Threat	Cause or related activity	Evidence	Possible Impact	Priority for Action	Relevant Actions	Party Responsible
Directly lethal threats						
<i>e.g. Entrapment in set nets</i>	<i>Set net fishing</i>	<i>Strong</i>	<i>Mortality +/- or serious injury</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>RES-01</i>	<i>Participating range states</i>
<i>e.g. Entanglements in Other Types of Fishing Gear</i>						
Sub-lethal threats						
<i>e.g. Noise, pollution, etc</i>						

5.2 Mitigation Measures and Monitoring

This section should include identified mitigation measures to address key threats and how the mitigation measures will be monitored. For example:

5.1 *Entrapment in Set Nets*

Undertake the following mitigation measures (MIT-01, 02, 03) and the following monitoring measures (MON-01, 02) to facilitate the conservation of species A in the area designated XYZ.

Undertake the following public awareness raising measures PACB-01, 02 to promote the conservation of species A in the area designated XYZ.

5.2 *Entanglements in Other Types of Fishing Gear*

6. ACTIONS

These form the key component of any CMP. While there may be overlap, these can generally be incorporated under the following categories:

- co-ordination (COORD);
- public awareness and capacity building (PACB);
- research essential for providing adequate management advice or filling in knowledge gaps (RES);
- monitoring (MON); and
- mitigation measures (MIT).

It is important that actions be realistic and effective. They should be well specified (usually 1-2 pages for each action) and generally include the following information, where relevant:

- (1) Description (including concise objective, threats to which relevant and how, rationale, target data or activity, method, implementation timeline);
- (2) Actors (responsible for implementation and relevant stakeholders);
- (3) Evaluation (actors responsible);
- (4) Priority (importance to the plan and feasibility);
- (5) Costs (where appropriate).

6. SUMMARY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIONS

Insert a tabular summary of all actions here, referring to the 1-2 page detailed summaries (see above). In addition, include here an implementation strategy or designate responsibility for developing and implementing an implementation strategy along with a Management Framework.

Outline how the actions will meet the short, medium or long term objectives of the plan.

6.1 Stakeholder Engagement, Public Awareness and Education

Insert here a strategy and information on stakeholder engagement, public awareness and any education activities that will be undertaken during the CMP implementation stage (e.g. via websites, meetings etc.).

6.2 Reporting Process

A CMP should be considered a living document and once the implementation stage begins, a process of reporting and review is essential to determine how well the CMP is meeting its overall objectives and implementation timelines and milestones.

Insert process for reporting on CMP progress to the IWC (including a timeframe).

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

As a CMP should be based upon best scientific knowledge and guided by the principles and practices of adaptive management, it is important for a CMP to identify any published works relevant to effective implementation of the plan.

Insert bibliography here.

8. APPENDICES

Insert additional background and contextual information in appendices. For example, the original CMP nomination could be supplied here.

RECOMMENDATION 10.9 - RECOMMENDATION ON CAPACITY BUILDING
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1. Stranding network, referring to Res.1.10 and Res 3.29:

The Scientific Committee **reiterates** the value and role of stranding networks in providing valuable data for cetaceans' conservation. It **recommends** capacity building efforts in countries where stranding networks are either not efficiently operating or absent, including the training of personal on how to deal with stranding events including rehabilitation and euthanasia (see Item live -strandings) and how to run a necropsy (see Item standard protocols). The Scientific Committee also **recommends** that the local authorities be involved in the network and intervention team.

2. Research programmes

The Scientific Committee **recommends**:

- the identification and prioritisation of research needs (e.g. photo-identification, abundance surveys, assessment of interaction with fisheries and other anthropogenic impacts) in sub-regions of the ACCOBAMS area, in collaboration with RAC/SPA and Black Sea Commission, to increase the research and output quality using standardised protocols and approaches (e.g. see Item survey guidelines) – this includes fieldwork training and data analysis/publication.
- Continued emphasis on photo-identification as a priority research technique in the ACCOBAMS area (see Resolution 5.2) - this includes the use of common platforms (e.g. Intercet – see discussion under Item 4.2.7) to compare data from neighbouring regions and as well as to provide a wider view of bottlenose dolphins' distribution;
- That the capacity building programme should include a follow-up on the research activities in each sub-region as part of efforts to ensure the continuity of the programme to achieve its long term goals;
- That the training should be organised in collaboration with the countries in the region to ensure the participation of maximum number of trainees;
- That the Secretariat assists research institutes to apply to potential donors for necessary research equipment.

3. Promoting education and public awareness (Res.5.2)

The Scientific Committee **recommends**:

- Promotion of ACCOBAMS module on cetology (Master Program in French and English) for use in relevant educational programs in the ACCOBAMS area;
- Promotion of public awareness campaigns regarding cetaceans' research and conservation, targeting different stakeholders as an initial step prior to facilitating effective capacity building programmes.

RECOMMENDATION 10.10 - RECOMMENDATION ON LIVE STRANDINGS

Cetacean strandings can present national governments with specific challenges that are exacerbated when they become a transboundary event. They involve multiple jurisdictions and policy sectors and often require a rapid response; usually under conditions of both media and social pressure with a high emotive content. Given this, these events can turn into a crisis, in particular during live or mass strandings, when euthanasia may need to be considered as a human option, and those related to epidemic or anthropogenic causes.

The joint ACCOBAMS/Pelagos workshop on cetacean live stranding held in Monaco on 29-30 October 2014 (ACCOBAMS-Pelagos WLS/2014/Doc 25) proposed harmonized Procedures in case of cetacean live stranding stressing that in case of transboundary emergencies involving cetaceans rapid intervention, participation and cooperation from different experts, stakeholders and within scientific organizations are required to ensure an effective response and an adequate coordination.

The Scientific Committee noted that the IWC held an Expert Workshop in September 2013 (IWC/65/WKM&AWIRep01) that addressed many of the concerns noted above. In particular it stressed the need for human safety to paramount, developed a decision tree related to rescue versus euthanasia, provided an authoritative and comprehensive review of various euthanasia methods, provided advice on data collection protocols and provided advice on event management. It also recognised the special challenges presented by large mass strandings and has proposed a future workshop on that topic. The Scientific Committee **welcomed** information about this workshop but recognised that there was insufficient time to review it at this meeting.

With respect to live strandings, the Scientific Committee **recommends** that in conjunction with the IWC and ASCOBANS and taking into account the reports of the joint ACCOBAMS/Pelagos Workshop and the expert IWC Workshop:

- 1) the development of common definitions of terms related to stranding events;
- 2) the development of a common protocol for necropsies that also takes into account available resources throughout the region;
- 3) the development of a common data collection protocol for live strandings;
- 4) the development of principles and guidelines for handling live strandings events (including prevention), recognising the cultural, political, socioeconomic differences between countries;
- 5) the development of training and exchange programmes for national stranding networks aimed to creating a common framework for rescue teams, in particular with respect to rehabilitation, intervention on live strandings and euthanasia procedures and dealing with the public;
- 6) a mechanism for sharing of information before during and after emergency stranding events to improve guidelines in the future; and
- 7) the development of regional Task Forces to share expertise, equipment and knowledge.

RECOMMENDATION 10.11 - RECOMMENDATION ON MSFD IMPLEMENTATION

Following the discussion about the results presented in ACCOBAMS-SC10/2015/Doc.24 “Overview of the implementation of EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (regarding Cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and recommendations”, the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee:

- **endorses** the Recommendations provided within the document presented, notably the two higher priority recommendations: (1) complete the questionnaire survey by inviting more Parties to respond and prepare a joint paper for a marine policy journal, and (2) hold a workshop with scientists and monitoring officers to help coordinate national monitoring programmes within MSFD regions in the medium term (the MSFD 6-years cycle).

- **encourages** EU Member States, but also Non-EU-Member States [Parties to ACCOBAMS and of the Barcelona Convention under which the EcAp initiative is being developed] to include cetaceans in all 5 potentially relevant descriptors (D1, D4, D8, D10 & D11) as threat to GES.

- **encourages** EU Member States, but also Non-EU-Member States [Parties to ACCOBAMS] to integrate conservation action reflecting objectives, decisions, recommendations and information by ACCOBAMS that suit reaching GES within their national Programme of Measures.

RECOMMENDATION 10.12 - RECOMMENDATION FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**LANGUAGE AT THE MEETINGS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

The Scientific Committee **noted** that using a single language will facilitate the work of the Committee, particularly when drafting the report and recommendations. It **recognised** that at the present meeting almost all participants used English. Further, the Scientific Committee **acknowledged** that English has become the main language in international scientific communication, including conferences and peer-review publishing. In addition, it **noted** that simultaneous translations incur large costs and may restrict late-evening discussions.

The Scientific Committee therefore **recommends** that, depending on the composition of the next Scientific Committee, serious consideration be given to using English as the primary language at the meetings of the Scientific Committee, without the need for translation facilities.

LENGTH AND NATURE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Scientific Committee **expressed concern** over the lack of time to deal with the amount of workload during its meetings. The Scientific Committee also **noted** it is imperative to dedicate sufficient time to carry out its work, to provide the best possible scientific guidance to the MOP.

The Scientific Committee therefore **requests** that an additional day be allocated to meetings of the Scientific Committee, to facilitate proper scientific examination of materials presented, development of recommendations for scientific work, and, in the case of meeting prior to the MOP, the development of recommendations and advice to the MOP on Resolutions and the Work Programme. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee **noted** that with only two meetings in the triennium, it has insufficient time to ensure progress with scientific priorities. In particular, much of the first meeting is spent discussing the instructions from the previous MOP, whilst the second meeting is spent developing recommendations for the following MOP. Recognizing budgetary concerns, the Scientific Committee **recommends** that serious consideration be given to three meetings per triennium, including the possibility of having one smaller operational meeting. This should be examined further by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the Scientific Committee.

ANNEX 2 –List of meetings attending by the Chair of the Scientific Committee or other members

65b IWC Scientific Committee meeting (12-21 May 2014)

The IWC has been involved in issues related to ACCOBAMS since its creation and a representative is a member of the Scientific Committee. The rationale behind the participation to the IWC SC meeting was to strengthen the existing collaboration between ACCOBAMS and IWC in overlapping issues and conservation concerns for cetaceans.

The Chair participated to several meetings of sub-committees, presenting potential collaborations with ACCOBAMS and referring to ACCOBAMS work-plan and ongoing activities. Some of these interventions are visible in the IWC SC report (<https://archive.iwc.int/pages/search.php?search=%21collection73&k=>). A summary of the interventions follows :

- create links between Croatian researchers and the ongoing ACCOBAMS effort on bottlenose dolphins conservation plan;
- provide text for the joint preparation of a working paper on the recent beaked whales stranding off Crete;
- update the members of the Environmental Concerns (E) working group about the ACCOBAMS workshop on climate change (Monaco, June 2014) and suggest to present the report at the next SC meeting (2015);
- update the members of the Human Induced Mortality (HIM) working group on ongoing activities in the ACCOBAMS region on entanglements and ghost gears and impacts on cetaceans;
- help drafting the recommendations for the Eastern Mediterranean within the Small Cetaceans (SM) working group, with an emphasis on the ACCOBAMS work-plan and research priorities;
- present the ACCOBAMS intention to consider drafting Conservation and Management Plans (CMP) for Mediterranean cetaceans and stressing the need to liaise with the IWC in this process;
- suggest to link with ACCOBAMS during the preparation of an IWC workshop on entanglement and ghost gear, to benefit from the expertise on this issue and the work by GFCM;
- strengthening the urgent need to organize and conduct the Basin Wide Survey, known as the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI).

Joint IWC-SPAW ship strikes Workshop Panama (17-20 June 2014)

A Joint IWC-SPAW Workshop to Address Collisions Between Marine Mammals and Ships with a Focus on the Wider Caribbean was held in June 2014 in Panama. 30 participants from all around the globe were present, including scientists, representatives from IWC member countries, the shipping industry, as well as local and regional institutions. The workshop evaluated a number of existing operational mitigation measures, for example the adaption of Traffic Separation Schemes (TSSs), speed reductions, Areas To Be Avoided (ATBA) and the like. As such, measures will be implemented through the International Maritime Organisation (IMO); the Workshop recommended that an appropriate mechanism be developed to encourage consideration of cetacean distribution and occurrences when new or revised routing schemes are brought to the International Maritime Organisation. A variety of technological approaches were looked at, too, but the general Workshop conclusion on such tools was that none of the solutions available at the moment are perfect or assured to address the problem, or are applicable worldwide. Instead, a combination of complementary tools adapted to the biological and economical characteristics of the concerned area, coupled with adequate education measures, is the best option to significantly reduce the risk of ship strikes. The discussion of potential actions thus focused on specific data collection, targeted outreach to vessel operators, stranding networks, direct collaborations with shipping stakeholders or navies as well as the development of guidance documents for the shipping industry, such as the ones recently developed by IWC targeting cruise operators and regatta organizers, respectively. Further recommendations also include that placing emphasis on the collection and reporting of data to the IWC Global Ship Strikes Database is most important, as this will be key to facilitate a proper

evaluation, prioritisation and monitoring of ship strikes, and assist in the development of mitigation measures. With reference to MPAs, the workshop raised the idea of developing a 'go slow' ethic or speed limits for marine mammal protected areas.

With respect to mitigation measures that would also apply in the Mediterranean region (and in fact, globally) the Workshop agreed that those that separate whales from vessels (or at least minimise co-occurrence) in space and time are the most effective. The Workshop emphasised that the most effective and only demonstrated general method to ameliorate lethal strikes available at present is reduced speed. As long as technological solutions with proven effectiveness are not there and scientific knowledge around the issue is still relatively scarce, proper reporting will be paramount. This could be facilitated e.g. with a close coordination with the global data base at IWC. Finally, it is of great importance that stakeholders (including authorities, scientists, NGOs, mariners) engage in a permanent dialogue and that increasing engagement between decision makers with the maritime sector is paramount. The latter should be realized both on the individual level by exchanging views with and informing companies and maritime schools/curricula, as well as on the political level, with ACCOBAMS range countries actively engaging with the IMO.

Scientific Council of the CMS (30 June to 3 July 2014)

Preliminary email exchanges and meeting in person with the Secretariat had highlighted a series of points in the agenda where a contribution by ACCOBAMS was appropriate. Reference to the ACCOBAMS work-plan was mentioned in several occasions and potential collaborations and joint effort on issues that would benefit from a synergistic approach were suggested. In particular the following interventions were made:

- Agenda item 4.3 Gap Analysis. It was noted that it would be important to draft a proper recommendation regarding IUCN Data Deficient species and the need to invest effort to provide proper assessments.
- Agenda item 7.1 Criteria for listing species. The meeting debated whether Vulnerable species should be included in the Appendices I and II of the CMS. This was particular important since the Mediterranean population of Cuvier's beaked whale was suggested to be included in Appendix I. After discussion it was agreed that also VU species could be considered for Appendix I, if enough evidence of a decline or of concrete threats are affecting the population.
- Agenda item 7.2 Proposal for amendment to CMS Appendices. A proposal to include Mediterranean Cuvier's beaked whales in Appendix I was presented by the Chair ACCOBAMS SC. The Aquatic Mammal Working Group approved the proposal and suggested to consider concerted actions for this species in the Mediterranean region. ACCOBAMS offered to lead the concerted actions; further contacts with the CMS Secretariat will be established to provide details on the work to be done.
- Agenda item 10.1 Climate change. The COP appointed Councilor on CC presented the Programme of Work and the draft resolution. The ACCOBAMS workshop on Climate Change was presented, including the support to the CMS PoW and the recommendations presented in the report. It was also requested that ACCOBAMS be considered as a member of the CMS working group on CC and the request was accepted with interest by the meeting.
- Agenda item 10.2 Renewable Energy Technologies Deployment. The Resolution 4.17 (Guidelines to address the impact of anthropogenic noise on Cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area) adopted during the Fourth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Parties (9-12 November 2010, Monaco), which deals with best practices - established for each noise-producing human activity at sea - to be employed in the ACCOBAMS area, was presented. The joint ASCOBANS-ACCOBAMS working group on noise was also mentioned and the CMS was invited to be part of the WG. The request was accepted and approved by the meeting. It was also suggested to add a reference to ACCOBAMS resolution 4.17 when mentioning the different decisions by CMS and related agreements in the draft resolution presented in doc 10.2 annex 1 page 4.

- Agenda item 10.14. COP appointed councillor for Aquatic Mammals. Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara was suggested as future councillor; ACCOBAMS strongly supported this nomination, by underlining the long lasting involvement in ACCOBAMS related matters by Notarbartolo and the broad range of expertise to fulfil this role.
- Agenda item 10.15 By-catch. ongoing effort on this issue in the ACCOBAMS region was presented, introducing the project, developed by the Secretariat in collaboration with the Secretariat of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), for improving the conservation of endangered marine species with respect to fishing activities in the Mediterranean.
- Agenda 4.4 Structure of the Scientific Council. It was noticed that the Annex 2 of CMS/ScC18/doc 4.4 on ScC restructuring presents information on the ACCOBAMS SC were not updated. Resolution 5.3 was sent to the CMS Secretariat to update the Annex and present the correct information to the next CoP.
- Support to the draft resolution on live captures on dolphins was granted to WDC. Discussions with the Monaco representative were also made to support the offer by ACCOBAMS to lead concerted actions on beaked whales and to support the draft resolution on live captures.

3rd Biennial Conference on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Southern Mediterranean Countries Jounieh (Lebanon) (21-23 October 2014)

The Chair and the Task manager on Conservation of Cetacean Critical Habitats participated to the meeting. The Chair presented a talk on 'Research and continuous monitoring: aerial surveys and satellite telemetry in the Central Mediterranean Sea', illustrating a series of research projects aimed at assessing presence, distribution, movements and abundance of cetaceans in the Pelagos Sanctuary and illustrating how these projects may implement and contribute to the ACCOBAMS work-plan. Léa David, the task manager, participated to a practical capacity building workshop on bottlenose dolphins photo-identification, with a cruise in the bay of Beirut onboard a research vessel to look for dolphins and to engage in photo-identification effort.

Several recommendations were presented and discussed during the Conference and are included in the report, which is available from the Secretariat. One important aspect that was discussed and reiterated during the meeting regarded the good results available for the Southern Mediterranean Countries and the need to publish on peer reviewed journals the data; it was suggested that the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee would help in facilitating this process.

3rd International Conference on Marine Mammals Protected Areas (ICMMPA, Adelaide, Australia) and IUCN World Park Congress (Sydney, Australia) (6-16 November 2014)

The theme of the 3rd International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (ICMMPA 3), "Important Marine Mammal Areas – A Sense of Place, A Question of Size" gave attention to developing and refining criteria for the identification of important marine mammal areas and to addressing the challenges and strategies of managing very large and very small marine mammal protected areas. New developments in science and management were highlighted, training and capacity-building sessions were offered, providing a forum for sharing information on approaches to marine mammal management and conservation including knowledge products developed by the newly formed IUCN MMPA Task Force.

During the participation to the Conference, the Chair had the occasion to refer to the ACCOBAMS work-plan in several occasions, stressing the need to move further on the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative and other priority actions. In particular the following presentations were made:

- Panel 3: How Are Marine Mammals Being Managed in the Large MPAs. A presentation was made during this panel in plenary meeting on: Looking beyond Pelagos to conserve marine mammals of the Mediterranean. During the talk, data on the recent aerial surveys in the Central Mediterranean Sea and on the satellite telemetry project were presented, stressing the need to focus conservation efforts on a wide area, including the Gulf of Lions and the sea around the Balearic Islands.

- Workshop 1: Marine Spatial Planning. A presentation was given during this workshop on the need to apply Marine Spatial Planning and an Ecosystem Based Management approach in the ACCOBAMS area, focusing on the Pelagos Sanctuary and on the North Western Mediterranean Pelagic Ecosystem EBSA.
- Workshop 9: Examining the Unique Threats in MMPAs in Heavily Developed Coastlines. During this workshop a presentation was given on: Ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea: assessment and mitigation measures. The ship strike case of the Mediterranean was presented, stressing the need to joint effort for the assessment of mitigation measures and for the collection of ship strike records from the whole ACCOBAMS area. The fruitful relationship with the IWC was presented, referring to the joint workshops and recommendations prepared.

During the World Park Congress in Sydney, the Chair was invited to participate to the event on Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas: roadmap to achieve the Aichi targets organized by MedPAN. Goal of this event was to briefly present the actions needed to establish an ecological network of Marine Protected Areas which is effectively and sustainably managed identified by the 2012 Mediterranean MPA Forum and illustrate the Roadmap aimed at achieving, by 2020, the objectives set by international commitments.

During the session, the Mediterranean community did showcase how different stakeholder groups are implementing the recommendations of the Mediterranean MPA Roadmap.

The presentation has been organized around different level of support provided at:

- local level (MPA managers)
- national level (national authorities and MPA agencies)
- Mediterranean level (Barcelona Convention and other institutions, MPA regional network, NGOs...).

The Chair intervention focused on Areas of special importance for cetacean conservation identified by ACCOBAMS. The action on MPA in the 2014-2016 work-plan, mentioning the 2015 workshop on 'Effectiveness of MPA with Critical Habitat for Cetaceans' and illustrating the Terms of Reference for the workshop, was presented.

Regular Meeting of the Black Sea Commission (November 2014)

The Task Manager on Capacity Building (including public awareness and communication) participated, representing ACCOBAMS, to the Regular Meeting of the Black Sea Commission. The revised Black Sea dolphins Conservation Plan (CP) was presented and supported by the chairs of Fisheries and other Marine Living Resources (FOMLR) and CBD Advisory Groups and by the member states except Russia. Bulgarian commissioner pointed out some issues but she was supportive as a whole. Russia claimed that the CP was based on ACCOBAMS to which Russia is not a member of. It was explained that technical support was offered by ACCOBAMS but the CP is only for Black Sea dolphins, prepared by the experts of Black Sea countries. They further claimed that the CP should be prepared in the format in accordance with Bucharest Convention and its strategies (which have little connection to cetaceans).

The Commission elaborated a draft resolution (presented here below), which will be probably adopted in a few weeks. Some revision, to align with Bucharest Convention, will be needed and some actions, which are directly related to ACCOBAMS (such as Action 1), will probably have to be deleted. The effort will probably continue until next year for possible adoption.

Draft Resolution

The Commission appreciated the assistance and efforts of ACCOBAMS in elaborating the draft Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans for 2014-2018 and requests the CBD and FOMLR AGs to work in further aligning it with relevant BSC documents

The draft Conservation Plan for the Black Sea Cetaceans for 2015-2019 shall be submitted to the BSC for consideration and further adoption at the next BSC Meeting.

9th Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Bureau (Paris, 9-10 December 2014)

The Chair participated to the meeting of the ACCOBAMS Bureau and presented a report of the activities carried out by the Scientific Committee. The report of the meeting is available on the ACCOBAMS web page.

1st Meeting on the modus operandi of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee (Monaco, 17-18 December 2014)

The Chair and the Secretariat organized a Scientific Committee operational meeting in Monaco in December 2014. The aim of this meeting was to draw a road map, to assign specific tasks and to facilitate the effective implementation of the work-plan between now and the next SC meeting at the end of 2015, in light of the next MoP in 2016. The meeting was attended by the Chair of the SC, the task managers, the ECS, IWC and IUCN representatives.

The goals of the workshop were (inter alia):

- 1) discuss about the role of the task managers and their involvement in the activities of the SC;
- 2) assign specific tasks to members of the SC to be accomplished before the SC meeting;
- 3) agree on priority actions within the work programme and concentrate effort on these selected actions;
- 4) agree on a modus operandi for the SC to be implemented in the current triennium.

A report of the workshop has been circulated and is available by the Secretariat.

ACCOBAMS newsletter FINS 6(1)

In January 2015 the ACCOBAMS newsletter was published by the Secretariat. The newsletter is now available of the ACCOBAMS web page.

ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative meeting (March 2015)

The Chair participated to the meeting of the Steering Committee for the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative in Gland (Switzerland) on 5-6 March 2015. The main goals of the meeting were:

- (1) review comments received on the Project Identification Form compiled by ACCOBAMS Parties;
- (2) discuss/elaborate a strategy for approaching donors.

During the workshop we reviewed and updated the total budget of the project based on the estimates prepared during the workshop held in Rome. We also discussed whether consider the inclusion of turtles and sea birds surveys or some complementary activities (e.g. water sampling for microplastics?).

A discussion on how to identify and secure the sources of funding followed, in particular:

- how to confirm with Parties and Range States their contribution (mainly in-kind);
- how to approach some funding agencies, in particular the European Commission.

Power Point presentation by partners

A thorough Power Point presentation on 'The implementation of the work plan by ACCOBAMS Partners' has been prepared by the Chair of the Scientific Committee and is available from the Secretariat.

3rd ACCOBAMS Regional Workshops (Menton, 13-17 April 2015)

The Chair participated to the 3rd ACCOBAMS Regional Workshops held in Menton in April 2015. During these workshops, the Chair presented an update on the activities carried out by the Scientific Committee and gathered inputs from the participants to draft and structure the work-plan for the next triennium (2017-2019), to be presented and discussed during the SC meeting, before the Meeting of Parties.

MPAs meeting (Tunis, 27-28 April 2015)

Lea David, Task Manager on MPAs, represented the Secretariat at the ad hoc meeting for the elaboration of the 'Roadmap towards a comprehensive, ecologically representative, effectively connected and efficiently managed network of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas by 2020' (Tunis, Tunisia, 27-28 April 2015) organized by the RAC/SPA.

This roadmap was elaborated to guide the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and harmonize their efforts to achieve the globally agreed Aichi Target 11. To this end, the activities proposed in the roadmap were oriented towards achieving the following four Strategic Objectives:

Strategic Objective 1: strengthen systems of protected areas at national and Mediterranean levels, including in the open seas and in ABNJ, as a contribution to the relevant globally agreed goals and targets.

Strategic Objective 2: improve the system of Mediterranean MPAs through effective and equitable management.

Strategic Objective 3: promote the sharing of environmental and socio-economic benefits of Mediterranean MPAs, and the MPAs integration into the broader context of sustainable use of the marine environment and the implementation of the ecosystem and marine spatial planning approaches.

Strategic Objective 4: ensure the stability of the system of Mediterranean MPAs by enhancing their financial sustainability.

66a IWC Scientific Committee meeting (San Diego, 22-31 May 2015)

ACCOBAMS and the IWC have a long collaboration background, being involved in conservation issues related since its creation; to strengthen this joint effort, a IWC representative is a member of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee. ACCOBAMS has been represented at IWC Scientific Committee meeting and the rationale behind my participation to the IWC SC meeting was to strengthen the existing collaboration in overlapping issues and conservation concerns for cetaceans. In particular, I have been referred in several occasions to the ACCOBAMS work-plan (2014-2016) and suggested potential collaborations and joint effort on issues that would benefit from a joint and synergistic approach. In addition, the SC members have been informed about current activities in the ACCOBAMS area that may be relevant for the IWC research efforts.

The Chair participated to several meetings of sub-committees, presenting potential collaborations with ACCOBAMS, referring to the ACCOBAMS work-plan and informing members on ongoing activities. Some of these interventions have been reported to the rapporteurs and are visible in the IWC SC report (<https://archive.iwc.int/pages/view.php?ref=5429&k=>). A summary of the interventions follows :

- the climate change workshop organized in Monaco was briefly presented during the 'Environmental concern' sub-committee and the report was made available for the interested members of the SC;
- support was offered to Greece which is in the process of contacting the IMO to suggest shifting shipping lanes offshore from the Hellenic Trench, to avoid crossing areas with high concentrations of sperm whales;
- a paper describing the third year of work carried out by the IWC ship strike data coordinators up until May 2015 was presented. The activities carried out in the past 12 months resulted in a variety of outreach actions, with a large number of further contacts being established, including follow-up on the guidance documents for sailing and cruise ships drafted previously. Significant effort has also been dedicated to increasing user friendliness, as well as the technical functioning of the IWC ship strike database, which is currently being overhauled. Ongoing contacts with the ACCOBAMS and the Pelagos Sanctuary were discussed, to update on the possible synergies in assessing and mitigating ship strikes;
- a paper describing a study using satellite telemetry on Mediterranean fin whales to identify critical habitats that might assist mitigation of ship strikes was also presented. The data presented provide further evidence for the importance that the Strait of Sicily plays in the central Mediterranean Sea and supports the proposition

to establish an effective seasonal/dynamic protection regime in the Strait of Sicily area, in terms of a Marine Protected Area or a SPAMI, with a designated action plan to address actual and potential threats. The data also demonstrate the use of telemetry to assess fin whale critical habitats and areas of high habitat use, where concentrated effort to mitigate human induced threats such as ship strikes can be prioritised;

- the ACCOBAMS resolution that reaffirms that anthropogenic marine noise is a form of pollution, caused by the introduction of energy into the marine environment, which can have adverse effects on marine life (Resolution 5.15) was presented. The members were informed that, in accordance with the ACCOBAMS Working Programme 2014-2016, the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and the Secretariat are going to: (a) Identify anthropogenic noise/cetaceans interactions hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area; (b) Map and develop a monitoring of sea ambient noise, particularly in cetaceans critical habitats. It was suggested that a report of this work should be presented at SC/66b in May/June 2016;
- it was presented that ACCOBAMS is addressing the issue of MMOs and Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM) within the Mediterranean Sea, with the final objective that ACCOBAMS becomes the reference body on the MMO issue in the Mediterranean and Black Seas. The next steps will include a working document to be presented at the next ACCOBAMS scientific committee meeting at the end of 2015, to be turned into a draft Resolution to be approved by Countries at the next meeting of parties in 2016;
- members of the SC were also informed that there is a current effort within the ACCOBAMS area on micro plastics. Members were informed about projects that are ongoing and planned for the near future, which will look into concentration of microplastics in large cetaceans and preys in the ACCOBAMS region. Results will be available for discussion at future meetings of the SC;
- members were informed about the ongoing activities related to whale watching in the ACCOBAMS area.

Statement of Concern

A Statement of Concern on past and proposed offshore exploration activities in the Adriatic Sea has been developed by the Joint Noise Working Group in response to a request from the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee Chairman. In line with the new Operational Procedures of the JNWG, this document was submitted through the Secretariat and presented to the Scientific Committee Chairman. The document is available for consultation from the Secretariat.

The SC has also asked the Joint Noise Working Group to consider drafting a statement regarding the whole Mediterranean Basin and subsequently focusing on regional statements to cover sensitive areas, with cetaceans critical habitats.

Joint GFCM, RAC/SPA and ACCOBAMS meeting on protection of marine areas in the Mediterranean and Black Sea (Gammarth, 9-12 June 2015)

Lea David, Task Manager on MPAs, participated to this joint initiative of three organizations (RAC/SPA, GFCM and ACCOBAMS) on the effectiveness of marine protected areas (MPAs) containing critical habitats of cetaceans. This joint initiative allowed to bring together 59 experts (including scientists, representatives of NGOs and national administrations) to discuss on actions and tools, mainly area based management measures, for the protection of the marine environment in general. Each organism present its tool (SPAMI for RAC/SPA, FRA for CGPM, Important Area for Cetacean for ACCOBAMS, etc).

The meeting agreed to promote fisheries restricted areas (FRAs) at national and international level as one of the most appropriate tools, especially for the high seas, where to anchor additional protection layers such as MPAs or international recognized labelling such as SPAMIs (Special Protected Area of Mediterranean Importance).

Concerning cetacean, the most important points were that everything should be done to push forward the final process where MPAs declaration process is already ongoing, and implement appropriate conservation measures where it has been identified. It has been considered adopting the IMMA (Important Marine Mammal Area)

denomination proposed by the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force (MMPA TF), when it will be finalized by IUCN, to designate areas important for cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area.

During the meeting, it has been recommended that the collaboration with RAC/SPA, GFCM, IUCN, MedPAN and other relevant organizations on areas of protection for cetaceans is strengthened. The group welcomed the proposal of the three organizations (GFCM, RAC/SPA and ACCOBAMS, in collaboration with IUCN-Med and MedPAN) for a joint strategy to find synergies, avoid duplications and assist their Members in a coordinated manner in adopting multiple designation of spatial based management measures in areas agreed by the concerned parties as deserving special protection.

Effort to “propose new areas of importance for cetacean conservation in the ACCOBAMS area” is currently ongoing. The process is to collect existing synthetic knowledge from all experts in the ACCOBAMS area about cetacean distribution, important habitat, human activities and level of threats. For this purpose:

- Three questionnaires have been send to all focal points and partners of the ACCOBAMS area.
- Contact have been set with GFCM, MedPan and IUCN to exchange GIS layers about MPA and human activities
- GIS data have been searched via Internet, on environmental parameters (bathymetry with canyons and sea-mounts, currents) and also human activities (AIS data, VMS for fishery vessels, etc).
- Contact have been set with OBIS-SEAMAP in order to put the data visible in the ACCOBAMS web-site.

In parallel the following document has been prepared: **Evaluation of the effectiveness of place-based conservation for cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area: a handbook.**

ACCOBAMS 10th Scientific Committee meeting (Nice, 20-22 November 2015)

The 10th Meeting of the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS was convened in Nice from the 20 to 22 October 2015. It was attended by Members of the Scientific Committee and Representatives from International Organizations and Observers including Partners of ACCOBAMS.

This was the last meeting of the SC before the Meeting of the Parties, where customarily draft recommendations, to be turned into draft resolutions and be presented to the MoP, are discussed. In addition, during the SC the ACCOBAMS scientific work-plan for the next triennium (2017-2019) was presented and discussed.

The work-plan is not fully developed and the SC is working on its finalization by email; the next steps will be to have a draft adopted by the SC and presented at the next meeting of the Extended Bureau, to be presented as annex to an *ad hoc* draft resolution at the MoP in November 2016. It is expected that most of the arguments treated under the work-plan will stem from the issues within the recommendations discussed and presented in the SC report and listed below.

One of the ACCOBAMS priority is the so called ‘ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative’, which implies a basin-wide survey to estimate cetaceans density and abundance. An update on the current status of the initiative has been presented, both in terms of logistic and scientific aspects. The Task Manager on ‘cetacean population estimates, will be working in close collaboration with the initiative steering group, to guarantee the rigorous scientific implications of this exercise. Moreover, there will be space for training and capacity building actions. The SC reiterated the strong need to hire a ‘scientific coordinator’ to provide support to the steering group and the Secretariat since the early stages of development of the project.

The need to further elucidate cetacean population structure within the ACCOBAMS area has been stressed, as well to focus on the reassessment, under the IUCN Red List criteria, of those species which are currently listed as Data Deficient and those which has not been assessed yet.

Particular emphasis was devoted to killer whales in the Strait of Gibraltar, underlining the difficult situation between fishermen and depredation activities on blue-fin tunas from killer whales. There is scientific evidence which proves that killer whales are pretty much dependent on blue-fin tuna caught in the Strait of Gibraltar and in order to address this pressing issue, a dedicated workshop with the relevant stakeholders (ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, scientists, fishermen, etc.) has been planned in the near future.

The need to write basin-wide conservation plans for selected species was also discussed and the SC agreed to follow the template, developed and adopted by the International Whaling Commission, of Conservation management Plans

(CMP). These are plans which involve different stakeholders since the beginning and integrate and implement existing regional or national plans.

The issue of noise has been thoroughly discussed, in order to make sure that adequate attention is used when organizing seismic or military activities. The importance of conducting dedicated and rigorous Environmental Impact Assessments has been reiterated and will be part of a specific recommendation.

Ship strikes have been discussed and mitigation measures suggested. The existing collaboration with the International Whaling Commission and the effort to gather information on ship strikes and near misses globally was reiterated and a recommendation to focus on mitigation measure suggested by the International Maritime Organization will be presented to the MoP.

Chemical pollution still represents a main source of concern for cetaceans in the Agreement area and marine litter, including micro-plastics are now very high on the international agenda. A project proposal was presented and discussed, with a recommendation from the SC to evaluate ways to remove plastics from the sea, together with a significant reduction of plastics coming from land.

12 recommendations have been approved by the SC; the complete text are available in the report.

- RECOMMENDATION ON CETACEAN POPULATION ESTIMATES
- RECOMMENDATION ON POPULATION STRUCTURE
- RECOMMENDATION ON THE ASSESSMENT OF IUCN CONSERVATION STATUS
- RECOMMENDATION ON MEDACES
- RECOMMENDATION ON SHIP STRIKES
- RECOMMENDATION ON CETACEAN WATCHING
- RECOMMENDATION ON CAPACITY BUILDING
- RECOMMENDATION ON LIVE STRANDINGS
- RECOMMENDATION ON NOISE
- RECOMMENDATION ON MANAGEMENT CONSERVATION PLANS
- RECOMMENDATION ON MSFD IMPLEMENTATION
- RECOMMENDATION FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Capacity building

The Task Manager on Capacity Building conducted a simple survey with the members of the Scientific Committee in order to understand the priorities in the ACCOBAMS area.

The survey contained the following questions:

1. Can you identify any capacity building activity in the Agreement Area which you find particularly successful? Do you think they need further reinforcement?
2. Can you provide priorities to capacity building activities? (e.g. High priorities to Stranding network, Photo ID training, Low priorities to Cetacean course)
3. Any other suggestion for capacity building in your area (both geographical and expertise)?

Replies from eight members of the Scientific Committee, representing geographical range of the ACCOBAMS were received and presented at the SC meeting.

In conclusion, setting priorities is important to achieve conservation goals in the long term, but the priorities vary greatly according to regions and country. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss priorities on a regional basis, if not on a country basis. On the other hand, the experts in SC can identify more up-to-date issues concerning capacity building, such as new sampling techniques. This kind of capacity building should be encouraged in all ACCOBAMS areas.

10th Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Bureau (Casablanca, Morocco 24-25 November 2015)

The Chair participated to the meeting of the ACCOBAMS Bureau and presented a report of the activities carried out by the Scientific Committee. The report of the meeting is available on the ACCOBAMS web page.

ACCOBAMS newsletter FINS 6(2)

In December 2015 the ACCOBAMS newsletter was published by the Secretariat. The newsletter is available on the ACCOBAMS web.

21st Biennial Conference of The Society for Marine Mammalogy (San Francisco, USA, 13-18 December 2015)

The Chair and Léa David, Task Manager on MPAs, participated to the biennial Conference and the associated workshop, representing the Agreement and presenting updates on the current and planned effort in terms of research and conservation activities in the ACCOBAMS area.

1st Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council of the CMS (18-21 April 2016)

The Chair represented ACCOBAMS at the 1st Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council of the CMS. Preliminary email exchanges with the Secretariat highlighted a series of points in the agenda where a contribution by ACCOBAMS was appropriate. Reference to the ACCOBAMS work-plan and conservation actions was mentioned in several occasions and potential collaborations and joint effort on issues that would benefit from a synergistic approach were suggested. In particular the following interventions were made:

- Agenda item 4 Programme of work. Support with the drafting of the skeleton of the programme of work. It was suggested to follow the ACCOBAMS template.
- Agenda item 10.2.1 Live captures. The CITES resolution prepared by ACCOBAMS on the identification of origin of cetaceans bred or kept in captivity was briefly introduced, stressing the need to identify a Country that would submit the draft Recommendation to the next CITES COP.
- Agenda item 10.2.3 Underwater noise. Support to the document presented, underlining the collaboration of ACCOBAMS within the noise working group.
- Agenda item 10.4.2.1 IMMAs. Mention of the draft resolution and the Mava project implementation within the Mediterranean Sea. Describe the partners and the outcomes (gap analysis, IMMAs, protected area template in the Strait of Sicily).
- Swim with dolphins. Link with ACCOBAMS and Pelagos Sanctuary and interest to be member of the working group.

3rd meeting of the ACCOBAMS Extended Bureau (Monaco, 28-29 April, 2016)

The Chair participated to the meeting of the ACCOBAMS Extended Bureau and presented a report on the evaluation carried out by the Scientific Committee on the proposals to be funded under the framework of the ACCOBAMS Supplementary Conservation Fund. Based on the evaluation, a list of projects were prepared and following the discussion it was decided which projects to fund. The report of the meeting is available on the ACCOBAMS web page.

Gap Analysis workshop (Nice, France, 18-20 May 2016)

The Chair, the Task Manager on Cetaceans Critical Habitats and the Secretariat participated to a workshop on assessing a Gap Analysis within the Mediterranean Sea organized by the Duke University on the U.S. During the workshop the Chair and the Secretariat had the occasion to discuss with the U.S. Navy, which was represented at the meeting by the Sixth Fleet based in Napoli (Italy), the possibility of supporting the effort to implement the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative.

66b IWC Scientific Committee meeting (Bled, Slovenia, 6-16 June 2016)

ACCOBAMS and the IWC have a long collaboration history, being involved in conservation issues related since its creation; to strengthen this joint effort, a IWC representative is a member of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee. ACCOBAMS has been represented at IWC Scientific Committee meeting and the rationale behind this participation is to strengthen the existing collaboration in overlapping issues and conservation concerns for cetaceans. In particular, the Chair referred in several occasions to the ACCOBAMS work-plan and suggested potential collaborations and joint

effort on issues that would benefit from a joint and synergistic approach. In addition, the SC members have been informed about current activities in the ACCOBAMS area that may be relevant for the IWC research efforts.

- The ACCOBAMS representative informed the participants of the Small Cetaceans (SM) sub-committee about the progress on the so called ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI): a synoptic survey to be conducted in the ACCOBAMS area to estimate density and abundance of cetaceans. The survey has been discussed and endorsed by the SM sub-committee over the last few years and it is considered one of the top priorities under the ACCOBAMS work-plan. The ACCOBAMS Secretariat has received funding from private foundations and from Countries and fieldwork is planned to be carried out either in summer 2017 or 2018. Contacts have been established with SCAN III coordinator to warrant consistency in data collection protocols across Europe;
- support from ACCOBAMS was offered to Greece which is in the process of contacting the IMO to suggest shifting shipping lanes offshore from the Hellenic Trench, to avoid crossing areas with high concentrations of sperm whales;
- a paper describing the fourth year of work carried out by the IWC ship strike data coordinators up until May 2016 was presented. The activities carried out in the past 12 months resulted in a variety of outreach actions, with a large number of further contacts being established, including follow-up on the guidance documents for sailing and cruise ships drafted previously. Significant effort has also been dedicated to increasing user friendliness, as well as the technical functioning of the IWC ship strike database, which is currently being overhauled. Ongoing contacts with the ACCOBAMS and the Pelagos Sanctuary were discussed, to update on the possible synergies in assessing and mitigating ship strikes. The draft resolution on ship strikes to be discussed at the next ACCOBAMS Meeting of Parties was also presented;
- the ACCOBAMS representative presented a working paper illustrating the effort currently ongoing by the joint CMS, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS Noise Working Group on advising on sensitive areas for offshore exploration activities in the Mediterranean Sea;
- the ACCOBAMS representative also presented a document focusing on identifying areas of high anthropogenic pressure on the marine environment, as a key element for an effective environmental management and for mitigating impacts. As underwater noise is considered a major threat for cetaceans, the ACCOBAMS Agreement has undertaken a work aiming at identifying noise hotspots and areas of potential conflicts with cetacean conservation. The global aim of this project is to gather baseline knowledge on noise-producing human activities in the Mediterranean Sea.
- Members of the Whale Watching (WW) sub-committee were informed about the ongoing activities related to whale watching in the ACCOBAMS area, with a request to consider the chair of the ACCOBAMS working group on whale watching for future reference.
- Sandro Mazzariol also participated to the meeting, presenting the participants of the Environmental Concern (E) sub-committee the ongoing effort within the ACCOBAMS region on strandings and necropsy protocols.

IUCN World Conservation Congress (Hawai'i, USA, 1-5-September 2016)

The Chair participated to the IUCN World Conservation Congress, Planet at the Crossroads, participating in several meeting discussing the ongoing conservation effort within the Mediterranean and the Black Seas. In particular, the following events were selected:

- *Regional MPA Networks: their contribution to global challenges.* The session aims to emphasize the importance and added value of regional "human" networks of MPA managers to achieve Aichi target 11 and to contribute to climate change challenges.

- *Regional MPA Networks: Contribution to Aichi Target 11 in Regional Seas and sub-regions, and other challenges.* Regional MPA networks and their partners in the different Regional Seas launch a joint mobilisation.
- *Blue Economy: Conservation Trust Funds and other innovative financial instruments for MPAs and marine ecosystems.* The session will highlight results and ongoing efforts that help leverage additional financial means to the benefit of marine and coastal ecosystem protection.

In several occasions the Chair presented the activities currently undergoing within the ACCOBAMS area, specifically focusing on the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative.

Current work in progress:

- ✓ The Chair and the Task Manager on Conservation of cetaceans critical habitats are collaborating with the Secretariat in the preparation of a workshop planned for October 2016 on identifying Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) in the Mediterranean Sea.
- ✓ The Task Manager on Interaction with fisheries is working on drafting Conservation Plans for cetacean in the Spanish waters and in assessing the IUCN cetacean species currently listed as Data Deficient (DD).
- ✓ Effort is currently being devoted to facilitate exchanges between scientists and stakeholders for the implementation of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI).

ANNEX IX

REPORT OF THE BLACK SEA SUB-REGIONAL COORDINATION UNIT INCLUDING ACTIVITIES FROM NON-PARTIES

ANNEX IX - REPORT OF THE BLACK SEA SUB-REGIONAL COORDINATION UNIT INCLUDING ACTIVITIES FROM NON-PARTIES

MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT (MA)

MA 1	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION		
MA 1 a	Establish regular communication		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ³⁵
1- Establish regular platform of communication to inform all relevant subjects about ongoing activities, cooperation possibilities, project call of proposals and other relevant information	Active e-mailing list (regular exchange of information)		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Maintain and regularly update ACCOBAMS database , including information about all cetacean conservation related scientists and experts operating in the region	New and updated information filled into ACCOBAMS database		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Continue organising regional workshops with representatives of Parties and introducing participation of representatives of Scientific Committee	Regional workshops organised in 2015		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
4- Continue organising biennial conferences for the Southern Mediterranean countries	Biennial conferences organised in 2014		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
5- Regularly update ACCOBAMS web-site , including FINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New and accurate information available on the web-site FINS regularly published 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

³⁵ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

MA 2	INVOLVEMENT OF ALL KEY STAKEHOLDERS		
MA 2 a	Strengthen involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.2/ 2.30 / 3.8 / 4.8/ 4.20			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ³⁶
<p>1- Strengthen existing partnerships: GFCM, IMO, CMS and relevant CMS agreements such as ASCOBANS, the Barcelona Convention, RAC/SPA, the Black Sea Commission, IWC, EU Biodiversity Strategy, marine strategies in the ACCOBAMS area (MSFD³⁷), CBD Strategy, SAP BIO, ECS, international, regional and local NGOs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the work of relevant GFCM bodies/working groups • Joint project with GFCM on by-catch • Joint activities with ECS • Regular meetings of relevant Secretariats • Cetacean conservation activities included in all relevant regional strategic documents • Regular communication/meetings with representatives of the relevant international NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSC PS participated in the work of relevant ACCOBAMS bodies/working groups • Regular meetings of ACCOBAMS-BSC Secretariats took place • Cetacean conservation activities were included in all relevant regional strategic documents (draft BSIMAP, draft BS SoE Report, revised reporting format etc.) 	
<p>2- Establish new partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accession of all riparian states to the Agreement, • Establish formal partnership with the EC jointly with ASCOBANS and as feasible with assistance from CMS, • Establish formal partnership with NATO – NURC, OGP, ICES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All riparian states are Parties to ACCOBAMS • Participation in the relevant fora and Meetings • Contribution to the determination and monitoring of the GES (MSFD) and favourable conservation status (HD) 		
<p>3- Organise a workshop of Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforcement of synergy between Partners • Harmonisation of activities 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

³⁶ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

³⁷ EC Marine Strategy Framework Directive

MA 3	ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING, IN PARTICULARLY FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES		
MA 3 a	New funding possibilities		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.7/ 3.6/ 5.16/5.5			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ³⁸
1- Appoint one projects preparation/implementation assistance and fundraising officer in the Secretariat	Project and fundraising officer as a member of the Secretariat staff		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Analyse available funding possibilities in the region (EU funds, private funds etc.) and develop a funding strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of available funding possibilities in the region • Funding Strategy in particular for joint projects 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Regularly inform Parties about project call of proposals and other funding possibilities	Information frequently sent via e-mailing list		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
4 - Evaluate projects submitted for funding under the Supplementary Conservation Fund	Project proposals selected for implementation with support from ACCOBAMS		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
5- Encourage development of multilateral/ transboundary projects	Project proposals prepared with assistance of ACCOBAMS bodies		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

³⁸ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

MA 4	IMPLEMENTATION OF AND COMPLIANCE WITH ACCOBAMS		
MA 4 a	Improve the level of implementation of and compliance with ACCOBAMS resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.4			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ³⁹
1- Evaluate work programmes implementation progress and level of resolutions implementation by Parties as a basis for new triennial work programme planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of work programme Reports on implementation by Parties Reports on implementation of the Resolutions 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Propose remedy actions in cases of non compliance and infringements	Proposal of remedy actions		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

MA 5	ACCOBAMS EXTENSION AREA		
MA 5 a	Ensure implementation of the ACCOBAMS's cetacean conservation standards in the adjacent areas		
Relevant Resolutions: A/4.1			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Enforce ratification by Parties of the existing Amendment for geographical extension to the Atlantic	Amendment has entered into force	Ratification of ACCOBAMS agreement by the Republic of Turkey is on final stage	
2- Analyse added value of extension to the adjacent areas, particularly of the Red Sea extension	Proposal of further actions regarding extension of the Agreement		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

³⁹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CONSERVATION ACTIONS (CA)

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 a	Cetacean population estimates and distribution		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴⁰
1- Undertake a comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea using aerial surveys where possible	Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the different parts of the Mediterranean Sea based on results of the survey		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Undertake a comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Black Sea	Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the Black Sea based on results of the survey		
3- Undertake regional comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans	Study reports of distribution and abundance of cetaceans		
4- Undertake a retrospective analysis of the literature and on results of the mentioned comprehensive surveys	Lists and maps of critical habitats by species (including migration routes, biological corridors, breeding/calving and feeding areas)	Chapter “Conservation of Cetaceans” of the State of Black Sea Environment Report (BS SoE Report). Publications on cetaceans in Black Sea.	

⁴⁰ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 b	Population Structure		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.11			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴¹
1- Implement population structure priorities including region-wide and local genetic studies , based on knowledge gap analysis performed in 2013, allowing to identify isolated populations (Greek waters, killer whales in Gibraltar, etc.)	Identification of isolated populations		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 c	Monitoring cetaceans status		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.22/ 3.19			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Monitor mortality trends and cases of animals injured through human activities (e.g. ship strikes), using existing tools (such as MEDACES), at least on triennial basis	Mortality trend reports		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Assess IUCN threat status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and update it regularly, and more specifically gather information to assess the Data Deficient species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threat assessment reports Updates available on the IUCN and, ACCOBAMS websites 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Prepare Red Books of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Region for Mediterranean and Black Seas and communicate with European Union, including Killer whales in the cetaceans of the Mediterranean Sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Books of cetaceans Report on the state of cetaceans 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁴¹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 a	Interaction with fisheries		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.13/ 2.21/ 2.25/ 3.13/ 4.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴²
1- Assess cetaceans bycatch and depredation impacts on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and propose mitigation measures focusing on pilot areas through a joint GFCM/ACCOBAMS project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data on cetacean bycatch in pilot areas the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea and mitigation measures Contribution to GFCM Task 1 Contribution to the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy and MSFD 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 b	Anthropogenic noise		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.16 / 3.10/ 4.17/ 5.15			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴³
1- Identify anthropogenic noise /cetaceans interactions hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area	Overview of noise hot spots	In relevant resolution the BSC supported the efforts of ACCOBAMS Secretariats on <u>underwater noise</u> , it is also mentioned in the draft Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans (2016-2020) regarding shipping impact. The ACCOBAMS Secretariat is currently supporting a project on	

⁴² Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

⁴³ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		mapping the anthropogenic underwater noise in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea.	
2- Monitor all activities in the region including noise component	Overview(s) of approved activities including noise component		
3- Map and develop a monitoring of sea ambient noise, particularly in critical habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of sea ambient noise • Monitoring protocol(s) 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
4- Update a guide for Parties to use mitigation measures	Updated guide to use mitigation measures		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 c	Ship strikes		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.11			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴⁴
1- Identify high risk areas for ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of high risk areas for ship strikes • New shape file in the ACCOBAMS interactive platform 		
2- Promote use of mitigation measures , particularly REPCET system to shipping companies in the region	Ships/boats in areas inhabiting large whales using the REPCET or other systems		
3- Develop a protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities	Protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁴⁴ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 d	Cetacean watching		
Relevant Resolutions: 3.23/ 4.7/ 5.10			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴⁵
1- Promote use of a ACCOBAMS / Pelagos “High quality whale watching” certificate including organisation of training for operators	All states with intensive cetacean watching use labelling		
2- Prepare a framework document regarding national rules on the implementation of a “High quality whale watching” certificate	Framework document regarding national rules on the implementation of a “High quality whale watching” certificate		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Assess the whale watching activities and critical areas for these activities in the Mediterranean Sea	Map of areas of concern due to whale watching activities.		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
4- Prepare guidelines for monitoring cetacean watching development in the Agreement Area and guidelines to develop national databases to store the information	Guidelines for monitoring cetacean watching development in the Agreement Area Guidelines to develop national databases to store the information		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
5- Prepare procedures and forms on data collection from cetacean watching vessels for the Agreement Area	Procedures and forms on data collection for cetacean watching vessels for the Agreement Area		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁴⁵ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 e	Marine debris		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.8			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴⁶
1- Assess the impact of ghost nets on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area: undertake a joint project with MedPOL and GFCM	Assessment of ghost nets impacts on cetaceans		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Assess the impact of plastic bags , microplastic and other plastic materials ingestion on cetaceans in cooperation with existing initiatives, such as IWC : bibliographic synthesis and Scientific Committee recommendation	Assessment of plastic materials impacts on cetaceans by providing bibliographic synthesis		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 f	Climate change		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Assess the impact of climate change : bibliographic synthesis	Bibliographic synthesis		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁴⁶ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 g	Species conservation plans		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.8/ 1.12/ 3.7/ 3.11/ 4.6/ 4.13/5.12/ 5.13/ 5.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴⁷
1- Revise regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans , in cooperation with relevant stakeholders	Revised regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans	With assistance of ACCOBAMS Secretariat, the draft Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans (2016-2020) was revised and aligned in line with BSC documents and was recommended for consideration at 32nd BSC Regular Meeting (October 2016).	
2- Prepare /Adopt Conservation Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuvier's beaked whales, • Fin whale, • Bottlenose dolphin • Killer whales • Long finned pilot whales 	Conservation Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuvier's beaked whales, • Fin whale, • Bottlenose dolphin • Killer whales • Long finned pilot whales 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Adopt / implement/ revise if necessary National Action Plans	Implementation of National Action Plans in most of the ACCOBAMS Parties		

⁴⁷ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 h	Captivity related issues		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴⁸
1- Assess and inventory specimens of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity	Assessment of BS bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity	The item “Bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity” was included into the draft Black Sea Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Program (BSIMAP 2016-2020) and into revised reporting format for Black Sea Fisheries under BSC requirements. Draft Road Map for assessment of bottlenecked dolphins in captivity was elaborated and adopted.	

⁴⁸ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 3	ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT CETACEANS		
CA 3 a	Public awareness		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.23			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁴⁹
1- Introduce ACCOBAMS cetaceans day and promote annual celebration	ACCOBAMS cetaceans day regularly celebrated in the area	ACCOBAMS cetaceans day will be celebrated in the Black Sea area back-to-back with Black Sea Day on 31 st October, 2016	
2- Create and disseminate communication tools such as educational kit	Communication tools distributed to relevant subjects		
3- Organise public awareness related survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey format and instructions Survey report 		

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 a	Functional stranding networks and responses to emergency situation		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.10/ 3.25/ 4.16			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Undertake systematic trainings on necropsies , live strandings and response to emergency situation in the ACCOBAMS region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained participants from all Parties with identified needs Live stranding training in collaboration with Pelagos in 2014 	Workshop on mass mortality of harbour porpoises in the western Black Sea was held on 24th August, 2016 in Limankoy, Turkey	
2- Establish (sub)regional mailing lists of participants in the stranding networks to facilitate exchange of information, in particular in the South Mediterranean region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification and synthesis of subregional mailing lists Regularly exchanged information on stranding events in particular on the occasion of conference biennial 		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁴⁹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

3- Establish a regional Emergency Task Force as advise to Parties and develop an operational protocol	Operational regional Emergency Task Force nominated		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
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CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 b	Capacity to use cetaceans photo id and undertake aerial surveys		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.28/ 5.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁵⁰
1- Undertake trainings on the use of photo-id	Trained experts from all Parties with identified needs		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Promote the use of INTERCET	Use of INTERCET		

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 c	Capacity building for other cetacean conservation issues		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Identify protected areas managers from the areas containing cetacean critical habitat and facilitate exchanges between areas containing cetacean critical habitats in the similar areas using good management practices (organising visits for example)	Cetacean conservation is taken into account at the regional level in the network of MPAs		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Enable practice of cetacean conservation staff on relevant issues in the ACCOBAMS Secretariat	Trained cetacean conservation staff from the Parties		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁵⁰ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 d	Cetacean conservation and postgraduate programmes		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁵¹
1- Introduce cetacean conservation modules in the existing postgraduate programmes	Post-graduate programmes with included cetacean conservation modules	With the support of ACCOBAMS, the BSC PS plans to introduce the " <u>Cetacean conservation</u> " modules in the existing postgraduate programs and to enroll the English speaking universities of the ACCOBAMS area. It is planned tentatively to hold such workshop for teachers and PhD students at Istanbul University in February, 2017.	

CA 5	ENHANCE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS CRITICAL HABITATS		
CA 5 a	Protected areas for cetaceans		
Relevant Resolutions: 3.22/ 4.15			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁵²
1- Update regularly a list of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS region	Lists of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans available on the ACCOBAMS web-site		
2- Develop /Disseminate tools for adequate management of areas containing critical habitat, including evaluation of management effectiveness and using examples of best practice	Guidelines on adequate management of areas containing critical habitats		Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁵¹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

⁵² Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

<p>3- Evaluate effectiveness of protected areas containing critical habitats for cetaceans using existing initiatives (such as MedPAN endeavours in that context)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluation of effectiveness of protected areas for cetaceans, foremostly their contribution to achievement/maintenance of favourable conservation status• Joint workshop with Pelagos		<p>Not relevant for the Black Sea sub Regional Coordination Unit</p>
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ANNEX X

REPORT OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SUB-REGIONAL COORDINATION UNIT INCLUDING ACTIVITIES FROM NON-PARTIES

**ANNEX X - REPORT OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SUB-REGIONAL COORDINATION UNIT INCLUDING ACTIVITIES
FROM NON-PARTIES**

MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT (MA)

MA 1	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION		
MA 1 a	Establish regular communication		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁵³
1- Establish regular platform of communication to inform all relevant subjects about ongoing activities, cooperation possibilities, project call of proposals and other relevant information	Active e-mailing list (regular exchange of information)		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Maintain and regularly update ACCOBAMS database , including information about all cetacean conservation related scientists and experts operating in the region	New and updated information filled into ACCOBAMS database		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Continue organising regional workshops with representatives of Parties and introducing participation of representatives of Scientific Committee	Regional workshops organised in 2015	RAC/SPA took part to the following workshops: -Regional Workshop for Western Mediterranean and contiguous Atlantic area (Menton, 13-14 April 2015) -Regional Workshop for Central Mediterranean (Menton, 14-15 April 2015)	Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
4- Continue organising biennial conferences for the Southern Mediterranean countries	Biennial conferences organised in 2014	RAC/SPA supported the organisation of the third biennial conference (CSMC3) held in Jounieh (Lebanon), 21st – 23th October 2014	Done

⁵³ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

5- Regularly update ACCOBAMS web-site , including FINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and accurate information available on the web-site • FINS regularly published 		Done
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MA 2	INVOLVEMENT OF ALL KEY STAKEHOLDERS		
MA 2 a	Strengthen involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.2/ 2.30 / 3.8 / 4.8/ 4.20			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁵⁴
<p>1- Strengthen existing partnerships: GFCM, IMO, CMS and relevant CMS agreements such as ASCOBANS, the Barcelona Convention, RAC/SPA, the Black Sea Commission, IWC, EU Biodiversity Strategy, marine strategies in the ACCOBAMS area (MSFD⁵⁵), CBD Strategy, SAP BIO, ECS, international, regional and local NGOs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the work of relevant GFCM bodies/working groups • Joint project with GFCM on by-catch • Joint activities with ECS • Regular meetings of relevant Secretariats • Cetacean conservation activities included in all relevant regional strategic documents • Regular communication/meetings with representatives of the relevant international NGOs 	<p>-A MoU between the Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS) and the United Nations Environment Programme in its capacity as Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) was signed in 2016. Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity among the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN: it aims to strengthen the collaboration between these five organizations, it addresses the issues of common interest related to the adoption of spatial based</p>	<p>Done</p> <p>Partially Done</p>

⁵⁴ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

⁵⁵ EC Marine Strategy Framework Directive

		<p>management and conservation measures including their promotion and fund raising. The overall aim of the Joint Cooperation Strategy is to contribute to the achievement of SDG 14, in particular 14.2, 14.5, 14.7 to be achieved in the Mediterranean; and that the application of the precautionary principle and of the Ecosystem Approach is strengthened in a coordinated manner.</p> <p>In particular, the objectives of the Joint Cooperation Strategy are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the conservation and the sustainable use of the open sea in the Mediterranean are ensured through the best available knowledge and the application of the precautionary principle and the Ecosystem Approach; -the activities undertaken by the concerned Partners in relation to the spatial-based management and conservation in the open sea in the Mediterranean are harmonised and complement each other. 	
<p>2- Establish new partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accession of all riparian states to the Agreement, • Establish formal partnership with the EC jointly with ASCOBANS and as feasible with assistance from CMS, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All riparian states are Parties to ACCOBAMS • Participation in the relevant fora and Meetings 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish formal partnership with NATO – NURC, OGP, ICES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution to the determination and monitoring of the GES (MSFD) and favourable conservation status (HD) 		
3- Organise a workshop of Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforcement of synergy between Partners Harmonisation of activities 		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

MA 3	ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING, IN PARTICULARLY FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES		
MA 3 a	New funding possibilities		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.7/ 3.6/ 5.16/5.5			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁵⁶
1- Appoint one projects preparation/implementation assistance and fundraising officer in the Secretariat	Project and fundraising officer as a member of the Secretariat staff		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Analyse available funding possibilities in the region (EU funds, private funds etc.) and develop a funding strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of available funding possibilities in the region Funding Strategy in particular for joint projects 		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Regularly inform Parties about project call of proposals and other funding possibilities	Information frequently sent via e-mailing list		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
4 - Evaluate projects submitted for funding under the Supplementary Conservation Fund	Project proposals selected for implementation with support from ACCOBAMS		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
5- Encourage development of multilateral/ transboundary projects	Project proposals prepared with assistance of ACCOBAMS bodies		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁵⁶ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

MA 4	IMPLEMENTATION OF AND COMPLIANCE WITH ACCOBAMS		
MA 4 a	Improve the level of implementation of and compliance with ACCOBAMS resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.4			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁵⁷
1- Evaluate work programmes implementation progress and level of resolutions implementation by Parties as a basis for new triennial work programme planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of work programme Reports on implementation by Parties Reports on implementation of the Resolutions 		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Propose remedy actions in cases of non compliance and infringements	Proposal of remedy actions		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

MA 5	ACCOBAMS EXTENSION AREA		
MA 5 a	Ensure implementation of the ACCOBAMS's cetacean conservation standards in the adjacent areas		
Relevant Resolutions: A/4.1			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Enforce ratification by Parties of the existing Amendment for geographical extension to the Atlantic	Amendment has entered into force		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Analyse added value of extension to the adjacent areas, particularly of the Red Sea extension	Proposal of further actions regarding extension of the Agreement		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁵⁷ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CONSERVATION ACTIONS (CA)

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 a	Cetacean population estimates and distribution		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁵⁸
1- Undertake a comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea using aerial surveys where possible	Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the different parts of the Mediterranean Sea based on results of the survey	<p>RAC/SPA supported the implementation of the following studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Satellite telemetry applied to fin whales in the Mediterranean Sea” carried out by the “Tethys Research Institute” around Lampedusa Island (Italy). (March-April 2015/2016) -A photo –identification survey on the bottlenose population in the Bay of Bizerte (North of Tunisia) achieved by the Tunisian Association for Taxonomy (ATUTAX) in summer 2015. -Tunisian Dolphin Project: population size and habitat use for bottlenose and common dolphins along the North of Tunisia, which is ongoing by « L’Association Nationale du Développement Durable et de la Conservation de la Vie Sauvage. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Done</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Done</p>

⁵⁸ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		- Survey and monitoring of the common dolphin population around the islands of Corfu, Paxos/AntiPaxos, Lefkada, Ithaki/Kephallonia. This activity is under the implementation of The Ionian Dolphin project, the field work is scheduled for October 2016 by Tethys Research Institute.	Partially Done Not Done
2- Undertake a comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Black Sea	Study report of distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the Black Sea based on results of the survey		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Undertake regional comprehensive surveys of abundance and distribution of cetaceans	Study reports of distribution and abundance of cetaceans		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
4- Undertake a retrospective analysis of the literature and on results of the mentioned comprehensive surveys	Lists and maps of critical habitats by species (including migration routes, biological corridors, breeding/calving and feeding areas)		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 b	Population Structure		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.11			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status⁵⁹
1- Implement population structure priorities including region-wide and local genetic studies , based on knowledge gap analysis performed in 2013, allowing to identify isolated populations (Greek waters, killer whales in Gibraltar, etc.)	Identification of isolated populations		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁵⁹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS		
CA 1 c	Monitoring cetaceans status		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.22/ 3.19			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁶⁰
1- Monitor mortality trends and cases of animals injured through human activities (e.g. ship strikes), using existing tools (such as MEDACES), at least on triennial basis	Mortality trend reports	RAC/SPA is planned, in collaboration with the secretariat of ACCOBAMS to support financially the update of the Mediterranean database on cetaceans stranding (MEDACES).	Partially Done
2- Assess IUCN threat status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and update it regularly, and more specifically gather information to assess the Data Deficient species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threat assessment reports Updates available on the IUCN and, ACCOBAMS websites 		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Prepare Red Books of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Region for Mediterranean and Black Seas and communicate with European Union, including Killer whales in the cetaceans of the Mediterranean Sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Books of cetaceans Report on the state of cetaceans 		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 a	Interaction with fisheries		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.13/ 2.21/ 2.25/ 3.13/ 4.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Assess cetaceans bycatch and depredation impacts on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and propose mitigation measures focusing on pilot areas through a joint GFCM/ACCOBAMS project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data on cetacean bycatch in pilot areas the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea and mitigation measures 	Within the implementation of the Project on mitigating interaction between endangered marine species and fishing activities,	Partially Done

⁶⁰ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to GFCM Task 1 • Contribution to the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy and MSFD 	<p>RAC/SPA, as partner to this project, is coordinating the achievement of the two following pilot actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Purse seine small pelagic fisheries in Kelibia; -Bottom and surface longline fisheries in the Gulf of Gabès. <p>RAC/SPA is also collaborating with the ACCOBAMS secretariat to accomplish the second component of the sus-mentioned Project, which is related to the promotion of Ecotourism in Tunisia and Morocco. The objective of this component is to conciliate the conservation of the endangered species and the fishing activities</p>	
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CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 b	Anthropogenic noise		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.16 / 3.10/ 4.17/ 5.15			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁶¹
1- Identify anthropogenic noise /cetaceans interactions hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area	Overview of noise hot spots		
2- Monitor all activities in the region including noise component	Overview(s) of approved activities including noise component	In the framework of Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) Process , RAC/SPA collaborated with ACCOBAMS secretariat for the	Done

⁶¹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		preparation of a “Mediterranean strategy on noise monitoring” that was integrated in “the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme draft” discussed during the CORMON meeting (30 March-1 April 2015).	
3- Map and develop a monitoring of sea ambient noise, particularly in critical habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of sea ambient noise • Monitoring protocol(s) 		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
4- Update a guide for Parties to use mitigation measures	Updated guide to use mitigation measures		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 c	Ship strikes		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.11			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁶²
1- Identify high risk areas for ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of high risk areas for ship strikes • New shape file in the ACCOBAMS interactive platform 		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Promote use of mitigation measures , particularly REPCET system to shipping companies in the region	Ships/boats in areas inhabiting large whales using the REPCET or other systems		
3- Develop a protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities	Protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁶² Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 d	Cetacean watching		
Relevant Resolutions: 3.23/ 4.7/ 5.10			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁶³
1- Promote use of a ACCOBAMS / Pelagos “High quality whale watching” certificate including organisation of training for operators	All states with intensive cetacean watching use labelling		
2- Prepare a framework document regarding national rules on the implementation of a “High quality whale watching” certificate	Framework document regarding national rules on the implementation of a “High quality whale watching” certificate		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
3- Assess the whale watching activities and critical areas for these activities in the Mediterranean Sea	Map of areas of concern due to whale watching activities.		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
4- Prepare guidelines for monitoring cetacean watching development in the Agreement Area and guidelines to develop national databases to store the information	Guidelines for monitoring cetacean watching development in the Agreement Area Guidelines to develop national databases to store the information		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
5- Prepare procedures and forms on data collection from cetacean watching vessels for the Agreement Area	Procedures and forms on data collection for cetacean watching vessels for the Agreement Area		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

⁶³ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 e	Marine debris		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.8			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁶⁴
1- Assess the impact of ghost nets on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area: undertake a joint project with MedPOL and GFCM	Assessment of ghost nets impacts on cetaceans		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Assess the impact of plastic bags , microplastic and other plastic materials ingestion on cetaceans in cooperation with existing initiatives, such as IWC : bibliographic synthesis and Scientific Committee recommendation	Assessment of plastic materials impacts on cetaceans by providing bibliographic synthesis		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 f	Climate change		
Relevant Resolutions: 4.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Assess the impact of climate change : bibliographic synthesis	Bibliographic synthesis	A team of experts on biodiversity monitoring was identified to work on assessing climate change indicators in three SPAMIs located in Italy and Spain serving as model for the future implementation of different indicators measuring, linked to climate change monitoring. Where possible, the same indicator will be	Partially Done

⁶⁴ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		compared in at least two SPAMIs. The work will aid to identify the main science, technical and operational gaps for the monitoring of climate change in the different habitats and oceanographic parameters considered.	
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CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 g	Species conservation plans		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.8/ 1.12/ 3.7/ 3.11/ 4.6/ 4.13/5.12/ 5.13/ 5.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁶⁵
1- Revise regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans , in cooperation with relevant stakeholders	Revised regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit
2- Prepare /Adopt Conservation Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuvier's beaked whales, • Fin whale, • Bottlenose dolphin • Killer whales • Long finned pilot whales 	Conservation Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuvier's beaked whales, • Fin whale, • Bottlenose dolphin • Killer whales • Long finned pilot whales 	The Appendix to the Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean , (adopted by the Focal Points for SPAs in October 1992) was revised in order to provide new orientations for the Action Plan that are in line with the evolving regional context regarding cetacean conservation and with the new challenges and priorities as identified by the most recent scientific knowledge.	

⁶⁵ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		<p>Given the strong linkages between the Action Plan and the implementation of ACCOBAMS in the Mediterranean, RAC/SPA collaborated closely with the Secretariat of ACCOBAMS in elaborating the revised Appendix.</p> <p>The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are invited to orient their action regarding the implementation of the Action Plan towards the following priorities during the period 2016-2020.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Legal and institutional measures 2- Improving the knowledge about cetacean populations 3- Reducing cetacean-fisheries interactions 4- Mitigating the impact of underwater noise 5- Habitat conservation <p>The revised appendix, adopted during the 19th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention is given in the Annex I.</p>	
3- Adopt / implement/ revise if necessary National Action Plans	Implementation of National Action Plans in most of the ACCOBAMS Parties	Following the finalization of the National Action Plan for the conservation of marine Mammals in Egypt in 2012, RAC/SPA has organized with the	Done

		<p>collaboration of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and ACCOBAMS, the First Cetaceans field Survey in the Egyptian Mediterranean Waters. The survey was conducted during April, in the area of Damietta (Part of the Nile Delta area).</p> <p>The main aims of the survey were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Establish and designate a core team of researchers specialized in cetaceans research and monitoring in Egypt;-Give a preliminary training for the team on how to conduct surveys including data handling and analysis;-Conduct the first survey on cetaceans and collect data on species distribution and occurrence. <p>-Monitor and assess the interaction between cetaceans and anthropogenic activities taking place in the area such as fisheries.</p>	
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CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)		
CA 2 h	Captivity related issues		
Relevant Resolutions: 5.14			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁶⁶
1- Assess and inventory specimens of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity	Assessment of BS bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity		Not Relevant for the Mediterranean Sub Regional Coordination Unit

CA 3	ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT CETACEANS		
CA 3 a	Public awareness		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.23			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Introduce ACCOBAMS cetaceans day and promote annual celebration	ACCOBAMS cetaceans day regularly celebrated in the area		
2- Create and disseminate communication tools such as educational kit	Communication tools distributed to relevant subjects	RAC/SPA published: -The Guidelines for the establishment and management of marine Protected Areas for cetaceans. (follow this link http://www.racspa.org/sites/default/files/doc_cetacean/manuel_cetaces_amp.pdf) - The updated Action Plan for the conservation of cetacean in the Mediterranean	Done
3- Organise public awareness related survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey format and instructions Survey report 		

⁶⁶ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 a	Functional stranding networks and responses to emergency situation		
Relevant Resolutions: 1.10/ 3.25/ 4.16			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁶⁷
1- Undertake systematic trainings on necropsies , live strandings and response to emergency situation in the ACCOBAMS region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained participants from all Parties with identified needs Live stranding training in collaboration with Pelagos in 2014 		
2- Establish (sub)regional mailing lists of participants in the stranding networks to facilitate exchange of information, in particular in the South Mediterranean region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification and synthesis of subregional mailing lists Regularly exchanged information on stranding events in particular on the occasion of conference biennial 		
3- Establish a regional Emergency Task Force as advise to Parties and develop an operational protocol	Operational regional Emergency Task Force nominated		

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 b	Capacity to use cetaceans photo id and undertake aerial surveys		
Relevant Resolutions: 2.28/ 5.9			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status
1- Undertake trainings on the use of photo-id	Trained experts from all Parties with identified needs	Within the implementation of the initial phase of the IMAP (integrated monitoring and assessment programme), RAC/SPA is supporting the southern	Partially Done

⁶⁷ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		<p>Mediterranean Parties to develop their national monitoring programme on Biodiversity (EO1) and its related common indicators 3-5 i.e. Species distributional range; Population abundance of selected species (marine mammals, seabirds, marine reptiles and monk seals); and Population demographic characteristics.. The being prepared monitoring programme will be discussed during a consultation workshop involving the national IMAP committee (a National IMAP Committee will be set up in order to ensure coherence approach between the monitoring programmes and enhanced coordination at national level) and national stakeholders. Experts/ scientists belonging to relevant national institutions involved in monitoring and assessment of these common indicators will be invited to this workshop in order to discuss and further improve the elaborated monitoring programme.</p> <p>Common indicator factsheet were developed by SPA/RAC in order to provide countries with</p>	
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		<p>clear background and guidance to develop their IMAP monitoring programme. These documents will be presented at the CORMON Group meeting on Biodiversity and fisheries, scheduled in February 2017.</p> <p>A sub-regional training on monitoring of marine mammals, seabirds, and marine turtles will be organized by earlier 2017 in order to deliver information on the distribution, abundance and population trends of cetacean species occurring in this area. In addition RAC/SPA will prepare monitoring manuals for marine mammals, seabirds and marine turtles with the collaboration of relevant partners and experts.</p>	
2- Promote the use of INTERCET	Use of INTERCET		

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 c	Capacity building for other cetacean conservation issues		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status⁶⁸
1- Identify protected areas managers from the areas containing cetacean critical habitat and facilitate exchanges between areas containing cetacean critical habitats in the similar areas using good management practices (organising visits for example)	Cetacean conservation is taken into account at the regional level in the network of MPAs		

⁶⁸ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

2- Enable practice of cetacean conservation staff on relevant issues in the ACCOBAMS Secretariat	Trained cetacean conservation staff from the Parties	<p>RAC/SPA has contribute to the organization of the following gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The 25th Annual Conference of the European Cetacean Society, Germany, 21st – 23rd March 2014. -The 29th Annual Conference of the European Cetacean Society (hereinafter referred to as ECS), Malta, 23rd – 25th March 2015. -The 1st International Workshop: “Conservation and research networking on short beaked common dolphin (<i>Delphinus delphis</i>) in the Mediterranean Sea” Ischia Island, Italy, 13-15 April 2016”. -The workshop “Developing tools to ensure high quality MMOs in the ACCOBAMS Areas” 13 March 2016 Funchal, Madeira. 	Done
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CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS		
CA 4 d	Cetacean conservation and postgraduate programmes		
Relevant Resolutions: -			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status⁶⁹
1- Introduce cetacean conservation modules in the existing postgraduate programmes	Post-graduate programmes with included cetacean conservation modules		

⁶⁹ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

CA 5	ENHANCE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS CRITICAL HABITATS		
CA 5 a	Protected areas for cetaceans		
Relevant Resolutions: 3.22/ 4.15			
Action in the WP 2014-2016	Expected Outputs in the WP 2014-2016	Achievement of the WP 2014-2016	Status ⁷⁰
1- Update regularly a list of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS region	Lists of areas containing critical habitats of cetaceans available on the ACCOBAMS web-site		
2- Develop /Disseminate tools for adequate management of areas containing critical habitat, including evaluation of management effectiveness and using examples of best practice	Guidelines on adequate management of areas containing critical habitats	<p>MAPAMED database: In the framework of the implementation of the "Regional Working Programme for the Coastal and Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean Sea including the High Sea", RAC/SPA and MedPAN jointly developed, in 2011-2012, a spatial database on Marine Protected Areas and other sites of interest to the conservation of marine environment in the Mediterranean Sea: MAPAMED (www.mapamed.org).</p> <p>Information gathered in this database served as a basis for the analysis of the 2012 Mediterranean MPA Status Report. RAC/SPA and MedPAN launched a new round of data collection and analysis in order to assess what progress have been made since 2012 and more importantly, to identify what is left to be done to reach conservation targets,</p>	Partially Done

⁷⁰ Done, Partially Done, Not Done, Not relevant

		<p>particularly the CBD Aichi target 11. This new Mediterranean MPA Status Report will be published this year (2016), timely for the 2016 Mediterranean MPA Forum (November 2016).</p> <p>In this perspective, the MAPAMED database will undergo a major update and RAC/SPA Focal Points support will be requested for the review and validation of spatial data as well as basic information related to MPAs in their countries.</p>	
<p>3- Evaluate effectiveness of protected areas containing critical habitats for cetaceans using existing initiatives (such as MedPAN endeavours in that context)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of effectiveness of protected areas for cetaceans, foremostly their contribution to achievement/maintenance of favourable conservation status • Joint workshop with Pelagos 	<p>The Mediterranean Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) was organized, in Malaga, Spain, on 7-11 April 2014, by the Secretariat of the CBD, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention / Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), with logistical and technical support of IUCN-Med and RAC/SPA. This workshop was a great achievement and resulted in describing 17 EBSAs that were endorsed by the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) in June 2014. During the SBSTTA meeting 3 side events for both UNEP/MAP and RAC/SPA were presented.</p>	<p>Done</p>

		<p>The 17 Mediterranean candidate EBSAs were finally presented to the CBD COP 12 (Pyongchang, Republic of South Korea, October 2014), among which 15 EBSAs were included in the CBD EBSA repository. Two other ones remained pending additional work and deliberation by the concerned neighbouring countries for a further cycle of EBSAs listing in the CBD EBSA repository.</p> <p>The Joint RAC/SPA-GFCM-ACCOBAMS meeting on the on protection of marine areas in the Mediterranean and Black Sea included the RAC/SPA SPAMI Conference; the second meeting of the GFCM Working group on marine protected areas (WG-MPAs) and the ACCOBAMS workshop on the effectiveness of marine protected areas (MPAs) containing critical habitats of cetaceans was held in Gammarth, Tunisia, on 9–12 February 2015 and it was attended by 55 participants.</p> <p>The Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) of the Mediterranean Action Plan (United Nations Environmental Program) was designated as co-executing agency within the framework of the regional project "Towards an ecologically</p>	Done
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		<p>representative and efficiently managed network of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas", which is a 30-month project (2016-2018) managed by UNEP/MAP, co-executed by RAC/SPA, WWF-MedPO and MedPAN, and financially supported by the European Union.</p> <p>It builds on the achievements of the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (MedPartnership project), and contributes to the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity (SPA/BD) Protocol.</p> <p>The global objective of the project is to support achieving a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Mediterranean which ensures the long term conservation of key elements of the marine biodiversity and gives significant support to the sustainable development of the region.</p> <p>RAC/SPA activities have been given the name of "MedMPAnet project II" and focus on the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establishing new MPAs through their ecological characterization (Lebanon) and management and business planning (Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia) in order to extend the existing regional network and enhance its ecological representativeness ; 	
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		<p>-Strengthening MPA regional coordination to ensure long-term networking through (i) the setting up of an Ad hoc group of experts focused on Mediterranean MPA issues under the SPA/BD Protocol and (ii) the organization of the 2016 Mediterranean MPA forum ;</p> <p>-Sharing knowledge and raising awareness about MPAs in the Mediterranean by (i) upgrading and updating the Mediterranean MPA database (MAPAMED), (ii) elaborating the MPA status report 2016, (iii) evaluating the 2020 MPA' roadmap implementation and (iv) developing information and communication tools on MPAs.</p> <p>In the continuity of the 2012 Mediterranean MPA Forum (Antalya, Turkey), RAC/SPA, MedPAN the Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte Contre la Désertification and several partners organise the Second Edition of the Mediterranean MPA Forum from 28 November to 1st December 2016 in Tangier, Morocco. Four hundred participants are expected at this event.</p> <p>The high point of the Forum process is a 4-day event to assess the progress made and what's left ahead according to the MPA roadmap developed at the 2012 Forum and now adopted by the Barcelona Convention. What should</p>	Partially Done
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		<p>still be done to conserve, through effectively managed MPAs and other area-based conservation measures, at least 10% of the Mediterranean Sea by 2020? How to address MPA issues, especially those related to climate change, with a long-term and integrated vision?</p> <p>The “Deep-sea conservation project in Lebanon” elaborated by RAC/SPA, OCEANA (lead partner), IUCN Med, the UNEP/MAP Secretariat and the national authority is financed by MAVA Foundation.</p> <p>The project aims to support Lebanon’s efforts to implement its MPA strategy and it will contribute to increased information of deep-sea ecosystems, in which areas there is currently lacking data. Based on the information gathered over the course of the project, ecosystem-based measures will be drafted to assist in the development of management guidelines that will benefit national authorities as well as the local communities. The main sea campaign is planned to be organized during the October 2016 and will last one month.</p>	
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ANNEX I

ACTION PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Additional Points for the Implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2016-2020 Taking into account (i) the work done at national level for the conservation of cetacean species in the Mediterranean since the adoption of the Action Plan in 1991, (ii) the progress made so far in the implementation of the provisions of ACCOBAMS in the region and (iii) the available knowledge about the status of the Mediterranean cetacean populations, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are invited to orient their action regarding the implementation of the Action Plan towards the following priorities during the period 2016-2020:

Legal and institutional measures

- To ratify the ACCOBAMS Agreement, if they have not already done so, and to implement its Resolutions and Recommendations of relevance for the Mediterranean Sea. As agreed during the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Portoroz, Slovenia, November 2005), the common obligations relating to cetaceans under the SPA/BD Protocol are fulfilled by the implementation of ACCOBAMS. In this context, close cooperation at the national level between the SPA/RAC National Focal Points and the ACCOBAMS Focal Points is highly recommended.
- To ensure that cetaceans are covered, at national level, by appropriate regulation measures providing for the elimination of deliberate killing and for the mitigation of the adverse impacts from their interactions with human activities, in particular in relation to:
 - bycatch and depredation in fishing gears,
 - seismic surveys and other marine noise generating activities,
 - harassment by leisure boating and scientific activities and
 - collisions with ships (ship strikes)
- Ensure, through regulation or other appropriate approaches, that whale-watching activity is environmentally sound and sustainably conducted, using, as appropriate, high quality certification systems for whale-watching.
- Where relevant for cetacean conservation, to support the use of the compliance mechanisms set for the Barcelona Convention and the ACCOBAMS Agreement, in particular by encouraging the notification of non-compliance and of non-follow-up cases.
- SPA/RAC should pursue its collaboration with the Secretariat of ACCOBAMS, by facilitating the implementation of the Annex 2 (Conservation Plan) of ACCOBAMS, in particular in fulfilling its function of the Regional Coordination Unit for the Mediterranean of the ACCOBAMS Agreement.

Improving the knowledge about cetacean populations

- Considering the urgent need of obtaining reliable estimates of cetacean populations and data about their distribution, a special effort should be done in the period 2016-2020 to undertake the comprehensive survey of abundance and distribution of cetaceans being planned by ACCOBAMS (ACCOBAMS Survey initiative). Their contribution (funding, equipment, vessels, planes, etc.) and the involvement of their scientists in all the survey phases (planning, field work and data analysis) being a key factor for the success of the Survey, the Contracting Parties should facilitate and support the Survey Initiative and liaise closely with SPA/RAC to ensure that the data collected by the Survey serve also as baseline data for the Good Environmental Status concerning cetacean species as defined by the contracting Parties under the Ecological Objective 1 of the EcAp process.

Reducing cetacean-fisheries interactions

- To assess the cetacean bycatch and depredation in their fisheries and adopt mitigation measures taking into account the requirements for cetacean conservation and the need for the development of sustainable and responsible fishing activities. In this context, the Contracting Parties are invited to conform to the recommendations from ACCOBAMS and GFCM on this issue.

- SPA/RAC should strengthen its collaboration with the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS and GFCM to provide assistance to the Mediterranean countries in mitigating the impacts of the interactions occurring between cetacean species and fishing activities, through investigating innovative and environmentally sound mitigation measures and by disseminating information on relevant best practices and successful initiatives.

Mitigating the impact of underwater noise

- Pursue the development and the implementation of a basin-wide strategy for underwater noise monitoring in the Mediterranean, as proposed by the ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS/CMS Joint Noise working group, under the Ecological Objective 11 of the EcAp process.
- Development of acoustic mapping using standardised methodologies to build a comprehensive picture of the spatial and temporal distribution of anthropogenic noise sources. Mapping effort should be deployed in the noise hotspot areas identified in the Mediterranean by ACCOBAMS, taking into account the available knowledge regarding the distribution of cetacean species, including areas that are affected at different levels of noise.
- Promote awareness of the anthropogenic noise impacts on cetaceans, targeting in particular decision makers, key players in the industry organisations and the stockholders in the shipping sectors.
- Considering the increasing number of seismic surveys in the Mediterranean Sea, SPA/RAC should liaise closely with the Secretariat of ACCOBAMS, the national authorities of the Mediterranean countries and relevant companies to promote the collection and dissemination of cetacean data from MMOs (Marine Mammal Observers) during seismic surveys.

Habitat conservation

- In addition to implementing the provisions of the relevant international and regional agreements related to combating pollution and eliminating sources of degradation of the marine environment (IMO regulations, relevant Protocols of the Barcelona Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity, etc.), each Contracting Party should establish a list of marine areas under its jurisdiction identified as of special importance for cetaceans, using as appropriate the tools developed at regional and international levels for inventorying sites of conservation interest, in particular the list of areas of special importance for cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area .
- The areas of special importance for cetaceans should be granted a protection status that ensures the long term preservation of the species and the sustainable management of human activities having impacts on cetaceans.

ANNEX II

Information provided by the Non Contracting Parties to the ACCOBAMS about the implementation of the Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea
(The text presented hereinafter represents the inputs of the Parties as appearing in the Barcelona reporting system, without translation and with only minor editing changes)

Israel

Has the Party developed an action plan for the conservation of cetaceans?

All marine mammals are fully protected by Israel law, enforced by INPA IMMRAC (Israel Marine Mammal Research & Assistance Center an NGO) operate observations for marine mammals. IMMRAC recently accredited the status of Partner in ACCOBAMS (Agreement on the Conservation Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area)

Has the Party conducted studies and set up scientific research programmes on cetaceans?

There is academic research and monitoring by INPA in cooperation with IMMRAC

Has the Party set up a network for monitoring cetacean strandings?

INPA in cooperation with IMMRAC recently accredited the status of Partner in ACCOBAMS (Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area). IMMRAC and INPA operate observations. The public and mentioned above are required to report when encountering stranded or caught cetaceans. A procedure to handle such cases exists.

Turkey

Has the Party developed an action plan for the conservation of cetaceans? No

Has the Party conducted studies and set up scientific research programmes on cetaceans?

In process. Many universities working on that matter.

Has the Party set up a network for monitoring cetacean stranding? Other

There are many monitoring agents but it is not easy to say there is a network between them.

Has the Party created marine protected areas and/or SPAMIs to protect one or several species of cetacean?

In process, It is planned to establish an MPA especially for Cetaceans.

ANNEX XI

REPORT OF THE ACCOBAMS FOLLOW UP COMMITTEE

ANNEX XI - REPORT OF THE ACCOBAMS FOLLOW UP COMMITTEE
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The ACCOBAMS Follow-up Committee was created by the ACCOBAMS Parties at MOP5 through the adoption of the Resolution 5.4.

The following members were appointed:

Members nominated by Parties

Victor ESCOBAR PAREDES	Full term (2014-2019)
Mohamed HAMANI	Reduced term (2014-2016)
Marie-Anne MORTELETTE	Reduced term (2014-2016)

Members nominated by ACCOBAMS Partners

Drasko HOLCER	Full term (2014-2019)
Dan KEREM / Aviad SCHENIN (<i>as alternate</i>)	Reduced term (2014-2016)

The First Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Committee was convened in Monaco (NOVOTEL Hotel) on **Wednesday 2nd March 2016**.

By consensus, the Committee decided that its **President shall be Mr. Victor ESCOBAR PAREDES** and its **vice President Mr. Draško HOLCER**, until the end of their mandate in the Committee.

Recommendations issued from the first Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Committee:

Recommendation 1:

The Committee **recommended** the MOP to amend paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 3 of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Procedure in the following way: [amendments in bold]

“2. The Committee shall consist of five members and two alternate members elected during the Meetings of the Parties. Three of the members and one alternate member shall be elected by secret ballots by Parties from a list of candidates nominated, one by each Party. Two of the Members and one alternate member shall be elected by secret ballots by the organizations and institutions having the status of ACCOBAMS Partner (hereinafter referred to as “ACCOBAMS Partners”) from a list of candidates nominated one by each of them. The alternate members are the candidates who immediately follow for the number of votes received the three members elected by the Parties and the two members elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners.

3. The alternate member elected by the Parties shall serve in the absence of a Committee member elected by the Parties. The alternate member elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners shall serve in the absence of a Committee member elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners.”

Recommendation 2:

The Committee **recommended** the MOP to consider requesting to review, under Article 6, paragraph 1,d, of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Procedure, the legal and technical issues of implementation and follow up of existing obligations and commitments related to seismic and military activities producing underwater noise; the two kinds of activities should be considered separately as they belong to different contexts and require different approaches. This review should be based on the relevant Committee documents prepared by ACCOBAMS bodies and compiled and summarised by the Secretariat.

Recommendation 3:

The Committee **recommended** the MOP to consider requesting the Committee to review, under Article 6, paragraph 1, d, of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Procedure, the legal and technical issues of implementation and follow up relating to interactions between humans and dolphins addressed by Resolution 3.13 (Dolphin interaction programme), based on the relevant documents prepared by ACCOBAMS bodies and compiled and summarised by the Secretariat.

Recommendation 4:

Considering that its plan of work consists of specific submissions and general issues of implementation and follow up, the Committee **recommended** that priority is given to consideration of specific submission and then to general issues of implementation and follow up.

Recommendation 5:

The Committee **recommended** to make clear that it shall consider only submissions which are presented according to the submission forms, approved under Resolution 5.4, and that the 3-month term provided for in Article 7, paragraph 2, and Article 9, paragraph 2, shall start from the day when the submission is communicated by the Secretariat to the Party concerned.

Recommendation 6:

The Committee **recommended** to the MOP to consider the possibility of allowing the budget for two physical meetings for the forthcoming triennium (2017-2019).

ANNEX XII

RESOLUTIONS

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RESOLUTION 6.1 - GRANTING THE RIGHT TO VOTE

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

Recalling Article III, paragraphs 5 and 6, of the Agreement regarding the right to vote,

Recalling Article 14, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure of the Meeting of the Parties, which provides that “Representatives of Parties which are three or more years behind in paying their subscriptions on the date of the opening session of the Meeting of the Parties shall not be eligible to vote. However, the Meeting of the Parties may allow such Parties to continue to exercise their right to vote if it is satisfied that the delay in payment arises from exceptional circumstances”,

Convinced that decisions-making at the Sixth Meeting of the Parties will benefit from the active participation of as many Parties as possible,

1. *Decides* that, although Libya is more than three years behind in paying its ordinary contribution, the current economic situation of this Party can be considered as an exceptional circumstance and that this Party shall exceptionally exercise its right to vote at the Sixth Meeting of the Parties.

RESOLUTION 6.2 - AMENDMENT TO THE HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT WITH THE HOST COUNTRY

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

Considering that, in accordance with to Resolution 1.2, the Meeting of the Parties accepted the offer by the Government of the Principality of Monaco to host the Permanent Secretariat and agreed with the terms of reference of the Secretariat, as annexed to the same Resolution,

Considering also that paragraph 1 of the annex to the above-mentioned Resolution specifies that the Principality of Monaco will provide the Executive Secretary and give to the Permanent Secretariat the means to devote the necessary time to carrying out their task successfully,

Recalling Resolution 4.2, adopted at the Fourth Meeting of the Parties, that approves the Headquarters Agreement between the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco and the Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS, an Agreement enforced by the Sovereign Ordinance No. 3.060 of 27 December 2010,

Recalling Resolution 5.6 which:

- highlights the need to adopt a procedure for the designation and appointment of the ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary and to amend the Headquarters Agreement accordingly,
- requests the Secretariat to prepare the draft amendments, in collaboration with the Government of the Principality of Monaco,
- requests the Secretariat to present them to the Bureau and to submit them for adoption to the Sixth Meeting of the Parties,

Taking note of the recommendation by the Bureau to adopt the Headquarters Agreement, as amended,

1. *Thanks* the Government of the Principality of Monaco for the continuous support granted to the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat and for the amendment proposal of the Headquarters Agreement;
2. *Adopts* the proposed amended Headquarters Agreement which includes the financial rules, as annexed to the present Resolution;
3. *Mandates* the President of the Bureau and the Executive Secretary to sign the above-mentioned Headquarters Agreement on behalf of the Parties to ACCOBAMS and of the Permanent Secretariat, respectively;
4. *Mandates* the Executive Secretary, after the signature, to notify the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco that the requirements concerning the entry into force of the amended Headquarters Agreement have been met, as provided for in Article XVII, paragraph 1, of the said Agreement.

ANNEX 1

**Amendment to Headquarters Agreement between the Government of H.S.H the Prince of Monaco and the
Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea,
the Mediterranean Sea and the Contiguous Atlantic Area**

(Original: French)

The Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco from one side,

and,

the Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Contiguous Atlantic Area, hereafter called "the Permanent Secretariat" on the other;

Considering Article III 7 of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS), signed in Monaco on 24 November 1996 and entered into force on 1 June 2001, which provides that the Meeting of Parties at its first session would establish a Secretariat to carry out the secretarial functions enumerated in Article IV 2, par 2 of the Agreement above mentioned;

Considering that the Headquarters of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Contiguous Atlantic area is established in Monaco in accordance with the offer made by the Government of H.S.H the Prince of Monaco and the acceptance of the said offer by the Meeting of Parties in its Resolution 1.2 of 28 February 2002 of the First Meeting of Parties to the Agreement here above mentioned;

Recalling Resolution 4.2 adopted during the Fourth Meeting of Parties approving the Agreement between the Government of the Principality of Monaco and the Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Contiguous Atlantic area related to its Headquarters and its privileges and immunities on the territory of the Principality of Monaco, enforced by the Sovereign Ordinance No. 3.060 of 27 December 2010;

Wishing to clarify the conditions which govern the establishment and the functioning of the Permanent Secretariat;

Agree to amend the Headquarters Agreement as follows:

Article 1: Legal personality

1. The Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco shall recognize the legal personality of the Permanent Secretariat and, for the purposes of carrying out its statutory responsibilities, its capacity:
 - to contract,
 - to acquire and dispose of movable and immovable property,
 - to be a party to legal proceedings.

2. The President of the Bureau of the Agreement is qualified to represent the Agreement.

Article 2: Establishment of the Headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat – Premises

1. The Headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat include the premises it occupies or may occupy for the needs of its activity, with the exception of its staff's residential premises. These premises have been graciously granted by the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco for the requirements of its functioning for a period of (99 years) starting from the date when the present Agreement enters into force.
2. At present the premises occupied by the Permanent Secretariat are located at Jardin de l'UNESCO – Les Terrasses de Fontvieille – 98000 Monaco.
3. With the terms outlined in the [Appendix 1](#), the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco, besides taking charge of the usual expenses of the owner, agrees to take charge, with the exception of expenses caused by negligence or omission on the part of the Permanent Secretariat's staff, of the functioning expenses of the said Secretariat, as well as expenses for heating, lighting, water supply, sewage disposal and garbage collection of the Permanent Secretariat facilities, the Permanent Secretariat Organisation the Organisation itself taking charge of those other expenses of internal maintenance that are usually borne by a tenant.
4. Without prejudice to the conditions of the present Agreement, the Permanent Secretariat shall not allow its Headquarters to be used as a refuge for persons who are wanted for a crime or for a flagrant offence, or are subjected to a legal warrant, a criminal conviction, an expulsion order or a decision to be deported or extradited issued by the Monacan authorities.
5. The Headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat shall be inviolable. The Monacan authorities may only enter it with the consent or at request of the representative of the Permanent Secretariat. This consent may be presumed in case of fire or other emergency requiring prompt protective action.

Article 3: Immunities of the Permanent Secretariat

1. Except as otherwise provided by the present Agreement, the Permanent Secretariat's official activities shall be carried out in compliance with Monacan law in the Principality of Monaco.
2. The Permanent Secretariat shall enjoy, on the territory of the Principality of Monaco, of the independence, and of the freedom of actions for the achievement of missions and activities entrusted by the ACCOBAMS and by the Meeting of the Parties, in conformity with the provisions of the present Agreement.
3. Within the limits of its official activities, the Permanent Secretariat and its movable property, wherever found, its premises and its assets shall enjoy immunity from jurisdiction, except insofar as the President of the ACCOBAMS Bureau or his representative expressly waives this immunity by notifying the Government of H.S.H the Prince of Monaco.

4. The property mentioned in Paragraph 3 of the present Article shall also be immune from all forms of search, requisition, confiscation and seizure, as well as from all other forms of administrative or legal restraint.
5. The immunities provided for in the present Article do not apply to property, premises and assets abandoned by the Permanent Secretariat.

Article 4: Archives

1. The Permanent Secretariat's archives shall be inviolable.
2. These archives shall include all correspondence, documents, manuscripts, photographs, computer databases, films and records belonging to or held by the Permanent Secretariat.

Article 5: Flag and emblem

The Permanent Secretariat shall have the right to display the flag and the emblem of ACCOBAMS in its premises and on its means of transport, its own or those used on its behalf.

Article 6: Exemption from dues and taxes

1. Within the limits of its official activities, the Permanent Secretariat, its assets, income, premises and other property shall be:
 - exempted from all direct taxes, it being understood however that the Permanent Secretariat shall not ask to be exempted from the taxes that in fact only constitute payment of services provided;
 - exempted from import or export taxes and dues, interdictions and restrictions on imports or exports as regards goods or articles imported or exported by the Permanent Secretariat for its operating requirements, it being however understood that, on Monacan or French territory, the goods or articles imported in accordance with this exemption can only be ceded or lent freely or for money under the conditions previously agreed by the competent Monacan or French authorities.

The above exemptions shall in no way be interpreted as preventing the adoption by the Monacan authorities of appropriate security measures.

2. The Permanent Secretariat shall pay, as provided for in ordinary law, those indirect taxes that are included into the price of the goods sold or the services provided. However, the taxes relating to major purchases or operations carried out by the Permanent Secretariat for its needs, according to Article 6.1, shall be reimbursed according to modalities to be decided by mutual agreement between the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco and the Permanent Secretariat, with the exception of alcohol and tobacco products.

Article 7: Currency and exchange rate

1. Without being subjected to any monitoring, regulation or financial moratorium, the Permanent Secretariat, within the context of its official activities, can freely:
 - receive, acquire, hold or cede funds, currency and valuables of all kinds and hold bank or other accounts in any currency whatsoever;
 - transfer its funds, currency and valuables within the territory of Monaco and from the Principality of Monaco to another State, or vice-versa.

2. In exercising the rights granted to it in accordance with the present Article, the Permanent Secretariat takes account of any representation made by the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco insofar as it deems that it can act on it without prejudice to its interests.

Article 8: Communications

Insofar as it is compatible with the provisions of the international conventions, regulations and arrangements to which the Principality of Monaco is a Party, the Permanent Secretariat shall enjoy, for its official communications of whatsoever kind, treatment that is at least as favourable as that granted to the diplomatic missions in the Principality of Monaco as regards any communications priority.

Article 9: Publications

Importing and exporting the Permanent Secretariat's publications or any other information materials imported or exported by the Permanent Secretariat within the limits of its official activities shall not be subjected to any restriction.

Article 10: Representatives at and Observers to ACCOBAMS meetings

1. The Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco commits itself, unless some reason of public order prevents it, to facilitate the entry and staying in the Principality of Monaco, for the duration of their functions or missions, of representatives of Member States and observers from correspondent States who have been invited to participate to the meetings of the ACCOBAMS organs or to conferences and meetings convened by the Permanent Secretariat, as well as of experts or personalities called upon for consultation.

2. The persons referred to in Paragraph 1 of the present Article shall not, for the entire duration of their functions or missions, be obliged by the Monacan authorities to leave the territory of Monaco, unless they have abused the privileges of staying they were granted or are pursuing any activity not related to their Permanent Secretariat functions or missions.

3. The persons referred to in Paragraph 1 of the present Article shall not be exempted from the application of quarantine and public health regulations where appropriate.

4. During their assignments, and during their movements on Monacan territory, the persons referred to in Paragraph 1 of the present Article shall enjoy:
- personal immunity from arrest or detention or seizure of their personal luggage, except in cases of flagrant offence;
 - inviolability of all their official papers, documents and materials;
 - the right to use codes and to send and receive correspondence and other papers and documents by post or in sealed bags.

In order to help the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco to implement the provisions of the present Article, the Permanent Secretariat shall communicate to the Government of H.S.H the Prince of Monaco the names of the representatives before their arrival in the Principality of Monaco.

Article 11: Staff Members of the Permanent Secretariat

The Government of the Principality of Monaco takes in charge the Executive Secretary and a full time Assistant, according to the procedures set out in [Appendix 1](#).

Article 12: Staff immunity

1. The staff members shall be entitled of immunity from jurisdiction, even after termination their duties, for all acts, including their words and writings, undertaken by them in the exercise of their functions and within the limits of their mandate. This immunity shall not apply in the case of any breach of the rules of road traffic committed by a member of the Permanent Secretariat's staff, or of harm caused by an automobile vehicle belonging to or driven by a member of staff.
2. At times of international tension, the staff members shall be entitled of repatriation facilities granted to members of diplomatic missions.
3. Except for Monacan nationals and permanent resident in the Principality of Monaco, the staff shall enjoy:
 - a. exemption from any Monacan tax on salaries and emoluments paid for his/her activities for the Permanent Secretariat;
 - b. the regime set forth in article 10 as regards entry and staying in the Principality of Monaco.

Article 13: Object and waiver of privileges and immunities

1. The privileges and immunities provided for by the present Agreement shall not be established with a view to giving personal advantages to those enjoying them, but solely to ensure that, in all circumstances, the Permanent Secretariat can operate freely and that the persons on whom they are conferred are completely independent.
2. The President of the ACCOBAMS Bureau or, in the case of representatives of Member States, the Government of the State concerned, shall have the duty to waive these immunities when they deem that they prevent the normal

carrying out of justice and that it is possible to dispense with them without prejudicing the interests of the Permanent Secretariat.

Article 14: Cooperation

1. The Permanent Secretariat shall fully cooperate in all circumstances with the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco in order to prevent any abuse of the privileges, immunities and facilities provided for by the present Agreement.
2. The provisions of the present Agreement shall in no way affect the right of the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco to take the measures it could deem useful for the security of the Principality of Monaco and the protection of public order.

Article 15: Notification of appointments

1. The President of the ACCOBAMS Bureau or his representative shall notify the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco of the appointment of the Executive Secretary and the date on which the Executive Secretary begins or end his/her functions.
2. The Executive Secretary of the ACCOBAMS shall notify the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco when a member of the staff other than the Executive Secretary begins or end his/her functions and shall indicate if this person is a Monacan national or a permanent resident in the Principality of Monaco.
3. During the first quarter of each year, the Executive Secretary shall provide the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco with an updated list of all members of staff, stating if these persons are Monacan nationals or are permanently resident in the Principality of Monaco.
4. The Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco shall deliver to all the members of staff as promptly as possible after notification of their appointment a "special" card carrying the picture identification of the occupant and identifying him/her as a member of staff of the Permanent Secretariat. This card shall be accepted by the Monacan authorities as proof of identity and of appointment. When the member of staff ends his/her functions, the Permanent Secretariat shall send the concerned person's "special" card back to the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco.

Article 16: Settlement of Disputes

Any dispute between the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco and the Permanent Secretariat about the interpretation or the implementation of the present Agreement or any question affecting the relations between the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco and the Permanent Secretariat, when not settled by consultation or negotiation or a method acceptable to both parties, shall be submitted for final decision without appeal to a Committee of three arbitrators composed of:

- a. an arbitrator designated by the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco;
- b. an arbitrator designated by the President of the ACCOBAMS Bureau;

- c. an arbitrator designated by mutual agreement by the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco and the President of the ACCOBAMS Bureau, or, when there is disagreement, by the Chair of the International Court of Justice.

Article 17: Entry into force and termination

1. The present Agreement shall enter into force after mutual notification in writing, by the Government of H.S.H. the Sovereign Prince and by the President of the ACCOBAMS Bureau, that their respective requirements concerning the entry into force of the present Agreement have been met.
2. The present Agreement can be modified or terminated on the common decision by the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco and by the Permanent Secretariat. In deciding to modify or to terminate the present Agreement, the Permanent Secretariat can only act in compliance with a decision taken by the Meeting of Parties.
3. Should negotiations not lead on to an understanding within one year, the present Agreement may be denounced by the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco or by the Permanent Secretariat acting in compliance with a decision taken by the Meeting of Parties, with previous notice of two years.
4. Should the Headquarters of the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat cease to be located in the Principality of Monaco, the present Agreement shall cease to apply at the end of a reasonable period necessary for the transfer and the cession of the Permanent Secretariat's property in the Principality of Monaco.
5. In case provided for in paragraph 3 and 4, the date of the Agreement termination will be confirmed by an exchange of notes between the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco and the Permanent Secretariat.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorised to do so, have signed the present Agreement, in two copies, in French language.

Signed in Monaco on the twenty-second of November two thousand sixteen.

For the Government
of His Serein Highness
the Prince of Monaco,

The Minister of State,

H.E. M. Serge TELLE

For the ACCOBAMS Bureau,
The President

H.E.M. Xavier STICKER

For the Permanent Secretariat of the ACCOBAMS,

The Executive Secretary,

Mrs. Florence DESCROIX-COMANDUCCI

Appendix 1

Financial arrangements between the Government of H.S.H the Prince of Monaco and the Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS

1. The Government of the Principality of Monaco provides the Permanent Secretariat with an annual grant, which will be paid in two equal instalments at the beginning and in the middle of the civil year, and which use will allow the Permanent Secretariat to take in charge the following expenses:
 - heating, lighting, water supply, waste water discharge and garbage collection,
 - maintenance of the premises,
 - rent and maintenance costs of a photocopier,
 - telephone and internet costs and subscription,
 - computer stock with maintenance,
 - office equipment and maintenance,
 - staff cost according to the conditions defined under items 3, 4 and 5 hereunder.

2. The Host Country takes directly care of:
 - rent of the premises and their maintenance costs,
 - lease hold expenses,
 - cost for the rent, maintenance, insurance and related taxes for two governmental apartments, located in France, for staff housing.

3. The Government of Monaco takes in charge the Executive Secretary and a full time Assistant.

4. The staff expenses of the Executive Secretary, are covered by the Host Country through reimbursement of relevant expenditures incurred by the Permanent Secretariat, within the limit of a gross annual remuneration equivalent to the one provided to the civil servants classified as Department Head of the 3rd group of the Monacan Civil Service. This ceiling amount shall be communicated to the Executive Secretary by the Government of the Principality of Monaco before each budget year.

5. The Assistant is recruited by the Executive Secretary. Staff expenses, along with welfare cost, are covered by the Host Country through reimbursement of relevant expenditures incurred by the Permanent Secretariat, within the limit of a gross annual remuneration equivalent to the one provided to the civil servants classified in the scale of Attaché, Principal Attaché and Highly Qualified Attaché of the Monacan Civil Service. This ceiling amount shall be communicated to the Executive Secretary by the Government of the Principality of Monaco before each budget year.

6. The Executive Secretary shall be entitled upon entry on duty, of an allowance of maximum 5 000 € linked to the inflation rate and covered by the Host Country, to cover the possible moving expenses.

7. The Permanent Secretariat has recourse to suitable local banking services to conduct day-to-day transactions.

8. In support to its request for the following year budget allowance, the Permanent Secretariat will provide a detailed provisional budget of expenditures, for which the support is requested, together with the latest closed accounts listing the related items and signed-off by the fund management controller.

RESOLUTION 6.3 - ACCOBAMS STAFF

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

Considering that under Resolution 1.2 the Meeting of the Parties accepted the offer of the Government of the Principality of Monaco to host the Permanent Secretariat and agreed with the terms of reference of the Secretariat as annexed to the same Resolution,

Taking note of the document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Res6.3Rev2 on Staff Regulations,

1. *Mandates* the Executive Secretary to entrust a specialized consultant to carry out by the end of 2017 a functional assessment of the personnel needs of the Permanent Secretariat and the associated costs;
2. *Asks* the Executive Secretary, on the basis of the above-mentioned functional assessment, and in consultation with the Host Country and the Bureau, to develop a proposal on the structure of the Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS and a mechanism to implement the proposal to be submitted to the Seventh Meeting of the Parties;
3. *Entrusts* the Bureau, in consultation with the Host Country, to address the question of the recruitment procedures for the Executive Secretary as a matter of priority.

RESOLUTION 6.4 - AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURES FOR THE BUREAU

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

Recalling Article VI of the Agreement,

Recalling Resolution 5.7 on the Rules of Procedure for the Bureau,

Recalling Resolution 6.2 on the amendment to the Headquarters Agreement,

Considering the need to amend the Rules of Procedure for the Bureau to improve and facilitate the functioning of the Bureau,

1. *Decides* to amend text of the Rules of Procedure for the Bureau, as annexed to this Resolution:

- Article 1, sub-paragraph b): the word “and” is deleted;
- Article 1, sub-paragraph c): a semicolon replaces the full stop and the word “and” is added after the semicolon;
- Article 1: the following sub-paragraph d) is added:
“d) officially appoint the ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary, in conformity with the agreed procedures;”
- Article 1: the following paragraph 2 is added:
“2. The President of the Bureau is entitled to waive the immunities of the ACCOBAMS staff members in conformity with Article 13 of the Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country. ”;
- Article 1: the following paragraph 3 is added:
“3. All members and alternate members of the Bureau shall exercise their functions in their personal capacity and shall not represent any single ACCOBAMS Party.”;
- Article 2: the previous Article 2 becomes the new paragraph 1 of the new Article 2;
- Article 2, paragraph 1, second sentence: replace “Meeting of Parties” with “Meeting of the Parties” (twice);
- Article 2: the following paragraph 2 is added:
“2. If unable to attend a Meeting, any member of the Bureau may be replaced by an alternate member appointed by the ACCOBAMS Party concerned.”;
- Article 2: the following paragraph 3 is added:
“3. Any member of the Bureau may be assisted by an advisor of his/her choice. The Party concerned shall cover the travel and accommodation expenses of the advisor.”;

- Article 2: the following paragraph 4 is added:
“4. All decisions of the Bureau shall be adopted by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, a decision may be adopted by the majority of the Bureau members.”;
- 2. *Decides* to adopt the Rules of Procedure for the Bureau as annexed to the present Resolution (amendments in bold);
- 3. *Decides* that the present Resolution replaces Resolution 5.7.

ANNEX

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE BUREAU OF THE PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS OF THE BLACK SEA, MEDITERRANEAN SEA AND CONTIGUOUS ATLANTIC AREA ⁷¹

Article 1

1. The Bureau shall:

- a) provide general policy guidance and operational and financial direction to the Agreement Secretariat and the subregional Co-ordination Units concerning the implementation and promotion of the Agreement;
- b) carry out, between sessions of the Meeting of the Parties, such interim activities on its behalf as may be necessary or assigned to it by the Meeting of the Parties;
- c) represent the Parties vis-à-vis the Government of the Host Country of the Agreement Secretariat and the Meeting of the Parties, the Depositary and other international Organizations on matters relating to the Agreement and its Secretariat; **and**
- d) officially appoint the ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary, in conformity with the agreed procedures.**

2. The President of the Bureau is entitled to waive the immunities of the ACCOBAMS staff members in conformity with Article 13 of the Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country.

3. All members and alternate members of the Bureau shall exercise their functions in their personal capacity and shall not represent any single ACCOBAMS Party.

Article 2

1. The Bureau shall meet at least twice between two Meetings of the Parties. One of these Meetings shall be held six months before each Meeting of **the** Parties, and will act as a preparatory Meeting for the Meeting of **the** Parties.

2. If unable to attend a Meeting, any member of the Bureau may be replaced by an alternate member identified by the ACCOBAMS Party concerned.

3. Any member of the Bureau may be assisted by an advisor of his/her choice. The Party concerned shall cover the travel and accommodation fees of the advisor.

4. All decisions of the Bureau shall be adopted by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, a decision may be adopted by the majority of the Bureau members.

Article 3

1. At its preparatory meeting for the Meeting of the Parties and in the accomplishment of the functions provided for in Article 1, a) and b), the Bureau shall be supported, as observers, by:

- a representative of the State holding the next Meeting of the Parties, if not already represented in the Bureau,
- a representative of each of the two sub-regional Co-ordination Units,
- a Working Group.

⁷¹ The composition and functions of the Bureau are settled by Article VI of the Agreement. The Rules of procedure of the Bureau, acting as Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties, are already stated in the general Rules of procedures of the Meeting of the Parties which will apply *mutatis mutandis* to the meetings of the Bureau.

The Bureau, with the help of these observers, will have the task to examine:

- the progress made in the activities of the Secretariat and the sub-regional Co-ordination Units;
- the proposals made by the Scientific Committee, and
- the drafts of Recommendations and Resolutions to be submitted to the Meeting of the Parties.

2. The Working Group shall be made up of three experts having extensive experience in social and economic aspects of conservation and management of marine biodiversity. The three experts shall be selected before the third year of each triennium by the Bureau in close consultation with the Secretariat, according to the development of the Working Programme and the priorities to be taken in consideration for the subsequent triennium. The three experts shall be selected based on their curriculum vitae.

3. Cumulative function between member of the Scientific Committee and member of the Working Group shall be avoided.

4. The Secretariat shall invite the three selected experts to attend the Bureau Meeting on a voluntary basis and shall cover their travel and accommodation fees.

5. Each Party can send an observer to the Meeting of the Bureau preparatory for the Meeting of the Parties. The Party concerned shall cover the travel and accommodation fees of the observer.

Article 4

1. The precise dates of the Meetings shall be set by the President of the Bureau, after consultation with the Secretariat and the other members. The Secretariat shall inform the members of the Bureau, as well as all Parties of the date, place and agenda of each Meeting and shall invite them to participate.

2. The Secretariat shall inform the members of the Working Group of the date, place and agenda of the Meeting of the Bureau preparatory to the Meeting of the Parties and shall invite them to participate.

Article 5

The Secretariat shall prepare the provisional agenda of each Meeting, in consultation with the President of the Bureau.

Article 6

The Bureau shall provide a report on its activities for each session of the Meeting of the Parties that shall be circulated to all Parties in advance of the session by the Agreement Secretariat.

Article 7

The Chairperson of the Scientific Committee shall be invited to participate as an observer in the Meetings of the Bureau.

Article 8

The Agreement Secretariat shall provide secretariat services for the Bureau Meetings.

Article 9

These rules may be amended as required by the Meeting of the Parties.

RESOLUTION 6.5 - WORK PROGRAMME 2017-2019

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

Acting in accordance with the commitments of the Parties to conserve cetaceans in conformity with the Agreement, especially the fundamental obligations placed upon Parties in Article II,

Taking into account the ACCOBAMS Strategy (2014-2025), as adopted under Resolution 5.1,

Recognizing the need to set priorities,

Acknowledging the relevant work being carried out in other Organizations, in particular within the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the instruments adopted within its framework, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention), the system of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, the Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution and the Agreement for the Establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

Recalling CMS Resolution 11.2 “Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023”, which urges the CMS Family of instruments to integrate the goals and targets of the Strategic Plan within relevant policy and planning instruments, to take actions to raise awareness of the Plan, and invites the decision making bodies of CMS instruments to consider adoption of the Strategic Plan,

Stressing the need to increase collaboration with other relevant International Organizations in the spirit of the ecosystem approach,

Aware that scientific research in Agreement area remains essential to identify populations with the least favourable conservation status and to address the conservation priorities,

Conscious that the current heterogeneity of management and research capacity in the area covered by the Agreement must be addressed by capacity-building and public awareness,

Taking into consideration the results of regional workshops organised in 2015 within ACCOBAMS, where the needs and priorities of Parties for the implementation of the Agreement have been identified,

Thanking the Scientific Committee for its involvement, its work and its wise advice to Parties in setting up accurate conservation measures,

Thanking also the Sub-Regional Coordination Units and the ACCOBAMS Partners for their continuous support to the implementation of the Agreement,

Recalling that Article IX, paragraph 3, calls for voluntary contributions to increase the funds available for monitoring, research, training and projects related to conservation,

Recalling Resolutions 1.7 and 5.5, establishing and implementing a Supplementary Conservation Fund,

1. *Notes* that identification of knowledge gaps, both thematic and geographical, is of particular importance for the Agreement;
2. *Adopts* the Work Programme for 2017-2019, as in [Annex 1](#) to the present Resolution, without prejudice to the pursuance of existing conservation actions, and considers as a priority the implementation of the key conservation issues listed in [Annex 2](#) to the present Resolution;
3. *Urges* Parties to support projects and activities in line with the Work Programme by means of financial and in kind contributions and to report thereon to the Seventh Meeting of the Parties;
4. *Urges* Parties to fully commit themselves in the ACCOBAMS Regional Workshops which should be organized in 2018, by having a representative attending the relevant Workshop;
5. *Recommends* Parties, in order to prepare these workshops, to organize through ACCOBAMS Focal Points a half-day national meeting, to collect all the relevant data prior the Regional Workshops;
6. *Asks* Parties to share with the Permanent Secretariat all national relevant GIS information in order to update maps in NETCCOBAMS;
7. *Urges* Parties and specialized international Organizations to develop international cooperative projects for implementation of the Work Programme and to keep the Permanent Secretariat fully informed of progress;
8. *Further urges* Parties and *encourages* other donors to provide financial assistance to Countries in need of capacity-building to support the implementation of the Agreement and of the Work Programme, directly or through the financial mechanisms of the Agreement, in particular through the Supplementary Conservation Fund;
9. *Calls on* the Scientific Committee, the Permanent Secretariat and Bureau, the Sub-Regional Coordinating Units, ACCOBAMS Partners and international and national non-governmental organizations to promote the actions necessary to facilitate implementation of the Work Programme, bearing in mind the Resolutions adopted by the Meetings of the Parties;
10. *Calls on* the Scientific Committee to further promote cooperation with scientific Institutions of the ACCOBAMS area;
11. *Instructs* the Permanent Secretariat to:
 - disseminate the Work Programme for priority actions for 2017-2019, to collaborate closely in its implementation with the Secretariats of other relevant Conventions, international Organizations and ACCOBAMS Partners and to seek appropriate donors;

- inform in time the National Focal Points of workshops and work programmes, as well as of the establishment of working groups within the ACCOBAMS framework;
12. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat to strengthen co-operation and develop activities with other relevant bodies, in particular within the CMS Family, the Barcelona Convention system, the IWC, the Bern Convention, the Bucharest Convention, European Commission, CBD, CITES, GFCM, OSPAR, ICES, IUCN, MedPAN and Pelagos Agreement;
 13. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat to participate in the process of fully developing the Companion Volume for the Strategic plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 to ensure that relevant tools developed by ACCOBAMS are reflected and possible areas of cooperation identified;
 14. *Allows* Parties to submit, as appropriate, to the Permanent Secretariat, by the end of 2016, for transmission to Focal Points and to the Scientific Committee, a list of their proposed priorities for the actions included in the work programme;;
 15. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, after consulting the Scientific Committee and on the basis of [Annex 2](#) to this Resolution, the outcomes of the ACCOBAMS Regional Workshops and the Parties' lists of proposed priorities, to submit to the Bureau a proposal to prioritize the implementation of the activities included in the Work Programme, taking into consideration the availability of financial resources, to facilitate its effective and timely implementation;
 16. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to further develop for the triennium 2020-2022 the current format for the Work Programme by including, for each action: level of priority, timeline, estimated costs, secured funds, prospected funds for cost coverage; and also *requests* the Executive Secretary to indicate the ongoing actions as well as to assess the overall financial sustainability of the Work Programme.

ANNEX 1

WORK PROGRAMME 2017 – 2019

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Actions underlined in green have been identified with a high priority during the ACCOBAMS Regional workshops (April 2015, Menton, France)

MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT (MA)

MA 1	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION				
MA 1 a	Establish regular communication				
Relevant Resolutions: -					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding ⁷²
1- Maintain regular communication to inform about ongoing activities, cooperation possibilities, funding possibilities, project call of proposals and other relevant information	Secretariat Parties	Scientific Committee, Partners SRCUs ⁷³ Other experts ⁷⁴	Active e-mailing list (regular exchange of information) New and updated information filled into NETCCOBAMS	ET ⁷⁵	AF
2- Maintain and regularly update NETCCOBAMS , including information about cetacean conservation scientists and experts operating in the region	Secretariat Parties	Scientific Committee, Partners Other experts	Link with the BSIS (Black Sea information system) prototype		
3- Continue organising Regional Workshops with the representatives of Parties and representatives of the Scientific Committee	Secretariat	Parties, Scientific Committee	Regional Workshops organised in 2018	2018	AF, NC
4- Continue organising Biennial Conferences for the Southern Mediterranean countries	Secretariat	Mediterranean SRCU	Biennial conferences organised in 2017	2017	AF, NC, EF
5- Regularly update ACCOBAMS web-site , and newsletter FINS. Link with the Black Sea bulletin	Secretariat	Scientific Committee, SRCUs, Focal Points	New and accurate information available on the web-site FINS regularly published	ET	AF

⁷² AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund and Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC =national co-funding/in kind through logistic , etc.... ; EF= External Funds

⁷³ SRCUs = Sub-regional Coordination Units

⁷⁴ Other experts are experts not included in the Scientific Committee and not included as ACCOBAMS Partners

⁷⁵ ET = Entire Triennium

MA 2	INVOLVEMENT OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS				
MA 2 a	Strengthen involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations				
Relevant Resolutions: 2.2/ 2.30 / 3.8 / 4.8/4.17/ 4.20 / 6.11/ 6.12					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
<p>1- Strengthen existing partnerships: CIESM, IUCN, GFCM, IMO, CMS and relevant CMS agreements such as ASCOBANS, the Barcelona Convention, RAC/SPA, the Black Sea Commission, IWC, EU Biodiversity Strategy, marine strategies in the ACCOBAMS area (MSFD⁷⁶), CBD Strategy, SAP BIO, ECS, Pelagos Agreement, international, regional and local NGOs</p>	Secretariat	Relevant Parties, Scientific Committee, Partners SRCUs Other experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint activities/ projects with relevant organizations • Joint working groups on particular issues • Regular meetings of relevant Secretariats • Cetacean conservation activities included in all relevant regional strategic documents, such as in the Black Sea status environment report • Regular communication/meetings with representatives of the relevant NGOs • participation in the process of fully developing the Companion Volume for the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 	ET	AF, EF
<p>2- Strengthen involvement of all riparian Countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage accession of all riparian states to the Agreement • Develop activities with non-Parties 	Secretariat	Relevant Parties and non-Parties, SRCUs, Partners Other experts	All riparian states are Parties to ACCOBAMS	ET	AF, NC, EF
<p>3- Establish collaboration with the EC jointly with ASCOBANS and as feasible with assistance from CMS.</p>	Secretariat	Relevant Parties, Partners,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the relevant fora and Meetings 	ET	AF, EF

⁷⁶ EC Marine Strategy Framework Directive

		Other relevant organizations	• Contribution to the determination and monitoring of the GES (MSFD) and favourable conservation status (HD)		
4- Establish / strengthen collaboration with NATO – NURC, OGP, ICES, OSPAR	Secretariat	Relevant Parties, Partners	• Participation in the relevant fora and Meetings • Joint activities	ET	AF, EF
5- Establish connections with other relevant organizations (EBA, WTO...)		Other relevant organizations, Other experts			
6- Organise a Workshop of Partners	Secretariat	Partners	Reinforcement of synergy between Partners and harmonisation of activities	2017 (SC11)	AF, NC, EF

MA 3	ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING, IN PARTICULARLY FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES				
MA 3 a	New funding possibilities				
Relevant Resolutions: 1.7/ 3.6/ 5.16/5.5					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Develop a funding strategy	Secretariat	Parties, Partners, SRCUs, CMS	Funding strategy in particular for joint projects	ET	AF
2 – Launch calls for proposals for projects to be funded under the Supplementary Conservation Fund (SCF)	Secretariat	Parties Scientific Committee	Conservation activities implemented through projects funded under the SCF	ET	AF, EF
3- Support development or develop multilateral/transboundary projects	Secretariat	Parties Non-Party Range States Scientific Committee, SRCUs Partners Other experts	Project proposals prepared with assistance of ACCOBAMS bodies	ET	-

MA 4	IMPLEMENTATION OF AND COMPLIANCE WITH ACCOBAMS				
MA 4 a	Improve the level of implementation of and compliance with ACCOBAMS resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress				
Relevant Resolutions: 5.4 / 6.8					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Evaluate the effectiveness of the ACCOBAMS Strategy (including evaluation of the work programme and level of resolutions implementation by Parties as a basis for new triennial work programme planning)	Secretariat	Parties, Scientific Committee SRCUs Follow-up Committee Partners	Mid-term evaluation of the effectiveness of the ACCOBAMS Strategy (including evaluation of work programme and evaluation of the implementation of ACCOBAMS by Parties)	2019	AF
2- Propose remedy actions in cases of non-compliance with ACCOBAMS Resolutions and infringements	Follow-up Committee	Parties, Secretariat, Scientific Committee	Proposal of remedy actions	ET	AF, NC

MA 5	ACCOBAMS EXTENSION AREA				
MA 5 a	Ensure implementation of the ACCOBAMS's cetacean conservation standards in the adjacent areas				
Relevant Resolutions: A/4.1 / 6.10					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Encourage ratification by Parties of the existing Amendment for geographical extension to the Atlantic	Secretariat	Depositary SRCUs Parties	Amendment has entered into force	ET	AF, NC

CONSERVATION ACTIONS (CA)

CA 1		IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS			
CA 1 a		Cetacean population estimates and distribution			
Relevant Resolutions: 5.9/ 6.13					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Undertake a comprehensive survey of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea and in the Black Sea (based on 2013 survey and conclusions in the final report to EC DG MARE, 2014) using the most appropriate methodology	Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States Scientific Committee, Partners, SRCUs Project Steering Committee, Other experts	Distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the different parts of the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea based on results of the survey	ET	AF, NC, EF

CA 1		IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS			
CA 1 b		Population Structure			
Relevant Resolutions: 2.10/ 2.11/ 3.9/ 4.18/ 6.14					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Identify isolated populations and improve description of population of several species	Scientific Committee Working Group on Population structure	Partners IWC, CMS, ASCOBANS, OSPAR, other experts	Characterisation of Mediterranean, Atlantic and or Black Sea sub populations Identification of isolated populations	ET	AF, EF

2- Investigate and implement modes for better collaboration between tissue banks and Countries to facilitate exchanges of samples for joint analysis.	Parties	Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Partners, SRCUs,	Exchanges of samples facilitated for joint analysis	ET	NC, EF
3-In order to facilitate the exchange of samples, a list of tissue banks registered with the CITES Secretariat should be made available		CITES, Other experts			

CA 1	IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS				
CA 1 c	Monitoring cetaceans status				
Relevant Resolutions: 2.22/ 3.19 / 6.15					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Monitor mortality trends and cases of animals injured through human activities (e.g. ship strikes, bycatch, pollution, epidemic), using existing tools (such as MEDACES, IWC database on ship strikes,...)	Scientific Committee	Parties, SRCUs, Secretariat, Partners, IWC Other experts	Mortality trend reports	2018 (SC12)	AF, NC, EF
2- Assess IUCN threat status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and update it regularly, and more specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information to assess the Data Deficient species • Evaluate species within the region not previously assessed (e.g. the rough-toothed dolphin) • Consider killer whales in the Agreement area 	Scientific Committee	Secretariat, Partners IUCN, Other experts	Assessment of IUCN threat status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area Updates available on the IUCN and, ACCOBAMS websites	2019 (after the ASI)	AF, EF
3- Prepare Red Books of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area and communicate with European Union. Coordinate with the Black Sea Red Data Book	Scientific Committee	Secretariat, Partners SRCUs IUCN, Other experts	Preparation of Red Books of cetaceans	2018 (SC12)	AF, EF

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)				
CA 2 a	Interaction with fisheries				
Relevant Resolutions: 2.13/ 2.21/ 2.25/ 3.13/ 4.9 / 6.16					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Assess cetaceans bycatch and depredation impacts and propose mitigation measures through pilot actions in the framework of the joint ACCOBAMS/GFCM project	Secretariat GFCM	Parties, SRCUs, Scientific Committee EC, Other experts	Gaining data on cetacean bycatch and depredation impacts in pilot areas in the Mediterranean Sea and adjacent Atlantic waters and on mitigation measures Contribution to GFCM DCRF	ET	AF, NC, EF
2- Assess the bycatch levels in the Agreement area , in connection with GFCM and EU regulations	Secretariat Parties	Partners, SRCUs, Scientific Committee, GFCM, EC, other experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaining data on bycatch levels Contribution to GFCM DCRF Contribution to the implementation of the EU Policies 	ET	AF, NC, EF
3- Investigate the establishment of connection with the EU bycatch reporting system	Secretariat	Parties, SRCUs, Scientific Committee GFCM, EC, ICES, other experts	Contribution to the implementation of EU Policies	2017 /2018	AF, NC, EF
4- Investigate funding opportunities to address impacts of interaction between fisheries and cetaceans in the Black Sea through the identification of mitigation measures and the preparation of a draft Strategy for reducing cetacean bycatch	Secretariat	Parties SRCU Scientific Committee GFCM, EC, IWC, other experts	Improving knowledge on interaction of fisheries on cetaceans in the Black Sea (Coordinate with strategic action plan implementation report -SAPIR) Contribution to GFCM DCRF	ET	AF, NC, EF
5 - Develop a joint working group with ASCOBANS on bycatch, and explore opportunities for linking this to the Bycatch Initiative established under the IWC.	Secretariat	Scientific Committee, ASCOBANS, IWC	joint working group with ASCOBANS on bycatch	2017	-

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)				
CA 2 b	Anthropogenic noise				
Relevant Resolutions: 2.16 / 3.10/ 4.17/ 5.15 / 6.17/ 6.18					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Pursue the identification of anthropogenic noise /cetaceans interactions hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area	Secretariat Parties JNWG	Scientific Committee, Partners RAC/ SPA Other experts	Overview of noise hot spots (Phase II III)	2017 /2018	AF, EF
2- Monitor all activities in the region including impulsive noise component through the development of an ACCOBAMS Common database	Parties	Secretariat RAC/ SPA Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview(s) of approved activities including impulsive noise component • National Noise databases • ACCOBAMS Common database 	ET	AF, NC, EF
3- Develop a regional project to implement a monitoring of underwater noise, particularly in critical habitats and in interactions hot spots	Secretariat, JNWG,	Parties, Non-Party Range States Scientific Committee, Partners RAC/ SPA Other experts	Regional Project	2016	AF, NC, EF
4- Develop and update more detailed guidelines to mitigate impacts of anthropogenic noise (using the existing guidelines Res 4.17) and update the guide for Parties to use mitigation measures	JNWG	Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Other experts	Updated guide to use mitigation measures	2019	AF
5- Assess the feasibility to develop best practice guidelines for an EIA review process	Scientific Committee, Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States JNWG, Partners Other experts	Assessment of feasibility to develop best practice guidelines for an EIA review process	2019	AF, EF
6- Develop cooperation on noise issue with other international Organizations such as CMS Family, EC, OSPAR, ICES, the Barcelona Convention, Black	Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States	Joint activities Meetings Workshop	ET	AF, EF

Sea Commission, CBD, IWC, NATO and with relevant international NGOs		Scientific Committee, JNWG, Partners Other experts			
7- Develop certificate or deliver certification in existing MMO training centres and encourage Focal Points to make mandatory the use of MMO in their countries (under the MSFD “measure” programme for EU countries for example / EcAP process)	Secretariat, Parties WG MMO	Scientific Committee, Partners Other experts	MMO certification	ET	AF, NC, EF
8- Support the finalization of the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities, encourage their adoption at CMS COP12	Parties	Scientific Committee	Implementation of CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities,	2017	NC
9- implement the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities				ET	NC

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)				
CA 2 c	Ship strikes				
Relevant Resolutions: 5.11 / 6.19					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Continue to monitor high risk areas for ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea	Scientific Committee and its relevant working group	Parties, Non-Party Range States SRCUs, Secretariat, Partners IMO, IWC, other experts	Overview of high risk areas for ship strikes	2017 (SC11)	AF, EF
2-Suggest and facilitate implementation of IMO or national mitigation measures (PSSA, TSS, ATBA) in selected areas			New shape files in NETCCOBAMS IMO or national measures in place	ET	AF, NC, EF

3- Promote use of mitigation measures to shipping companies in the region (speed restrictions, avoidance area) in particular in Cetacean Critical Habitats	Secretariat, Scientific Committee	Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners	Ships/boats in areas inhabiting large whales using the REPCET or other systems	ET	AF, EF
4- Encourage the use of tools such as REPCET in the Pelagos Agreement as a pilot area to facilitate statistical testing of the system		Pelagos Agreement, IWC	REPCET statistically tested	2017 (SC11)	AF, EF
5-Evaluate the relevance and the feasibility of a “whale-safe from ship strikes” certificate for shipping Companies	Secretariat, Scientific Committee	Partners IWC Other experts	Decision on relevance of a “whale-safe from ship strikes” certificate for shipping Companies	2018	AF
6- Facilitate and encourage reporting to and feedback from IWC database on ship strikes injuries and mortalities	Scientific Committee its relevant working group	Parties Non-Party Range States Partners IWC, Other experts	Protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities	2017	AF, EF

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)				
CA 2 d	Cetacean watching				
Relevant Resolutions: 3.23/ 4.7/ 5.10 / 6.20					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Promote the use of the “High quality whale watching” certificate , including organisation of training for operators	Secretariat Parties	Partners Pelagos Agreement Relevant stakeholders (tourism sector)	Awareness campaign to adopt and establish HQWW® certificate Member States with intensive cetacean watching activities use the certificate	ET	AF, NC, EF
2 - Provide a definition on the different types of whale watching operators (commercial, research, others)	Working Group Scientific Committee	Secretariat, IWC	Definition on the different types of whale watching operators	2017 (SC11)	AF

3- Test (i) the Guidelines for monitoring programmes aimed at maximizing the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts on individual cetaceans and on populations, (ii) the common procedure on the data collection in some pilot areas representing a variety of operation types (e.g. the Pelagos Agreement area, Gibraltar Strait, and south Portugal).	Working Group Scientific Committee	Secretariat, IWC	Guidelines for monitoring programs aimed at maximizing the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts on individual cetaceans and on populations, updated Common procedure on the data collection updated	ET	AF
4- Use (i) the Guidelines for monitoring programmes aimed at maximizing the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts on individual cetaceans and on populations, (ii) the common procedure on the data collection	Parties	Working Group Scientific Committee	Guidelines for monitoring programs aimed at maximizing the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts on individual cetaceans and on populations, used by Parties Common procedure on the data collection used by Parties		
5- Compile the information collected from whale watching companies through the data collection forms annexed to the Resolution [6.20]	Secretariat WW Working Group	Parties Partners	Specific entry created in NETCCOBAMS to compile the information collected from whale watching companies	ET	AF
6- Revise, if necessary, (i) the Guidelines for monitoring programmes aimed at maximizing the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts on individual cetaceans and on populations, (ii) the common procedure on the data collection and report on this issue to the Seventh Meeting of the Parties	Working Group Scientific Committee	Secretariat, IWC	Guidelines for monitoring programmes aimed at maximizing the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts on individual cetaceans and on populations, revised Common procedure on the data collection revised	ET	AF
7- Strengthen collaboration with relevant organisations addressing cetacean watching initiatives, in particular the IWC 'Online Handbook' for whale watching (under development)	Secretariat	Working Group Scientific Committee IWC	Collaboration strengthened with relevant organisations	-	AF, EF

CA 2		REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)			
CA 2 e		Marine debris			
Relevant Resolutions: 4.8					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Assess the impact of ghost nets on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area in collaboration with MedPOL and GFCM , with emphasis on the development of the removal methods	Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States Scientific Committee, Partners GFCM, MedPOL, other experts,	Assessment of ghost nets impacts on cetaceans	2017 - 2018	AF, EF
2- Assess the impact of plastic bags , microplastic and other plastic materials ingestion on cetaceans in cooperation with existing initiatives, such as IWC : bibliographic synthesis and Scientific Committee recommendation	Scientific Committee	Secretariat, Partners IWC, MedPOL, other experts,	Assessment of plastic materials impacts on cetaceans by providing bibliographic synthesis	2017 (SC11)	AF, EF
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on secondary effects more than ingestion • Suggested mitigation measures 	2018 (SC12)	AF, EF
3- Encourage cooperation with ongoing regional initiatives on marine litter.	Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States Scientific Committee, Partners SRCUs	Joint programmes at the Agreement level Synergies with EU MSFD	ET	AF, EF

CA 2		REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)			
CA 2 f		Climate change			
Relevant Resolutions: 4.14					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Identify indicator species, in cooperation with existing initiatives, such as EU, CMS Family, Barcelona Convention/EcAp, BSC, IWC, IUCN, GFCM, and propose a monitoring system for these species	Scientific Committee	Partners SRCUs Other experts	Proposed monitoring system for indicator species	2017 (SC11)	AF, EF
2- Liaise with the relevant CMS Working Group to participate to its future activities	Scientific Committee	Secretariat	Joint activities	ET	AF, EF

CA 2		REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)			
CA 2 g		Species conservation plans			
Relevant Resolutions: 1.8/ 1.12/ 3.7/ 3.11/ 4.6/ 4.13/5.12/ 5.13/ 5.14 / 6.21					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Revise regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans (prepared in 2014) , in cooperation with relevant stakeholders	Scientific Committee	Parties, Non-Party Range States Black Sea SRCU, Secretariat Other experts	Revised and adopted regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans and implementation at the national level in BS Parties	2017 (SC11)	AF, EF
2- Complete the Conservation Plan for Bottlenose dolphin	Scientific Committee,	Parties,	Scientists in charge of relevant Conservation Plans identified	ET	AF, EF

3- Prepare the Conservation Plan for Fin whale , including investigation of the existing data to determine the efficacy of undertaking a spatial modelling exercise for fin whales in the Mediterranean for comparison with information on shipping traffic	Secretariat, SRCUs	Non-Party Range States Partners, IWC Other experts	Finalized Conservation Plan for Bottlenose dolphin Drafts of Conservation Management Plans for: ○ Fin whale ○ Cuvier's beaked whales ○ Killer whales ○ Long finned pilot whales List of other species of interest		
4- Consider the preparation of regional conservation plans based on the IWC conservation and management plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuvier's beaked whales, • Killer whales • Long finned pilot whales And Identify other species of interest					
5- Consider update existing conservation plans (e.g. short-beaked common dolphins)	Scientific Committee, Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners, SRCUs IWC Other experts	Existing conservation plans updated and implemented	ET	AF
6- Implement existing conservation plans (e.g. short-beaked common dolphins)					
7- Develop or revise National Action Plans	Parties	SRCU, Scientific Committee, other experts	National Action Plans in most of the ACCOBAMS Parties developed/ revised and mostly implemented	ET	AF, NC
8- Implement National Action Plans					

CA 2		REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)			
CA 2 h		Captivity related issues			
Relevant Resolutions: 5.14					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Update regularly the inventory of specimens of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity	Black Sea SRCU	Parties, Non-Party Range States Scientific Committee, Secretariat Other experts	Updated inventory of BS bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity	2017 (SC11)	AF
2- Encourage the implementation of the CITES decisions based on the draft Resolution prepared by ACCOBAMS on the identification of origin of cetaceans bred or kept in captivity	Parties	Secretariat, Scientific Committee CITES	Identification of origin of cetaceans bred or kept in captivity	ET	AF, EF
3- Make Parties aware of new captivity issues: disseminate the document "Taking of cetaceans and dolphinaria: a legal analysis within the framework of ACCOBAMS" updated with the "quasi dolphinaria" together with the re-introduction issues	Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States Scientific Committee, SRCUs Partners Other experts	Relevant ACCOBAMS document on captivity and "semi-captivity" largely disseminated	ET	-

CA 2	REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)				
CA 2 i	Chemical & biological pollution				
Relevant Resolutions: -					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Assess the impact of chemical pollution on cetaceans (Focus on emerging contaminants, comparison between pristine areas and polluted ones)	Scientific Committee	SRCUs IWC and Pollution 2020 project Other experts	Assessment of impacts of pollution on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area Updated bibliography of chemical pollution in cetaceans Identify target areas and species for <i>ad hoc</i> projects	2018 (SC12)	AF, EF
2- Review of existing work (literature review) and identify knowledge gaps					
3- Suggest ad hoc research projects for targeted areas and species					
4- Study the possibility/consequences of enhanced transfer of pollutants via ingested microplastics					
5- Encourage international or regional cooperation, such as UNEP/MAP, BSC, IWC, in sampling and analyses of chemical pollution					

CA 3	ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT CETACEANS				
CA 3 a	Public awareness				
Relevant Resolutions: 2.21, 2.23, 4.9, 6.23					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1-Continue and facilitate ACCOBAMS cetaceans day and promote annual celebration, linked with existing dates for nature conservation	Parties Partners	SRCUs, Secretariat	ACCOBAMS cetaceans day regularly celebrated in the area	ET	AF, NC
2- Create and disseminate communication tools targeted to future generations	Secretariat Scientific Committee	SRCUs, Partners, Parties, Non-Party Range States Other relevant organisations	Communication tools distributed to relevant subjects	ET	AF, NC, EF
3-Promote ACCOBAMS activities using the social networks (such as Facebook, Twitter,..)					
4- Organise public awareness related survey (Opinion of public)	Parties	SRCUs, Secretariat, Partners	Survey format and instructions Survey report	ET	AF, NC
5- Promote cetacean conservation actions during different events at international and national levels (such as Black Sea day celebration, ECS/ACCOBAMS student award ...)	Secretariat	Partners, SRCUs, Parties, Other relevant organisations	Side events, exhibitions, website, public lectures, awareness material	ET	AF, NC, EF
6- Establish a Partner Award for public awareness on Cetaceans Conservation	Secretariat	Partners	Project proposals selected among ACCOBAMS Partners for implementation with support from ACCOBAMS	2018	AF, EF
7- Evaluate the relevance of 'Citizen Science' input of cetacean sightings into a newly established, expert-supervised, database, before transferring to ObisSeamap	Scientific Committee	Partners, Other experts	Decision on the relevance of 'Citizen Science' input of cetacean sightings into a newly established, expert-supervised, database, before transferring to ObisSeamap	2018	AF

8 - Implement specific national activities on public awareness	Parties	Secretariat, SRCUs Partners Non Parties	National specific public awareness activities implemented	ET	NC
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CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS				
CA 4 a	Functional stranding networks and responses to emergency situation				
Relevant Resolutions: 1.10/ 3.25/ 4.16 / 6.22 / 6.23					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Undertake trainings on necropsies , live strandings and response to emergency situation in the ACCOBAMS area	Secretariat	Parties SRCUs Partners Pelagos Agreement	Participants from all Parties trained	ET	AF, NC
2-Maintain/ Establish (sub)regional mailing lists of participants in the stranding networks to facilitate exchange of information, particularly in the South Mediterranean region	Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and synthesis of subregional mailing lists • Regularly exchanged information on stranding events in particular on the occasion of Biennial Conference 	ET	AF, NC
3- Develop a common operational stranding protocol, in collaboration with IWC, ECS and ASCOBANS	Scientific Committee Parties	Partners ASCOBANS, IWC, ECS Other experts	Common operational protocol implemented	2017	AF, EF
4- Encourage data / tissue exchanges through collaboration with relevant databases and tissue banks	Secretariat, Scientific Committee Parties	Partners, SRCUs CITES IWC, Other experts	Data / tissue exchanges facilitated for Basin wide analysis (list of tissue banks registered with the CITES Secretariat should be made available)		AF, NC, EF

CA 4		IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS			
CA 4 b		Capacity to use cetaceans photo identification methods			
Relevant Resolutions: 2.28/ 5.9 / 6.13/ 6.23					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Undertake trainings on the use of photo-id (and theodolites)	Secretariat Parties	Scientific Committee, Partners SRCUs MedPAN, others experts	Trained experts from all Parties with identified needs Selected trainers from Partners	ET	AF, EF
2- Promote the use of, catalogue or web-based database of photo-IDs, such as INTERCET or analogue systems both in Mediterranean and Black Seas	Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States Scientific Committee, Partners Others experts	Disseminate the use of INTERCET or other analogue systems	ET	AF, EF
3- Provide photo-id equipment to the relevant organisations from Parties with least capacities (based on the scale of middle and low incomes, from the World Bank in [February 2015])	Secretariat Parties	SRCUs SC Partners Others experts	Provided relevant Parties with photo-id equipment (camera, lenses), upon funding availability (approach Companies for sponsorship)	ET	NC, EF

CA 4	IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS				
CA 4 c	Capacity building for other cetacean conservation issues				
Relevant Resolutions: 6.23					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Identify protected areas managers from the areas within cetacean critical habitat and facilitate exchanges to suggest good management practices between neighbouring area (organising visits for example)	Secretariat,	Parties SRCUs MedPAN,	staff from protected areas within cetaceans critical habitats have participated in the exchange programmes (e.g. study tours and other types of visits)	ET	AF, NC
2- Train staff of Marine Protected Area to be updated on cetacean conservation issues	Secretariat	Parties	Staff from Marine Protected Areas trained by Parties in cetacean conservation	ET	AF, NC
3- Promote and facilitate exchange of expertise, such as participation of experts with less knowledge in the specific projects implemented by experienced researchers, etc...	Secretariat and Parties Partners	SRCUs Scientific Committee Others experts	Experts trained through participation in the specific projects	ET	AF, NC
4- Encourage exchanges between universities and laboratories for training on genetic and molecular biology, in Southern Mediterranean countries and Black Sea	Secretariat Parties	SRCUs Scientific Committee Others experts	Experts trained on genetic and molecular biology through exchanges between universities and laboratories	ET	AF, NC, EF
5- Organize training sessions for national experts to fill databases (NETCCOBAMS, OBIS-Seamap, Medaces, Intercet,...)	Secretariat	Parties Non-Party Range States SRCUs Scientific Committee Partners Others experts	Experts trained on relevant databases	ET	AF, NC, EF

CA 4		IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS			
CA 4 d		Cetacean conservation and postgraduate programmes			
Relevant Resolutions: 6.23					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Introduce cetacean conservation modules in all ACCOBAMS Countries	Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States SRCUs, Partners Universities	Post-graduate programmes with included cetacean conservation modules	ET	AF, NC, EF
2- Translate existing cetacean conservation modules in other languages (such as Arabic, Russian, ...)	Parties	Secretariat, SRCUs, Partners Universities	Cetacean conservation modules available in different languages of the Agreement	ET	AF, NC
3- Encourage Parties that have already introduced the module, to disseminate the module to others universities	Parties	SRCUs, Partners, Secretariat Universities	Dissemination of cetacean conservation modules in universities	ET	AF, NC

CA 5		ENHANCE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS CRITICAL HABITATS			
CA 5 a		Protected areas for cetaceans			
Relevant Resolutions: 3.22/ 4.15 / 6.24					
Action	To be coordinated by	With the cooperation of	Outputs	Timing	Possible Source of funding
1- Update regularly a list of areas containing habitats of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS region	Parties, Scientific Committee	SRCUs, Secretariat, Partners, Other experts	Lists of areas containing cetaceans habitats available on NETCCOBAMS Updated lists and maps of critical habitats by species (including migration routes, biological corridors, breeding/calving and feeding areas)	ET	AF, EF
2- Revise the existing Cetacean Critical Habitats (CCHs) , taking into account (i) the candidates IMMAs proposed and the Areas of Interest identified during the first workshop on the Identification of Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) in the Mediterranean Sea , and (ii) the threat-based management approach	Scientific Committee (Task Managers, Regional representatives and coordinators of conservation plans)	SRCUs, Secretariat, Partners, Parties, Non-Party Range States Other experts	Identification of areas with the same threats for cetaceans (bycatch areas, harassment areas...) IMMAs in the ACCOBAMS area identified Establishment of links with the BSC CBD activities centre		
3- Disseminate tools for adequate management of areas within CCH, including evaluation of management effectiveness and using examples of best practice	Secretariat	Scientific Committee, Parties Non-Party Range States MedPAN, other experts	Adequate management of areas within CCH implemented, based on the ACCOBAMS document "Place-based conservation of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area: a handbook on management effectiveness"	ET	AF
4- Evaluate effectiveness of management of protected areas within CCH using existing initiatives (such as MedPAN endeavours in that context).	Scientific Committee, Secretariat Parties	SRCUs, MedPAN, Pelagos Agreement, other experts	Evaluation of effectiveness of protected areas for cetaceans, foremostly their contribution to achievement/maintenance of favourable conservation status	2018 (SC12)	AF, EF

5-Promote the use of Passive Acoustic Monitoring in MPAs and in control sites as a management effectiveness monitoring tool	Scientific Committee, Secretariat	Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners SRCUs MedPAN, Pelagos Agreement	Use of PAM in MPAs and in control sites	ET	AF, NC
6- Revise and update the tools for adequate management of areas within CCH, after the evaluation of management effectiveness has been implemented	Scientific Committee, Secretariat	Parties, Partners SRCUs MedPAN, Pelagos Agreement	ACCOBAMS Document “Place-based conservation of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area: a handbook on management effectiveness” updated	2019	AF
7-Participate actively in a strategical alliance on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity among ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN	Secretariat, RAC/SPA, GFCM, IUCN, MedPAN	Parties Non-Party Range States other experts	Joint Cooperation Strategy document	ET	AF, EF

ANNEX 2
TRIENNIUM 2017-2019 - KEY CONSERVATION ISSUES AND RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS

CA 1 - IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STATE OF CETACEANS

CA 1 a - Cetacean population estimates and distribution: ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative –Resolution 6.13

CA 2 - REDUCE HUMAN PRESSURES ON CETACEANS, IN PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO BYCATCH, HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION (POLLUTION)

CA 2 a- Interaction with fisheries - Resolution 6.16

CA 2 b - Anthropogenic noise- Resolution 6.17 & 6.18 (MMO)

CA 2 c - Ship strikes - Resolution 6.19

CA 2 d - Cetacean watching - Resolution 6.21

CA 2 e - Marine debris

CA 2 g - Species conservation plans - Resolution 6.15 & Resolution 6.21

CA 2 i - Chemical & biological pollution

CA 4 - IMPROVE CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND EXPERTS - Resolution 6.22 & Resolution 6.23

CA 5 - ENHANCE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS CRITICAL HABITATS - Resolution 6.24

RESOLUTION 6.6 - FINANCIAL MATTERS FOR THE TRIENNIUM 2017-2019

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

Recalling Article IX, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Agreement, stating that the Parties shall determine the scale of contributions to the budget and that the Meeting of the Parties shall adopt a budget by consensus,

Acknowledging with appreciation:

- the financial support and the contributions in kind provided by the Government of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco for the Permanent Secretariat under the Headquarter Agreement,
- the voluntary contributions provided by the Government of Monaco, and the co-financings from RAC/SPA, IUCN and the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas,
- the financial support provided by MAVA Foundation,
- the support from Partner Organisations for Agreement activities,

Stressing the importance of the payment by all Parties of the contributions due to the budget of the Agreement,

1. *Takes note* with satisfaction of the audited accounts for the period 2014-2016 presented by the Permanent Secretariat;
2. *Agrees* to review at Seventh Meeting of Parties the option of transferring, if appropriate, some of the unspent balance of previous triennium funds (including some unpaid pledges that might be received) to the Supplementary Conservation Fund;;
3. *Agrees* to provide financial support for the participation to the ACCOBAMS Meetings of the Parties of delegates (one delegate by country) from countries with middle and low incomes, as classified by the World Bank in July 2016 and as listed in [Annex 5](#) to the present Resolution, excluding countries with arrears of more than three years of contribution to the Trust Fund;
4. *Adopts* the Budget for 2017-2019, as in [Annex 1](#) to the present Resolution;
5. *Confirms* that Parties shall contribute to the budget, in accordance with Article III, paragraph 8 (e), of the Agreement, at the scale agreed upon by the Meeting of the Parties;
6. *Agrees* to the scale and amounts of contributions of Parties to the Agreement, as listed in [Annex 2](#) to the present Resolution, and to the application of that scale to new Parties *pro rata* of the remaining financial year;
7. *Takes into consideration* Resolution 6.5 of the Meeting of the Parties on the Work Programme for the period 2017-2019;

8. *Requests* Parties, in particular those that pay the minimum contribution, to consider paying for the entire triennium in one instalment at the beginning of the period;
9. *Further requests* Parties to pay their contributions as promptly as possible, but in any case no later than at the end of March of the corresponding year;
10. *Recommends* that Parties provide additional support to Countries in need of capacity-building and assist them in implementing the Agreement throughout the triennium 2017-2019;
11. *Invites* Parties, Range States and organisations to consider the feasibility of providing adequate personnel for the Permanent Secretariat;
12. *Also invites* States that are not Parties to the Agreement, as well as governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations and other possible donors, to consider contributing to the implementation of the Agreement on a voluntary basis;
13. *Asks* the Parties that have unpaid pledges to pay their pending contributions within a reasonable time, at the latest two to three months after the end of 2016, in order to close the budget for the 2014-2016 triennium, as soon as possible;
14. *Encourages* individual Parties and Range States, when allocating funds for ACCOBAMS-related research, to take into account the priorities of the ACCOBAMS Work Programme and *asks*, as appropriate, for the advice of the Scientific Committee in identifying activities that:
 - a. are most directly in accord with the conservation priorities identified in Resolutions adopted by the Parties, in particular the Work Programme and
 - b. will directly assist the Scientific Committee in its priority work;
15. *Approves* the terms of reference for administration of the Agreement Budget for the period 2017-2019, as set out in [Annex 3](#) to the present Resolution, as well as the guidelines for the acceptance of financial contributions, as set out in [Annex 4](#), provided that no voluntary contribution shall entail any present or future financial liability for the Agreement Trust Fund without the prior consent of the Parties or the Bureau;
16. *Entrusts* to the Permanent Secretariat with the task of exploring the availability of appropriate additional funds to support the implementation of the Agreement;
17. *Mandates* the Executive Secretary, as he/she prepares for the 2020-2022 budget proposal, to include an option based on the outcomes of the functional assessment as Resolution 6.3 stipulates.

ANNEXES

[Annex 1](#): Budget 2017 -2019

[Annex 2](#): Annual contributions of Parties to the Trust Fund of ACCOBAMS

[Annex 3](#): Terms of reference for administration of the Budget

[Annex 4](#): Guidelines for accepting voluntary financial contributions

[Annex 5](#): Eligibility for funding to attend the Meetings of the Parties to ACCOBAMS

ANNEX 1
BUDGET 2017 – 2019

		2017	2018	2019
Administration and general management				
110	Administrative staff			
1 101	Executive Secretary allowance	20 600	20 600	20 600
1 102	Programme Officer	41 040	41 430	41 820
1 103	Accountant	11 550	11 660	11 700
1 104	Assistant	-	-	-
120	Administrative support			
1 201	Coordination Units	7 200	7 200	7 200
1 202	Translators	1 000	1 000	1 000
1 203	Reviewers	0		
1 204	External Assistance	3 000	3 000	2 300
130	Travel			
1 301	Secretariat staff	17 500	17 500	15 000
140	Bank fees	750	760	780
150	Hospitality	600	600	600
Total administration and general management		103 240	103 750	101 000
Total administration and general management for the triennium 2017 - 2019		307 990		
Host country contributions under HQA *		661 200**		
TOTAL cost administration and general management including In cash and in kind contributions under HQA*		969 190		

* In accordance with appendix 1 (Financial arrangements between the Government of H.S.H the Prince of Monaco and the Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS) of Resolution 6.2 on Amendment to the Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country. This amount includes both in cash and in kind contributions.

**Indicative value of the contributions of the Principality of Monaco, under the Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country.

		2017	2018	2019
Institutional Meetings				
210	Meeting of the Parties	0	5 000	57 000
220	Scientific Committee	20 000	29 000	-
230	Bureau	6 200	6 200	10 500
240	Regional Workshops	-	20 000	-
250	Follow-up Committee Meeting	0	5 000	-
Total institutional Meetings		26 000	65 200	67 500
Total institutional Meetings for the triennium 2017 - 2019		158 700		

		2017	2018	2019
Support to Conservation actions				
51	Capacity-building	10 000	20 000	5 000
	Assistance to Countries			
52	Human-cetacean interactions / Emergency situations	12 000	30 000	5 000
	Collisions			
	Interactions with fisheries			
	Pollution impacts			
53	Habitats / Research and monitoring	10 000	20 000	5 000
	Monitoring cetaceans status			
	Conservation plans			
	Marine Protected Areas			
54	Public awareness / Dissemination of information	15 000	13 500	15 000
	Databases management			
	Public awareness			
55	Project officer	39 500	39 870	41 040
Total conservation actions		86 500	123 370	71 040
Total conservation actions for the triennium 2017 - 2019		280 910		

		2017	2018	2019
Total administration, meetings and conservation		215 940	292 320	239 540
Total budget for the triennium 2017 - 2019		€747 800		
Total budget for the triennium including In cash and in kind contributions under HQA		1 409 000***		

*** The indicative value of the contributions of the Principality of Monaco for the triennium, under the Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country, is €661 200.

ANNEX 2
ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF PARTIES TO THE TRUST FUND OF ACCOBAMS

	UN Scale 2017-2019	ACCOBAMS Key 2017-2019	Annual Contribution 2017-2019
Albania	0,008	0,10	1 500
Algeria	0,161	2,01	4 328
Bulgaria	0,045	0,56	1 500
Croatia	0,099	1,24	2 661
Cyprus	0,043	0,54	1 500
Egypt	0,152	1,90	4 086
France	4,859	25,98	64 769
Georgia	0,008	0,10	1 500
Greece	0,471	5,89	12 662
Italy	3,748	25,98	64 769
Lebanon	0,046	0,58	1 500
Libya	0,125	1,56	3 360
Malta	0,016	0,20	1 500
Monaco	0,01	0,13	1 500
Montenegro	0,004	0,05	1 500
Morocco	0,054	0,68	1 500
Portugal	0,392	4,90	10 538
Romania	0,184	2,30	4 947
Slovenia	0,084	1,05	2 258
Spain	2,443	22,32	55 619
Syrian Arab Republic	0,024	0,30	1 500
Tunisia	0,028	0,35	1 500
Ukraine	0,103	1,29	2 769

ANNEX 3
TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE BUDGET

1. The terms of reference for administration of the budget of ACCOBAMS shall refer to the financial years beginning 1st January 2017 and ending 31st December 2019.
2. The budget shall be administered by the Executive Secretary.
3. The budget shall be administered according to these Terms of reference.
4. The financial resources of the budget shall be derived from:
 - (a) Contributions from the Parties according to Annex 2, as well as contributions from new Parties, and
 - (b) Voluntary contributions from Parties, contributions from States not Party to the Agreement, other governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations and other sources.
5. All contributions to the budget shall be paid in Euros.
6. With regard to contributions from States that become Parties after the beginning of the financial period, the initial contribution (from the first day of the third month after the deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance or accession, until the end of the financial period) shall be determined *pro rata* on the basis of the contributions of other Parties according to the adopted scale of assessments and depending on the remaining annual financial exercise.
7. Contributions by all Parties throughout the triennium 2017-2019 are calculated on the basis of the United Nations scale of assessments applicable for 2016, with the modifications needed to adapt it to the ACCOBAMS Parties.
8. The contributions are due on 1st January 2017, 1st January 2018 and 1st January 2019. Contributions shall be paid into the following account:

<i>Account holder</i>	<i>Swift code</i>	<i>IBAN code</i>
ACCOBAMS	CFMOMCMX	MC 02 1273 9000 7001 0702 3000 M76

9. For the convenience of the Parties, the Executive Secretary shall notify as soon as possible the Parties to the Agreement of their assessed contributions for each of the years of the financial period.
10. Contributions received into the budget and not immediately required for financing activities shall be invested at the discretion of the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau, and any generated income shall be used to implement the Agreement.
11. The budget shall be audited by a fund management controller.
12. The budget estimates of income and expenditures for each calendar year of the financial period shall be prepared in Euros and submitted to the Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement.

13. The estimates for each calendar year covered by the financial period shall be divided into sections and objectives of expenditure, be specified according to budget lines, be consistent with the programmes of work to which they relate, and be accompanied by information as may be required by or on behalf of the contributors.
14. The proposed budget, including all the necessary information, shall be dispatched by the Permanent Secretariat to all Parties at least 90 days before the date established for the opening of the Meeting of the Parties.
15. The budget shall be adopted by consensus at the Meeting of the Parties.
16. With the authorization of the Bureau, the Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement can make transfers from one budget line to another.
17. Should the Permanent Secretariat anticipate a shortfall in resources over the financial period, the Permanent Secretariat shall consult the Bureau about its priorities for expenditure.
18. Commitments against the resources of the budget may be made only if they are covered by sufficient income.
19. A secured fund is created, equivalent to thirty per cent of the administrative budget.
20. At the end of each calendar year of the financial period, the Permanent Secretariat shall submit the accounts of the year to the Bureau. These shall include details of actual expenditure and comparisons with the original provisions for each budget line.
21. The Permanent Secretariat shall give the Bureau an estimate of proposed expenditures for the coming year simultaneously with, or as soon as possible after, the communication of the accounts and reports referred to in the preceding paragraphs.
22. The Permanent Secretariat shall present the audited accounts for the financial exercises to the Meeting of the Parties.
23. The present terms of reference shall be implemented by the Executive Secretary.

ANNEX 4
GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTING VOLUNTARY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

1. General Rules

No voluntary contribution, gift or donation for a specific purpose may be accepted if incompatible with the policies and aims of the Agreement or the CMS.

2. Approval of donors

- 2.1 Donors who are not governmental Institutions of Parties or Economic Integration Organisations or riparian States not Party to the Agreement, must be approved as such by the Bureau before their contributions are accepted by the Permanent Secretariat.
- 2.2 Sources known to have been involved in interests or activities which conflict with the aims of the Agreement or the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and any Organisation or individual who has deliberately brought, or might bring, the Agreement into public disrepute, shall be excluded. The same shall apply where there is a risk that a source might try to influence the decisions of any organ of the Agreement where in the opinion of the Scientific Committee, this source has, or has had in the past, an environmentally unfriendly attitude.

3. Acceptance of voluntary contributions

- 3.1 Voluntary contributions shall only be accepted when the purpose is consistent with the policies and aims of the Agreement.
- 3.2 No voluntary contributions shall have an immediate or ultimate financial liability for the Agreement Trust Fund without the prior consent of the Parties or the Bureau.
- 3.3 All monetary contributions shall be paid in freely convertible currency; exceptions may, however, be made for special projects if the currency in question can effectively be used.
- 3.4. Voluntary contributions in kind may be accepted, provided that they are used to cover activities approved by the Meeting of the Parties. These may include, inter alia, direct or indirect involvement in a joint project, free office accommodation, equipment, or the secondment of staff.

ANNEX 5**ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS OF THE PARTIES TO ACCOBAMS**

Based on the scale of middle and low incomes, from the World Bank in July 2016, the Permanent Secretariat is authorised to cover, upon budget availability, the travel and accommodation fees of the representatives of the following Parties for the Meetings of the Parties of ACCOBAMS (one delegate/Party):

- Albania
- Algeria
- Bulgaria
- Egypt
- Georgia
- Lebanon
- Libya (pending on settlement of unpaid pledges)
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Romania
- Syrian Arab Republic
- Tunisia
- Ukraine

RESOLUTION 6.7 - SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

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

Recalling Article VII of the Agreement on the composition and functions of the Scientific Committee,

Recalling Resolution 5.3 adopting the rules concerning the Scientific Committee and introducing a rotation between CIESM and IUCN to be entrusted with the Chairmanship of the Committee,

Considering the recommendations of the Scientific Committee and the Bureau,

Commending the participation in the Scientific Committee of representatives from the Mediterranean Science Commission (CIESM), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the European Cetacean Society (ECS), the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS),

Taking into account the ACCOBAMS Strategy (Period 2014-2025) as adopted by Resolution 5.1 and the work programme 2017-2019 as adopted by Resolution 6.5,

Stressing the need for establishing a closer link between the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS and the rest of the scientific community working on cetaceans in the Agreement Area,

Stressing the need for strengthening the representation of the Parties' scientific community in the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS, by allowing Parties to designate, on a voluntary basis, national experts to participate to the work of the Scientific Committee,

Considering that the "task managers" and the regional representatives should have an active role in supporting the Chair during the meetings of the Scientific Committee and other works,

Aware of the need to adapt the selection procedure for the Scientific Committee to the increasing challenges the Agreement is facing,

1. *Decides to* amend the text of the Rules on the Scientific Committee, as annexed to this Resolution:
 - Article 2.1 in order to allow the Chair and Vice-Chair to act also as "task managers";
 - Article 3 in order to allow changes in the designation of the "task managers";
2. *Decides to* adopt the Rules on the Scientific Committee as annexed to the present Resolution (amendments in bold);
3. *Entrusts* the Chair of the Scientific Committee to IUCN and the Vice-Chair to CIESM, according to the function described in the Rules on the Scientific Committee annexed to the present Resolution;
4. *Takes note* of the experts designated by IUCN and CIESM for the period 2017-2019 as follows:

- **IUCN :**
 - Ibrahim BENAMER
 - Léa DAVID
 - Simone PANIGADA

- **CIESM :**
 - Ayaka Amaha OZTÜRK
 - Aviad SCHEININ

5. *Asks* the Scientific Committee to appoint, at its first Meeting of the triennium, its Chair among the experts designated by IUCN, its Vice-Chair among the experts designated by CIESM and its "task managers";
6. *Invites* each of the two organizations listed in the previous paragraph to appoint one of their experts to assist the Permanent Secretariat in the preparation of the first Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the triennium;
7. *Thanks* CIESM, CMS, IUCN and IWC for shouldering the responsibility for their experts' participation expenses;
8. *Invites* the Sub-Regional Coordination Units to fully participate in the work and the Meetings of the Scientific Committee;
9. *Invites* the Permanent Secretariat, if resources allow, to ensure, where necessary, the participation in the Meetings and/or work of the Scientific Committee of experts in disciplines that are not covered by the members of the Scientific Committee, including legal and socio-economic aspects, after consultation with the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee as for the selection and the definition of tasks of these experts;
10. *Calls* upon CIESM, CMS, IUCN, ECS and the Scientific Committee of IWC to pursue their contribution to the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS;
11. *Decides* that the present Resolution replaces Resolution 5.3.

ANNEX
RULES OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

Article 1

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 to the Parties through the Permanent Secretariat.
2. The functions of the Scientific Committee are defined in Article VII, paragraph 3, of the Agreement.
3. The scientific Committee is **alternatively entrusted, on a triennial basis, to one of the Expert Organisations (CIESM, IUCN) which will take turns in ensuring the function of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.**

Article 2

1. The Scientific Committee **shall consist in principle of the following members, namely:**
 - **Three experts, including the Chair**, appointed by the Organisation to which the Scientific Committee has been entrusted under Article 1.3;
 - **Three experts, including the Vice-Chair**, appointed by the Organisation other than the one to which the Scientific Committee was entrusted under Article 1.3;
 - Four representatives of the Regions defined in the Appendix, appointed by the Meeting of the Parties from a list of experts submitted by the Parties together with their *curriculum vitae*;
 - One representative from the European Cetacean Society (ECS), one representative of the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and one representative of the Scientific Council of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS);
2. Additional members of the Scientific Committee may be designated by the Parties on a voluntary basis. The cost of their participation to the meetings of the Scientific Committee shall not be covered by the Agreement's funds.

SELECTION OF THE MEMBERS AND TERMS OF OFFICE

Article 3

1. The selection of the Scientific Committee members must take into consideration the following criteria, finalized by the Extended Bureau in accordance with the Work Programme proposed to the Parties:
 - a) To be an expert in one or more fields relevant to cetacean conservation science;

- b) To possess an appropriate level of quality, relevance, productivity and originality in activities related to cetacean conservation, as demonstrated through scientific publications and reports, communications to conferences, participation in working groups or committees at national or international levels;
- c) To be available to participate in the work of the Scientific Committee, attend its meetings and contribute to the working groups, with the required continuity;
- d) To be proficient in one of the Agreement's two working languages (English and French) and preferably in both.

2. The qualified experts designated by CIESM and IUCN are designated in close consultation with the Executive Secretary, who reports on the outcome of these consultations to the Meeting of the Parties.

3. The priorities set in the Work Programme for each triennium, as well as the need to ensure a balanced geographical representation, shall be taken into account **in selecting the members of the Scientific Committee by the Meeting of the Parties.**

4. At its first Meeting, four "task managers" are designated by the Scientific Committee among the experts referred to in Article 2.1. As far as necessary, these appointments can be modified during the triennium upon decision of the Chair of the Scientific Committee in consultation with the Vice-Chair and in concertation with the Executive Secretary.

Article 4

The terms of office of the members shall expire at the closure of the ordinary Meeting of the Parties following the one at which they were appointed.

MEETINGS

Article 5

1. The quorum for an ordinary meeting shall consist of the two thirds of the members of the Committee, without considering the additional members referred to in Article 2, paragraph 3. The quorum shall be reduced to half of the members in extraordinary meetings.

2. The Chair shall preside over the meetings of the Scientific Committee, prepare the provisional agenda in consultation with the Permanent Secretariat, and liaise with members between meetings of the Committee. The Chair may represent the Committee as required and carry out other functions as may be delegated to him/her by the Committee, within the limits of the Committee functions.

3. The Vice-Chair, shall assist the Chair.

4. At its first meeting after the Meeting of Parties, the Scientific Committee shall assign specific topics for each task manager taking into account the priorities set in the Work Programme for the triennium.
5. Each task manager, in addition to his/her role as member of the Scientific Committee, shall coordinate the works of the Scientific Committee concerning the topics that he/she has been assigned by the Scientific Committee.
6. Each task manager shall provide a report to the meetings of the Scientific Committee on the topics he/she is in charge of.
7. Each regional representative shall provide a report to the meetings of the Scientific Committee on the conservation status of cetaceans and relevant activities in the region he/she has the responsibility of.

Article 6

1. The Scientific 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.
2. The meetings of the working groups shall be held, where possible, in conjunction with other events.
3. The Scientific Committee may consider reports from other relevant meetings and working groups established under the Agreement, when necessary.
4. These Rules shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the meetings of working groups.

Article 7

1. The Chair, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, may decide to invite, as observers, other experts as deemed necessary.
2. The Chair, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, may decide to invite, as observers, experts in disciplines that are not covered by the members of the Scientific Committee, including legal and socio-economic matters.
3. ACCOBAMS Partners may participate as observers to the Meeting of the Scientific Committee.

Article 8

1. Notices of meetings, including date and venue, shall be sent to all Parties, to the members of the Scientific Committee and to the ACCOBAMS Partners, by the Permanent Secretariat at least 45 days in advance and, in the case of extraordinary meetings, at least 14 days in advance.
2. The Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement, with the support of the Sub-Regional Coordination Units, shall undertake secretarial tasks during the meetings of the Scientific Committee and of its working groups and shall provide administrative and logistical support.

3. A report of each Meeting shall be prepared by the Permanent Secretariat as soon as possible and shall be communicated to all members and observers of the Scientific Committee, to all Parties and ACCOBAMS Partners.
4. The report shall be posted on the ACCOBAMS website.

Article 9

1. Decisions of the Scientific Committee shall be taken by consensus.
2. If consensus cannot be reached regarding an issue, all the positions expressed about it during the meeting shall be included in the meeting report.

Article 10

1. The Meeting of the Scientific Committee shall be convened once a year during the first two years of the triennium by the Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement in consultation with the Chair.
2. Extraordinary meetings may be convened if the Bureau agrees.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE

Article 11

1. In application of Article II, paragraph 2, of the Agreement, when a Party asks for advice on exceptions to the prohibition on deliberate taking of cetaceans, the Permanent Secretariat shall immediately communicate the request to the Chair and to the members of the Scientific Committee for advice.
2. Within 30 days, the Chair takes a decision on the request also on the basis of the advices received from the other members of the Scientific Committee and communicates it to the Permanent Secretariat for immediate communication to the requesting Party.

Article 12

1. Between sessions, any member of the Scientific Committee or the Sub-Regional Coordination Units, through the Permanent Secretariat, or the Permanent Secretariat directly may submit a written proposal to the Chair for a decision within the limits of the functions of the Scientific Committee.
2. The Chair shall communicate the proposal to members of the Scientific Committee for comments within 60 days from the date of that communication.
3. Any comments received within the 60-day period shall be communicated to members of the Scientific Committee and to the Permanent Secretariat.

4. If, by the date on which comments on a proposal were due to be communicated, the Permanent Secretariat has not received any objection from a member of the Scientific Committee, the proposal shall be considered as adopted. Its adoption shall be notified to all members and to those who have made the proposal.

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

Article 13

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

WORKING LANGUAGES

Article 14

1. The working languages of the Scientific Committee shall be English and French.

2. Simultaneous translation in English and French may be provided for the plenary sessions of the meetings of the Scientific Committee if funding is available.

3. Working documents shall be made available in English or in French and may be translated if funding is available.

REPORT

Article 15

The Chair of the Scientific Committee shall submit to each ordinary Meeting of the Parties and to each meeting of the Bureau a written report on the Scientific Committee's work since the previous ordinary Meeting of the Parties.

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 16

These Rules shall apply immediately upon their adoption by the Parties.

Article 17

These Rules may be amended as required by a decision of the Meeting of the Parties.

Appendix

Article 1

In order to ensure balanced geographical representation in the Scientific Committee, the geographical scope of the Agreement is divided into four regions.

Article 2

For the purpose of facilitating Scientific Committee members' nomination, the regional distribution of Parties is as follows:

Region	Parties
Western Mediterranean and contiguous Atlantic area	Algeria, France, (Italy), Monaco, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, (Tunisia)
Central Mediterranean	Albania, Croatia, (Greece), (Italy), Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Slovenia, (Tunisia)
Eastern Mediterranean	Cyprus, Egypt, (Greece), Lebanon, Syria
Black Sea	Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Ukraine

Article 3

At the moment of the designation of representatives of the Regions, because of their geographical situation, Greece, Italy and Tunisia can select their attachment to a region:

- 'Western Mediterranean' or 'Central Mediterranean' for Italy and Tunisia;
- 'Central Mediterranean' or 'Eastern Mediterranean' for Greece.

Article 4

Article 3 applies to any other Party that wishes to be associated with another region, unless one Party in that region disagrees.

RESOLUTION 6.8 - AMENDMENTS TO THE FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURE

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

Recalling Article III, paragraph 8 c), of the Agreement and Resolution 5.4 on the establishment of the ACCOBAMS Follow-up Procedure,

Stressing that this Follow-up Procedure is to be considered as a means for preventing disputes and for facilitating the implementation of the Agreement,

Noting with appreciation the work accomplished by the Follow-up Committee during the triennium 2014-2016,

Desirous to improve and facilitate the functioning of the ACCOBAMS Follow-up Procedure,

1. *Decides* to amend in the following way Annex 1 (Rules on the ACCOBAMS Follow-up Procedure) to Resolution 5.4:

a) Article 3, paragraph 2, shall read as follows:

“The Committee shall consist of five members and two alternate members elected during the Meetings of the Parties. Three of the members and one alternate member shall be elected by secret ballots by Parties from a list of candidates nominated, one by each Party. Two of the Members and one alternate member shall be elected by secret ballots by the organizations and institutions having the status of ACCOBAMS Partner (hereinafter referred to as “ACCOBAMS Partners”) from a list of candidates nominated one by each of them. The alternate members are the candidates who immediately follow for the number of votes received the members elected by the Parties and the members elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners.”;

b) Article 3, paragraph 3, shall read as follows:

“The alternate member elected by the Parties shall serve in the absence of a Committee member elected by the Parties. The alternate member elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners shall serve in the absence of a Committee member elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners.”;

c) The first sentence of Article 4, paragraph 2, shall read as follows:

“The Committee shall meet at least once every three years.

Depending on the workload, the Committee may decide to hold additional meetings, in particular in conjunction with other bodies established by the Agreement”;

d) Article 4, paragraph 4, shall read as follows:

“The Committee meetings shall be open, as observers, to ACCOBAMS Parties, to one member of the Scientific Committee, as nominated by it, and, unless the Party whose follow up is in question requests otherwise, to ACCOBAMS Partners.”;

e) Article 6, paragraph 1,c shall read as follows:

“ensure the follow-up of its recommendations and of the relevant decisions of the Meeting of the Parties and report the results to the latter, based on the synthesis of the Parties implementation reports and other relevant information”;

2. *Approves* the amended text of the Rules on the ACCOBAMS Follow-up Procedure, as annexed to this Resolution (amendments in bold);
3. *Approves* the submissions form as annexed to this Resolution;
4. *Encourages* the Parties, the Permanent Secretariat and the ACCOBAMS Partners to make use of the Follow-up Procedure as a non-confrontational means for preventing and settling disputes;
5. *Encourages* the Committee to make use of provisions of Article 4, paragraph 7 on the Rules on the ACCOBAMS Follow up Procedure;
6. *Decides* that the present Resolution amends the Resolution 5.4.

ANNEX 1
RULES ON THE ACCOBAMS FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURE

Article 1 - Legal Basis

The following Follow-up Procedure (hereinafter referred to as “the Procedure”) is based on Article III, paragraph 8 c), of the Agreement.

Article 2 - Objectives and Nature of the Procedure

1. The objective of the Procedure is to monitor, facilitate and promote follow-up with the provisions of the Agreement, taking into account the specific situation of each Party and with a view to preventing disputes. The Procedure shall complement the work performed by other bodies of the Agreement.
2. The Procedure shall be carried out in a simple, flexible, expeditious, fair, transparent, cost-effective and non-confrontational way.

Article 3 - Structure and Election of the Follow-up Committee

1. A Follow-up Committee (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) is hereby established.
2. The Committee shall consist of five members and **two alternate members** elected during the Meetings of the Parties. Three of the members **and one alternate member** shall be elected by secret ballots by Parties from a list of candidates nominated, one by each Party. Two of the Members **and one alternate member** shall be elected by secret ballots by the organizations and institutions having the status of ACCOBAMS Partner (hereinafter referred to as “ACCOBAMS Partners”) from a list of candidates nominated one by each of them. **The alternate members are the candidates who immediately follow for the number of votes received the members elected by the Parties and the members elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners.**
3. **The alternate member elected by the Parties shall serve in the absence of a Committee member elected by the Parties. The alternate member elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners shall serve in the absence of a Committee member elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners.**
4. The full term of office of the Committee members commences at the end of an ordinary Meeting of the Parties and runs until the end of the second ordinary Meeting of the Parties thereafter.
5. At the time of the first election, the term of office of two Committee members elected by the Parties and of one Committee member elected by the ACCOBAMS Partners shall be limited to the period between the end of this ordinary Meeting of the Parties and the end of the subsequent one. The Committee members in question shall be drawn by lots.
6. The Committee members elected by the Parties shall not include more than one national of the same Party.

7. Nominated candidates shall be persons of high moral character and shall have recognized competence in the fields dealt with by the Agreement, including legal matters. In the election of the Committee members, consideration shall be given to the diversity of experiences and competences and to the equitable geographical and gender distribution of membership. Members of the Bureau cannot be members of the Committee at the same time.

8. The procedure for the nomination of candidates for the Committee shall be the following:

- a) nominations shall be sent to the Secretariat of the Agreement not later than twelve weeks before the opening of the Meeting of the Parties during which the election is to take place;
- b) each nomination shall be accompanied by a *curriculum vitae* of the candidate in at least one of the official working languages of the Agreement;
- c) the Secretariat shall distribute the nominations and the *curricula vitae*.

9. In derogation to paragraph 8 above, the first election of the members of the Committee can take place at the Meeting of the Parties when the Resolution on the ACCOBAMS Follow-up Procedure is adopted, on the basis of nominations and *curricula vitae* previously submitted by the Parties and the ACCOBAMS Partners on request by the Bureau.

10. The Committee members shall not serve for more than two consecutive terms.

11. The Committee members and their alternates shall serve in their personal capacity and shall act objectively in the best interest of the Agreement. Every Committee member shall, before taking up his or her duties, make a solemn declaration that he or she will perform his or her functions impartially and conscientiously.

12. The Committee shall elect its own President and Vice-President. The Vice-President shall, in addition, serve as the *rapporteur* of the Committee.

Article 4 - Meetings of the Committee

1. The quorum of the Committee shall consist of three members, including at least two members elected by the Parties.

2. The Committee shall meet at least once every three years.

Depending on the workload, the Committee may decide to hold additional meetings, in particular in conjunction with other bodies established by the Agreement;

3. The Secretariat shall arrange for and service the meetings of the Committee.

4. The Committee meetings shall be open, as observers, to ACCOBAMS Parties, **to one member of the Scientific Committee, as nominated by it**, and, unless the Party whose follow-up is in question requests otherwise, to ACCOBAMS Partners.

5. The Party whose follow-up is in question shall participate in the consideration of the submission by the Committee and shall have the opportunity to present its views and any relevant information, expert advice and document.

6. The Party whose follow-up is in question, other Parties and ACCOBAMS Partners shall not take part in the elaboration and adoption of the related Committee recommendation, nor shall they be involved in the adoption of the report of the Committee.

7. Without prejudice to the previous paragraphs, the Committee may, in appropriate circumstances, undertake some of its activities through electronic communications.

Article 5 - Adoption of Recommendations and Reports

1. The Committee shall make every effort to adopt its recommendations and reports by consensus. If all efforts to reach a *consensus* have been exhausted and no recommendation or report has been adopted, they shall be taken by a majority of the members present and voting.

2. Any Committee member or alternate member shall, with respect to any matter that is under consideration by the Committee, avoid direct or indirect conflict of interest. When a member finds himself or herself faced with a direct or indirect conflict of interest, that member shall bring the issue to the attention of the Committee before consideration of the matter. If the majority of the other Committee members find that the conflict occurs, the concerned member shall not participate in the elaboration and adoption of a recommendation or report of the Committee in relation to that matter.

3. Any Committee member can attach his or her dissenting or separate opinion to the relevant recommendation or report.

Article 6 - Functions of the Committee

1. The Committee shall

- a) consider any submission made in accordance with Articles 7 to 9 below, with a view to determining the facts and causes of the matter of follow-up and assisting the Party concerned in its resolution;
- b) adopt recommendations that it considers appropriate to resolve such a follow-up issue;
- c) ensure the follow-up of its recommendations and of the relevant decisions of the Meeting of the Parties and report the results to the latter, based on the synthesis of the Parties implementation reports and other relevant information;
- d) at the request of the Meeting of the Parties, review general issues of implementation and follow-up under the Agreement and prepare a report, including relevant recommendations on them, to be presented at the Meeting of the Parties;
- e) report on its activities at each ordinary Meeting of the Parties and make recommendations as it considers appropriate.

2. The Committee's recommendations shall include motivations and, wherever appropriate to assist the Party concerned to implement the Agreement, legal and technical advice on the required measures, strategies and time schedules.

3. Recommendations and reports shall be finalized by the Committee not later than twelve weeks in advance of the Meeting of the Parties at which they are to be considered.

4. The Committee, through the Secretariat, shall notify the Party concerned in writing of its recommendations. The Party concerned shall be given the opportunity to comment in writing on the recommendations.

Article 7 - Submissions by Parties

1. A submission may be brought before the Committee by one or more Parties that have reservations about another Party's follow-up with its obligations under the Agreement.

2. A submission made under paragraph 1 above shall be addressed in writing to the Secretariat and shall be supported by corroborating information. The Secretariat shall, within one week of receiving a submission, send a copy of it to the Party whose follow-up is in question. Any reply and supporting information shall be submitted to the Secretariat and to the Parties involved within three months or such longer period as the circumstances of a particular case may require, but in no case later than six months. The Secretariat shall transmit the submission and the reply, as well as all corroborating information, to the Committee, which shall consider the matter as soon as practicable.

3. A submission may be brought before the Committee by a Party that concludes that, despite its best efforts, it is or will be unable to comply fully with its obligations under the Agreement.

4. A submission made under paragraph 3 above shall be addressed in writing to the Secretariat and shall explain the specific circumstances that the Party considers to be the cause of its non-follow-up. The Secretariat shall transmit the submission and the supporting information to the Committee, which shall consider the matter as soon as practicable.

5. The Committee may decide not to proceed with a submission which it considers is:

- a) an abuse of the right to make such submission; or
- b) manifestly ill-founded or unreasonable; or
- c) incompatible with the provisions of the Agreement or this Procedure.

Article 8 - Submissions by the Secretariat

1. Where the Secretariat, also on request by the Scientific Committee, becomes aware of possible non-follow-up by a Party with its obligations under the Agreement, it may request the Party concerned to furnish necessary information about the matter.

2. If there is no response or the matter is not resolved within three months, or such longer period as the circumstances of the matter may require, but in no case later than six months, the Secretariat shall bring the matter to the attention of the Committee, which shall consider it as soon as practicable. The Secretariat shall immediately inform the Party concerned of its submission.

Article 9 - Submissions by ACCOBAMS Partners

1. A submission may be brought before the Committee by one or more ACCOBAMS Partners that have reservations about a Party's follow-up with its obligations under the Agreement.
2. A submission made under paragraph 1 above shall be addressed in writing to the Secretariat and shall be supported by corroborating information. The Secretariat shall, within one week of receiving a submission, send a copy of it to the Party whose follow-up is in question. Any reply and supporting information shall be submitted to the Secretariat and to the Parties involved within three months or such longer period as the circumstances of a particular case may require, but in no case later than six months. The Secretariat shall transmit the submission and the reply, as well as all corroborating information, to the Committee, which shall consider the matter as soon as practicable.
3. The Committee may decide not to proceed with a submission which it considers is:
 - a) an abuse of the right to make such submission; or
 - b) manifestly ill-founded or unreasonable; or
 - c) incompatible with the provisions of the Agreement or this Procedure.

Article 10 - Procedure before the Committee

In carrying out its functions, the Committee may:

- a) consider any relevant information submitted to it by the Party whose follow-up is in question, by other ACCOBAMS Parties, by the Secretariat or by ACCOBAMS Partners;
- b) request further information from any sources and draw upon outside expertise, as it considers necessary and appropriate;
- c) undertake, with the agreement of the Party concerned, information gathering in the territory of one Party;
- d) consult with other Agreement bodies and in particular with the Scientific Committee;
- e) request information from any Parties, through the Secretariat, on the general issues of implementation and follow-up under its consideration.

Article 11 - Confidentiality

The procedure before the Committee and the documents examined by the Committee are confidential, unless the Party concerned agrees to their publicity.

Article 12 - Consideration by the Meeting of the Parties

1. The Meeting of the Parties may decide, upon consideration of recommendations of the Committee and taking in account the capacity of the Party concerned and factors such as the cause, type, degree and frequency of non-follow-up, to:
 - a) endorse the measures recommended by the Committee;
 - b) take any other non-confrontational action it deems appropriate.

2. The Meeting of the Parties' decisions under paragraph 1 above also include motivations.
3. The Meeting of the Parties, through the Secretariat, shall notify the Party concerned in writing of its decisions.

Article 13 - Relationship between settlement of disputes and the Follow-up Procedure

The present Follow-up Procedure shall be without prejudice to Article XII of the Agreement on the settlement of disputes.

Article 14 - Enhancement of Cooperation

In order to enhance cooperation between this and other Follow-up Procedures adopted under other treaties, the Meeting of the Parties may request the Committee to communicate, as appropriate, with the relevant bodies of those treaties and report back to it with any relevant recommendation.

ANNEX 2
SUBMISSIONS FORM

1. Name of the submitting Party or Organization / institution having the status of ACCOBAMS Partner:

(If the submission is presented by the Secretariat, indicate "Secretariat")

2. Contact person:

(Person who has the capacity to represent the submitting Party or organization / institution having the status of ACCOBAMS Partner. If the submission is presented by the Secretariat, this information is not necessary)

- Name and position:
- Address for correspondence:
- Tel.:
- E-mail:

3. Name of the Party concerned by the submission:**4. Relevant provision(s) of the Agreement concerned by the alleged non-follow-up situation:**

(List as precisely as possible the provisions of the Agreement that the Party concerned is alleged not to follow-up)

5. Statement identifying the question of non-follow-up:

(Include all matters of relevance to the assessment and consideration of the submission. When a submission is made by a Party regarding its own non-follow-up, it has to provide the specific circumstances that it considers to be the cause of its situation)

6. Information supporting the submission:

(Relevant national legislation, national decisions, results of other procedures, etc. Indicate if any other domestic or international procedures have been undertaken to address the issue of non-follow-up which is the subject of the communication)

7. Any other information (existence of an environmental impact assessment (EIA), size of projects, maps of the area, etc.)

8. List of the documents annexed to the submission:

(Only copies are accepted)

Date:**Signature:**

(of the person specified under No. 2 or, in case of a submission by the Secretariat, of the ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary)

This form has to be sent to the ACCOBAMS Follow-up Committee through the Secretariat at the following address:

ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary
Jardin de l'UNESCO
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille
98000 Monaco (Principality of Monaco)
Fax: +377 98 98 42 08
E-mail: follow@accobams.net

RESOLUTION 6.9 - FORMAT FOR NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS

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

Referring to Article VIII of the Agreement establishing the need to report regularly on the national implementation of the Agreement,

Considering that these reports should primarily focus on the obligations as defined in the Agreement itself,

Recognizing that a follow up of the implementation of Resolutions and Recommendations is part of the execution of the Agreement and has to be included in the national reports,

Considering that national reports should also deal with the constraints and difficulties encountered in the implementation of the Agreement,

Also recognizing that information provided in the national reports will be necessary to determine whether ACCOBAMS is meeting its objectives,

Taking into account the functioning and user-friendliness of the online reporting system,

Recalling Resolution 3.7, inviting the Permanent Secretariat to liaise regularly with other relevant intergovernmental bodies in order to harmonize data and information collection and management,

Conscious that the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS) are also revising their national reporting formats, and *recalling* related decisions, in particular CMS Resolution 11.2 on the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023, and ASCOBANS Resolution 8.1 on National Reporting,

Recalling also Resolution 4.6 on the format for national implementation reports and the annexed Proposed Format for the On-line Reporting to ACCOBAMS,

Recalling that the Monitoring of the long term Strategy (Resolution 5.1) implementation progress will include regular monitoring of operational work programmes and resolutions implementation,

Recalling the recommendation by the First Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Committee to include in the National Report all the “general issues of implementation and follow-up” on which the Meeting of the Parties could request a report to be prepared by the Follow up Committee,

Desirous to further improve the functioning of the online reporting system by establishing a more flexible mechanism for gathering information,

1. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee, to complement the current On-line Reporting format with relevant elements, based on the priorities of the ACCOBAMS Work Programme for 2017-2019 and to present this amended format to the next Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Bureau, for approval;
2. *Decides* that, whenever appropriate, modifications to the Format for the On-line Reporting to ACCOBAMS shall be made by the Permanent Secretariat, in consultation with the Scientific Committee and after approval by the Bureau;
3. *Urges* Parties to regularly update on-line the information provided as soon as it is appropriate to do so and preferably every year;
4. *Invites* Parties to regularly report to each Meeting of the Parties on the results and possible improvements of the on-line reporting system;
5. *Recommends* that the Parties improve, on this matter, coordination between their ACCOBAMS National Focal Points and the Focal Points responsible for reporting to the Organizations listed in the Agreement preamble¹;
6. *Asks* the Permanent Secretariat to invite non-Parties within the Agreement area to report on a voluntary basis using the on-line format for implementation reports;
7. *Encourages* the Permanent Secretariat to exchange views with these relevant Organizations on the manner to ease reporting burdens by Parties;
8. *Decides* that the present Resolution amends Resolutions 1.8 and 3.7 and replaces Resolution 4.6.

¹ The International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, 1946; the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, 1976, its related protocols and the Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea adopted under its auspices in 1991; the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, 1979; the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982; the Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992; the Convention for the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, 1992; and the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Management and Utilization of Marine Mammals of the United Nations Environment Programme, adopted in 1984; as well as initiatives of *inter alia* the General Fisheries Commission for Mediterranean, the International Commission for Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean, and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas.

**RESOLUTION 6.10 - ACCEPTANCE OF THE ACCOBAMS AMENDMENTS ON THE EXTENSION OF THE ACCOBAMS
GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE**

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

Recalling that, in 2010, the Fourth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Parties adopted Resolution A/4.1 which amended the text of the ACCOBAMS Agreement and extended its geographical scope to include an enlarged neighbouring Atlantic area,

Reaffirming the importance of the above-mentioned Resolution, which is based on the scientific evidence that cetacean populations present in waters to the north of Portugal and the Galician and Cantabrian Seas are connected, as shown by the most recent scientific studies,

Aware that, under Article X, paragraph 3, an amendment to the Agreement, after having been adopted by the Meeting of the Parties, enters into force on the thirtieth day after the date on which two thirds of the Parties to the Agreement at the date of the adoption of the amendment have deposited their instruments of acceptance with the Depositary, corresponding in this specific case to sixteen acceptances,

Recalling the steps regularly taken by the Depositary and the Secretariat to promote the acceptance of the amendments,

Noting with concern that, so far, only eight Parties have deposited their acceptance of the amendments,

Stressing the need to have the amendments in force as soon as possible,

1. *Calls upon* Parties to ACCOBAMS that have not yet done so to treat the acceptance of the above-mentioned amendments as a matter of priority.

RESOLUTION 6.11 - A STRATEGICAL ALLIANCE CONCERNING MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN ENVIRONMENT BETWEEN THE SECRETARIATS OF ACCOBAMS, GFCM, UNEP/MAP THROUGH SPA/RAC, AND IUCN-MED IN COLLABORATION WITH MEDPAN

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

Recalling Article IV paragraph 2 of the Agreement which in particular charges the Secretariat:

- to liaise with and facilitate co-operation between Parties and non-Party Range States, and international and national bodies the activities of which are directly or indirectly relevant to the conservation of cetaceans in the Agreement Area,
- to assist the Parties in the implementation of this Agreement, ensuring coherence between the sub regions and with measures adopted pursuant to other international instruments in force,

Recalling also Article V, which creates co-ordination sub-regional Units and Resolution 1.4 establishing the sub-regional co-ordination Units for the Mediterranean and Atlantic adjacent Area in the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean,

Recalling the Conservation Plan, annexed to the Agreement, which refers, in its point 3, to the sharing of responsibilities between ACCOBAMS and the Barcelona Convention in regard to the habitats protection,

Recalling Resolution 4.15 concerning protected areas, which, inter alia, charges the Permanent Secretariat to liaise with any other similar organisations in the ACCOBAMS region in order to facilitate networking and synergies between them in particular at the scientific level,

Recalling Resolution 3.22, which establishes the criteria for the selection and the format for the proposal of specially protected areas for cetaceans,

Recalling Resolution 4.20 reinforcing the status of ACCOBAMS Partners,

Recalling Resolutions pertinent to cooperation with several Mediterranean entities and in particular:

- Resolution 2.22 establishing the link with the IUCN and Resolution 5.3 enhancing the active participation of IUCN in the Scientific Committee,
- Resolution 3.8 establishing links with the GFCM,
- Resolution 3.22 underlining the importance of MedPAN (the network of marines protected areas in the Mediterranean) in the formation of protected areas managers,

Recalling related decisions, in particular Resolution 11.2 of the the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) on the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023,

Recalling also the pertinent activities adopted in the ACCOBAMS strategy (period 2014-2025) in Resolution 5.1 and the various programmes of work,

Underlining that ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat has already signed memorandum of cooperation with each of the above-cited organisations,

1. *Welcomes* the Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity among the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN, (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf17);
2. *Congratulates* the RAC/SPA, in the framework of the Ecosystem approach of the Barcelona Convention (EcAP process), to have initiated this strategical approach within the consultation held in the Joint RAC/SPA, GFCM and ACCOBAMS Meeting on protection of marine areas in the Mediterranean and Black Sea (Gammarth, Tunisia, 9-12 June 2015);
3. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat to participate actively to this strategical alliance in cooperation with the Scientific Committee and to inform the Bureau of any difficulty encountered.

**RESOLUTION 6.12 - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU MARINE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE (MSFD) AND
RELEVANT ECOSYSTEM APPROACH PROCESSES (ECAP)**

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

Acting upon Recommendation 10.11 of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee,

Recalling Resolutions 4.8 on the contribution from ACCOBAMS to the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), 4.17 on the guidelines to address the impact of anthropogenic noise on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area, 5.15 and 6.17 on addressing the impact of anthropogenic noise, and 6.13 on the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative,

Recalling also the UNEP/MAP Ecosystem Approach Process (EcAP) aiming at managing human activities with a view to conserve natural marine heritage and protecting vital ecosystem services,

Taking into consideration document ACCOBAMS-SC10/2015/Doc24, Overview of the implementation of MSFD (regarding cetaceans) in the ACCOBAMS area and recommendations,

1. *Invites Parties to respond to the questionnaire about cetaceans and the implementation of MSFD sent by the Permanent Secretariat on 26 September 2014;*
2. *Asks the Permanent Secretariat, in collaboration with RAC/SPA, to convene a workshop with scientists and monitoring officers of MSFD/ EcAP processes, to ensure (i) awareness on the importance of cetaceans as component of a good environmental status and (ii) coordination in national monitoring programmes within MSFD and EcAP processes;*
3. *Asks the Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to assist ACCOBAMS Parties, both European Union Member States and non-European Union Member States, in including cetaceans in relevant descriptors to the achievement of a good environmental status, such as biodiversity, food web, pollution, marine litters and underwater noise;*
4. *Asks the Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to assist ACCOBAMS Parties, both European Union Member States and non-European Union Member States, in integrating conservation action reflecting objectives, decisions, recommendations and information by ACCOBAMS within their national programme of measures, with a view to achieving a good environmental status under the MSFD and relevant EcAP Processes.*

RESOLUTION 6.13 - COMPREHENSIVE CETACEAN POPULATION ESTIMATES AND DISTRIBUTION IN THE ACCOBAMS AREA (MONITORING OF CETACEAN DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE AND ACCOBAMS SURVEY INITIATIVE)

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

Recalling Article II, paragraph 3, of the Agreement and its Annex 2 (Conservation Plan), paragraph 2,

Recalling Resolution 2.11 on the facilitation of scientific research campaigns and programmes,

Recalling Resolution 5.9 on “Comprehensive cetacean population estimates and distribution in the ACCOBAMS Area (ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative)”, which has replaced the previous Resolutions 2.19 and 3.15,

Recalling Resolution 5.1 on the ACCOBAMS Strategy for the period 2014-2025, in particular, its specific objective B.1 “Improve the knowledge about state of cetaceans”,

Taking into consideration Recommendation 10.1 of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee,

Reiterating that the work for obtaining baseline population estimates and distributional information of cetaceans within the ACCOBAMS area represents the highest priority for conservation research within the ACCOBAMS area and is of great importance in the assessment of risk from different sources (e.g., by-catch, degradation of habitats, disturbances, pollutions) and in the determination of appropriate mitigation measures and priority actions,

Stressing that, without such information and a suitable monitoring programme, it will be impossible, *inter alia*, to determine whether ACCOBAMS is meeting its conservation objectives,

Aware that the implementation of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative would allow to obtain baseline cetacean population estimates and distribution in the ACCOBAMS Area and to progress in the regional monitoring of cetacean populations,

Recalling the commitment of the Parties to the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative, to promoting it at the national and international levels and to carrying it out,

Recalling that identification of the components of biological diversity is a fundamental priority, expressed *inter alia* in the Convention on Biological Diversity, and that the Habitat Directive (92/43/EEC) requires to monitor the conservation status and the impact of human-induced mortality on populations of all cetacean species,

Recognizing also the importance given by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EU) to qualitative descriptors for determining good environment status, including the maintenance of biological biodiversity,

Stressing that the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative could provide a fundamental contribution to other relevant initiatives, such as the Ecosystems Approach (EcAp) Process within the framework of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection

of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and the 2009 Strategic Action Plan for the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation of the Black Sea,

Welcoming the development by the Scientific Committee of the Monitoring Guidelines to Assess Cetacean's Distributional Range, Population Abundance and Population Demographic Characteristics,

Recalling the commitment of the Barcelona Convention ' Contracting Parties to facilitate and support the ACCOBAMS Survey initiative through the implementation of the decision IG.22/12 related to the adoption of the updated Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea,

Considering that it is possible to undertake the survey separately for the Mediterranean and the Black Seas waters and that there are advantages in establishing links between the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative and other survey programmes which are being carried out by other entities in the North Atlantic Ocean,

Thanking the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas for the financial support provided for developing the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative,

Thanking also the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas for their support within the Steering Committee of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative,

Expressing its gratitude to Italy, Spain, the Prince Albert II Foundation and the MAVA Foundation for their voluntary contributions and financial support, and to other Parties that have accepted to provide in-kind contributions,

Welcoming the announcement by France for its generous contribution,

I – Monitoring of cetaceans distribution and abundance

1. *Asks* the ACCOBAMS Parties and *invites* the Range States to ensure that any proposed national programme for monitoring abundance and distribution of cetaceans is in line with the Monitoring Guidelines to Assess Cetacean's Distributional Range, Population Abundance and Population Demographic Characteristics that are annexed to the present Resolution, stressing the importance to have standardized protocols for data collection and analysis;
2. *Recommends* that, as monitoring methodologies evolve and new techniques become available, these Guidelines be considered as a living document to be reviewed at least every triennium and updated, as necessary;
3. *Urges* the Parties to facilitate the release of permits according to their national legislation for research activities to be conducted in the Agreement area in line with the actions presented in the ACCOBAMS programme of work;
4. *Asks* the researchers involved in these surveys that:
 - as soon as possible, all the information obtained from these surveys is available on the ACCOBAMS web tools, (such as NETCOBAMS) and OBIS SEAMAP with all the GIS information and raw data as necessary;
 - all measures are taken when and if possible to train and increase the capacity building of all the Countries involved;

5. *Asks* the Scientific Committee for advice on the development and coordination of international and national research and monitoring programmes on cetacean population abundance and distribution in the ACCOBAMS area, in compliance with Article VII, paragraph 3, d), of the Agreement;

II - ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

6. *Welcomes* strongly the launching of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative;
7. *Commends* the efforts by the Secretariat to secure funding for the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative and asks it to pursue such efforts;
8. *Recommends* that the ACCOBAMS Parties, the Secretariat, the Sub Regional Coordination Units and the ACCOBAMS Partners actively promote the visibility of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative, underlining its scientific, conservation, education and capacity building components;
9. *Invites* the ACCOBAMS Parties and range States to:
 - a) Actively participate in the implementation of the survey;
 - b) give priority to contributing with financial or in-kind support for the survey;
 - c) appoint a national contact person to assist the National Focal Point, whose tasks will be mainly to:
 - facilitate the process of obtaining permits for vessels and aircraft to operate in the waters under their jurisdiction in accordance with relevant provisions of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);
 - co-ordinate the identification of financial and/or in-kind support for the survey;
 - co-ordinate ongoing monitoring projects and, where appropriate, facilitate the development of new projects;
 - identify observer candidates;
 - d) share with the Secretariat reports and GIS information of national programmes on the study of abundance and distribution of cetaceans;
10. *Encourages* other competent international organizations and the ACCOBAMS' Partners to participate in the programme;
11. *Reiterates* the urgent need to hire a scientific co-ordinator to work in close cooperation with the fund-raiser and the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative Steering Committee within the financial resources allocated to the project ;
12. *Decides* that the present Resolution replaces Resolution 5.9.

ANNEX

MONITORING GUIDELINES TO ASSESS CETACEANS' DISTRIBUTIONAL RANGE, POPULATION ABUNDANCE AND POPULATION DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Introduction

The Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS) has been working for several years on defining an exhaustive program for estimating abundance of cetaceans and assessing their distribution and habitat preferences in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and the adjacent waters of the Atlantic (the "ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative"). This initiative consists in a synoptic survey to be carried out in a short period of time across the whole Agreement area and it will combine visual survey methods (boat- and ship-based surveys) and passive acoustic monitoring.

This document was elaborated based on the documents prepared by the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee that has worked for several years on the definition of the most appropriate methodologies for collecting data on cetaceans at the Mediterranean and Black Seas scale, taking into account the protocols used in other regional contexts⁷⁷. It presents specific information on monitoring by visual line transect surveys (conducted from boat and airplane) and by acoustic survey. It should be noted that it does not address all the tools and methods that could be used for cetacean survey, neither new technologies that are currently experimented (i.e. drones and satellite imagery). Significant information also comes from stranding networks. Lastly, this document is considering surveys using large ships, but the shipboard cetacean surveys conducted from small vessels would also make use of this document.

Monitoring cetacean species may be addressed at two spatial scales:

- 3) **Regional monitoring** - if the requirement is to monitor the use of a specific area by a particular species, e.g. monitoring the status of relative abundance between and within years in national waters or marine protected areas.
- 4) **Population level monitoring** - if the requirement is to monitor the status of a whole population, e.g. estimate density and abundance of cetaceans in the whole ACCOBAMS area.

Before conducting any type of monitoring of animal populations, it is important to define the objectives. The main aim in both aerial and vessel-based surveys is to assess density and abundance and, if systematic monitoring programs are in place, assess potential trends over time. Monitoring at the regional level may require data collection throughout the year, to better understand seasonal patterns in distribution, whereas monitoring at the population level would mainly address inter-annual changes.

Cetaceans generally occur in low densities and are highly mobile. They are difficult to spot and to follow at sea, even during good survey conditions, because they typically only show part of their head, back and dorsal fin while surfacing and spend the majority of their time underwater.

⁷⁷ e.g. in the Atlantic waters within the framework of (i) the SCANS surveys undertaken to assess the populations of Small Cetaceans in the European Atlantic and North Sea, and (ii) the CODA surveys (Cetacean Offshore Distribution and Abundance in the European Atlantic) aiming to estimate cetacean abundance in European Atlantic waters.

There are a number of actions that need to be taken when initiating any type of monitoring, either for species distributional range or to estimate population abundance of selected species.

8. Select the target species (surveys can be multi-species or single-species).
9. Determine whether to monitor an entire population or a portion of it (in a given region).
10. Define the population or area to monitor and the time-window.
11. Define monitoring objectives.
12. Consider logistics for the monitoring (e.g. size of area, weather, depth of area, available survey platforms).
13. Conduct statistical power analysis to find the best method to meet the monitoring objectives.
14. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis.

Currently, there are at least five potential approaches to be used in monitoring cetaceans:

7. Visual surveys from ship, aircraft or land observation platforms (LOP).
8. Passive acoustic monitoring carried out during ship surveys with towed hydrophones.
9. Passive acoustic monitoring performed by means of static acoustic monitoring, e.g. using T-PODs.
10. Photo-identification and mark-recapture analysis.
11. Satellite telemetry to track individual animals.
12. A combination of all or some of the above methodologies.

When deciding which monitoring method to implement, it is important to consider the limitations of each approach and compare the different methodologies. In general, surveys from ship or aircraft have a low temporal resolution, ship surveys may have bias due to responsive movements of animals, stationary acoustic systems have low spatial resolution and logistical problems with deployment, photographic identification relies on visual differences between individuals to allow identification, and telemetry typically only allows small samples resulting in much inter-individual variation.

There are different types of platforms and methods of detection that can be used for each approach, e.g. fixed observation points such as headlands or moving survey platforms such as ships and aircraft, or direct visual or acoustic detections of vocalizing animals, respectively. The methods can therefore range from very basic, yielding simple indices of abundance in limited areas, to very advanced providing accurate (how close the estimate is to the true value) and precise (the statistical variation in estimates generated from repeated samples) estimates of absolute abundance across wide areas.

Target species

Cetaceans

Eleven species of cetaceans are considered to regularly occur in the Mediterranean area: short-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*), striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*), common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), long-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala melas*), rough-toothed dolphin (*Steno bredanensis*), Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*), fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*), sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*), Cuvier's beaked whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*) and killer whale (*Orcinus orca*). In the Black Sea, three

small cetaceans' species are represented by resident populations: common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis ponticus*), bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus ponticus*) and harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena relicta*).

Knowledge about the ecology, abundance and habitat preferences of some of these species, including the most abundant ones, is in part scant and limited to specific sectors of the ACCOBAMS area, due to the uneven distribution of research effort during the last decades. In particular, the south-eastern portion of the basin, the coasts of North Africa and the central offshore waters are amongst the areas with the most limited knowledge on cetacean presence, occurrence and distribution (2010 ACCOBAMS Status report - Conserving whales, dolphins and porpoises in the Mediterranean and Black Seas, by Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara & Alexei Birkun, Jr.).

Other marine endangered species

Even if cetacean species are the first targets of this monitoring effort, the observations of other marine endangered species, such as marine turtles, giant devil rays, monk seals and sea birds, and other elements such as marine debris, could be reported during the surveys. Specific protocols have to be designed for these opportunistic observations, bearing in mind that the primary objective is to collect data on cetaceans.

Dedicated vessel or aircraft visual surveys

For monitoring programmes involving dedicated visual surveys both ship-based and aerial methods are well established. Although in some situations the choice of platform will be determined by logistical constraints, and despite the fact that a full and comprehensive comparison of aerial and vessel-based surveys has not yet been carried out, generally the method which provides an estimate with the required precision for the lowest cost should be chosen.

For visual surveys, it is important to consider observer skill and experience. Observers may vary in sighting efficiency and observer training is important to obtain consistent results. Furthermore, consistency in data collection protocols, observers, survey design and planning is essential to guarantee reliable and robust results in the long term, especially when systematic monitoring programmes are scheduled.

Line transect sampling is typically used to estimate abundance and assess density. In line transect sampling, a survey area is defined and surveyed along pre-determined transects. The distance to each detected animal is measured and consequently used to obtain a detection function, from which an estimate of the effective width of the strip that has been searched can be calculated. This is necessary because the probability of detecting an animal decreases the further away it is from the transect line. Abundance is then calculated by extrapolating estimated density in the sampled strips to the entire survey area. The calculated number is therefore an estimate of abundance in a defined area at a particular time.

On ships, distances are either estimated by naked eye (observers should be trained in distance estimation and use individually calibrated tools) or using binoculars with distance calibrated reticules. Video range measuring methods allow distance to be accurately measured. To calculate the perpendicular distance to a sighting the radial angle should be recorded using an angle board. If an aircraft is used, an inclinometer reading, taken when the sighting is abeam of the aircraft, and the altitude of the aircraft allow precise calculation of the perpendicular sighting distance to the transect. Animals occur in groups in many cetacean species so the target for detection in a line transect survey is often a group rather than individuals. Hence, data on the group size and composition must also be accurately collected.

When estimating absolute abundance using the line transect distance sampling method, it is assumed that all animals on the track line are detected, i.e. probability to detect an animal or a group of animals is maximum ($g(0)=1$).

There are two potential categories of bias that may invalidate the assumption that $g(0)=1$:

- availability bias (when the animal is underwater or, in general, not available to be seen during the period it is within visual range) and
- perception bias (when for whatever reason an observer misses an animal that is available at the surface).

To address the availability bias, data on diving behaviour of the target species could be taken into consideration and used as a correction factor. With trained observers and large cetaceans, perception bias can be considered equal to or approximately equal to 1. However, if $g(0)$ is significantly lower than one (as is often the case for small cetaceans) then this will result in a considerably negatively biased estimate and the true value of $g(0)$ must be estimated. For shipboard surveys, the double-platform approach has been successfully used to address this problem. Availability bias is a particular problem for animals with very long dives; in the case of the sperm whale, acoustic techniques can overcome this problem.

The logistics of aerial surveys often prevent the use of two independent platforms to allow estimation of the proportion of animals missed on the transect line, however, recently Partenavia P-68 planes have been equipped with two sets of bubble windows, to allow double-platform data collection by means of independent observers on board of the same aircraft. Data collection protocols implementing aircraft circling back after a sighting to simulate the second research platform can be also used.

Relative abundance using only one platform may be sufficient for detecting population trends, reducing surveys cost considerably and may be used to monitoring the status of the target population between large-scale absolute abundance surveys based on larger budgets.

Another assumption for line transects methodology is that animals do not move prior to detection. This is not a problem for aerial surveys, but may bias shipboard surveys that typically survey at speeds around 10 knots. Evasive movements lead to negative bias in estimates of abundance, while attractive movements lead to positively biased estimates. Double-platform methodology can be applied to assess responsive movements. According to this method, observations are carried out from two platforms. Observers from the secondary or 'tracking' platform search an area ahead of the 'primary' survey area and sufficiently wide to ensure that animals are detected prior to any responsive movement to the ship, and to allow the tracking of animals until they are detected by the primary platform. The observers from the primary platform search independently of the tracking platform.

To assist in planning a line transect survey and to analyse the data there is a comprehensive analysis program available called DISTANCE.

DISTANCE provides software for estimating detection functions, density and abundance, and can be used to design the surveys. The latest version also includes mark-recapture distance sampling which allows analysis of dual observer distance sampling surveys, where the probability of detection on the trackline can be estimated. All versions of DISTANCE can be downloaded free from <http://www.ruwpa.st-and.ac.uk/distance/>.

It is clear from the above examples that proper design of the survey is critical to address monitoring issues of cetacean populations, and in particular that a large enough area is covered so that shifts in distributions can be accounted for when analysing the data.

The areas to be surveyed are usually divided into survey blocks and the transects are designed to ensure equal coverage probability, using the dedicated software.

Survey design

The basic requirement for a line transect survey is that it provides representative coverage of the area for which an abundance estimate is desired (*i.e.* each point in the area has an equal or quantifiable probability of being sampled). A common design for vessel-based surveys at sea is a set of zig-zag lines following a regular pattern, starting from a random point along one edge of the survey area. In aerial surveys, 'parallel transects' are to be preferred and the coverage should be allocated according to target species' density: more coverage where their density is higher.

Survey blocks

The development of appropriate survey blocks is a combination of biological factors (species, distribution/stock structure and abundance, habitat types etc.) and pragmatism associated with the logistics (numbers of vessels/planes; port/airport facilities; transit times; national borders etc.).

Effort required per block

The effort required per block is determined as a function of ship/airplane time available in each block, available information on density of species and logistical constraints. The higher the level of coverage the better, as it allows for a larger sample size and therefore for more precise and robust abundance estimates.

There are some practical points needing attention when designing a survey. Transects should, as far as possible, run perpendicular to any density gradient; for example, coastal surveys typically have transects that run more or less perpendicular to the shore line.

Closing mode versus passing mode

In order to confirm certain information (species identification, group size and, historically, distance to sighting), cetacean surveys could be operated in 'closing mode'. In this mode, once a sighting has been made and the initial distance and angle been recorded, the vessel then approaches the animal(s) to identify the species and group size. It is also used if, for example, it is desired to obtain biopsy samples or photographs.

Nevertheless, operating in 'closing' mode can result in biased abundance and estimates. The preferred approach is thus to operate in 'passing mode' whenever possible (*i.e.* once a sighting is made the vessel remains on the designated course). However, this too has its problems, if, for example, many sightings are unidentified to species (the use of cameras with large stabilized zoom lenses may facilitate species identification).

Deciding between vessel and aerial surveys

Visual line transects surveys can be operated from a ship and from an aircraft. When deciding which platform to use, the relative merits of each approach for the species and areas to be covered must be considered. These include:

- aerial surveys are usually more cost-efficient per area than large vessel surveys, provided that the area to be covered is within the range of the aircraft from an airport and taking safety considerations into account (this often means not travelling more than 200 nautical miles or so offshore);
- aerial surveys can take better advantage of good weather conditions, in that they can cover much larger areas in the same period;
- aerial surveys are more efficient (and trackline design is easier) if the area to be covered has complex coastlines, many islands or large areas of shallow waters;
- aerial surveys can be more tolerant of swell but less tolerant of sea state and low cloud – they can also be affected by poor weather at the airport even if survey conditions are acceptable at sea;
- animals are less disturbed (if at all) by aircraft at normal flying altitudes and thus the problem of responsive movement is minimal;
- for multispecies aerial surveys, compromises must be made in terms of the optimum altitude for flying e.g. flying at the optimum altitude for a harbour porpoise survey means that the searching area for larger species such as fin whales is considerably reduced;
- vessels are generally better platforms for photo-identification and aircraft are unsuitable for biopsy sampling and acoustic recording;
- availability bias is much greater for aerial surveys;
- it is generally easier to obtain a suitable vessel than a suitable aircraft.

Platforms of opportunity

Platforms of opportunity are a potentially valuable resource for monitoring but it is usually not possible to choose the time or area of operation. Survey coverage is therefore typically extremely uneven and some areas, crucial for the presence of a target species, may not be covered; such unrepresentative coverage may introduce bias into assessment of distribution and abundance.

Platforms of opportunity using visual and/or acoustic methods are the cheapest way to monitor cetaceans. However, the success of using such vessels depends on finding the right platform that can cheaply and effectively accommodate observers and equipment and that cover appropriate areas at suitable speeds. These criteria are seldom fulfilled, especially since long term monitoring ideally requires the conditions to be consistent. Ferries may be suitable in some areas but spatial coverage is likely to be poor because of the fixed routes covered. Research vessels conducting annual monitoring of e.g. oceanography or fish resources have the potential to be valuable platforms of opportunity for monitoring if they take place at the right time(s) in the right place(s).

Acoustic surveys

The collection of acoustic data for cetaceans has some significant advantages over visual methods. Acoustic methods can be automated, data can be collected 24-hrs a day and data collection is not dependent on observer's skills, is less sensitive to weather conditions and can detect the presence of diving animals not available for visual observations. Disadvantages are that these methods rely on animals making sounds within a useful detection range and are

identifiable to the species level. Furthermore, with exception of some species such as the sperm whale, methods to estimate abundance are not well established yet.

All odontocetes (toothed whales) have the ability to echolocate by producing and listening to particular “click” sounds. This allows them to navigate during night time or in murky waters, and to find and catch preys. Most toothed whales such as most dolphins (e.g. bottlenose and common dolphins) also produce other frequency modulated sounds (whistles) used for intraspecific communication. The monitoring of these sounds allows for the collection of information on spatial and temporal habitat use, as well as estimation of relative density.

Ship-board line transect acoustic survey is the most effective way of surveying sperm whales in the open sea and to collect the data required for accurate and robust estimation of absolute abundance in these waters. Visual-only survey techniques could introduce biases due to the long dive duration abilities demonstrated by the species and the little time generally spent at the surface, which makes them mostly unavailable for visual detection.

Acoustic data from sperm whales can be used to assess both relative and absolute abundance provided that the appropriate equipment and survey design is followed. Sperm whales produce loud regular clicks, which can be detected at ranges of tens of kilometres. Sperm whale click characteristics are generally easily recognisable. Thus, software automatization has been developed and used on a number of surveys resulting into real-time tracking and location to single animals or groups. By tracking a whale for a period of time, crossed bearings to successive clicks give a position for each whale, which can be used in a distance-based analysis.

A major task in this type of analysis is the assignment of clicks to individual whales when many animals are vocalizing simultaneously. Often, clicks from different whales are easily resolved using bearing information with dedicated software implementing beamforming. The regularity of the click train on each bearing indicates that they represent a single whale. On occasions where more than one whale is on the same bearing, clicks can be assigned to individuals using spectral and amplitude information, inter-click intervals and inter-pulse intervals. By identifying the most obvious whale in a group and removing those clicks from the analysis, identification of successive whales becomes progressively easier until all clicks are assigned.

Since acoustic detection ranges are generally ~10 km, a survey vessel travelling at 18 km per hour (10 knots) will be in acoustic range of a sperm whale close to the track line for over an hour. Typically, sperm whales dive for approximately 30-50 minutes followed by 10-15 minutes at the surface. Clicking is generally continuous when the whales are submerged and they are silent while resting at the surface.

On occasion, whales cease clicking regularly for periods of 2-3 hours, but evidence from tagging and observational studies suggests this is infrequent. The probability of a whale to remain silent for the entire time that the vessel is in range is therefore considered to be small, indicating that $g(0)$ for acoustic surveys is close to 1. However, calves (which may represent up to 20% of the population) do not make long foraging dives and are not clicking regularly. Consequently, their detection may have low efficiency and a correction factor calculated from existing data should be applied.

Acoustic survey data for sperm whales can generally be collected simultaneously with visual data for other species particularly if the survey is operating primarily in passing mode. Survey vessels can also continue acoustic sampling in conditions unsuitable for visual survey (bad weather and night time).

Abundance estimates, based on acoustic methods, are only possible for sperm whales. Potentially, information on distribution can be obtained from acoustic data for all species, although with much more uncertainties for common and striped dolphins, given the difficulties in distinguishing their vocalizations.

A hydrophone array is towed behind each vessel. The equipment consists of a desktop computer running automatic detection software, the towed hydrophone, and various interface cards for getting sounds into the computer. The computer is running all the time, and one scientist is in charge of the acoustic system on each vessel.

Photo-identification

Photo-identification is a widely used technique in cetacean research that can provide estimates of abundance and population parameters e.g. survival and calving rate. It has been used for monitoring purposes for common bottlenose dolphins and killer whales since the 1970s. The technique relies on being able to obtain good quality photos of animals' body parts that constitute unique recognizable markings.

This method can be used for population level monitoring of species with appropriate markings, if data can be collected across the distribution of the population. This approach cannot be applied to species that lack suitable individual identification marks.

Using photo-identification, it is sometimes possible to census the whole population when all individuals can be encountered at any given time in an area, all are well marked and no individuals seem to be moving in or out of the population. This is however unusual and has only been accomplished for a few populations of bottlenose dolphin, e.g. Sado Estuary, Portugal and Doubtful Sound, New Zealand, and for killer whales off Vancouver Island. More commonly, mark-recapture models must be applied to photo-identification data to estimate abundance (rather than a census the whole population) for specific areas that populations or part of populations occupy during one or more seasons of the year.

Information on the proportion of the population possessing recognisable markings is also required to allow estimation of population size.

The standard software program for mark-recapture analysis is program MARK (<http://www.cnr.colostate.edu/~gwhite/mark/mark.htm>), which includes a wide range of models to estimate population size and survival rates. There are models that can take account of heterogeneity of capture probabilities, a common problem in mark-recapture studies. These include program CAPTURE, a widely used multi-sample closed population model. If animals are believed to emigrate temporarily from the study area, there are also methods available for taking this into account in analysis.

Satellite tracking

Information on the movements and distribution of individual animals can help to identify important habitats, migration routes and to define boundaries between populations. Effective conservation of animal populations is enhanced by this information, which can also be valuable when designing monitoring programmes. In recent years satellite tagging of cetaceans has been increasingly used to obtain information on seasonal movements, distribution and diving behaviour.

To make inferences about large populations ranging over a wide area, many animals must be tagged, especially in species with high individual variation in behaviour. For some areas and species this would be a significant logistical challenge.

Many kinds of tags have been used in studies of cetaceans, including VHF transmitters, satellite tags and GPS data loggers. Satellite telemetry has the advantage that because data are transmitted to an earth based station via a satellite, it is possible to follow animals all over the world without retrieval of the tag.

Each tagged animal can provide a wealth of information but the limitation is that typically only a few animals can be tagged in a study due to limited funding or access to live animals. General conclusions are therefore often difficult especially if all members of the population are not equally available for tagging.

Power analysis

For any type of monitoring it is necessary to ensure that the chosen method and the study design will be able to provide an answer to the question posed with a useful level of precision. A power analysis can indicate the ability of the statistical procedure and the available or planned data to reveal a certain level of change i.e. the ability to detect a trend of a given magnitude. Power analysis can be used in two situations: firstly for interpretation of results of analysis of existing data; and secondly to plan studies to calculate the necessary sample size e.g. the length of time series of abundance estimates, or the coefficient of variation (CV) of those estimates, needed to detect specified rates of population change in a trend analysis.

TRENDS is a freely available program designed to carry out a power analysis of linear regression, particularly in the context of monitoring populations in wildlife studies:

(<https://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division=PRD&ParentMenuId=228&id=4740>).

TRENDS summarises the power analysis in five parameters: duration of study, rate of change, precision of estimates, Type 1 error rate, and power (1 - Type 2 error rate). The value of any one of these can be estimated if the other four are specified. TRENDS is therefore designed to help answer such questions as:

- How many years are required to detect a trend?
- How much effort would be required to detect a certain level of change in a certain time period? What is the probability of detecting a trend?

RESOLUTION 6.14 - POPULATION STRUCTURE STUDIES

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

Taking in consideration Recommendation 10.2 of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee on population structure, as well as the Work Programme 2014-2016, as adopted by Resolution 5.2,

Recalling that Article II, paragraph 3 (e), of the Agreement invites Parties to reinforce the collection and dissemination of information,

Recalling ACCOBAMS Resolutions:

- 2.10 on facilitation of exchange of tissue sample,
- 2.11 on facilitation of scientific research campaigns and programs,
- 3.9 on guidelines for the establishment of a system of tissue banks within the ACCOBAMS area and the ethical code,
- 4.18 on guidelines on the granting of exceptions to Article II, paragraph 1, for the purpose of non-lethal in situ research in the Agreement Area,

Taking note of the draft CITES Resolution proposed to the COP 17 and prepared by ACCOBAMS on the identification of origin of cetaceans bred or kept in captivity,

Recalling CMS Resolution 11.23 on Conservation Implications of Cetacean Culture, encouraging governments to take into account culturally transmitted behaviours in conservation and management measures and threat assessments, applying a precautionary approach if there is evidence that influence of culture and social complexity may be a conservation issue for a population,

Recognising the importance of information on population structure highlighted by the project "ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative"⁷⁸,

Acknowledging that genetic methods represent an important tool among the techniques that are of value in determining units-to-serve, also considering that other methods, such as photo identification and satellite telemetry, provide valuable information on stock structure,

Stressing the relevance of genetic research to elaborate specific conservation measures, as confirmed by the decisions taken by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) as regards the Black Sea Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*),

Recalling the report of the Joint ECS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Workshop on Cetacean Population Structure (27th ECS Conference, 6 April 2013, Setubal, Portugal), which identified a number of priorities for immediate attention, given conservation concerns,

⁷⁸ Comprehensive cetacean population estimates and distribution in ACCOBAMS area.

1. *Urges* Parties to support projects and activities giving information on population structure to help in the definition of specific conservation measures;
2. *Recommends* the re-establishment by the Scientific Committee of a working group on population structure and *takes note* of its terms of reference, as provided in document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc16;
3. *Requests* the Scientific Committee, in collaboration with the Working Group on Population Structure, to implement population structure priorities including region-wide and local genetic/morphometric/pollutant profile studies, based on the knowledge gap analysis performed in 2013, allowing identification of isolated populations and better descriptions of populations, especially as regards:
 - Short-beaked common dolphins, particularly in Greek waters;
 - Risso's dolphins, given some evidence that they may occur in small, local "management units";
 - Killer whales in the Strait of Gibraltar and Gulf of Cadiz with a focus on the relationship with the Atlantic waters outside the Mediterranean;
 - Harbour porpoises in the Black and Aegean Seas and in the Atlantic contiguous area;
 - Cuvier's beaked whales;
 - Fin whales;
4. *Encourages* collaboration between tissue banks and countries to facilitate exchanges of samples for joint analysis;
5. *Decides* that the present Resolution replaces Resolution 4.11.

RESOLUTION 6.15 - ASSESSMENT OF IUCN CONSERVATION STATUS OF CETACEANS IN THE ACCOBAMS AREA

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

Acting upon recommendation 10.3 of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee,

Recalling Resolution 2.22, on strengthening relations with IUCN, and Resolution 3.19, on the IUCN Red List of cetaceans in the Mediterranean and Black Seas,

Considering Resolution 5.1 on the ACCOBAMS Strategy (period 2014-2025), stating that sufficient data should be collected to be able to assign all currently Data Deficient species to one of the other IUCN categories,

Recalling also document ACCOBAMS-SC9/2014/Doc11 "Assessment of IUCN Conservation Status of Cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area",

Aware that the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation has not received new or updated assessments in the last two years for the species categorized as Data Deficient for the IUCN Red List in the Mediterranean Sea,

Stressing that assessments on the IUCN conservation status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area should be regularly updated,

1. *Asks* the Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to liaise with the initial assessors to :
 - consider whether there is sufficient new information to re-assess the species that are still Data Deficient and, if so, submit new assessments for consideration by the appropriate evaluators;
 - consider whether there is sufficient information to evaluate species within the region not previously assessed (e.g. the Rough-toothed dolphin) and, if so, submit an assessment for consideration by the appropriate evaluators;
 - re-assess Killer whales, which are still not included in the Mediterranean IUCN Red List despite the evaluation done in collaboration between IUCN and ACCOBAMS in 2006 (Resolution 3.19), taking into account the Agreement Area, and submit such re-assessment for consideration by the appropriate evaluators.

RESOLUTION 6.16 - INTERACTIONS BETWEEN FISHERIES AND CETACEANS

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

Recalling the provisions of Article II, paragraph 3, of the Agreement, inviting Parties to implement, within the limits of their sovereignty and/or jurisdiction and in accordance with their international obligations, appropriate measures for the assessment and management of human-cetacean interactions and stressing that measures concerning fisheries activities shall be applied in respect of any vessel under their flag or registered within their territory, including in all waters under their sovereignty and/or jurisdiction, and outside these waters,

Recalling the following Resolutions:

- Resolution 2.12 on guidelines for the use of acoustic deterrent devices,
- Resolution 2.13 on pelagic gillnets,
- Resolution 2.21 on assessment and mitigation of the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS area,
- Resolution A/3.1, amending Annex 2 to ACCOBAMS, as regards the use of drift nets
- Resolution 3.8 strengthening collaboration with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean,
- Resolution 4.9 on fisheries interactions with cetaceans,

Recalling the commitment of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to reduce cetacean-fisheries interaction through the implementation of the Decision IG.22/12 related to the adoption of the updated Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea,

Fully aware of the complexity of the cetacean-fisheries interaction issue with its negative impacts on cetacean populations as well as its socio-economic implications, in particular the situation of severe conflicts between fishermen and dolphins generated, in some zones of the Agreement Area, by the damages to the fishing gear,

Conscious of the related work underway under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and *recalling* related decisions, in particular CMS Resolutions 9.18 on Bycatch and 10.14 on Bycatch of CMS-listed Species in Gillnet Fisheries;

Conscious of the related work underway under the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS), and *recalling* related decisions, in particular ASCOBANS Resolution 8.5 on Monitoring and Mitigation of Small Cetacean Bycatch;

Commending the collaboration bounds established between the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS and of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), in particular regarding the mitigation of the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the Agreement area,

Noting with appreciation the recommendations adopted by the GFCM on the mitigation of incidental catches of cetaceans in the GFCM area (Recommendation GFCM/36/2012/2) and on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom-set gillnet fisheries for turbot and conservation of cetaceans in the Black Sea (Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/2),

Noting also the validation by GFCM of the Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF), that includes incidental catches of vulnerable species,

Greatly appreciating the financial support provided by the MAVA Foundation for the joint ACCOBAMS/GFCM Project on mitigating the impact of fishing activities on endangered species, being implemented in cooperation with RAC/SPA,

1. *Invites* the Permanent Secretariat to pursue its collaboration with the GFCM Secretariat and strengthen its involvement in the relevant works and initiatives undertaken under GFCM;
2. *Invites* the Permanent Secretariat to provide assistance to Parties in addressing the issue of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities, including illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, taking into account the social and economic aspects of this issue, ensuring that all activities undertaken in this context are in line with the objectives of ACCOBAMS and considering mutual impacts of mitigation measures;
3. *Invites* the Scientific Committee, in close collaboration with the Permanent Secretariat, to keep a watch over the recent advances in technology regarding the acoustic devices for mitigating the interactions between cetaceans and fishing gears and where necessary propose amendments to the Guidelines for the use of acoustic deterrent devices adopted by the Parties (Resolution 2.12);
4. *Invites* the Permanent Secretariat to strengthen its collaboration also with the Secretariats of CMS, ASCOBANS, the IWC and other relevant Organizations to investigate approaches for achieving significant decrease in the cetacean by-catch levels, using as appropriate the recommendations of the Scientific Committee.
5. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee, to develop a joint working group with ASCOBANS on bycatch, and to explore opportunities for linking this with other relevant initiatives, including the Bycatch Initiative established under the International Whaling Commission
6. *Invites* Parties and Non-Party Range States to prioritize and allocate funding to :
 - a. monitor cetacean bycatch in relevant fisheries, and report the data gathered to the Permanent Secretariat, as appropriate;
 - b. develop appropriate technical and other measures to mitigate cetacean bycatch, as well as their implementation and evaluation, taking into account potential effects on other species and socio-economic consequences.

RESOLUTION 6.17 - ANTHROPOGENIC NOISE

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

Recalling Resolutions 4.17 on “Guidelines to address the impact of anthropogenic noise on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area” and 5.15 on “Addressing the impact of anthropogenic noise”,

Taking into consideration Recommendation 10.5 of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee,

Conscious of the related work underway under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and *recalling* related decisions, in particular CMS Resolution 9.19 on Adverse Anthropogenic Marine/Ocean Noise Impacts on Cetaceans and other Biota, and Resolution 10.24 on Further Steps to Abate Underwater Noise Pollution for the Protection of Cetaceans and Other Migratory Species;

Recognizing that a large portion of the Mediterranean area is impacted by noise-producing human activities and that it is likely that such activities will increase,

Convinced that environmental impact assessment procedures should be carried out prior to projects that may affect cetaceans and especially those involving impulsive noise,

Aware of the need for the development of a comprehensive registry on anthropogenic noise in the Agreement Area to assist in identifying noise “hot spots” to elaborate mitigation measures,

Welcoming Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (applicable as of 16 May 2017), amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Public and Private Projects on the Environment,

Also welcoming the progress on the “CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities” presented in ACCOBAMS/MOP6/Inf22 and the related ASCOBANS Resolution 8.11,

Further welcoming the study on “A basin-wide strategy for underwater noise monitoring in the Mediterranean” (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc27), prepared by experts from the Joint ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS/CMS Working Group on Noise (JNWG), and the report “Overview of the noise hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area – Part I, Mediterranean Sea” (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc28),

Also welcoming Decision IG.22/7 on Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria, adopted during the 19th Conference of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention,

Concerned that, while recognizing the sensitivity surrounding military exercises, the safety of cetaceans is often not adequately addressed during such exercises,

Noting with appreciation that the United States Navy has recognised the importance of not using active sonar in areas and at times when marine mammals are vulnerable, but concerned that military exercises using active sonar are still conducted in the ACCOBAMS Area such as the Dynamic Manta NATO exercise in September 2015,

1. *Welcomes* the process established by CMS allowing Parties to CMS, ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS and Signatories to relevant Memoranda of Understanding, to contribute further to the development of the “CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities”, and *invites* ACCOBAMS Parties and the Scientific Committee to participate actively;
2. *Recognizes* the broad scope of the guidelines and therefore invites CMS to consider the adoption of revised “CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities” at the 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
3. *Calls* on the Parties to undertake Strategic Impact Assessments (SIA), Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and other relevant assessments such as Appropriate Assessments (AA) under the EU Habitat Directive prior to plans, programmes and projects that may affect cetaceans and especially those involving impulsive noise, noting that, as a minimum standard, such assessments should:
 - provide adequate information on baseline biological and environmental information to describe the area being impacted;
 - fully characterise operations and their acoustic components – this should include professional modelling of the sound propagation features and the spatial region that will experience anthropogenic noise above natural ambient sound levels;
 - assess the impact on cetaceans within this area and consider the potential cumulative effects from other anthropogenic activities;
 - describe how the impacts are proposed to be mitigated and effectiveness monitored before, during and after the operation; and
 - provide an objective consideration of the risk posed by the proposed activity against alternatives;
4. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat to develop an ACCOBAMS-hosted online depository of ACCOBAMS noise-related documents and decisions made by the Parties with respect to EIAs with a cetacean component, as well as documents evaluating the success, if any, of mitigation measures, and *calls on* Parties to provide relevant information, both in line with the recommendations contained in the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities;
5. *Encourages* Parties, following consultation with national experts for the development of noise indicators, to provide comments to the Permanent Secretariat on the study on “A basin-wide strategy for underwater noise monitoring in the Mediterranean” (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc27), and on the report “Overview of the noise hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area – Part I, Mediterranean Sea” (ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Doc28);
6. *Urges* Parties to implement Decision IG.22/7 on Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria adopted during the 19th Conference of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention, in order to assist in identifying noise “hotspots” and elaborate mitigation measures;
7. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat in consultation with the Scientific Committee to enter into dialogue with NATO and national navies of non-NATO countries as appropriate, inviting them to provide information on past

military exercises in the ACCOBAMS Area, for example the Dynamic Manta exercise in September 2015, in particular on:

- a) active sonar use or other noise sources, including explosions (time, area, source levels);
- b) sightings of cetaceans, if any, during the exercise;
- c) approaches adopted, if any, to evaluate potential adverse effects on cetaceans (e.g. through sound modelling and examination of data on likely cetacean occurrence);
- d) mitigation measures taken, if any, and the basis for these;

8. *Further requests* the Permanent Secretariat to organize a workshop inviting NATO and national navies to show how the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee can provide advice and assistance with respect to mitigating adverse effects on cetaceans for any future exercises;
9. *Recommends* that the Scientific Committee and the JN WG further develop in the next triennium the concept of “quiet zones” as outlined in Recommendation 10.5 of the Scientific Committee with a focus on a quantitative elaboration and evaluation of the scientific evidence for establishing such areas both in space and time;
10. *Encourages* the Parties to recommend to their research institutes and organizations that wish to undertake monitoring programmes on noise requiring official permits to submit such programmes to the Permanent Secretariat for advice and assistance;
11. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to contribute to the further development of two candidate noise indicators with respect to the Ecosystems Approach (EcAp) Process of the Mediterranean Action Plan, in line with the Descriptor 11 of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive of the European Union (MSFD);
12. *Further requests* the Scientific Committee to contribute to the development of a noise impact indicator on cetaceans for Descriptor 11 of the MSFD;
13. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to develop a proposal for a regional project to implement a monitoring programme of underwater noise, particularly in critical habitats and in interactions hot spots, in line with Decision IG.22/7 on Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria adopted during the 19th Conference of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention;
14. *Invites* the Permanent Secretariat to develop cooperation on noise issue with other international Organizations such as the CMS Family, the EC, OSPAR, ICES, the Barcelona Convention, the Black Sea Commission, CBD, IWC, NATO, IMO, IUCN and with other relevant international organizations;
15. *Encourages* the CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Joint Noise Working Group and the Marine Mammals Observers Working Group to work in close collaboration.

RESOLUTION 6.18 - IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ACCOBAMS CERTIFICATION FOR HIGHLY QUALIFIED MARINE MAMMALS OBSERVERS

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

Recognizing that marine noise generated by humans is a form of pollution caused by the introduction of energy into the marine environment which may have an adverse impact on marine life, from disruption to injury and death,

Conscious of and concerned by the negative impact of anthropogenic underwater noise on cetaceans, particularly noise due to seismic activities, pile driving, dredging, explosions, drilling, etc.,

Conscious that several anthropogenic activities, in particular seismic activities, are increasingly common in the ACCOBAMS region,

Recognizing that According to the Guidelines of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) for minimizing the risk of injury and disturbance to marine mammals from seismic survey, a Marine Mammal Observer (MMO) is “an individual responsible for conducting visual watches for marine mammals, and that for some seismic surveys it may be requested that observers are trained, dedicated and / or experienced. The MMO may also be a Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM) operative if sufficiently trained”,

Taking into account Resolution 4.17 “Guidelines to address the impact of anthropogenic noise on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area”, and more particularly the following specific points:

Guidelines for seismic surveys and airgun use

g) Continuous visual and passive acoustic monitoring with a specialized team of cetacean observers and bio-acousticians to ensure that cetaceans are not in the Exclusion Zone before turning on the acoustic sources and while sources are active,

General guidelines

l) Mitigation should include monitoring and reporting protocols to provide information on the implementation procedures and their effectiveness, and to provide datasets to be used for improving existing cetacean databases,

q) Trained and approved Cetacean Observers (visual observers and/or acoustic monitors where appropriate) should be employed for the monitoring and reporting programme, including overseeing the implementation of the mitigation rules,

r) Cetacean observers and bio-acousticians in charge of the monitoring programme must be qualified and experienced, with suitable equipment,

t) Marine mammal observers should report to the National Focal Point, who will inform the ACCOBAMS Secretariat using a standardized reporting protocol. Any unexpected condition and/or change in applied protocols should be discussed with the Secretariat in collaboration with the Scientific Committee,

Considering that Bureau Members, during the Ninth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Bureau (Paris, 9-10 December 2014) confirmed to the Permanent Secretariat the need of working on the “Marine Mammals Observers” (MMOs) issue,

Recognizing the existence of different MMOs training centres, with different theoretical and practical courses levels, in the ACCOBAMS Area, and *aware* that there is a need to establish a standard of legitimacy and credibility for such training centers,

Aware that the implementation of an ACCOBAMS certification on this issue will:

- ensure the recognition of the ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators at the international level,
- improve the effectiveness of conservation measures to limit the impact of noise on cetaceans,

Welcoming the Report of the ACCOBAMS Workshop “Developing Tools to Ensure High Quality MMOs in the ACCOBAMS Area”, held during the 30th ECS Conference (13th March 2016, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal), and co-funded by the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA -MAP-UNEP),

1. *Recognizes* that a certification for entities to train MMOs and PAM operators in the ACCOBAMS area will guarantee throughout the Agreement area:

- a high quality training of MMOs/PAM;
- the standardization of training contents, regardless of the country;
- the standardization and quality of the data collected, which may also be made available to scientists;

2. *Adopts*:

- the Tools ensuring Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators in the ACCOBAMS area, as presented in [Annex 1](#) of the present Resolution;
- the Rules and criteria for entities requesting the certification to become Trainers (including commitments) as presented in [Annex 2](#) of the present Resolution;
- the Rules and criteria for candidates to integrate a training to become a Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators (including commitments, certificate and template for the mission report) as presented in [Annex 3](#) of the present Resolution;
- the ACCOBAMS accredited training for MMO/PAM operators - Content and duration as presented in [Annex 4](#) of the present Resolution;

3. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat to inform all relevant international organizations, as well as entities generating noise in the ACCOBAMS area about the tools ensuring Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators in the ACCOBAMS Area;

4. *Encourages* Parties to:

- implement the tools ensuring Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators in the ACCOBAMS Area;
- give, in priority, permits for activities in their national area, to industrial companies employing Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators or at least other internationally agreed certifications;
- whenever possible provide the Permanent Secretariat with a copy of the MMO/PAM report and data

5. *Encourages* industrial companies and public entities engaged in noise-producing activities that may have negative impacts on cetaceans to use the “Tools ensuring Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators in the ACCOBAMS Area” in order to prove their commitment at reducing these impacts; further encourages international associations of oil and gas producers to promote such steps;

6. *Requests* the Scientific Committee, as well as the Working Group on MMOs, whose composition and Terms of Reference are presented in [Annex 5](#) of the present Resolution, to :

- pursue collaboration with other relevant entities for the improvement of the implementation of the Tools ensuring Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators in the ACCOBAMS Area;
- revise accordingly, if necessary, the tools ensuring Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators in the ACCOBAMS area and report on this issue to the Seventh Meeting of the Parties.

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ANNEX I – TOOLS ENSURING HIGHLY QUALIFIED MMO⁷⁹/PAM⁸⁰ OPERATORS IN THE ACCOBAMS AREA

Role and links of the different actors of the tool

The Permanent Secretariat will:

- Give the accreditation/renewal to organizations asking to become “trainer”, based on requirements set up by the Working group;
- Establish the commitment with the accredited MMO/PAM (receive the signed commitment of MMO from the trainer organizations or the ACCOBAMS school in the same time as the list of accredited MMO);
- Assist the MMO working group;
- Feed NETCCOBAMS with relevant information and moderate the dedicated works space;
- provide the Focal Point with an updated list of accredited MMO/PAMs operators in the country
- Set up and manage a repository for MMO/PAM mission reports;
- Receive sighting forms with data from the most appropriate national entity (when possible if there is a period of confidentiality).

The MMO Working group will:

- set the requirements that have to be fulfilled by organizations asking for trainer’s accreditation/renewal;
- set the requirements that has to be fulfilled by people to integrate a training to become a MMO/PAM;
- set the standards, content, duration, etc.... of the training module;
- set the updates, news, actualization that has to be integrated in the training;
- identify experts for the ACCOBAMS School;
- feed the NetCCOBAMS webpage on the MMO/PAM subject.

The ACCOBAMS School will:

- be composed by experts (e.g. from the research, academic sectors, and relevant stakeholders) operating in the ACCOBAMS Area in cetacean ecology, underwater acoustics and bioacoustics, impacts on marine mammals, mitigation measure in the ACCOBAMS regions, identified by the MMO working group;
- select the future MMO/PAM candidates in accordance to the terms of references;
- train and certificate MMO/PAM;
- provide the support for the standard training to all accredited “trainer” organizations under the directives and/or validation of the MMO working group;
- provide the support for the updates to be integrated in the training, following MMO working group directives;
- update regularly the list of certificated MMO/PAM and inform the Permanent Secretariat;
- Submit to MMO/PAM-trainees the commitment agreement between them and ACCOBAMS for signature;
- Send the commitment agreement to the Permanent Secretariat.

The “TRAINER” organizations will:

- ask for accreditation/renewal to the Permanent Secretariat;
- use standard support of training provided by the ACCOBAMS School;
- train and certificate MMO/PAM that fulfil the requirements to be candidate;
- update regularly the list of certificated MMO and inform the Permanent Secretariat;
- Submit to MMO/PAM-trainees the commitment agreement between them and ACCOBAMS for signature;

⁷⁹ MMO : Marine Mammals Observers

⁸⁰ PAM operators: Passive Acoustic Monitoring operators

- deliver the template report and a standard sighting form to be used in the field;
- participate in a working group or a group on NetCCOBAMS (<http://www.netccobams.com>) relating to MMOs or PAM operators.

The MMO/PAM operators will:

- have to fulfil requirements established by the MMO Working Group, to apply for the training;
- attend a standard training from an accredited organism or from the ACCOBAMS school;
- receive a certificate stating that they can act now as MMO/PAM;
- sign a commitment (through the trainer organism or through the ACCOBAMS school) with the Permanent Secretariat to engage themselves in using standards;
- elaborate a report after each mission at sea that will be forwarded to the relevant national authority ;

- Send the commitment agreements to the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat.

The coordinating organization (ACCOBAMS) commits itself:

- To increase the standing of organizations committed to the common quality system within the ACCOBAMS region;
- To keep accredited organizations informed of any changes to the specifications (protocols, standard forms, manual, etc.).

Article 1.1. Subject

Agreement on the accreditation designed to standardize and certify training for MMOs and PAM operators in the ACCOBAMS region and use the training kit tool given by the ACCOBAMS School.

Article 1.2. Conditions of access to accreditation

The applicant organization must be an ACCOBAMS' Partner and be involved in cetacean research or conservation and provide proof of experience in training operational staff and being a MMO and/or a PAM operator onboard a seismic vessel.

The applicant organization must submit a written application to the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat explaining its reasons for applying and describing its experience of training operational staff.

Article 1.3. Identification



Article 1.4. Length of agreement and renewal of accreditation

The accreditation is valid for two years. Following the submission of a report summarizing activity at the end of the accreditation period to the coordinator (ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat), the coordinator shall assess compliance with the specifications. In the event that the specifications have been complied with, the coordinator shall renew the accreditation; if the specifications have not been complied with, the accreditation shall not be renewed.

Article 1.5. Procedures for assessing compliance with the accreditation specifications

The activity report shall describe the training carried out, provide evidence that the specifications have been properly complied with, list the names of the MMOs and/or PAM operators trained and include copies of the commitments signed by MMOs/PAM operators regarding the submission of field reports.

Template of the activity report in the ANNEX: Activity report for renewal of the accreditation agreement between the **“ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators” Trainer** and the ACCOBAMS Permanent secretariat

Prepared in two copies the (date):

Location (city, country):

Recipient:	For ACCOBAMS:
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Signature and stamp, preceded by the words: <i>“I agree to fully comply with the provisions of the accreditation and these specifications”</i>	Signature and stamp, preceded by the note: <i>“MMO/PAM accreditation agreed”</i>

Initial each page of the specifications and annexes.

c : Activity report for renewal of the accreditation agreement between the “ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM Operators” Trainer and the ACCOBAMS Permanent secretariat

- Name of the organization:
 - Name of the responsible of the training:
 - First date of accreditation:
 - Date of the report:
- 1) Description of the training(s) carried out
 - i. Report the training location (for both theoretical and practical session);
 - ii. Report the training duration (for both theoretical and practical session);
 - iii. Report the trainers name and qualification;
 - iv. Specify a detail list of the training subjects/course work (for both theoretical and practical session);
 - v. Report the list of education material provided;
 - vi. Specify the overall number of attenders (within the 2 years).
 - 2) Report the overall list of the MMOs and/or PAM operators certified;
 - 3) Provide evidence of the specifications fulfilment including:
 - i. the use of NETCCOBAMS webpage;
 - ii. the active collaboration with the ACCOBAMS School as support of the training (adoption of any updates provided by the School);
 - iii. the utilization of the standardized material provided by the ACCOBAMS School (e.g. delivery to the certified MMO of the standard sighting forms, the manual and tool kit,...);
 - iv. Accreditation request of renewal or Non-renewal for the accreditation (or not). In case of non-renewal specify the reason.

ANNEX 3: INFORMATION ON HOW TO BECOME AN ACCOBAMS HIGHLY QUALIFIED MMOS/PAM OPERATOR

a: Rules and criteria for candidates to integrate a training to become an ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified MMO/PAM operator

To integrate a training to become an ACCOBAMS highly qualified MMO/PAM operator, the candidate should, at least, be graduated in biology or ecology, **or** demonstrate a commitment to environment and its conservation. Personal path should demonstrate a minimum of 30 days-at-sea as observer (real spent in favourable condition at sea at work), and the candidate should be able to recognize the different species and understand the behaviour of animals at sea. Period could be continuous or cumulative.

The candidate should provide all necessary information to the trainer organism (dates, places, species encountered, type of work done at sea).

b – Commitment between an ACCOBAMS highly qualified MMO/PAM operator and the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat

I, the undersigned, (full name).....
 in my role as an MMO/PAM* operator, having completed an ACCOBAMS accredited training course
 delivered by (organization)
 in (location)
 (dates) between and

Agree that:

- no later than one month after each mission relating to activities generating noise in the ACCOBAMS region on which I have embarked as an MMO/PAM operator, I will **submit a mission report** as stipulated in the standard documents.
- during these missions, I will **implement** the procedures explained in the manual and which I learned during the training course, and I will **use the standard forms** provided by ACCOBAMS.
- I will stay in **relation** through NETCCOBAMS on the MMO issue.

In case of noncompliance, I know that my accreditation will be withdraw.

**Delete where appropriate*

Location (city, country):

Date:

Signature:

c: Training certificate of an ACCOBAMS “Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators”

We certify that (surname, first name).....

completed an ACCOBAMS accredited training course as an:

- MMO*
- PAM operator*
- MMO and PAM operator*

(* Delete where appropriate)

Issued by (name of “trainer” organization):

In (location):

(Date) from:.....to.....

This certificate qualifies the holder to work as an MMO and/or PAM operator during activities generating noise at sea in order to minimize the impact on cetaceans, by applying the knowledge, expertise and skills taught during the training course and to use the standard procedures, forms and manual, in accordance with the ACCOBAMS principles.

Location

Date

Signature of certificate holder:

Signature of training manager:

d: Model of report for ACCOBAMS “Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators” after a mission at sea

(To be sent within one month after the mission)

Contact details: Name; email; phone number

Content

1. Area and characteristics of the survey
 - Date and location (including mapping*) of survey
 - Objectives of the survey
 - Number and types of vessels involved in the survey
 - Contact details of all MMO and PAM operators aboard the vessel(s)
 - Material and method used as MMO/PAM
 - Total number and volume of the airguns used
 - Nature of airgun array discharge frequency (in Hz), intensity (in dB re. 1µPa or bar metres) and firing interval (seconds), and / or details of any other acoustic energy used

2. Records

- A record of all occasions when the airguns were used (copy of the forms*)
- A record of the watches made for marine mammals, including details of any sightings and the seismic activity during the watches (copy of the forms and/or excel filled if possible*)

3. Details of any problems encountered during the seismic survey including instances of non-compliance with the ACCOBAMS guidelines (Resolution 4.17)

Annexes*:

The excel file filled* (example Marine Mammal Recording Form from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee) - Cover page, Operations, Effort and Sightings

Date

Signature

** in case of data confidentiality, please send a copy of the paragraph specifying the terms of confidentiality and the delay, and send the data after the period of confidentiality.*

ANNEX 4 – ACCOBAMS ACCREDITED TRAINING FOR MMO/PAM OPERATORS - CONTENT AND DURATION

The training should comprise two parts: theoretical and practical.

The content of the *theoretical training* must cover the subjects listed below, and should be drawn primarily from the ACCOBAMS manual based on the JNCC one.

1. Introduction to the “life style” onboard

- 1.1. Offshore survival and safety
- 1.2. Tasks of a MMO/PAM
- 1.3. Ethics, conflicts of interest and standards of conduct
- 1.4. MMO medical condition requirements
- 1.5. Data confidentiality
- 1.6. Field communication/support; communication and support with appropriate personnel; and using communications devices (i.e., two-way radios, satellite phones, Internet, email, etc.)
- 1.7. Conflict resolution

2. Introduction to marine mammals and acoustics

- 2.1. Marine mammal biology and behaviour
- 2.2. Marine mammal identification
- 2.3. Marine mammal vocalizations
- 2.4. Marine mammal distribution and critical habitats

3. Introduction to regulations and ACCOBAMS guidelines

- 3.1 International regulations
- 3.2 National regulations
- 3.3 ACCOBAMS guidelines

4. Introduction to the different components of a survey

- 4.1 Transects
- 4.2 Observation periods
- 4.3 Sightings
- 4.4 Practical issues: equipment needed for observation

5. Introduction to seismic survey

Overview of types of seismic survey and sound source technology and equipment (e.g., site, two-dimensional, three-dimensional, four-dimensional, four components, ocean bottom cable, ocean bottom surveys, high resolution, electromagnetic, airguns, sparkers, boomers and echo-sounders).

- 5.1. Background on underwater sound
- 5.2. Overview of oil and gas industry use of sound-active exploration
- 5.3. Environmental impacts of seismic survey
 - 5.3.1. Masking
 - 5.3.2. Behavioural impact
 - 5.3.3. Auditory and physical impacts
 - 5.3.4. Stress
 - 5.3.5. Cumulative and population-level impacts

5.3.6. Effects on fish and other marine life

6. General restrictions and data management

- 6.1. Pre-survey phase
 - 6.1.1. Regional restrictions
 - 6.1.2. Seasonal restrictions
 - 6.1.3. Gather information
 - 6.1.4. Survey design
 - 6.1.5. Array configuration
 - 6.1.6. Selection of visual observers
 - 6.1.7. Monitoring method

- 6.2. Survey phase
 - 6.2.1. Ramp-up
 - 6.2.2. Search method for marine mammals
 - 6.2.3. Safety zone

- 6.3. Post-survey phase
 - 6.3.1. Data entry and reporting
 - 6.3.2. Reporting violations, non-compliance, etc.

7. Elements specific to other activities generating noise and requiring MMO or PAM, such as pile driving for construction, dredging, explosives, drilling, etc.

The *practical training* (conducted on a boat out at sea) should enable future MMOs/PAM operators to test and gauge their skills and master the detection and identification of species and the use of the equipment (binoculars, stick, angleboard, acoustic software, completion of forms, etc.).

Duration: The training must be **at least three** full days in length for the theory section and cover all of the subjects listed above. This should be followed by **at least one** day session at sea where the theoretical protocols should be applied and also a simulation of real conditions onboard with a shutdown call and non-compliance with ramp up for example.

ANNEX 5 - COMPOSITION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP ON MMO/PAM

This WG will address these items:

- Examine possibilities for the promotion of mandatory involvement of MMO/PAMs in any impulsive noise-generating activities (e.g. seismic exploration, pile driving, training course of seismic acquisition and processing, testing of seismic instruments);
- Review of existing training schemes and best practice guidelines and participation to their actualization;
- Review of different ways of implementing MMO/PAM trainings and development of an ACCOBAMS MMO scheme (e.g. ACCOBAMS MMO label, ACCOBAMS school);
- Development of strategy to involve industrial stakeholder into the process;
- Assessment of MMO/PAM accreditation conditions;
- Presentation of a consolidated proposition to the SC of ACCOBAMS about the MMO/PAM training issue.

First members of the WG:

- Léa DAVID (EcoOcéan Institut) : lea.david2@wanadoo.fr (**Leader**)
- Nathalie DI-MEGLIO (EcoOcéan Institut) : nathalie.di-megli@wanadoo.fr
- Nicolas ENTRUP (Ocean Care/JN WG) : n.entrup@shiftingvalues.com
- Silvia FREY (OceanCare/JN WG) : sfrey@oceancare.org
- Caterina LANFREDI (Tethys Research Institute) : caterina.lanfredi@polimi.it
- Alessio MAGLIO (SINAY/JN WG) : alessio.maglio@sinay.fr
- Aurélie MOULINS (CIMA Foundation/JN WG) : aurelie.moulins@cimafoundation.org
- Gianni PAVAN (CIBRA / JN WG) : gianni.pavan@unipv.it
- Yanis SOUAMI (SINAY / JN WG) : contact@sinay.fr

The composition of the Working Group will evolve by adding other experts to benefit of their skills

RESOLUTION 6.19 - SHIP STRIKES ON CETACEANS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. *Strongly encourages* Parties to submit information on ship strikes to the Global Ship Strikes database hosted by the IWC which has recently streamlined the data entry process with advice from members of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and others;
2. *Encourages* the Scientific Committee and its relevant Working Group to facilitate reporting to, and feedback from IWC Global Database;
3. *Asks* the Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to continue to work with the IWC, the European Cetacean Society, ASCOBANS and other relevant organisations in finalising necropsy protocols to, *inter alia*, identify causes of death, related to ship strikes;
4. *Asks* the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee to:
 - investigate the existing data to determine the efficacy of undertaking a spatial modelling exercise for fin whales in the Mediterranean for comparison with information on shipping traffic;
 - continue to monitor high risk areas for ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea;

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

RESOLUTION 6.20 - COMMERCIAL CETACEAN WATCHING ACTIVITIES IN THE ACCOBAMS AREA

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

Recalling Resolution 4.7 regarding the Guidelines on Commercial Cetacean Watching in the ACCOBAMS Area,

Taking in consideration the Recommendations of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee,

Considering that under Article II, paragraph 1, of the Agreement, the Parties shall prohibit and take all necessary measures to eliminate any deliberate taking of cetaceans, including harassing or attempting to engage in any such conduct,

Considering also that under Chapter 1.c) of Annex 2 to ACCOBAMS, the Parties shall require impact assessments to be carried out in order to provide a basis for either allowing or prohibiting the continuation or the future development of activities that may affect cetaceans or their habitat in the ACCOBAMS area, including tourism and cetacean-watching, as well as for establishing the conditions under which such activities may be conducted,

Recalling paragraph 130 of "The Future We Want" that underlines the need to support sustainable tourism activities and relevant capacity-building that promote environmental awareness, conserve and protect the environment, respect wildlife, flora, biodiversity, ecosystems and cultural diversity, and improve the welfare and livelihoods of local communities by supporting their local economies and the human and natural environment as a whole,

Acknowledging that commercial cetacean-watching activities, where properly conducted, should be encouraged as they do contribute to the building of education and awareness on cetaceans and their habitat and present other potential benefits, including economic benefits,

Conscious, as outlined in Resolution 11.29 on sustainable boat based marine wildlife watching, adopted by the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), that disturbance caused by excessive exposure to wildlife watching boats may lead to changes in the target species' behaviour and as a result, to negative consequences, such as emigration, reduced reproduction or reductions of the population,

Acknowledging the extensive work that has been undertaken in other international fora with respect to whale watching activities, in particular the CMS (Resolution 11.29), the International Whaling Commission (IWC), and the Pelagos Agreement,

Congratulating the Permanent Secretariat for having registered the logo "High Quality Whale Watching[®]" at the World Intellectual Property Organisation, and also thanking the Principality of Monaco for its financial support,

[®]The *High Quality Whale Watching* [®] is a trademark registered by ACCOBAMS and developed in collaboration with the Pelagos Agreement.

Congratulating France and the Principality of Monaco for having implemented the “High Quality Whale-Watching®” Certificate,

Stressing that any expansion of cetacean watching activities in the Agreement area should be carefully managed in order to minimise potential adverse impacts on cetacean individuals and populations,

1. *Acknowledges* that the HQWW Certificate has been developed jointly by the Pelagos Agreement and ACCOBAMS;
2. *Adopts* the new logo of the “High Quality Whale-Watching®” Certificate as presented in [Annex 1](#) of this Resolution;
3. *Mandates* the Permanent Secretariat, in cooperation with any relevant organisations, to continue the implementation of the “High Quality Whale-Watching®” Certificate in the ACCOBAMS Parties;
4. *Encourages Parties:*
 - to promote the implementation of the “High Quality Whale-Watching®” Certificate on their territory;
 - to support the continuation and expansion of national or regional training courses for operators, covering, inter alia, the biology of animals, risks, boat behaviour around the animals, involvement in scientific research;
5. *Takes note* of the Regulations Governing Use associated with the “High Quality Whale-Watching®” Certificate as presented in [Annex 2](#) of this Resolution;
6. *Encourages* the Scientific Committee to continue consideration, including collation and review of scientific literature on potential adverse effects of cetacean watching on cetaceans and means to mitigate them, with an emphasis on population-level impacts, swim-with activities, use of aerial spotter aircraft and the concept of “carrying capacity”;
7. *Takes note of:*
 - a) the Guidelines for monitoring programs aimed at maximizing the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts of whale watching activities on individual cetaceans and on populations, as presented in [Annex 3](#) of this Resolution,
 - b) the proposed common procedure (data collection system) for whale watching vessels to be implemented in the ACCOBAMS Area, as presented in [Annex 4](#) of this Resolution;
8. *Asks* the Working Group on Whale Watching to:
 - a) provide a definition of the different types of whale watching operators (commercial, research, others)
 - b) test the proposed common procedure (data collection system) for whale watching vessels in pilot areas and a variety of operation types (e.g. the Liguro-Provençal Basin, Gibraltar Strait, and south Portugal);
 - c) revise accordingly, if necessary, the Guidelines mentioned in item 6. a) of the present Resolution and report on this issue to the Seventh Meeting of the Parties
9. *Encourages Parties to:*
 - a) monitor the activity of cetacean watching operators, in order to obtain information on their development and to identify potential problems;
 - b) use the Guidelines and data collection system referred to in paragraph 7. a) and b);

10. *Also encourages* the Permanent Secretariat to disseminate the gathered information through NETCCOBAMS;
11. *Asks* Parties to develop methods to better inform the general public, including yachtsmen and other boaters involved in opportunistic cetacean watching, about responsible boat behaviour around cetaceans;
12. *Encourages* the Permanent Secretariat to continue its collaboration with CBD, CMS, IWC (especially with respect to the online whale watching handbook) and any other relevant organisations on this issue;
13. *Decides* that the present Resolution replaces Resolution 5.10.

ANNEX 1

“HIGH QUALITY WHALE-WATCHING®” CERTIFICATE LOGOS



ANNEX 2
REGULATIONS GOVERNING USE OF THE COLLECTIVE CERTIFICATION MARK
"HIGH QUALITY WHALE-WATCHING®"

Introduction

Whale-watching activities are increasing in the Mediterranean. If well managed, and within a substantial framework, they are a wonderful vector for environmental education, contribute to the local economy and can promote research on cetaceans and their conservation. However, in the absence of a framework, they can grow too fast, increasing pressure on the environment and disturbing animals, and give rise to serious repercussions for the populations concerned.

Since 2004, several studies have shown that such activities are increasing in the Mediterranean, particularly in north-western regions. Aware of these challenges, many whale-watching operators from the Pelagos Sanctuary have come together, at the initiative of the Pelagos Sanctuary and the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), with the support of several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). This collaboration has led to the creation of a consultative and voluntary management tool to ensure the sustainability of these activities – a certification for whale-watching operators that are involved in initiatives fostering quality and environmental responsibility.

In addition, it is important to note:

- That ACCOBAMS Resolutions 4.7 and 5.10 set out Guidelines for the observation of cetaceans for commercial purposes in the ACCOBAMS area;
- That by virtue of Article II, paragraph 1 of ACCOBAMS, the Parties prohibit and take all necessary measures to eliminate any deliberate taking of cetaceans, including disturbing them or attempting to perform such activities;
- That pursuant to Section 1.c) of Annex 2 to ACCOBAMS, the Parties require that impact assessments be carried out in order to provide a basis for either allowing or prohibiting the continuation or the future development of activities that may affect cetaceans or their habitat in the Agreement area, including tourism and cetacean-watching, as well as establishing the conditions under which such activities may be conducted;
- That Resolution 4.5 of the Pelagos Agreement on the creation of a certification for marine mammal-watching activities for commercial purposes in the Pelagos Sanctuary has been adopted by the State Parties;
- That Article 8 of the Pelagos Agreement on the protection of marine mammals in the Mediterranean provides that "In the Sanctuary, the Parties regulate the watching of marine mammals for the purposes of tourism";
- That the Pelagos Sanctuary provides unique potential for tourists to watch marine mammals and for such watching to become an exceptional awareness-raising and educational tool;
- That cetacean-watching activities for commercial purposes, where properly conducted, should be encouraged since they contribute to educating the general public and raising awareness of cetaceans and their habitat, and also have other potential benefits including economic benefits;
- That such activities, if carried out in an inappropriate way, may lead to detrimental disturbance of marine mammals; and lastly

- That paragraph 130 of the document "The Future We Want", adopted in 2012 by the Rio Conference on sustainable development (Rio +20) highlights the necessity of supporting activities related to the sustainable development of tourism and capacity-building in this regard, which foster knowledge of the environment, preserve and protect the environment, respect wildlife, flora, biodiversity, ecosystems and cultural diversity, and improve living conditions and sources of income for local populations by protecting their economy, as well as the natural environment overall.

Project objectives

In this context, and to meet the requirements of the State Parties to the Agreement, ACCOBAMS and the Pelagos Sanctuary wish to promote good practices for cetacean watching for commercial purposes.

The collective certification mark "High Quality Whale-Watching" is voluntary, individual and participative, and acts as an incentive to ensure that good practices and responsible methods are implemented by operators involved in whale watching at sea, as well as their crews. It also contributes to optimizing existing initiatives.

This initiative is based on these Regulations Governing Use that can be adapted to all professional operators organizing whale watching at sea for commercial purposes.

Regulatory framework

These Regulations Governing Use have been prepared using the Intellectual Property Code which defines the status of a collective mark.

Marine whale-watching operators applying to use the collective certification mark "High Quality Whale-Watching" first undertake to comply with the regulations in force.

The law to be applied to these Regulations Governing Use is Monegasque law. French is the official language of the Regulations Governing Use. Any translation of the Regulations Governing Use that has not been approved by ACCOBAMS has no legal value and may only be considered to be a working document.

Disputes relating to these Regulations Governing Use will be brought before the competent Monegasque Courts.

Article 1 - Owner

The basic collective certification mark represented by the "High Quality Whale-Watching" logo (designed by *Souffleurs d'Ecume* and gifted to ACCOBAMS in a copyright assignment agreement signed on 18/07/2014), reproduced below and described in Article 5.2 is owned by ACCOBAMS, located at Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO, 98000 MONACO:



The mark has been lodged with the Intellectual Property Department (Business Development Agency - 98000 MONACO). Once registered, it is protected for 10 years as from the date at which the application was filed.

Article 2 - Scope**Article 2.1 - Date of implementation**

These Regulations Governing Use enter into force as from their registration on the national brand register.

Article 2.2 - Users of the mark

The "High Quality Whale-Watching" project concerns any operator offering trips out of a harbour to watch cetaceans in their natural environment.

Article 3 - Obtaining the Regulations Governing Use

The Regulations Governing Use are available free of charge and can be downloaded from the ACCOBAMS website: <http://www.accobams.org>.

Article 4 - Conditions of use**Article 4.1 - Conditions for the use of the mark**

A general condition regarding the reproduction of the mark and applying to all users:

The following words should be added below the logo:



**"Collective certification mark for whale-watching operators
complying with the Code of Good Conduct"**

Article 4.2 - House style

Operators authorized to use the "High Quality Whale-Watching" certification mark may reproduce, affix or use the "High Quality Whale-Watching" logo on any media for advertising or institutional communication.

Use of the logo must comply with the following house style specifications:

- **Use of colour:**



Pantone colour reference:

Black = 426C

4-colour offset colour references:

Cyan = 100%	Cyan = 54%
Magenta = 100%	Magenta = 50%
Yellow = 100%	Yellow = 45%
Black = 100%	Black = 11%

- **Use of the logo in other colours**

In order to meet users' aesthetic requirements, the logo may be used in the following ways:



4-colour offset colour references:

Cyan = 100%	Cyan = 54%
Magenta = 100%	Magenta = 50%
Yellow = 100%	Yellow = 45%
Black = 100%	Black = 11%



4-colour offset colour references:

Cyan = 76%	Cyan = 36%
Magenta = 6%	Magenta = 3%
Yellow = 41%	Yellow = 20%
Black = 0%	Black = 11%

Article 4.3 - Penalties regarding the conditions for the use of the mark

ACCOBAMS reserves the right to take any necessary measure to guarantee the proper use of the "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark.

For whale-watching operators authorized to use the "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark, non-compliance with the conditions for use of the mark and the house style will lead to the withdrawal of the authorization to use the mark, once the user has been invited to submit his remarks. Withdrawal of authorization will lead, *ipso jure*, to the termination of the agreement authorizing use of the "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark.

As a reminder, any infringement or wrongful or fraudulent use of the "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark, whether the fault of the mark holder or a third party, will entitle ACCOBAMS to take any legal action deemed appropriate, including brand infringement action, without prejudice to criminal proceedings being initiated.

Article 5 - Procedures for obtaining authorization to use the mark

Article 5.1 - Conditions on access to the mark and identification

The "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark may be requested by any operator offering trips to watch cetaceans in their natural environment. In order to benefit from the mark, operators must first follow a training programme, in accordance with the terms of Article 5.2.

Operators also undertake to be up to date with payments of mandatory contributions, confirm that they hold the insurance policies required for their activities, and undertake to provide their services in full compliance with the regulations in force, particularly as regards passenger safety.

Article 5.2. - Undergoing training

High-quality whale-watching activities require a considerable level of skill. It is for this reason that the training of whale-watching operators' management and crew is an essential clause regarding the use of the mark. This training is aimed at:

- giving added value to the operators' trips;
- promoting high quality service and an ecologically sustainable approach as regards the general public;
- restricting the impacts of activities on cetaceans and helping to protect them;
- thus ensuring that whale watching has a sustainable future.

During the training programme, the following issues will be covered:

- Marine ecology: physico-chemical and biological aspects of the Mediterranean, presentation of species that can be observed (fish, turtles, birds);
- Cetology: palaeontology, physiology and adaptation, Mediterranean populations, identification of species, ecology and conservation;
- Disturbances of human origin and measures experimented;
- The challenges of whale watching;

- Approaching cetaceans at sea (Code of Good Conduct);
- Contribution to research and conservation of cetaceans;
- Presentation of the activities of ACCOBAMS and the Pelagos Sanctuary (for operators from the area);
- Information to be disseminated to the general public.

In order to complete the training programme, candidates must attend all sessions and must not make more than 5 errors during the final examination comprising 40 questions. Candidates will then receive a certificate.

In order to use the mark, an executive from the beneficiary entity must on the one hand complete the training programme and on the other must be accompanied on each trip by at least one person that has also completed the training.

Article 5.3. – Compliance with the Code of Good Conduct

In order to obtain the right to use the "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark, **operators undertake to comply with the Code of Good Conduct** of ACCOBAMS and the **Pelagos Sanctuary**, as presented in Appendice 1.

Article 5.4 - Procedure for trips at sea

Operators undertake to organise **nature-oriented trips** rather than excursions focusing solely on cetaceans. The aim is to restrict pressure on the animals whilst ensuring public awareness and satisfaction.

“Big-game” fishing combined with whale watching within a single package is not allowed (the fishing techniques are incompatible with the Code of Good Conduct). To qualify as a mark-holder, entities offering both activities must organise them separately, on different excursions.

Swimming with cetaceans is prohibited under the certification mark, both for safety reasons and so as not to disturb the animals.

Using airborne detection systems to find cetaceans is not recommended (airborne searches are one way to accelerate and facilitate the detection of animals, leading to an increase in pressure and an intensification of activities).

Article 5.5 - Raising passengers' awareness

In compliance with the Code of Good Conduct, the operator undertakes to disseminate a high-quality message on board ship using common content comprising:

- a description and identification of cetaceans and other species that can be watched;
- biological and ecological ideas on the cetaceans and ecosystems of the Mediterranean;
- A presentation of ACCOBAMS and the Pelagos Sanctuary;
- The main existing threats to cetaceans and in particular those related to whale watching that does not comply with the Code of Good Conduct.

Operators awarded the certification mark also undertake to make available to their passengers awareness-raising documents provided by ACCOBAMS and/or the Pelagos Sanctuary.

At the end of the trip, **assessment forms are to be distributed to passengers on every occasion** by the operator, in accordance with Article 6.a.

Article 5.6. - Participation in research and conservation programmes

Owing to their presence at sea and their knowledge of the marine environment, operators can make a significant contribution to research and conservation, thus helping to protect the environment and the species that are involved in their business. This collaboration may also be promoted to passengers.

The cooperation takes the form of observation sheets filled in by the operators and intended to enrich scientific databanks. It may also be extended, as part of specific research programmes (joining working groups, hosting scientists on board, etc.).

All forms completed during the year are to be sent, by December each year, by the operator to the national (public or private) entity that has granted them the right to use the «High Quality Whale-Watching" mark.

Article 6 - Monitoring and penalties

Compliance with these Regulations Governing Use by whale watching operators is a guarantee of credibility for the "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark. In order to assess such compliance, the following will be put in place:

- a) Assessment forms for tourists using the operator's service
- b) Visits on board during trips
- c) A Participative Assessment Committee

a) Assessment forms

Assessment forms, for which a model form will be provided, will enable passengers to express their feelings about their trip and compliance by the operator with the conditions of these Regulations Governing Use.

The assessment forms may be sent to the passengers by email, subject to the operator providing proof of having systematically collected their clients' email addresses and subject to the operator keeping, and making available to ACCOBAMS, proof of dispatch of assessment forms by email for a period of 3 years.

b) Assessment visits and reports

An official will be mandated to go on board operators' vessels during their trips out to sea, with the aim of assessing compliance with these Regulations Governing Use (assessment visit). A report will be produced after the visit.

The choice of operators to be visited each year will be made partly according to assessment forms returned, partly according to the recommendations of previous Participative Assessment Committees, and partly on a random basis. Each operator will be visited at least once every three years.

c) National Participative Assessment Committee

Each year, a National Participative Assessment Committee will meet to assess compliance with the Regulations Governing Use by operators. The Participative Assessment Committee will thus be the guarantor of the credibility of the "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark with the regard to the general public. In accordance with the participative spirit of the certification project, all stakeholders will attend committee meetings. Thus each assessment committee will be composed at least of:

- A representative from the Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS,
- A representative from the Permanent Secretariat of the Pelagos Sanctuary,
- Relevant representatives from ACCOBAMS Partners,
- A certified operator, identified at random in the country concerned,
- A representative from any other (public or private) organization from the country in question.

In issuing its opinion, the National Participative Assessment Committee will examine each inspection report produced since the last Committee Meeting (the procedure is anonymized by blanking out the name of the operator concerned). The opinion of the Participative Assessment Committee, noted on said inspection report, will be issued in line with the provisions set out in Article 6.1., by consensus or, failing this, by show of hands.

The Participative Assessment Committee will also define a list of operators to be inspected for the next season, in accordance with the provisions of point b) of this Article. If necessary, the Committee may recommend an additional inspection visit for one or more operators during the current season, and, if applicable, decide to hold a further meeting.

Article 6.1 - Penalties applied for non-compliance with the Regulations Governing Use

If the undertakings set out in this document are breached, penalties are provided for. The following Table summarizes the procedure:

Infringement level	Description of penalty
1st report (moderate infringement)	Recommendation by letter, plus a reminder of the Regulations Governing Use.
1st report (serious infringement)	Warning by registered letter, possibly with a suspension from use of the High Quality Whale-Watching mark for a period of 1-2 years according to the seriousness of the infringement.
2nd report	Warning by registered letter, plus suspension from use of the High Quality Whale-Watching mark for a period of 1-2 years according to the seriousness of the infringement.
3rd report	Withdrawal of permission to use the "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark, possibly with a prohibition from re-applying for a period of from one to five years, depending on the seriousness of the breach. The person responsible for the entity must once again undergo training if they wish to apply for re-attribution of the "High Quality Whale-Watching" mark at the end of the period of withdrawal.

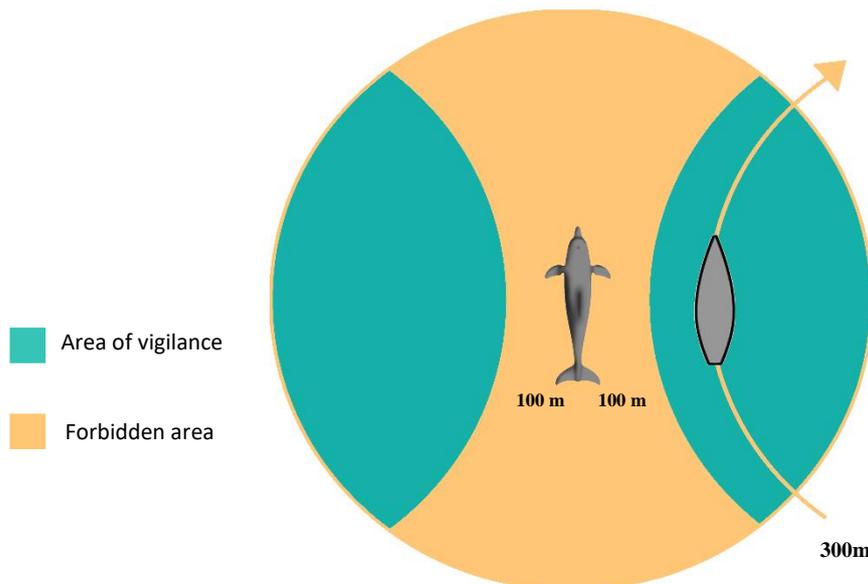
If, once a breach has been reported, the operator does not re-offend for five consecutive years, they will then be deemed never to have committed a breach.

Appendice 1

Code of Good Conduct for whale watching in the Mediterranean Sea

Whale-watching can be a source of serious disturbance if badly done. The following rules allow our impacts on the vital behaviour of dolphins and whales (hunting, repose or inter-individual socialization) to be mitigated. Whether one is an amateur sailor, fisherman, whale watching operator or other user of the marine domain, these rules, set out below, apply equally inside and outside the Pelagos Sanctuary.

The pie chart defines two areas that are essential when approaching cetaceans: the area of vigilance (green) and the forbidden area (yellow).



1. Area of vigilance (green)

The area of vigilance (**300 m**) defines the sector in which the disturbance caused by your boat (presence, noise and exhaust fumes) is strongly felt by the animals. When you enter this area, your behaviour must respect strict rules to limit this disturbance:

- ✓ the boat's speed must be constant and attuned to the speed of the slowest animal. It must not be more than 5 knots;
- ✓ any approach must be made according to a trajectory that gradually draws parallel to the animal's path (green arrow in the pie chart). The boat thus positions itself alongside the cetaceans, moving in the same direction;
- ✓ any sudden change of speed or direction is forbidden;
- ✓ to mitigate acoustic disturbance, sounders and sonar must be switched off;
- ✓ be even more careful, and limit your distance of approach if you remark the presence of new-born animals;
- ✓ you must immediately leave the area of vigilance if the animals are disturbed: for example, flight behaviour (acceleration, changing direction, trying to get away from the observer) must be considered as a sign of disturbance;
- ✓ observation time is limited to half an hour;

- ✓ if many boats are present, only one is tolerated within the area of vigilance. Observation time is then shortened to a quarter of an hour and the other boats have to wait patiently 300 m away. Radio contact between the various boats will enable the watching to be coordinated;
- ✓ when the observation is over, the boat must gradually leave the site, taking a path that clearly signals that it is leaving. The speed will remain moderate for a distance that is sufficient to avoid the risk of collision.

2. Forbidden area (yellow)

The forbidden area defines the sector which your boat must never enter (except when the cetaceans approach the boat of their own accord). This distance is **100 m**. Any nearer than this and the cetaceans will see your presence as a danger or an intrusion into their vital space, and their behaviour will become greatly disturbed by it.

Also, the boat must not enter the sector in front of the animals (reduced field of vision). Neither must it approach them from behind, since the boat may then be seen as a pursuer.

When the boat reaches the outside limit of the forbidden area, its relative speed must be reduced to zero and its engine put into neutral gear.

It is forbidden to enter groups, for this will cause social disturbance.

3. Special case when the animals come to the boat of their own accord

When cetaceans voluntarily approach the boat, the passengers must not try to touch them directly or with an instrument, bathe near them or feed them. Most of the above rules also remain in force, particularly the ban on entering groups, and keeping to a slow, regular pace.

4. Generally speaking...

Once the cetaceans are spotted, or at 1,000 m distance, particular vigilance and a speed limited to 10 knots are compulsory: other animals may be present in the sector and the risk of collision cannot be ruled out. Furthermore, a greater speed would be likely to disturb the animals, even at this greater distance.

Generally speaking, whale watching is not recommended within the 5-mile coastal strip, since the cetaceans there are already greatly disturbed by human activity.

An operator must accompany his trip with an educational talk on cetaceans and the marine environment. This must be given by a qualified, trained guide. He must be able to identify the species encountered, determine their activity phases and notice possible disturbance.

5. In short

- ✓ Slow pace and calm, constant advance the moment the cetaceans are spotted, especially within the 300 m area

- ✓ No approach closer than 100 m
- ✓ Length of observation limited to 30 minutes, 15 minutes if other boats are waiting
- ✓ Only one boat within the 300 m area
- ✓ Never try to touch, feed or swim with a cetacean.

ANNEX 3

PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR MONITORING PROGRAMS AIMED AT MAXIMIZING THE CHANCE OF DETECTING POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACTS OF WHALE WATCHING ACTIVITIES ON INDIVIDUAL CETACEANS AND ON POPULATIONS

Introduction:

The ACCOBAMS region is an important area for a great number of cetacean species, whether as a permanent habitat, a breeding or feeding ground or a migratory corridor. The presence of such a diversity of cetaceans has led to the development of whale watching activities, both on a commercial and recreational basis, which until present still maintains a steady and regular growth within the region.

Whale watching is an important economic activity in many areas of the ACCOBAMS area. Although several countries in the region have already implemented specific codes of conduct and national legislation aimed at regulating and monitoring the activity, this particular tourism activity is not necessary benign.

Management considerations:

In an effort to minimize the risk of adverse impacts of cetacean watching and to ensure the sustainable development of such activities, effective management strategies need to be implemented. Several tools and approaches should be considered:

- 1) National / regional licensing or permitting schemes to regulate:
 - i) the number, size, type and speed of vessels;
 - ii) standards of operation;
 - iii) capacity building;
 - iv) site specific and species specific requirements;
 - v) permitted research and media;
 - vi) training of operators;
 - vii) sanctions for non-compliance.

- 2) National / regional measures to regulate approaches, frequency, length and type of exposure in encounters with cetaceans;

- 3) Development of management provisions through cooperation amongst stakeholders, such as government agencies, NGO's and operators wherever appropriate. Such provisions are subject to adaptive management (as new information becomes available regulations may change to incorporate this new information);

- 4) National / regional management measures to include closed seasons, exclusion zones, speed limits and "no approach times", to provide additional protection to habitats, populations and individuals;

- 5) Assessment of the numbers, distribution and other characteristics of the target population(s) before the implementation of tourism operations to establish the feasibility of the industry and a baseline for future monitoring;

- 6) Where new cetacean watching operations are evolving, start cautiously, moderating activity and adapting management until sufficient information on populations and species is available to guide further development;
- 7) Monitoring compliance with and the effectiveness of management provisions and modifying them as required to reflect new information and circumstances, with the consultation of stakeholders, such as operators and NGO's;
- 8) Establishment of an enforcement framework to ensure compliance with regulations;
- 9) Scientific and socio-economic research and monitoring of potential impacts on cetaceans, and collection and sharing of information by all stakeholders, such as scientists, operators and NGO's;
- 10) Dissemination of information on best practice and research to improve public awareness, including all stakeholders;
- 11) On-going operator, naturalist and industry training and accreditation programmes on the biology and behavior of target species, local ecosystems, navigation, culture, best practice of cetacean watching operations, and the management provisions in effect;
- 12) Development of on-board research protocols to collect data on sighting effort, sighting data and other relevant documentation (e.g. about injuries, entanglements, highly identifiable individuals, vessel-cetacean interactions...) (see SC10/2015/Doc15);
- 13) Supporting and empowering communities' participation and ownership of the cetacean watching industry;
- 14) Development of educational standards for the provision of accurate and informative material to cetacean watching participants, to:
 - i) develop an informed and environmentally responsible public (locals and tourists);
 - ii) encourage development of realistic expectations during encounters;
 - iii) encourage the provision of naturalist guides on all boats;
 - iv) encourage public participation in on-board research and education programmes (e.g. docent and intern training, opportunistic data collection, species identification...);
 - v) encourage awareness of species protection measures and enforcement;
 - vi) assess and evaluate on an on-going basis on-board education programmes.

Cetacean species may respond differently to sound frequencies, relative sound intensity or rapid changes in sound. Such responses may not only be species specific but also differ between individuals and / or age classes. Therefore:

- 1) Vessels, engines and other associated equipment should be designed, maintained and operated during cetacean watching to reduce as far as practicable adverse acoustic and physical impacts on the target species and their environment;
- 2) Vessel design and operation should minimize the risk of injury to cetaceans should contact occur (for example, shrouding of propellers can reduce the risk of injury);

- 3) In order to avoid ship strikes, operators should keep track of cetaceans during an encounter and not engage engines until all cetaceans being watched are on the surface and at safe distance from the vessel.

Swimming with cetaceans may increase the potential for disturbance and displacement and puts cetaceans at additional risk. There are existing swim-with-cetacean programmes but the further development of these programmes is discouraged. For those countries where swim-with activities are currently being undertaken, it is recommended that the following standards be applied to these operations:

1) Scientific studies should be initiated to assess:

- a) the associated risk to the safety of the people and the cetaceans involved in swim-with activities;
- b) the current and potential future impacts of these activities on the target species. Any accidents should be documented and reported to the relevant authorities;
- c) Particularly sensitive animals (e.g. mothers with calves) and sensitive habitats (e.g. calving and/or feeding areas) should be provided with additional protection (see "Management Considerations");
- d) Sub-surface swimming by participants should not be allowed, including the use of underwater breathing apparatus and scooters;
- e) Underwater flash photography or lighted filming should not be allowed;
- f) A precautionary adaptive management approach should be taken when reviewing swim-with operating procedures. Consideration should be given to:
 - Regular review of operational standards as credible scientific information on the impacts of swim-with programmes becomes available;
 - All persons in the water with cetaceans should be accompanied by an appropriately trained naturalist or scientist;
 - Limiting the number of vessels permitted to undertake swim-with activities in a region;
 - Limiting the number of swimmers allowed in the water at any one time;
 - Limiting the maximum duration of in-water time allowed, including maximum swim time for each interaction, time required between successive swims with each cetacean and maximum cumulative interaction time with each cetacean per day;
 - Appropriate drop-off distance for swimmers and minimum swimmer distance from cetaceans;
 - Entering the water with cetaceans during behaviorally sensitive situations (e.g. feeding / foraging) should be discouraged;
 - Prohibit leap-frogging of cetaceans.

Relevant bibliography

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Carlson, C.; Kaufman, G.; Riter, F.; Rose, N. 2014 – Report on the intersessional working group on guiding principles development. Paper presented at the IWC 2014 sub-committee meeting on Whalewatching (SC/65b/WW04): 6 pp.

ANNEX 4

PROPOSED COMMON PROCEDURE (DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM) FOR WHALE WATCHING VESSELS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE ACCOBAMS AREA

Introduction

At the last meeting of the IWC scientific committee (2014) the sub-committee on whale watching discussed a proposal for data collection from commercial whale watching vessels. Guiding principles for data collection from platforms of opportunity were proposed which would help ensure a higher standard of data collected from whale watching vessels. Although a final version of a data sheet could not be approved and the sub-committee agreed that the submitted proposal could be further refined, this could also be a working document upon which the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee could work on, bearing in mind the specific characteristics of the agreement area.

Whale watching vessels constitute platforms of opportunity for the collection of data on target cetaceans and have been widely used in data deficient areas, particularly in developing countries. However data collected from whale watching vessels are subject to several types of bias:

1. The purpose of whale watching vessels is to find cetaceans and focus on fulfilling the clients' expectations to encounter the animals. Collecting research data is not their primary purpose and they do not follow scientific line transects. The behavior of whale watching vessels influences the search effort, which is often restricted to localized high abundance areas, sometimes seasonally dependent and species specific. In order to correct for the spatial and seasonal effort of the whale watching vessels, it is crucial that spatial and sighting effort data are collected as well.
2. Because guides and skippers have to perform many tasks on the boat and registering data and taking photographs are sometimes least priority, the quality of acquisition of data is a potential source of bias. However the use of qualified guides has great potential for improving collection of valuable but fairly inexpensive data, particularly in areas where funding is scarce.
3. The whale watching vessels will only spend time with a limited number of animals and not always approach and identify all individuals and groups in the area. There may also be a tendency to approach calm and easily approachable animals, which will lead to non-representative sampling.

Despite it being compulsory in many countries for whale watching vessels to register and report information to a central authority on the activity of the vessel, as well as observations and opportunistic sightings, such information is not collected according to international guidelines and it may be difficult to assess the significance of bias. To enable a reliable scientific outcome and support a high standard of data, the IWC sub-committee on whale watching has been working on a basic data collection protocol and data sheet that, ideally, would be applicable world-wide.

Proposed guidelines for data collection protocol and data sheet for whale watching vessels

From a research point of view, the data collected must be valid and consistent to be useful. Since the focus of whale watching vessels is on the passengers and not always on the data, it is important to simplify the data sheets as well as prioritize the required information.

Table 1 presents a proposal for a basic data collection sheet.

Content of the data sheet

The data sheet should at a minimum include the following parameters (see Table 1):

- Trip information:
 - 1) Date
 - 2) Trip number
 - 3) Departure time from harbor
 - 4) Return time to harbor
 - 5) GPS track of the route taken (if possible) or a tick box with the main "Areas visited"
 - 6) Name(s) of the person responsible for data collection
 - 7) Name of the skipper
 - 8) Weather information: wind direction and wind speed (No whitecaps, Some whitecaps or Many whitecaps or Beaufort scale)
 - 9) Sighting of animals: Yes / No

- Sighting information:
 - 10) Time of encounter
 - 11) Latitude position
 - 12) Longitude position
 - 13) Species
 - 14) Number of adults
 - 15) Number of calves
 - 16) Information about photo documentation
 - 17) Behavior comments
 - 18) Small comment box

Protocol

The protocol explains why the different data parameters are included in the data sheet.

1) Date

2) Trip number

Information about trip number and date is important when analyzing the data. Each trip will be given an ID-number before data can be analyzed and it is important to distinguish the different trips from each other. Some operators have more than 1 trip per day and the trips should have consecutive numbers reflecting the date and time they were conducted.

3) Departure time from harbor/ Start of searching effort

4) Return time to harbor / End of searching effort

The total time spent at sea is necessary to calculate sighting effort.

5) GPS track of route taken

It is crucial to be able to account for the effort spend at sea searching for cetaceans. Time and spatial effort is important reference data when calculating the spatial distribution of a species. Simple notation of start and end time of the trip can increase the quality and usefulness of the data collected. The optimal way to determine effort is to collect GPS tracks of the boat's location, which will also give precise data of the spatial route. Of crucial importance is the collection of information about trips where no cetaceans were sighted. The effort of the boat can be biased towards areas with cetaceans and where cetaceans would have been observed previously. On days with more than 1 trip, animals in the area have a high chance of being sighted consecutive times. If observers are experienced, they can make notes from trip to trip of individual re-sightings.

6) Name(s) of the person(s) responsible for data collection

The quality of the obtained data is dependent on an observer's skills. The quality of observations can be subject to bias when many different observers are involved in data collection.

7) Name of the skipper

8) Wind category (No whitecaps, Some whitecaps or Many whitecaps)

Sighting probability is reduced as weather becomes increasingly rough. To be able to adjust for this in data analysis, it is important for weather conditions to be noted. A suitable cut-off at, say Beaufort 2 (all data collected at or below sea state 2 are included in the analysis), can be applied to the dataset before conducting the analysis (Table 2).

9) Sightings of animals: Yes / No

To be able to account for effort, it is important to have a reference for the number of trips with no sightings, since even with no sightings, effort has been expended searching for animals. Weather data on trips where no animals are sighted are also important.

10) Time of encounter

It is important to distinguish between search and sighting time. By logging the time at each sighting, it will be possible to calculate search effort and sighting effort.

11) Latitude and Longitude positions

It is crucial to obtain location positions of the animals sighted to determine if animals have preferred habitat.

12) Water temperature (if possible)

13) Water depth (if possible)

Water temperature and depth are important factors to record, particularly in data deficient areas since bathymetric data often do not exist in such areas. In order to analyze data in relation to spatial and physical factors, it is important to record such parameters.

14) Species

Simple codes should be used for the relevant species (Table 3).

15) Number of adults

16) Number of calves

The number of adults and calves is important, as it may reveal whether there are specific areas used, for example, as nursery grounds.

17) Information about photo documentation

For photographic material to be useful it should be catalogued the same day and the frame of the photographs should be noted for each sighting where photographic evidence is collected. Setting date and time stamps on the camera is crucial as well. Photos of sightings should be divided with blanks between observations (e.g. a photo of the vessel). A GPS linked to the camera can be a great help during later analysis.

18) Behavioral categories

To enable an efficient and consistent analysis of behavioral data, the data sheet should consist of restricted and simple tick boxes with 4-5 main behavior types (e.g. matting, feeding, travelling and resting) and a comment box for further qualitative details (Table 4).

19) Small comment box

Comments should be minimized. Subjective comments can be very difficult to categorize and analyze.

The data sheet must be filled in at sea *in situ* and should ideally be digitized the same day by the observer. Photographs should be sorted the same day as well and linked to the relevant observations. The process of linking photos to specific observations is time consuming and almost impossible if done retrospectively by more than a few days.

Quality control

In order to ensure the quality of whale watching vessels data, a systematic control effort is necessary. Such a system should ideally be multi-layered, with the first layer being a well-structured data sheet that is easy to fill in.

The second layer should be an online submission system for data collected in the field, where each operator is assigned an ID-number and can log in to their account and enter the data and upload photos from each trip. Each operator's data should be then available to download either as an Excel sheet or Access database.

A third level is the systematic evaluation of the reported data by a qualified researcher with feedback to the reporting vessels.

Relevant bibliography

Vinding, K.; Christiansen, M.; Rose, N. 2014 – Data collection from commercial whale watching vessels: the need for international guidelines and systematic quality control. Paper presented at the IWC 2014 sub-committee meeting on Whalewatching (SC/65b/WW07): 6 pp

Table 1 – Proposed WW data sheet

Boat Based Whale Watching Trip Information													
Operator:			Passenger nrs.:			Areas visited:							
Date:													
Trip nr.:			Trip time:	(start)	(end)								
Vessel:													
Skipper:			Wind:	(direction)	(knots)	Sea state:		no whitecaps					
Data collector:					(circle one)		some whitecaps						
								consistent whitecaps					
Were cetaceans sighted on this trip?			YES	NO									
OBSERVATIONS													
Time	GPS Coord		Species	Nr of adults	Nr of calves	Behavior						Photos	Comments
	LAT	LONG		<i>min / best / max</i>		<i>T</i>	<i>R/L</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>O</i>		

Table 2 – Weather information

MPH	Beaufort	Knots	Km/h	Code
> 1 mph	0	> 1 kn	> 1 km/h	no whitecaps
1 - 3 mph	1	1 - 2 kn	1.1 - 5.5 km/h	
4 - 7 mph	2	3 - 6 kn	5.6 - 11 km/h	some whitecaps
8 - 12 mph	3	7 - 10 kn	12 - 19 km/h	
13 - 17 mph				consistent whitecaps
18 - 24 mph	4	11 - 15 kn	20 - 28 km/h	
25 - 30 mph	5	16 - 20 kn	29 - 38 km/h	
31 - 38 mph	6	21 - 26 kn	39 - 49 km/h	
39 - 46 mph	7	17 - 33 kn	50 - 61 km/h	
	8	14 - 40 kn	62 - 74 km/h	

Table 3 –Species codes

Scientific name	Code
<i>Eubalaena glacialis</i>	EGL
<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	BAC
<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	BPH
<i>Blaenoptera boralis</i>	BBO
<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	BMU
<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	MNO
<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>	PMA
<i>Kogia sima</i>	KSI
<i>Kogia breviceps</i>	KBR
<i>Mesoplodon bidens</i>	MBI
<i>Mesoplodon densirostris</i>	MDE
<i>Mesoplodon europaeus</i>	MEU
<i>Mesoplodon mirus</i>	MMI
<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>	ZCV
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	DDE
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	TTR
<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	SCO
<i>Globicephala melas</i>	GME
<i>Globicephala macrohynchus</i>	GMA
<i>Grampus griseus</i>	GGR
<i>Steno bredanensis</i>	SBR
<i>Orcinus orca</i>	OOR
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	PPH

Table 4 – Behavioral categories

Behavior	Description	Code
Travelling	Swimming in one direction for an extended period of time. Moving more quickly than idle speed of the vessel.	T
Resting / Logging	Motionless in same spot except to breath. If moving, then moving more slowly than the idle speed of the vessel.	R
Socializing	Diverse interactive behavior such a body contact, flipper caressing, tail swipes, genital inspections. Dive intervals may vary.	S
Feeding	May be surface apparent in some species (mouth open, baleen rattle). Otherwise indicated by long-term group synchronous diving. Arched backs may indicate deep dives.	F
Millling	Non-directional swimming. Individuals are surfacing in different directions. No net movement.	M
Other	Make a note in the Comments. Examples include spy hopping, breaching, pectoral slapping, tail, slapping and sailing.	O

RESOLUTION 6.21 - SPECIES CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLANS

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

Acting upon Recommendation 10.8 of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee,

*Recalling Resolutions 1.8 on the establishment of a triennial national report format for the Agreement, 1.12 on the conservation of the Black Sea *Tursiops truncatus*, 3.7 on the ACCOBAMS online reporting system, 3.11 on the conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans, 4.6 on the format for national implementation reports of the Agreement, 4.13 on the conservation of the Mediterranean short-beaked common dolphin, 5.12 on work towards a conservation plan for fin whales in Mediterranean Sea, 5.13 on the conservation of Cuvier's beaked whales in the Mediterranean, and 5.14 on the live removals of bottlenose dolphins in the Black Sea (*Tursiops truncatus*),*

Recognizing the importance of conservation plans to fulfil ACCOBAMS conservation objectives,

Aware of the need of structure and focus to ensure the development and effectiveness of such plans,

Noting that the International Whaling Commission (IWC) has developed a process for conservation management plans (CMPs) through its Scientific and Conservation Committees and that the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee has summarized the IWC approach in the context of the ACCOBAMS,

Taking into consideration document ACCOBAMS-SC10/2015/Doc16 & Doc18, draft terms of reference for an ACCOBAMS Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for fin whales in the Mediterranean Sea, with guidance for the general development of CMPs within the ACCOBAMS area,

Noting ASCOBANS Resolution 8.4 on Conservation of Common Dolphins, which requests the development of a comprehensive conservation plan for the common dolphin in the eastern North Atlantic and invites ACCOBAMS to participate in the drafting process,

Taking note of the workshop, that took place in April 2016 in Ischia, Italy, on the 'Conservation and research networking on short beaked common dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea' under the patronage of ACCOBAMS, CMS, the IUCN Species Survival Commission and others,

1. *Takes note of the CMP template, as annexed to this Resolution, for new conservation management plans in the ACCOBAMS Area;*
2. *Encourages Parties to work towards CMP key components of which should include:*
 - support of national authorities,
 - involvement of stakeholders at an early stage of development,
 - recognition that conservation management plans complement existing measures without replacing them,
 - overview of present status of species,

- clear and achievable objectives,
 - practical and prioritized mitigation actions,
 - regular monitoring and reporting,
 - clear governance structures to co-ordinate the engagement of key stakeholders;
3. *Establishes* an ACCOBAMS CMP Correspondence Group, the mandate of which will be proposed by the Scientific Committee and submitted to the Bureau, and could also include representatives of IWC and Pelagos Agreement, to develop a draft CMP for fin whales, following the CMP template and taking into consideration the relevant stakeholders through a workshop;
 4. *Asks* the ACCOBAMS CMP Correspondence Group to submit the draft CMP for fin whales for consideration at the Seventh Meeting of ACCOBAMS Parties;
 5. *Requests* the Scientific Committee and encourages Range States to participate in the drafting process for a comprehensive conservation plan for the common dolphin in the eastern North Atlantic under development by ASCOBANS;
 6. *Asks* the Scientific Committee to review the findings of the workshop 'Conservation and research networking on short beaked common dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea' and identify follow-up activities, as appropriate;
 7. *Calls upon* the Parties to support work on areas of special importance, population structure and ship strikes with respect to fin whales, as such work can produce important information for the development and subsequent implementation of a CMP;
 8. *Asks* the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee to complete the Conservation Plan for the Bottlenose dolphin;
 9. *Recommends* the review and possible revision of existing plans for ACCOBAMS species in the light of the CMP Template.

ANNEX

TEMPLATE FOR A CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide a general overview of the plan. This section should include:

- Why a CMP is needed: Scene setting for a CMP – including a brief description of the target population, its habitat, and threats that impact the population.
- An overall goal of the CMP which would act as the mission statement for the plan.
- An overview of how the CMP is structured and what is detailed in each section.
- A *Summary Table of High Priority Actions* could also be included. High priority actions usually fall into the following categories:
 - co-ordination (COORD);
 - public awareness and capacity building (PACB);
 - research essential for providing adequate management advice or filling in knowledge gaps (RES);
 - monitoring (MON); and
 - mitigation measures (MIT).

1. INTRODUCTION

This section should briefly address the following questions:

- Why is active management needed for the identified cetacean population, threat or critical habitat?
- Why is a CMP the most appropriate management tool to achieve the stated conservation objectives?

This section should include:

- The scope, context and policy setting of the CMP.
- A detailed map of the known distribution of the population/critical habitat
 - If a CMP is being designed for a particular threat the map should include an outline of the area where the threat is encountered by the target cetacean population.
 - If the CMP is being designed for a particular critical habitat, the map should include the extent of the critical habitat.
- This section should also reference any current or previous conservation management actions relating to the draft CMP including conservation plans, legislation as well as any relevant peer reviewed papers or related documentation.

1.1 Overall Objectives of the CMP

To maximise the success of a plan and ensure that required changes are identified promptly; the measurable short, medium and long-term objectives should be identified. Thus, the monitoring of the target population, human activities affecting it, mitigation measures, and the effectiveness of those measures is essential.

Objectives of a CMP will not only relate to the conservation of the population but also to the interests of relevant stakeholders.

Insert the overall short, medium- and long-term objectives of the CMP.

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Insert a list of relevant international conventions, agreements and legislation and management arrangements that the plan may relate to. Supporting information can be contained on Appendices.

[Please note that the below are examples only]

2.1 International Conventions and Agreements

2.2 National Legislation and Management Arrangements

2.2.1 *Participating Range State A*

National legislation with respect to the population of X whales

2.2.2 *Participating Range State B*

National legislation with respect to the population of X whales

2.2.3 *Participating Range State C*

National legislation with respect to the population of X whales

2.2.4 *Participating Range State A*

Area X Fisheries Management Plan

2.2.5 *Participating Range State B*

Marine Protected Area X Operational Management Plan

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1 Coordination of a CMP

As a CMP may cover a large geographical area and involve several jurisdictions, it is important to establish an appropriate management structure for the CMP that identifies key stakeholders, their roles and responsibilities and the interaction between them during the development, implementation and review stages of the plan.

Insert an outline of the governance framework under which the CMP would be conducted, from the development stage through to the implementation and review stages.

3.2 Timeline for a CMP

Identify the various stages of a CMP with tasks and indicative timings for each stage as well as outlining which parties may be involved with the tasks identified.

4. SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND

4.1 Biology, Status and Environmental Parameters

Insert concise background information on the nominated population(s), including:

- population structure;

- abundance and population trends;
- distribution, migration and movements; and
- basic biology (feeding, reproduction and survivorship).

Identify any knowledge gaps that exist in current data.

4.2 Critical Habitats

If habitats are identified that are deemed as critical for the recovery and/or protection of a target cetacean population, the extent of these habitats and the purposes that they are used for should be outlined here.

4.4 Attributes of the Population to be Monitored

The ultimate success or failure of any CMP depends on improvements in the conservation status of the target population(s) – this can only be achieved by monitoring. Depending on the objectives of the CMP and the nature of the threats a population faces, a variety of candidate ‘attributes’ of the population can be considered for monitoring over time, to determine the success of the overall plan and/or individual actions and to amend the CMP where necessary.

This section should include a description of the attributes of the population that will be monitored (e.g.: abundance (relative and/or absolute), reproductive rates, survivorship, health, prey status, range) and an evaluation of the feasibility of detecting trends with current methods given that changes occur (e.g. using power analyses).

5. THREATS, MITIGATION MEASURES AND MONITORING

5.1 Identification of Threats

This section should provide a summary of the known or suspected threats (both direct and incidental) to the nominated cetacean population/critical habitat. This should be summarised in tabular form (such as that seen below) but should also include a discussion of each explaining the rationale behind the summary. Where appropriate, reference should be made to actions within the CMP. Note: the first five columns in the table will form part of the nomination process.

Table: Summary of actual and potential threats to the nominated population.

Actual/Potential Threat	Cause or related activity	Evidence	Possible Impact	Priority for Action	Relevant Actions	Party Responsible
Directly lethal threats						
<i>e.g. Entrapment in set nets</i>	<i>Set net fishing</i>	<i>Strong</i>	<i>Mortality +/- or serious injury</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>RES-01</i>	<i>Participating Range States</i>
<i>e.g. Entanglements in Other Types of Fishing Gear</i>						
Sub-lethal threats						
<i>e.g. Noise, pollution, etc.</i>						

5.2 Mitigation Measures and Monitoring

This section should include identified mitigation measures to address key threats and how the mitigation measures will be monitored. For example:

5.2.1 *Entrapment in Set Nets*

Undertake the following mitigation measures (MIT-01, 02, 03) and the following monitoring measures (MON-01, 02) to facilitate the conservation of species A in the area designated XYZ.

Undertake the following public awareness raising measures PACB-01, 02 to promote the conservation of species A in the area designated XYZ.

5.2.2 *Entanglements in Other Types of Fishing Gear*

6. ACTIONS

These form the key component of any CMP. While there may be overlap, these can generally be incorporated under the following categories:

- co-ordination (COORD);
- public awareness and capacity building (PACB);
- research essential for providing adequate management advice or filling in knowledge gaps (RES);
- monitoring (MON); and
- mitigation measures (MIT).

It is important that actions be realistic and effective. They should be well specified (usually 1-2 pages for each action) and generally include the following information, where relevant:

- (1) Description (including concise objective, threats to which relevant and how, rationale, target data or activity, method, implementation timeline);
- (2) Actors (responsible for implementation and relevant stakeholders);
- (3) Evaluation (actors responsible);
- (4) Priority (importance to the plan and feasibility);
- (5) Costs (where appropriate).

7. SUMMARY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIONS

Insert a tabular summary of all actions here, referring to the 1-2 page detailed summaries (see above). In addition, include here an implementation strategy or designate responsibility for developing and implementing an implementation strategy along with a Management Framework.

Outline how the actions will meet the short, medium or long term objectives of the plan.

7.1 **Stakeholder Engagement, Public Awareness and Education**

Insert here a strategy and information on stakeholder engagement, public awareness and any education activities that will be undertaken during the CMP implementation stage (e.g. via websites, meetings etc.).

7.2 Reporting Process

A CMP should be considered a living document and once the implementation stage begins, a process of reporting and review is essential to determine how well the CMP is meeting its overall objectives and implementation timelines and milestones.

Insert process for reporting on CMP progress to the IWC (including a timeframe).

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

As a CMP should be based upon best scientific knowledge and guided by the principles and practices of adaptive management, it is important for a CMP to identify any published works relevant to effective implementation of the plan.

Insert bibliography here.

9. APPENDICES

Insert additional background and contextual information in appendices. For example, the original CMP nomination could be supplied here.

RESOLUTION 6.22 - CETACEAN LIVE STRANDING

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

Recalling Resolutions 1.10 on “Cooperation between national networks on cetacean strandings and the creation of a data base”, 3.25 on “Cetacean live stranding” and 4.16 on “Guidelines for a coordinated stranding response”,

Taking into consideration Recommendation 10.10 of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee,

Recognizing that in recent years the ACCOBAMS Area has been the scene of cetacean live stranding events, involving mass strandings over wide geographical areas, which have evoked great concern and have attracted considerable attention from the scientific community,

Aware that cetacean live strandings can present national governments with specific challenges that are exacerbated when they become a transboundary event,

Recalling that in emergency situations, one possible major barrier could be due to general difficulty of administrative authorities to produce immediate responses,

Conscious of the related work underway under the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS), and *noting* ASCOBANS Resolution 8.10 on Small Cetacean Stranding Response,

Considering that the joint ACCOBAMS/Pelagos workshop on cetacean live stranding held in Monaco on 29th and 30th October 2014 proposed harmonized procedures in case of cetacean live stranding, stressing that, in case of transboundary emergencies involving cetaceans, rapid intervention, participation and cooperation from different experts, stakeholders and within scientific organizations are required to ensure an effective response and an adequate coordination,

Also considering that the International Whaling Commission (IWC) held an Expert Workshop in September 2013, which, in particular, stressed the need for human safety, developed a decision tree related to rescue versus euthanasia, provided an authoritative and comprehensive review of various euthanasia methods and provided advice on data collection protocols and event management,

1. *Takes note*, as guidelines, of :

- the common definitions of terms related to stranding events as presented in [Annex 1](#);
- the common best practices for a basic post-mortem examination of stranded cetaceans as presented in [Annex 2](#);
- the common data collection protocol for live strandings as presented in [Annex 3](#);

2. *Requests* the Scientific Committee, to approach the ECS, IWC and ASCOBANS in order to:

- review during the triennium, if necessary, the common definitions, common data collection and common necropsy protocol;
- develop principles and guidelines for handling live strandings events, including prevention, recognizing the cultural, political and socio-economic differences between countries;

3. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat to:

- encourage training and exchange programmes for national stranding networks aimed at creating a common framework for rescue teams, in particular with respect to rehabilitation, intervention on live strandings and euthanasia procedures and dealing with the public;
- undertake trainings on necropsies, live strandings and response to emergency situation in the ACCOBAMS Area;
- maintain / establish (sub)regional mailing lists of participants in the stranding networks to facilitate exchange of information, in particularly in the South Mediterranean region;
- encourage data / tissue exchanges through collaboration with relevant databases and tissue banks. In this context, list of tissue banks registered with the CITES Secretariat should be made available.

ANNEX 1 COMMON DEFINITIONS OF TERMS RELATED TO STRANDING EVENTS

Sandro Mazzariol
DVM, PhD

In order to come up with a unified approach on how to manage strandings in general and live stranding in particular within the ACCOBAMS area as well as to facilitate data and information exchanges, it is fundamental to consider the presence of different approaches currently existing in different member states as potential barriers. The starting point towards the establishment of common procedures is a shared definition of all stranding events that can be identified and the possible stakeholders involved in these events, as stated during the joint workshop ACCOBAMS/PELAGOS on cetaceans live strandings organized in Monaco (October 29th-30th, 2014) in order to define common procedures in case of transboundary emergencies involving live stranded animals

This document summarize all proposed common definitions of term related to stranding events.

1. Stranding

Literally, a **stranded cetacean is one cetacean which body lies entirely on land**. The term is used to include both dead and live animals, the latter found in a helpless state after faltering ashore ill, wounded, weak, or simply lost. The term is sometimes expanded to include animals, dead or alive found floating or swimming, respectively, in shallow waters, in the latter case, showing clear signs of physiological dysfunction. One should keep in mind that many, if not most, of the dead stranded animals stranded while still alive and therefore the distinction between live and dead strandings relates to the timing of human attendance. The distinction is however crucial, as human intervention in a live stranding may prevent death, or hasten it to prevent suffering. On the basis of the number of animals involved, it is possible to distinguish between single and mass strandings.

1.1 *Single stranding*

This term refers in general to a **single animal involved, including a female and her calf**. Such events are the most common ones occurring in the Mediterranean Sea. Further definitions involve characteristics and features of the animal found stranded and general conditions of the findings. Accordingly, it is possible to distinguish:

- A. **Dead stranded cetacean: an animal lacking vital signs, which means without brain, respiratory and circulatory function.** This type of event requests specific procedures involving public actors (i.e. coast guard, local governments, sanitation authorities, public veterinarians, research institutions, NGOs, news media, etc.) in order to ensure public health and safety (delimitation of the carcass, rapid removal of the corpse, disposal of the carcass according to existing laws), research (biological information, postmortem investigations, recovery and storage of tissue samples and skeleton) and on-site public education; some countries consider dead stranded large whales as unusual events due to the compound logistics and procedures required.
- B. **Beached cetacean: this is another term sometimes used to define an animal found dead completely ashore.**
- C. **Live stranded cetacean: this term refers to a cetacean found alive, ashore or free-swimming in shallow waters.** Live-stranded animals are usually in need of medical attention and are unable to return to their natural habitat without assistance. In these cases, specific approaches should be considered in order to react to different situations. All interventions should be coordinated by a rescue team, including one or more expert veterinarians, able to assess the situation and apply its best knowledge and past experience through a well-established triage procedure. The latter should be used to decide whether the animal is immediately releasable, releasable after a period of rehabilitation or if euthanasia is the only option. In general, medical

condition and the stranding characteristics (i.e., epidemic on going, mass stranding, etc.) are the basic criteria to decide the possible release into the wild but behavioural responses, ecological and ethological parameters and ethical statement may also be used in assessing the situation and in the decision process.

- D. **Stranded cetacean: referring to an animal still in the water that is trapped, cannot cope or is outside of its natural environment;** these conditions suggest a perilous situation with a possible risk of stranding that may demand preventive measures and highlight the quandary of whether and when to act. More in detail in the ACCOBAMS area, this term referred to specific situations, often involving pelagic cetacean species, observed in unusual proximity to the coastline. Distance from the coasts depends on geography and bathymetry of the area. This term could refer also to coastal species when they are observed inside ports, estuaries, basins or in highly congested areas which could represent a risk for the animal's survival.
- E. **Entangled cetaceans: cetaceans are included in this term when found entangled in fishing gear** and this condition impairs their swimming and diving abilities thereby compromising their feeding activities. Animals could be completely or partially entangled by nets. If human safety and animal welfare are ensured by available trained personnel and equipment, a procedure to release the animal could be attempted.

1.2 Multiple strandings

- A. **Unusual Mortality Event (UME): this term refers to unexpected mortality of cetaceans at an abnormally large scale compared to average stranding reports for the species involved in the event and the area and period considered.** An immediate response is required and special investigation teams may be assembled to investigate the causes of these events. Main recognized causes are a rapid diffusion of a disease, biotoxins, human interactions (including environmental accidents) and malnutrition. Features of these mass mortalities (i.e. temporal and spatial distribution) do not correspond to mass strandings, as defined below.
- B. **Disease outbreak: specific UME involving infectious agents.** A disease outbreak is the occurrence of cases of disease in stranded individuals in excess of what would normally be expected in a defined population, geographical area and/or season. An outbreak may occur in a restricted geographical area, or may extend over an entire basin involving several countries. It may last for a few days or weeks, or for several years. A single case of a zoonotic or a communicable disease absent from a given cetacean population, or caused by an agent (e.g. bacterium or virus) not previously recognized in that species or area, or the emergence of a previously unknown disease, may also constitute an outbreak and should be reported and investigated.
- C. **Mass stranding: these events involve two or more cetaceans (excluding cow/calf pairs) stranded at the same time and place.** Several causes may be responsible for this event, including, but not limited to, extreme weather conditions, tidal changes, disease of one or several group members, or human-related events. It is noteworthy that some individuals involved in a mass stranding may be completely healthy.
- D. **Atypical mass stranding: this definition refers to those mass stranding related to sonar exposure** in which animals do not strand all together as a single cluster but over a very short and defined time lap and within a confined space, both in association to the SONAR event. .

1.3 Usual vs Unusual stranding events

In order to implement a stranding network, it is often useful, depending on the internal organization, to define usual and unusual strandings. This definition is based on resources, knowledge and organization necessary to face these kinds of events.

- A. **Usual strandings: this term refers to those stranding events occurring more frequently in a routine fashion.** In the Mediterranean Sea, small odontocetes found dead on the shore or close to the beach are included in this category. In these events, small teams are involved to recover the carcass, collect data, perform necropsy, store tissues, preserve skeleton and dispose of the corpse. Due to the limited scope, no immediate response is often necessary.
- B. **Unusual strandings: occur rarely** and, due to the amount of animals, the size of the cetaceans involved and/or the presence of live animals, request an immediate and coordinated response that faces several problems such as animal welfare, administration of euthanasia and associated socio-ethical considerations, decisional processes and emergency. These kinds of events are in need of equipment and a well-trained and coordinated, often multinational, emergency team.

2. Terms related to dead stranded cetaceans

Postmortem investigations on cetaceans found stranded dead ashore are fundamental diagnostic procedures aimed to reveal and report any threats for cetaceans' conservation, by using an evidence-based approach. In the last years, an increasing number of skilled and expert veterinarian have been involved and forensic protocols and techniques have been developed and used, thus increasing the quality of the data collected. In addition, PM investigations are an essential source of biological data, including dietary, morphometric, genetic, etc. Dead cetaceans could have stranded alone or have been a part of a multiple stranding.

- 2.1. **Necropsy/autopsy:** synonyms of postmortem examination, a specialized procedure that consists of a thorough examination of a carcass by dissection to determine the cause, the mechanism and manner of death and to evaluate any disease or injury that may be evident. It is usually performed by a specialized veterinarian with specific training in animal pathology. If trained personnel are not available, veterinarians and/or biologist with an adequate training in cetaceans' anatomy could perform part of the gross and sampling procedures, as well as some of the main ancillary analyses.
- 2.2. **Cause of death/stranding,** could be defined as: the disease, injury or abnormality that alone or in combination with other factors (environmental, other concurrent diseases, age, etc.) is responsible for initiating the sequence of functional disturbances that ended in death. In the case of an animal stranded on the shore, the necropsy is aimed to determine the cause of stranding. During necropsy the following may be further defined:
 - a) Immediate cause of death: final disease or condition resulting in death;
 - b) Underlying cause of death: the disease or injury that initiated the chain of morbid events that led directly and inevitably to death;
 - c) Contributing factors: other significant diseases, conditions, or injuries that may have contributed to death but which did not constitute an underlying cause of death.
- 2.3. **Mechanism of death:** the immediate physiologic derangement resulting in death. A particular mechanism of death can be produced by a variety of different causes of death. In an animal stranded alive that later died on shore, the mechanism is often asphyxiation due to mechanical compression of the chest by the animal's own weight.
- 2.4. **Manner of death:** how death came about; in the case of wildlife and, specifically, in cetaceans, we could distinguish: natural (due mainly to natural disease or toxic processes); related to anthropic activity (accidental -

ship strikes, by-catch - and non-accidental or due to a volitional act - direct killing); undetermined (inadequate information regarding the circumstances of death in order to determine manner).

3. Terms related to live-stranded cetaceans

May strand singly or be a part of a mass stranding; may be found completely ashore or in shallow waters. Stranded cetaceans sighted swimming close to the shore, in ports or lagoons with clear avoidance behaviour and entangled cetaceans should not be considered stranded and a different approach with specific protocols should be used in handling such cases.

- 3.1. **Triage:** a process of determining the priority of treatments, based on the severity of patient's condition. The process rations patient treatment efficiently when resources are insufficient for all to be treated immediately (i.e. mass strandings). This approach has been developed and is used in emergency medical centers. In its application to cetaceans stranded alive, specific decisional matrices have been developed by several rescue teams and stranding networks, in order to define the final destination of an animal, given that technical, economical and personnel resources are limited.
- 3.2. **Releasable cetaceans:** animals stranded alive, the ecological, ethological and health conditions of which, as evaluated by skilled veterinarians, are considered appropriate for an independent life and do not pose any risk to wildlife populations and public safety.
- 3.3. **Conditionally releasable cetaceans:** animals stranded alive, the ecological, ethological and health conditions of which, as evaluated by skilled veterinarians, are considered appropriate for an independent life and that do not pose any risk to wildlife populations and public safety, after further examinations or after a period of rehabilitation/quarantine, when national laws allows such procedures.
- 3.4. **Non releasable cetaceans:** animals stranded alive, the ecological, ethological and health conditions of which, as evaluated by skilled veterinarians, are considered NOT appropriate for an independent life and/or pose a risk to wildlife populations and public safety, even after a period of rehabilitation/quarantine. Euthanasia or permanent captivity, when national laws allow such procedure, are the most suitable options.
- 3.5. **Euthanasia:** Has been defined by the IWC and by the American Veterinary Medical Association in 2013 as "the use of humane techniques to induce the most rapid, painless and distress-free death possible". It could be chemical (use of drug) or physical (firearms). A specific IWC report is available (Report of the IWC Workshop on Euthanasia Protocols to Optimize Welfare Concerns for Stranded Cetaceans).

4. Common code system for strandings

As already proposed during the aforementioned workshop on transboundary procedure, an alert system is proposed including coded definitions of stranding events herein presented.

CODE A: live cetacean/s at risk (close to the coastline or stranded)

In this category are included animal/s that are still alive in the water but with obvious signs of trouble in swimming, abnormal behavior for the species or unusual location, potentially threatening their safety. No rehabilitation efforts are attempted because it is difficult to approach the animal in the water.

CODE B: single live animal refloated after stranding or stranding and rehabilitated or following disentanglement (cetaceans stranded alive and entangled).

Single animal rehabilitated and released after being stranded alive in shallow waters, or lying on the beach, or entangled and released after its health assessment.

CODE C: mass strandings involving dead animals including atypical events

Simultaneous stranding of two non-dependent (not recognized as mother and offspring) or more dead cetaceans of the same species. Atypical mass strandings that may comprise of more than one species, are also considered.

CODE D: mass strandings involving live animals, including atypical events

Simultaneous stranding of two non-dependent (not recognized as mother and offspring) or more live cetaceans of the same species. Atypical mass strandings that may comprise of more than one species, are also considered.

CODE E: unusual mortality events

Increase in seasonal and/or regional stranding rates related to diseases or environmental factors (i.e. oil spills, biotoxins, peak of by-catch phenomenon), involving both live and dead animals.

CODE F: presence of anthropic activity using sound

The use of anthropic sound sources have been often related to mass strandings or unusual mortalities.

5. References

GERACI, J.R., and V.L. LOUNSBURY. 2005. Marine mammals ashore: a field guide for strandings, Second Edition. National Aquarium in Baltimore, Baltimore, MD, USA

General document on transboundary emergencies involving cetaceans in the PELAGOS Sanctuary, Monaco, October 29th-30th 2014.

ANNEX 2

COMMON BEST PRACTICES FOR A BASIC POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION OF STRANDED CETACEANS

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Conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea and riparian waters is menaced by several threats. Often these are estimated on the basis of simple observation, but they are not associated to marine mammals' mortality by using an evidence based approach.

In order to quantify and explain the real impact of diseases, human activities and other causes of stranding, it is necessary to perform systematically postmortem examination of cetaceans found stranded on the coast. These procedures should be carried out through a shared approach in order to compare and exchange data collected during necropsies.

These approaches should be maintained not only within the ACCOBAMS Area but worldwide since the need of comparison and sharing is a common feeling. For these reasons, the present document has been prepared after consulting several colleagues (i.e. pathologists, stranding responders) working in the ACCOBAMS and ASCOBAMS Areas and also within the International Whaling Commission (IWC). This document should be considered as the starting point for a joint effort to build up a common procedure in order to study the causes of cetaceans' strandings and, in particular, the real impact of human activities on marine mammals' conservation.

In preparing this document it has been considered that in the ACCOBAMS area there are evident differences in the approach to cetaceans' strandings; procedures can be really informal or very well structured, services and equipment can be completely unsuitable or adequately organized, education and competences on the field can be at the forefront or totally insufficient. In some countries, National Stranding Networks are official or well-functioning and could have already adopted a national procedure for examining stranded marine mammals. For countries where National Stranding Networks are not existing or operate on the base of the volunteers' involvement there, a procedure based on the standards of more advanced countries could be too difficult to achieve.

The present document should be considered as a postmortem examination guideline supporting the development of national postmortem best practices in the Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea and riparian waters in order to standardize data collection and support those stranding networks without specialists working in these fields.

For those countries without a structured network including veterinarians and laboratories, these procedures could offer a simple tool to collect data in the proper way also by untrained personnel; furthermore, the document give also indication and suggestion to develop a more detail postmortem examination. On the other hand, for countries where a more developed procedure has been established, the present guidelines could give the minimum standard to be achieved.

These guidelines should be considered as the first step of a multi-level approach considering:

BASIC: basic gross examination and data collection

- collection of data on stranding event (date and location coordinates)
- data on animal involved (species, sex, age class, physiological status)

- measuring the animal
- gross examination with general description of main findings
- possible external signs of human interaction
- stomach content examination

INTERMEDIATE: sampling for general ancillary analyses

- sampling and performing microscopic examination and tissue bank
- sampling and performing microbiology
- sampling and performing toxicology
- sampling and performing and life history

ADVANCED: specific postmortem examinations and analyses with specific data and samples collection

- Dolphin morbillivirus
- Human interaction (bycatch and ship strikes)
- Sound related mortality
- Mass strandings

In order to diagnose specific causes of death, more detailed analyses and diagnostic procedures should be implemented: for these reasons, the creation of a list of internationally recognized experts and diagnostic laboratories is proposed and it is recommended to give whoever needs a proper support for more detailed examinations and/or in case of specific causes of strandings and diseases. In particular, this “expert panel” could develop dedicated diagnostic protocols in case of specific problems, as dolphin morbillivirus mortalities, ship strikes and interaction with fisheries, sound related unusual mortalities or be considered as advisory consultant. They could also support ACCOBAMS directly in the case of specific problems related to cetaceans’ mortality or intervene in case of unusual mortality events.

Finally, the expert panel could be appointed to revise and implement the present document with those indication and recommendation coming from the dialogue with ACCOBAMS and IWC in order to compare and share data as well as implement the guidelines with new information and diagnostic approaches. These could be foreseen periodically during international meeting as European Cetacean Society which could also support a common protocol for postmortem investigation to be used around Europe.

PROPOSAL FOR POSTMORTEM BEST PRACTICES IN CASE OF CETACEANS STRANDINGS

An autopsy, also known as a postmortem examination or necropsy, is a specialized procedure that consists of a thorough examination of a carcass by dissection to determine the cause and manner of death and to evaluate any disease or injury that may be evident. It is usually performed by a specialized veterinarian with a specific training in animal pathology. If trained personnel is not available, veterinarians and/or biologist with an adequate training in cetaceans' anatomy could perform part of the gross and sampling procedures, as well as some of the main ancillary analyses (for instance life history, genetics, gastric content analyses, toxicological studies).

1) **Main goals of a postmortem examination**

As already stated, through a standardize procedure, necropsies are aimed to determine:

- a) cause of death/stranding: it could be defined as the disease, injury or abnormality that alone or in combination with other factors (environmental, other concurrent diseases, age, etc.) is responsible for initiating the sequence of functional disturbances that ends in death. In the case of animal stranded on the shore, the necropsy is aimed to determine the cause of stranding. During necropsy it could be defined a:
 - b) - immediate cause of death: final disease or condition resulting in death
 - underlying cause of death: the disease or injury that initiated the chain of morbid events that led directly and inevitably to death;
 - contributing factors: other significant diseases, conditions, or injuries that contributed to death but which did not result in the underlying cause of death;
 - Cause of death does not always could be determined due to limiting factors (i.e. knowledge, lack of equipment, carcass preservation, etc.).
 - c) Mechanism of death: it is defined as the immediate physiologic derangement resulting in death (for example, haemorrhage, cardiac arrhythmia, cerebral hypoxia, sepsis, etc.). A particular mechanism of death can be produced by a variety of different causes of death. In animal stranded alive and dead on the shore, the mechanism is always mechanic compression of the chest acting on breathing;
 - d) manner of death: how the death came about; in the case of wildlife and, more in detail, in cetaceans, we could distinguish: natural (due mainly to natural disease processes; related to anthropic activity (accidental - ship strikes, by-catch - and non-accidental or due to a volitional act - direct killing); undetermined: inadequate information regarding the circumstances of death to determine manner.

In order to achieve these goals, it is necessary a very strict and well define procedure to collect data, in order to ensure a good quality of the information. This information obtained from stranded animals depends on a number of factors including:

condition, location and numbers of the carcasses

- quality of human resources: size, skills, organization, interests of the teams involved;
- existence of clear and detailed protocols;
- availability of equipment and supplies;
- time available;
- care in managing samples (packaging, labeling, shipping and storing).

2) Documenting Data

Information has scientific value only when carefully documented data are collected systematically using appropriate terminology. Depending on conditions listed in paragraph 1, data collection, as well as the postmortem procedure, may be basic (Level A), intermediate (Level B), or detailed (Level C) ([Appendix I](#)). The use of standardized data sheets and forms is recommended working on the field. Examples are reported herein ([Appendices III-V](#)).

Beyond written observations, photographic and video records may bring to life main details as color pattern, distinctive markings, scars or injuries, and the pattern of a mass stranding. Photographic documentation should include pictures of main distinctive pictures as well as a general view: at minimum, a full lateral view of the stranded animals and of the head with exposed teeth or baleen should be attempted. For those species included in photo-ID catalogues, additional pictures of identifying characteristics should be taken. Photographs should include a reference scale of known standard size and, possibly, a label with date and location.

Rare specimens are especially valuable and require an extra measure to ensure a complete body of data. The entire carcass removal to a suitable laboratory or museum for study or preservation should be attempted.

3) Public Health

Dead and decaying marine mammal tissues harbor a variety of potentially harmful organisms, some of which can infect humans (i.e. Brucella, Salmonella, etc.). Dangerous consequences from exposure can be reduced by wearing appropriate clothing (protective overalls and rubber gloves), eye and mouth protection (safety glasses, sun glasses, disposable masks), and by a careful handling of tissues. Persons should protect open wounds with dressings and avoid contact with fluids or airborne droplets. Keep disinfectant solutions at hand.

In implementing the postmortem protocol, a list of equipment and disposal wearing should be prepared. In [Appendix VI](#) a list of these tools is presented considering the minimal kit that should be always available in case of emergencies.

4) Evaluation of the carcass

Before beginning postmortem examination, the quality of the carcass must be evaluated to determine its suitability for collateral examinations and further studies. The condition of the carcass should be evaluated by observation of external and internal features.

a. External Features

The condition of a marine mammal carcass cannot be evaluated solely by its outward appearance or estimated by knowing the time since death. The rate of decomposition is influenced more by body temperature which is influenced by blubber layer (higher in more robust animals) and by environmental temperature. Larger, rotund carcasses retain heat longer than smaller, thin ones.

Cetaceans (except mysticetes) sink initially at death, then float days or weeks later when buoyed by decomposition gases (putrefaction gas is produced in 36 hours after death in large whales), and arrive ashore outwardly slightly changed but internally decomposed. At the other extreme, seagulls may begin gouging the eyes and penetrating the skin and blubber of the jaw and body openings of a living dolphin, perhaps already mutilated by shells and rocks during stranding. By the time the animal dies, the carcass may already appear to be spoiled.

Rigor mortis (stiffening of the body after death) is not a valuable indicator of the time of death in cetacean species as it is in terrestrial ones. Also skin, eyes, and exposed mucous membranes dehydration cannot be considered a reliable indicator, since it occurs rapidly after death during air exposure, while these tissues retain their vital appearance longer in water or with humidity or precipitation and then, too, may be unreliable indicators. During buoyancy, sides of the carcass in the water are better preserved than those exposed to sun and air.

Bloating is generally a sign that a carcass is not fresh, though some diseases may cause gas production in tissues even in live animals. Tell-tale signs of decomposition include a protruding tongue and penis. At some point the gases escape, and it may not be obvious whether the process has just begun or ended. The only reliable approach is to examine the carcass internally.

b. Internal Features

The blubber of a fresh carcass is firm, mostly white, and only moderately oily, depending on the species. With time, it may become tinged with blood (imbibition) from underlying tissues. Eventually, the oil begins to separate (delipidation) and pool, leaving behind a lacework of greasy connective tissue fibers.

Fresh muscle is dark (except in fetuses and manatees) and firm, and the bundles are distinguishable and easily separated. As a carcass decomposes, the muscles become soft, pale, translucent, and pasty; fiber bundles become almost indistinguishable.

The rate of decomposition may be increased by the animal's terminal condition, such as a generalized infection with increased body temperature (fever) or wounds that expose the body to rapid bacterial invasion. Because blood tends to promote the process, decomposition is retarded in animals that bleed to death.

The rate of decomposition of an internal organ is related to temperature, the amount and arrangement of connective tissue, and proteolytic enzyme content. Skin, blubber and muscle can remain intact and may even show gross lesions for as long as seven to nine days after death. The heart and lungs maintain their integrity for perhaps two or three days, while adrenal glands, liver, spleen, brain, kidney, and mucosa of the digestive tract decompose with frustrating rapidity.

c. Carcass Classification

Despite uncertainties inherent in determining the stage of decomposition, any study on carcasses requires a system to define the quality of the material. Animals or carcasses are assigned to one of five basic categories, determined by specific characteristics, as specified here below and in [Appendix II](#).

CODE 1: Alive or just died (< 2 hours post mortem).

Uses: morphometrics; limited life history, external gross pathology, parasitology and microbiology; biopsies; blood studies, including DNA analysis and clinical chemistry. If died in two hours same Uses of Code 2.

CODE 2: Fresh carcass (< 24 hours post mortem).

Uses: morphometrics; DNA analysis; life history; parasitology; histopathology; toxicology; microbiology; limited blood studies; gas bubble analysis.

Characteristics: Normal appearance, usually with little scavenger damage, fresh smell, minimal drying and wrinkling of skin, eyes and mucous membranes, eyes clear, carcass not bloated, tongue and penis not protruded. Blubber firm and white; muscles firm, dark red, well-defined; blood cells intact, able to settle in a sample tube; serum unhemolyzed; viscera intact and well-defined; gut contains little or no gas; brain firm with no discoloration, surface features distinct, easily removed intact.

CODE 3: Moderate decomposition. Carcass intact, bloating evident (tongue and penis protruded) and skin cracked and sloughing, possible scavenger damage, characteristic mild odor, mucous membranes dry, eyes sunken or missing. Organs are basically intact.

Uses: morphometrics; DNA analysis; limited life history; parasitology; gross pathology; stomach contents; marginal for microbiology (virology, mycology, molecular analyses for bacteria while is limited for bacterial agents by direct methods) toxicology (useful for metal and organochlorines, poor for biotoxins); histopathology of skin, blubber, muscle (skeletal and heart), lung, and possibly firm lesions. Brain, lymphoid organs, liver and genital tract should be examined in any case since partial information could be collected; GI tract and related glands (i.e. pancreas) can provide limited information.

Characteristics: carcass intact, bloating evident (tongue and penis protruded) and skin cracked and sloughing; possible scavenger damage; characteristic mild odor; mucous membranes dry, eyes sunken or missing; blubber blood-tinged and oily; muscles soft and poorly defined; blood hemolysis, uniformly dark red; viscera soft, friable, mottled, but still intact; gut dilated by gas; brain soft, surface features distinct, dark reddish cast, fragile but can usually be moved intact.

CODE 4: Advanced decomposition

Uses: morphometrics; limited life history (teeth, baleen, bone, claws, some stomach contents, possibly reproductive condition); DNA analysis parasitology, microbiology (virology with sensitive technique) gross pathology and toxicology.

Characteristics: carcass may be intact, but collapsed; skin sloughing; epidermis of cetaceans may be entirely missing; often severe scavenger damage; strong odor; blubber soft, often with pockets of gas and pooled oil; muscles nearly liquefied and easily torn, falling easily off bones; blood thin and black; viscera often identifiable but friable, easily torn, and difficult to dissect; gut gas-filled; brain soft, dark red, containing gas pockets, pudding-like consistency.

CODE 5: Mummified or Skeletal Remains

Uses: morphometrics; limited life history (teeth, baleen, claws, bone), DNA analysis, toxicology; paleopathology.

Characteristics: skin may be draped over skeletal remains; any remaining tissues are desiccated.

5) General Considerations on Necropsy Protocol

The effectiveness of a postmortem examination is increased by following clear and concise protocols. The procedure should be prepared implementing a basic protocol considering main anatomical and physiological feature of the species, main diseases and pathological findings, logistics, number and available economical resources, personnel and equipment. In case of insufficient experience, knowledge and/or means to dedicate at this activity, it is important to standardize a very basic procedure in order to collect useful and comparable information, concentrating on fresh specimens and avoiding losing of resources.

In order to obtain best samples, a careful dissection should be planned, avoiding contamination of tissues by contact with dirty instruments, other organs, or body fluids and ensuring before the type and quality of equipment and packaging materials. With thoughtful planning, it should be possible to obtain morphometric data first, followed by external samples for microbiology.

Once the carcass is opened, tissue samples for microbiology and toxicology take precedence, followed by sampling for histopathology, parasitology, and life history. This order follows the sequence of a routinely performed gross examination as reported in the example in [Appendix II](#).

6) Examining the Carcass

Procedures for dissecting and examining carcasses depend on the size and species of the subject and personal preference of the investigator. The outlines reported in [Appendix II](#) is one approach to carrying out systematic examination of a carcass and it is based on specific protocols and personal experience.

This protocol could be varied on the basis of the experience, knowledge and researches of specific diseases or pathological condition, such as Morbillivirus, damages related to sound, mortalities related to by-catch and ship strikes, etc., and it could be implemented on the basis of available diagnostic technique and resources. Here below main steps of the procedures are resume.

- IDENTIFICATION of the species and DETERMINATION of the sex.
- DESCRIPTION and PHOTOGRAPH form, colour pattern, scars, other distinguishing features (e.g., number and position of teeth or characteristics of baleen), injuries, external lesions, etc.; for populations included in photo catalogues, photograph pertinent characteristics in order to identify the individual
- TAKE MEASUREMENTS (at least total length), including blubber thickness; obtain body WEIGHT if possible.
- EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL GROSS EXAMINATION. Note, describe and illustrate any changes, lesions, parasites and discharges considering their:
 - distribution: focal, multifocal, disseminate, diffuse, segmental, etc.;
 - location: the region, apparatus, organ and/or tissue involved, mono-lateral or bilateral;
 - volume: increased, decreased, maintained;
 - shape: bi-dimensional or tridimensional description of the lesion (round, spherical, target, irregular, etc.)
 - edges: definition (well defined, not defined, infiltrating), shape and profile;
 - surface: smooth, rough, depressed, raised, wet, dry
 - dimension: measure the lesion
 - texture and consistency: note any changes compared to normal features of the interested tissue and organ;
 - smell: if any

These feature allow an objective description of the change observed compared to normal anatomical features. In case of inexperienced personnel, these approach is quite simple and it could allow advices of skilled experts, along with pictures taken during examination.

- TAKE PICTURES of any features, changes considered anomalous for the experience of the person carrying out the necropsy
- At each stage of the examination, SAMPLE tissues as soon as they are exposed, starting from virology and microbiology, histopathology and toxicology.

7) Sampling

a) Blood and urine samples.

They provide an opportunity to evaluate the functional capacity of organs, as one approach to determining what processes might have been responsible for or associated with the stranding event. A broad spectrum of analyses can be performed, including plasma chemistry, hematology, antibody titers, and toxicology, as a means of investigating a

range of pathologic conditions. Blood samples only have value for clinical pathology when taken from live animals, or within minutes after death. Organs deteriorate rapidly causing progressive changes in concentrations of blood gases, enzymes and electrolytes, among other parameters. Samples collected from animals dead for more than a few minutes are useful only for serological studies.

b) Morphometrics

Morphometric and descriptive data provide basic biological information and have added value when correlated with factors such as age, stage of maturity, reproductive status. The accumulation of such data results in a better understanding of general population health, demographic trends, and identification of discrete stocks. Every carcass provides some morphometric data, even skeletal remains. The amount available depends on the state of the carcass. Measurements are taken according to the appropriate protocol for the species. All measurements can be valuable, but standard length is consistently useful. It is the straight line distance from the tip of the snout (or the melon, if more anterior) to the tip of the tail or notch of the flukes. Blubber thickness (does not include skin) is measured from a perfectly perpendicular cut.

c) Life History

This analysis is aimed to obtain information on age, genetics, reproductive status, and feeding habits to understanding the general biology of the species. Certain life history information makes interpretation of pathologic and toxicological data more meaningful.

In general, biological data are additive; the more we can obtain on a given specimen, the more meaningful each element becomes.

d) Gross and Histopathology

Carcasses are a biological record of illnesses endemic in populations, diseases and disorders underlying natural mortality, and conditions that might have led the animal to strand. The information is tapped by careful selection of tissue samples for pathology studies. Injuries such as fractures and lacerations remain evident for long periods of time, as do certain firm lesions (e.g., tumors). Carcasses too decomposed for histopathology may still be useful for describing gross pathologic conditions. Brain, spleen, liver, and other enzyme-rich organs are the first to deteriorate.

e) Microbiology

This sampling procedure is aimed to evaluate factors underlying occurring in mortality. Studies reveal that marine mammals harbor a variety of microorganisms, some of which are known to have pathogenic potential. We now recognize that certain endemic diseases can periodically erupt into epidemics causing large-scale mortalities that have significant influence on the status of populations or stocks.

Even under ideal conditions, it is often difficult to associate bacteria isolated from a carcass with specific lesions. Bacteria associated with active infectious processes tend to endure longer in viable concentrations, and certain species may be isolated from more deteriorated carcasses, even frozen stored specimens.

Most viruses are fragile and have a short life span in decomposing tissue. Viruses that persist long enough to be harvested and identified, however, are generally responsible for some infectious process.

f) Parasitology

Virtually every marine mammal carcass has parasites. Most of these are innocuous and have value as ecological markers. Others, however, may cause serious illness to individuals and, perhaps, ultimately affect populations

g) Contaminants and Biotoxins

Marine mammals are the potential ultimate repository for oceanic contaminants passed through the food chain. Stranded inshore residents provide information on regional conditions and trends. Offshore species signal the extent to which the seas are being despoiled. Both groups reveal the influence of contaminants and toxins on health.

A commitment to collection and long-term storage of marine mammal tissues will enable us to follow patterns of biological toxins, organochlorines, heavy metals and other contaminants, and to recognize the need for change and help guide future policy. To be effective, the collection and preparation of specimens that form this resource must be impeccable, and the samples matched with reliable life history information.

h) Samples for Skeletal Preparations

While photographs and measurements can document the specific identification of some animals, skulls and skeletons can do it much better. In addition, osteological material provides a means of determining physical maturity of a specimen and may document skeletal abnormalities or injuries.

8) Necropsy forms

During postmortem examinations, it is necessary to collect data, observations and samples using a standardized approach. For these reasons, it is useful to prepare specific forms containing all information to be collected during necropsies. These forms are useful tools during the postmortem procedure which could be used both on the fields and in the laboratories. In [Appendix III-V](#), examples of these forms are attached to the present document. In particular, [Appendix III](#) is a necropsy form to be filled during gross examination noting any pathological change, peculiar feature or finding; in [Appendix IV](#), are listed all the information necessary to support the hypothesis of a human interaction; [Appendix V](#) is a simple checklist to remember all the samples to be collected during necropsy.

9) Specific analyses

These guidelines give information to implement a general and basic necropsy protocol, that could be carried out also by unexperienced and trained personnel with some basic knowledge of animal anatomy. In case of unusual mortality events, specific causes of death and/or threats related to cetaceans' strandings more detailed or different protocols should be applied. In particular:

- dolphin morbillivirus: this is one of the most relevant biological threats for cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea, since it caused several mortality outbreaks. Specific sampling protocols and molecular techniques have been implemented;
- by-catch: interaction with fishing activity is one of the most frequent causes of death of human origin. In order to determine if the animals died entangled in fishing gears, a detailed forensic protocol completed by microscopic analyses has been implemented;
- ship strikes: in order to understand if collision with vessels occurred with an alive animal or the interaction is postmortem, specific techniques have been developed for microscopic observation;
- gas and fat embolic syndrome and other sound related mortalities: mortality related to sound sources became famous after atypical mass strandings occurred spatially and temporally associated to military exercises using mid-frequency sonar. Animals exposed to this sound source developed an embolic syndrome that could be diagnosed by gross, microscopic and chemical examination which require a specific sampling protocol. Further sound related damages could be found analyzing inner ear through electron microscopy examination: also this investigation requires specific sampling and preservation protocols.

A list of scientists and/or institutions with specific expertise in the ACCOBAMS area should be provided along with their contacts for advisory service, creating an expert panel to support Countries of the Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea and Riparian Waters in case of necessity. If necessary, these reference laboratories are able to perform investigations and studies and could give specific information on sampling, preservation, packaging and delivery of samples collected during necropsy.

10) Tissue Banks

During postmortem examination tissue samples should be collected, properly preserved and forwarded to reference Tissue Banks as specified in the corresponding Guidelines.

If no national or neighboring tissue bank is available, the Mediterranean Marine Mammals Tissue Bank (www.marinemammals.eu) located in Padua is available for support, storage, and/or distribution of cetacean samples free of charge.

Appendix I DATA COLLECTION

1. Level A Data: Basic Minimum Data collected on the field

- a. Investigator: name and address (institution)
- b. Reporting source
- c. Species
 - preliminary identification (by qualified personnel)
 - supporting material (photographs; specimens, including tooth counts from odontocetes, or 2 pieces of mid-row baleen from mysticetes)
- d. Field number
- e. Number of animals, including total and sub-groups (if applicable)
- f. Location
 - preliminary description (local designation)
 - latitude and longitude GPS
- g. Date (mm\dd\yy), time of first discovery AND of data and specimen recovery
- h. Length (girth and weight when possible)
- i. Condition (recorded for both discovery and recovery times)
Codes as follows:
 - 1) alive
 - 2) freshly dead
 - 3) decomposed, but organs basically intact
 - 4) advanced decomposition (i.e., organs not recognizable, carcass intact)
 - 5) mummified or skeletal remains only
- j. Sex

2. Level B Data: Supplementary On-Site Information collected by direct observation or reported

- a. Weather and tide conditions
- b. Offshore human/predator activity
- c. Behavior
 - pre-stranding (e.g., milling, directional swimming)
 - stranding (e.g., determined effort to strand, passive, thrashing)
 - after return to sea (e.g., disoriented swimming, listing); note also ID number given after release and color
 - location of sighting
- d. Samples collected for life history studies: if these could not be collected during necropsy, they could be collected on the field
 - teeth, ear plugs or bone for age determination
 - reproductive tracts
 - stomach contents
- e. Samples collected for blood studies
- f. Disposition of carcass

3. Level C Data: Necropsy Examination and Sample Collection

- a. Gross pathological changes noted during necropsy
- b. Sampling of tissues for ancillary examination
 - microscopic examination (i.e. histopathology, fat emboli, electron microscopy)
 - microbiology
 - parasitology

- toxicology
- genetics
- gas emboli
- research of biotoxins

Appendix II

BASIC NECROPSY PROTOCOL

Before beginning postmortem examination, some biometrical data and life history information concerning the stranded animal should be collected in order to collect as many information as possible about the species and to gain further insight into the cause/s of death. In particular, data and information concerning any interaction with humans and with anthropic activities must be collected. Before handling the carcass, it is important to prepare all opportune protective equipment to prevent any transmission of infectious diseases to humans (zoonoses) and to prevent possible accidents with cutting tools.

1 Preliminary Information

Harmful zoonotic organisms can dwell within the carcasses of marine mammals, and personal and public safety precautions should be taken when handling dead marine mammals and tissues. Protective gear, such as disposable gloves, goggles, face masks, or splash shields should be worn to reduce the risk of contamination. All existing wounds should be well bandaged prior to beginning the necropsy and any injuries sustained during postmortem procedures should be thoroughly cleaned, bandaged and documented. Well stocked first aid kits must be on site at all times. Proper disposal receptacles for blades, knives, and needles as well as chemical spill treatment kits should be easily accessible. All chemicals should be handled in a well ventilated area. Exposed skin should be thoroughly scrubbed before leaving the lab or site. Equipment should be cleaned and disinfected. Disposal of the carcass should be well thought out in order to avoid exposing the general public to potential hazards. Prior to commencement of the necropsy, all necessary equipment should be set up and accessible.

1.1 Life History

Strandings offer a unique opportunity to study marine mammals. It is thus important to know the history of the stranded animal in order to evaluate any evidence of human interaction and to determine the cause and mechanism of death. It should likewise be remembered that a thorough necropsy begins with the stranding itself. Information that should be collected before the necropsy begins includes:

- The time and date of the stranding;
- Environmental conditions prior to and at the time of the stranding
- Location of stranding, including Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates and topographic features
- Behavior prior to and during the stranding;
- Single or mass stranding (if the stranding was mass, it should be specified if it was a single or multi-species);
- Time and date of death;
- Euthanized or natural death;
- If there is a current Unusual Mortality Event (UME) under investigation;
- Mode of storage prior to necropsy;
- Details of any ropes, nets, or fragments attached to the carcass during recovery, including gear no longer on the animal at the time it was collected or of the necropsy;
- Record of any trauma known to be inflicted (ante- or post-mortem).

If storage prior to necropsy is necessary, such as overnight, refrigerate the carcass as soon as possible. The carcass must be examined for evidence of human interaction and morphometric data collected before storage. It is best to avoid freezing prior to necropsy as it interferes with microscopic examinations.

Other information that may be useful is the time lapse between the first sighting and the first response as well as any treatment or therapies carried out if the animal was alive. Any photos that taken by the first person on the site should be requested as these may have been taken when the carcass was in better condition.

An age estimate is initially made on the basis of weight and total length (adult, juvenile, adult, and neonate) and then confirmed by more other data such as microscopic teeth examination, ossification of the shoulder, gonadic features and the fatty acids in the crystalline.

1.2 Human Interaction Evaluation

Post-mortem investigations should be carried out scrupulously and carefully, following an established necroscopic protocol. Using this protocol will yield two relevant information: the first is an objective evaluation of an animal or carcass to determine if any evident sign of human interaction, could be ante- or post-mortem, healed or recently inflicted. The second is a subjective analysis by the examiner who will use all available information to evaluate if human interaction could have contributed to the stranding event. Objective findings proving anthropic activities affecting the conservation and management of cetaceans' population, should be promptly communicated to authorities. Documenting this types of interaction and identifying the spatial and temporal patterns associated may shed light on measures that can help to prevent future events. Nonetheless, it is important to avoid misinterpreting strandings and data relative to human interaction and all findings should be recorded as contributory causes.

In cases in which it is opportune or necessary to take legal action, physical evidence must be conserved. This evidence can include nets or fragments that have been removed from the animal, photos, and samples of tissues.

1.3 Relevant issues for a post-mortem examination

Post-mortem investigations need be carried out scrupulously and carefully following an established necropsy protocol. The diagnoses that are formulated may be utilized to review management and political strategies. Then, it is important to be cautious in formulating any hypothesis which need be proven and irrefutable for every animal. If there are any factor that could compromise the possibility of evaluating the carcass in a thorough and appropriate manner, the final report should reflect this uncertainty and the diagnosis could consider that it "could not be determined." The factors that can affect possibility of emitting a certain diagnosis, also for human interaction include but are not limited to: decomposition, damage caused by scavengers, inexperience in conducting these examinations, logistics (large animals that are difficult to manage and to evaluate from all points of view). All individuals/organizations utilizing and implementing this protocol must collect data in the same manner to permit the data to be analyzed on a broader scale.

1.4 Images and video

In addition to describing the physical observed evidences, it is very important to document any observations with images (photographs and videos). Digital pictures and videotaping can be extremely important when human interaction is being evaluated. Iconographic documentation can support any evaluations and the final diagnosis. With regard to documenting physical data, it is important to:

- Photograph or film everything even if there are no evident marks;
- A label and a ruler should be used in all images; the label should include the identification number, the date of the stranding, the species and the organization, close-up views should indicate the lesion/body part;
- Images should be taken from a wide angle to allow a viewer to place close ups in context;
- Care should be taken with regard to shadows, glare and fingers;
- All marks should be drawn and/or described.

Pictures are the virtual support of descriptions of the pathological report. They will also aid the pathologist in identifying the sampling area and to put together microscopic observations with macroscopic evidence. During a necropsy, labels should be used and must contain the following data:

- An identification number;
- The species;
- Date of death and/or necropsy;
- Where the stranding took place;
- Tissue/lesion.

A measurement scale (cm) should always appear in all images to have an idea of dimensions. Both the scale and the identification number must be clearly visible in all images. When photographing/filming wounds caused by propellers images should be shot with the objective placed perpendicularly with respect to the axis of the surface of the lesions. It is important to photograph the organ or the entire tissue whenever there are lesions; other pictures can then be taken at a closer distance to provide more detailed information. If the tissue or organ have been removed from the carcass it is good practice to rinse and dry it to avoid blood excess or abnormal reflexes.

2 State of Conservation of the Carcass

It is possible to classify the state of conservation of a carcass found along the coastline using the criteria outlined by the most important manuals on the management of cetacean strandings. The following table delineates the criteria, which is based on physical parameters easily identified even by persons without any veterinarian experience, used to classify the state of conservation of a carcass and the code number assigned to each category; it also lists other investigations, depending on its status, that should be carried out.

Code	State of conservation	Description	Possible investigations
1	Alive/just died	Animal found alive or died at most 2 hrs earlier	Clinical examination, blood and urine exams, Microbiology/histology swabs, cytology, virology (from the tissue/PCR), serology, microbiology (cultures from tissues or PCR), parasitology, contaminants, biotoxins, genetics, biology (life history)
2	Carcass in good condition	Death took place within 24 hrs of the finding; minimal scavenger damage; normal smell; minimal drying or wrinkling of skin or eyes; eyes clear; no bloating; tongue and penis not protruded	Histology, cytology, virology, (from the tissue/PCR), serology, microbiology (cultures from tissues or PCR), parasitology, contaminants, biotoxins, genetics, biology (life history)
3	Moderate decomposition	Integral carcass with evident bloating (tongue and penis protruding) skin not integral with some sloughing, some damage by scavengers possible, mild odor, mucous membranes dry, eyes shrunken or missing	Histology (limited) virology (PCR) parasitology, contaminants, biotoxins, genetics, biology (life history)
4	Advanced decomposition	The carcass may be integral but collapsed; ample areas of sloughing skin, serious scavenger damage, strong odor, muscles and blubber easily detached from the bone, liquefaction of internal organs	Histology, (limited) virology (PCR), parasitology(PCR), contaminants (limited) biology, paleopathology (on the skeleton) (life history), genetics
5	Mummified or skeletal remains	Dehydrated, dry skin draped over desiccated bones	Biology (life history), genetics, paleopathology (on the skeleton)

Once the classification code has been made authorization has been given by the pertinent health authorities, one of three avenues are possible.

2.1 Category 1

1.a A living animal. A live stranding response unit should be contacted immediately and the animal should be transported to an appropriate facility if there is any hope that it can be recuperated and returned to the sea. The other possibility is euthanasia if the animal's state of health is seriously compromised.

1.b An animal found dead or one that has been euthanized. In this case the closest appropriate reference center should be contacted immediately. The center should in any case dispose of a veterinarian with some pathology training and experience with marine mammals and a biologist who can collect the necessary samples that will need to be conserved.

The necropsy should be carried out in an accredited facility or by personnel working for an accredited facility which disposes of appropriate equipment and logistics to carry out a thorough necropsy and to prepare for all the analyses listed above or are connected to appropriate organizations which do. In view of the rarity of the event and the perishability of the samples, all actions need be timely and coordinated. Efforts must be made to collect all the samples, possibly multiple ones, to guarantee that material is recuperated for scientific as well as diagnostic research. Again, in view of the rarity and importance the event and maintaining in all cases the role of coordinating the activities involved, the veterinarian/s in charge must carry out the necropsy taking into consideration, if this does not interfere with the protocol, the requests of various research groups to participate directly. When animals of large dimensions/weight are concerned, the extraordinary intervention of the Fire Department and Civil Protection Authorities or the assistance of the City administration may be necessary. Transportation may need to be organized to tow the animal to an appropriate site where the necropsy can be carried out and the skeleton can be recuperated. According to most ordinances, the city where the stranding took place is responsible for covering the cost of disposing the skeleton.

2.2 Categories 2-3

In these cases the carcass can still furnish useful information about the cause of death for both health and conservation purposes. An expert veterinarian as described in the point above is necessary. The value of the carcass is, however, inferior and as a result all activities can be carried out with greater tranquility and fewer samples will need to be collected. The standard protocol should be followed with the principal objective being that of diagnosing the cause of death, of establishing if any human interaction has taken place, and to furnish tissue samples for further investigations.

2.3 Categories 4-5

In view of the poor state of conservation, the qualified veterinarian of the Local Health Authorities who in any case is responsible for carrying out the samples requested and forwarding them together with photographic documentation to the appropriate centers can delegate personnel to collect the samples.

3 Life history and physiological parameters estimation

3.1 Age estimation

It is useful to estimate the age of beached cetaceans as this can modify the prognosis and all of the operations that need to be carried out.

Age estimation of cetaceans can be based on microscopic evaluation of the exemplar's teeth, but the procedure cannot be carried out on live animals. Age estimates can also be based on the dimensions and on other properties of the layer of dentin (calf, juvenile, young adult, old). The specimen's total length is the physical parameter that help to

define both physiologic parameters that is age class and estimated weight. The mean lengths ascertained in particular make it possible to differentiate between neonates (dimensions similar to the mean ones outlined in the literature for the species) and adults. Neonates a few days old can be identified by the presence of lingual papillae and a patent umbilical cord. Other factors of importance are obviously length and in some species the season.

Animals which are suspected to be dependent maternally should not be liberated unless there is clear evidence of members of that same species in the vicinity.

Intermediate length conditions falling between adult and neonates make it possible to classify the subject as young. That estimate can be confirmed by the color of the livery in some species of odontocetes (Risso's Dolphin, Beaked whale, etc.) and the limited number of signs attributable to intra-specific interaction.

Older specimens are characterized by dimensions comparable to those of an adult cetacean with perhaps some signs of muscular atrophy along the trunk or absent or worn out teeth. The table below outlines typical correlations between approximate lengths and age classes in species that are frequently beached on Mediterranean coastlines.

Species	Total length at birth (cm)	Total length calf (cm)	Total length 1 year (cm)	Total length 2 years (cm)	Approx age weaning (years)	Total length Weaning (cm)	Total length Adult (m)
Striped Dolphin <i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	93-100	100	166	180		170	2.2-2.6
Bottlenose Dolphin <i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	117	100-130	170-200	170-225	1.5-2	225	2.2-3 cost. 2.5-6 pel.
Risso's Dolphin <i>Grampus griseus</i>	110-150	120-160					3-4
Common Dolphin <i>Delphinus delphis</i>	80-90	80-100				110-120	2.3-2.5
Rough Toothed Dolphin <i>Steno bredanensis</i>	100						2.4-2.7
Long-finned pilot whale <i>Globicephala melas</i>	177	160-200			2-3	240	4.5-5 F 4.5-6 M
Beaked Whale <i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>	270	200-300					6.7-7

Sperm Whale Physeter macrocephalus	300	350-500		670	>2	670	11-13 F 15-18 M
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3.2 Weight estimation

It is important to estimate the weight of stranded animals for therapeutic purposes (to calculate drug dosages and other support therapies) or for logistics. The total length is once again used to hypothesize the subject's weight. The table below outlines some estimates underlining the relationship between the two parameters in five species of small cetaceans well represented in the Mediterranean Sea.

Total Length (m)	Maximum estimated weight (kg)		
	Striped Dolphin Common Dolphin	Bottlenose Dolphin Risso's Dolphin	Long-finned pilot whale
1	20		
1.5	60	65	
1.75		150	75
2	125		150
2.5	150	260	
3		370	
3.5		480	
4		600	2000
6			3500

To have more precise estimate it is possible to resort to a linear regression according to the $\log_e M_{\text{media}} = a + b \log_e L_{\text{max}}$ where M is the mass expressed in kg and L is length in centimeters. For a and b coefficients there is a variation linked to the species (there are differences between odontocetes and mysticetes) and sex. The sperm whale has a linear regression similar to that of mysticetes perhaps confirming its phylogenetic relationship to whales. A different formula to calculate weight is outlined for this species given its anatomic peculiarities ($M = 0.218 \times L^{2.74}$). The table below indicates the coefficients for the various typologies.

Family	Sex	a	b
Mysticetes	M	-7.347	2.329
	F	-7.503	2.347
Odontocetes	M	-8.702	2.382
	F	-9.003	2.432

3.3 Sex determination

The sex of a small cetacean can be determined by examining the ventral midline of the animal. Both male and female cetaceans possess a genital slit between the umbilicus and anus. The distance between the centers of the anal and genital openings are generally less than 10 cm for female cetaceans. The distance is generally greater in the male. A single short mammary slit can be seen on either side of the genital slit in most female cetaceans and occasionally

males also possess this feature. One of the simplest ways to determine the sex in a cetacean is by blunt-probing the genital slit. If the probe angles forward, it has entered the vagina and it is, thus, a female. If the probe angles backward it has entered the penile opening of a male. Confirmation of gender is of course exposing the penis (in animals in moderate or poor state of conservation) or by internal examination.

4 Nutritional status

The nutritional status of a cetacean can be evaluated by examining the dorsal axis from a slightly inclined perspective in order to verify the profile of the body at the sides of the dorsal fin revealing the dorsal fin muscles formed by the epiaxial muscles. In a healthy, well-fed animal, the profile will be rounded and convex. A thin animal will show some loss of muscle mass and may show bilateral retraction of the dorsal-lateral profile. An emaciated animal will show a greater loss of epiaxial muscle girth and may be concave along the dorsal-lateral body. Cachectic animals will show even greater concavity at the nape.

5 External examination: examining the integumentary system

The external examination should include the investigation and description of the eyes, mouth, blowhole, umbilicus, genital opening, anus and skin. Take note of the dimensions (height x width, height x depth, diameter) shape, color, consistence, localization and distribution of any abnormalities noted.

- When examining the eyes, operators should look for discoloration, injuries and/or discharge;
- All lesions, signs of parasites, the color of the mucus membranes as well as worn, broken or missing teeth should be documented;
- The color and amount of discharge from the blowhole as well as the presence of parasites and/or obstructions must be noted. Culture swabs should be taken (in the case of code 1 or 2 conservation);
- The umbilicus should be examined in neonates for signs of infection and degree of healing;
- Lesions, discharge, or growth around the genital opening and anus should be noted and samples should be taken for histology, microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations;
- If the animal has mammary glands, operators can attempt to express milk and note its color, consistency and estimate quantities (cc or ml). Milk can be expressed by pressing on the body about 10 cm dorsal and cranial to the mammary slit and massaging downward toward the nipple;
- Any scars, abscesses, ulcerations, erosions, wounds, and parasites on the skin should be thoroughly examined and documented;
- Photograph the dorsal fin in order to permit comparison of individual signs with ID photo records.

Take samples of all tissues mentioned and all lesions following the modality outlined in section 2. In particular, the following samples should be taken:

- Skin: make a sample of the skin of the apex of the dorsal fin (skin without blubber) for genetic analysis, take double samples (frozen and placed under a DMSO solution) and for histology. Select the skin, cleaning it from other tissues.
- Teeth: at least 4-6 teeth should be removed from the center of the lower left mandible to investigate the age and to carry out toxicological investigations (heavy metals). Teeth can be extracted by inserting a tooth extractor or a flat head screwdriver between the tooth and the alveolar wall. In some older animals a knife can be used instead of a scalpel to avoid breaking the blade. It is important to avoid breaking or crushing the tooth as this damage can render it useless for analysis purposes.

6 Removal of the external layers: skin, blubber, muscle

The procedures to evaluate the integumentary system and the muscles of the axial skeleton are outlined below.

6.1 The skin and blubber

The blubber must be removed before the examiners proceed to evaluate the body cavity. In the case of a small cetacean, the animal should be positioned left side up. Using a scalpel or a knife, a longitudinal incision starting just left of the dorsal midline posterior to the blowhole should be made and continued down the entire length of the animal ending at the dorsal tail stock. The incision must not penetrate or damage the skeleton but should cut through only the skin and blubber layers. A dorso-ventral incision perpendicular to the previous body length incision just cranial to the anterior insertion of the left pectoral flipper should then be made. Parallel incisions should be made down the length of the animal every 20-25 cm thus creating a series of flaps along the lateral body. The blubber should be separated from the muscle by cutting through the fascia or connective tissue at the top of each flap. By remaining between the blubber/muscle interfaces and reflecting the panel of skin down and away from the body in a dorsal to ventral direction, the blubber should easily separate from the muscle.

At this point it is possible to evaluate the thickness, color and texture of the blubber. The thickness of the blubber should be measured at three points (dorsal, midline and ventral) cranially to the cranial insertion of the dorsal fin. Parasites and abnormalities within the blubber layer should be noted. Samples of the blubber and of the subcutaneous tissue should be collected for histology and for analysis of contaminants. In the latter case, it is necessary to collect blubber without skin or muscle being careful to collect samples always from the same area, generally from the mid-thoracic region. Once the blubber has been examined the flaps can be separated from the carcass along the median sagittal line.

6.2 Skeletal muscle

Before removing it, the quality of the fascia and muscle on the body should be examined and all color, texture, thickness and abnormalities should be noted. Signs of hemorrhage, post mortem pooling of blood in vessels (hypostasis or post-mortem lividity) and bruising (hematoma) should all be noted. It is to be remembered that bruising generally result in a deep maroon to purple colour and gelatinous texture.

The large dorso-lateral muscle mass or epiaxial muscle spanning from the occipital ridge down to the tail stock can now be removed using the dorsal and lateral spinal processes as landmark boundaries for this muscle. It is opportune to trim away as much muscle as possible from the backbone and ribs. Samples of muscles for histology and contaminant analysis should be collected.

7 Internal examination

Once the external layers have been examined and removed the next step is the internal examination.

7.1. Removal of the scapula and pre-scapular lymph nodes

The pre-scapular lymph node must be located prior to the complete removal of the scapula, the oval to triangular shaped, beige to peach tissue located just underneath the cranial corner of the scapula proximal to the external ear. Normal lymph nodes throughout the body usually share the same characteristics: a well-defined oval shape, slightly firm texture, color is diffusely beige to peach with slight differentiation between the cortex and the medulla. If the tissue begins to vary from the homogenous peach to tan, it is indicative of a reaction. The size, shape, color and texture of the prescapular lymph nodes should be noted. Samples for histology, microbiology, molecular and accessory investigations should be collected.

The left scapula and appendage should now be removed by cutting through the connective tissue and muscles just underneath the bone. If the scapula is pulled ventro-laterally, reflecting it down, it should detach easily and a crackling sound as the connective tissues and muscles are being pulled and cut confirms that the incision is in the correct spot between the muscle groups.

Before cutting into the body cavity it is important to obtain uncontaminated bacterial and viral samples from the thoracic and abdominal cavities.

7.2 Opening the body cavity

In order to open the body cavity an incision should be made along the costal arch with the flat side of a knife or a scalpel keeping the tissue raised with tongs and leaving the muscle exposed the muscle. Once the peritoneal cavity has been penetrated, the incision should continue in a dorso-caudal direction first and in a caudo-ventral direction later following the muscular axis and moving towards the anus.

A sample of transudates, exudate or liquids, can now be collected with a sterile disposable syringe and can be described and weighed. The abdominal wall can then be folded over ventrally in order to complete the cranial and caudal incisions reaching the median sagittal line, arriving respectively at the xiphoid process and caudally at the anus. Once reaching the ano-genital region the pelvic rudiments can be recuperated dorsally and laterally to the anus in the abdominal wall and easily available in the male whose penis is anchored to the pelvic elements by two crura which are fused in the body of the penis to form a single corpus cavernous.

The organs in the abdominal cavity can now be examined and all its abnormalities (for example, ectopic spleens) can be verified. The intestine encumbers all of the peritoneal cavity and it is best to remove it before examining the other organs after collecting microbiological specimens and evaluating topographic variations of the organs. After having extracted the intestinal bundle using a scissors or the blade of knife, the mesentery should be cut at the point where it is inserted into the intestine in order to liberate the bowel loops. This operation will make it possible to observe the color of the mesentery and to reduce the pressure of the abdominal organs on the diaphragm making it possible to view it by lowering with a hand the stomach chambers and the liver.

The diaphragm is an elastic, expandable, thin, smooth textured dark brown muscular membrane inserted into the caudal ribs separating the thoracic cavity with the abdominal one. Note all variations in consistency and appearance. White streaks are frequent. Samples should be collected for histology.

7.3. Opening and examination of the thoracic cavity

The diaphragm should be punctured with a scalpel or scissors to evaluate the presence of negative intra-thoracic pressure (its absence is a sign of a pneumothorax, thoracic trauma, effusion or pneumonia) which can be verified by the presence of a sucking sound of air. The diaphragm can thus be separated from its insertion into the thoracic wall by resting the blade of the knife on the costal pleural surface and proceeding in a dorso-ventral direction from the spinal column to the xiphoid process following the costal profile.

To open the thoracic cavity, the cutter should start at the caudal end of the left rib cage and feel for the articulation between each individual rib and vertebrae. It is easy to separate the ribs from the costal cartilages without breaking any bones with the blade of the scalpel or a knife. While cutting, virology and microbiology samples and all liquids should be collected using a sterile syringe. Even chondro-sternal articulations can be cut to widen the window facilitating the operations pushing the sternum down. Beginning at the caudal ribs, the cutter can proceed to disarticulate the costo-vertebral articulations without breaking the bones and making the ribs rotate to favor the retrieval of the joints and the separation of the rib from the corresponding vertebra. The cutter should proceeds from rib to rib from the diaphragm towards the head maintaining a constant angle of the scalpel on the articulation and cutting the intercostal muscles in order to move and work on the single bones. Both pathologic states and old age can affect the way the joints disarticulate. Since the more cranial ribs present twin costo-vertebral articulation, the cutter must cut the first articulation and then proceed with the scalpel going down along the body of the bone until the second one is found and cut turning the blade in the direction of the animal's longitudinal axis.

The articular surfaces should be smooth and not granular. The cutter can feel with his hand if there are any fractures or bone alterations of the thoracic cage. No matter how labored and long this procedure may seem, it is the only way a skeleton be preserved for use in pathological bone investigations or for a museum collection or other educational uses.

Once the thoracic cage has been completely opened, the topography of the thoracic organs and any possible lesions, color alterations, adherences, fluids or particular odors can be appreciated. At this point the examiners can go on to evaluate the internal organs using a systematic approach. The organs can first be examined in situ and then extracted for further examination. The collection methodology is based on sampling requirements, the state of conservation of the exemplar, and personal preferences. Internal fluids such as those from the gastrointestinal tract must not be contaminated by other tissues.

7.4 The tongue, larynx and trachea

To extract the tongue connected to the pharynx, larynx and trachea, the cutter cuts the floor of the oral cavity with the blade of a knife following the medial side of the mandible extracting the tongue with his hand. Once the cutter has reached the pharynx and the hyoid bone which sustains the tongue, he must search for the chondral articulations severing them with a scalpel or knife keeping the bones integral for future donation to museums. It is possible to penetrate the pharynx with a hand and dislocate the larynx with a slight amount of traction. As already mentioned, the larynx is elongated in a dorso-cranial direction and is situated in the choanae permitting the separation between the airway and the food passages. The structures of the soft tissues of the short visceral space of the neck together with the esophagus should be separated using a firm traction and helping oneself with a cutting instrument. Once these are dislocated and extracted from their natural location, they appear as elongated, hard, short, whitish, flexible, tubular, slightly dorso-ventrally compressed organs formed by continuous rings.

The pharyngeal mucosa should be examined and possible color and appearance alterations of every lesion, foreign body or exudate should be noted. One penetrates with a scissors the epiglottis lumen continuing the cut on the dorsal side between the two arytenoids highlighting the pharyngeal tonsil and continuing to cut the tracheal wall until reaching the bronchial bifurcation. Luminal contents (foam, fluid, blood, puss), the appearance of the mucous and of the folds of the laryngeal tonsil (hyperemia, edema, hemorrhage, petechiae, erosions) must be examined. Samples should be collected for histology.

7.5 The thyroid and parathyroids

The thyroids, sitting ventrally and the cranial branches of trachea are rather difficult to locate and identify as their aspect and consistency are similar to that of smooth muscle (Fig. 3.34). The parathyroids are small, light colored tissue attached to the thyroid along the cranial margin of the thyroid and can aid in identifying the tissue correctly if found. The tissue must be examined externally and internally using serial cuts, and evaluating the form, dimensions, color and consistency. A sample in formalin for histology, microbiology, molecular and ancillary (toxicologic and molecular profiles of enzyme induction) investigations should be collected.

7.6 The thymus

The thymus is a large, lymphoid organ that is primarily found in neonates and some juveniles. It is situated at the base of the thoracic inlet, cranial to the anterior margin of the heart. The primary function of this organ is to generate T-cells. The thymus is absorbed with time after weaning, thus it is not usually visible in adult marine mammals. The tissue should be examined externally and internally. Its size, shape, color and texture should be noted. A sample in formalin for histology, microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations should be collected.

7.7 The tracheobronchial (TB) lymph node

The TB lymph node is located along the distal cranial ventral surface of the lung proximal to the bifurcation of the trachea. It can easily be located by reflecting the cranial lung tissue away from the cavity and palpating the connective tissue between the lung and anterior to the trachea bifurcation. This tissue should be identified and removed prior to removing the lung or trachea as it can easily be lost if there are no anatomical landmarks. The lymph node should be examined externally and internally by cutting it into a sandwich and describing the differences between the cortex

and the medulla as well as any other variations in size, shape, color and texture. A sample in formalin for histology, microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations should be collected.

7.8 Lungs

The lungs occupy the greater part of the thoracic cavity and are generally bright pink with a consistent sponge-like texture. Depending on its dimensions, it can be examined attached or detached from the trachea. The plural surface must be examined and the color pattern and texture noted and possible alterations in consistency can be found by palpation. Normal air-filled lung tissue bounces back immediately after being pressed with a linger (like a sponge) and float when placed in water or formalin. The internal organs should be examined using scissors to trace the trachea from the bifurcation along the bronchi and into the bronchioles of each lung. Note if there are any signs of fluid, froth, and/or parasites and describe the quantities and appearance.

Serial, parallel cuts perpendicular to the long axis of the body into the tissue should be made using a long knife and single sweeping movements to examine the parenchyma. The parenchyma should be examined and its color pattern and texture noted. A sample in formalin for histology, microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations should be collected from the cranial lobes of both lungs (four sampling sites).

7.9 Heart and vessels

It is best to examine the heart with the organ still in situ if the dimensions of the animal permit. If this is not possible the heart can be separated maintaining the roots of the vessels cutting the lung arteries and the aorta at least 6-10 cm from their starting points. The pericardium is to be observed and described first and any thickening, increase in liquid, exudate or the presence of gas bubbles within the pericardium vessels (important in freshly stranded animals) should be noted.

Once the pericardium has been removed the external surface of the heart can be observed. Abnormalities in dimension, appearance, color and consistency of every heart structure must be noted. Once the right ventricle has been identified scissors should be used to make a small opening in the cranial right atrium and cut down along the medial edge of the right ventricle down to the apex. The operator should continue cutting along the right ventricle side of the septum until this chamber joins the pulmonary artery and cut up through the vessel.

The left side of the heart can be examined using a knife or scissors and making a cut on the ventricular wall perpendicular to the septum from the apex to the base of the heart, cutting also the atrial wall. In this way the flaps of the mitral, the atrial valve, the atrial cavity, and the venous sinuses and the descending branch of the ventricle can be viewed. By cutting the atrial flap of the bicuspid inserting the point of the cutting instrument under it, one reaches the bulb of the aorta, exposing the origin of the coronary arteries above the semilunar and the aorta whose wall can be cut following the first bifurcations. Operators must look for signs of thrombi, endothelial plaques, whitish mineralization, aneurysms, or breaks and the consistency of the ductus arteriosus should be evaluated. The other alternative is to proceed as in the right part of the heart, by penetrating the atrium and following the coronary sulcus and the interventricular septum.

It is thus possible to evaluate the endocardium and to examine both chambers of the heart for the presence of nematodes or other abnormal material. The width of the ventricular chambers should be measured to verify their ratio (the normal ratio between left and right is 3-4:1 in adults and 2:1 in neonates or fetuses). Variations in width, thickness, appearance and consistency of the atrioventricular valves, which are normally homogeneously thin and slightly opaque, should be noted and described. Once the endocardium has been examined the muscle part can be evaluated by making bread-slice cuts, in particular in the subvalvular apparatus, in order to detect any variations in color, consistency, and to verify if there are any abscesses or granulomas. The right and left ventricles and the atria, septum, apex, atria and aorta should be sampled for histology.

7.10 The spleen

The shape and size of the spleen vary among cetacean species. The spleens of most dolphins are palm-sized, spherical and mottled dark purple to white with a smooth external texture. In other species it can be similar or smaller and

elongated. Normally the spleen is located close to the main stomach chamber on the left side. The organ can be removed by detaching it from the omentum (thin, web-like, connective tissue). The shape, dimensions and appearance both externally and internally should be described. Verify and note the presence of smaller, accessory spleens on the visceral side. The organ should be sampled for histology, microbiology, and molecular investigations.

7.11 The adrenal glands

The right and left adrenal glands are located just anterior to the cranial pole of each kidney and are attached to the dorsal abdominal wall. The adrenal glands are small, oblong, light maroon tissues. Locating and extracting the adrenals prior to removing the kidneys is highly recommended as they can be difficult to locate without an anatomical landmark. The adrenals can be removed by gasping and pulling the tissue away from the body wall and cutting the surrounding connective tissue. Before sectioning, each adrenal should be measured and weighed (length x width x depth). Each adrenal should be cut with parallel cuts perpendicular to the longest axis. When cut, a normal adrenal will present a distinct darkened center (medulla) with a lighter perimeter (cortex). All alterations in shape, dimensions, color and appearance of the external and internal tissue as well as in ratios regarding the cutting surfaces (cortex:medulla equal to 1:1) should be noted and described. The presence of cavities, cysts and hemorrhages should be noted and the organs should be sampled for histology and secondary investigations.

7.12 The kidneys and the ureters

The kidneys are maroon, ovoid tissues immediately evident when the abdominal cavity is opened and made up of numerous, clustered reniculi (miniature kidneys) attached to the caudal dorsal abdominal wall. The kidneys can be detached using traction against their connective tissue after having identified and isolated the adrenal glands endeavoring to maintain the links with the bladder and the entire urinary system examining them after having removed them from the carcass.

The external capsule should be examined for the presence of fluid, hemorrhage or gas bubbles and their color, thickness, and opacity should be described and noted. The capsule should be cut and using tongs the cutter should attempt to separate the capsule while evaluating the degree of adhesion and the presence of sub-capsular alterations. The dimension, size, external color and appearance of the kidneys should be examined and then these should be cut longitudinally like a sandwich to examine the internal structure. The presence of stones and the differentiation between the cortex and medulla as well as the medulla:cortex ratio within each reniculus should be evaluated (the normal ratio is equal to 1:2). Each reniculus should be well demarcated but clustered together within the kidney itself. Samples for contaminants, histology, and microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations should be collected.

7.13 The liver

Normally dark red, the liver is large and occupies a large part of the abdominal cavity adhering for the most part to the cupola of the diaphragm and covering the stomach. Once it has been separated from the abdominal organs and from the diaphragm together or after the gastrointestinal package, it is possible to examine the diaphragmatic and visceral surfaces of the organ and to note alterations in color, consistency and the sizes of the hepatic lobes. The organ should be weighed and the ratio with the weight of the rest of the carcass calculated: normally it is approximately 2-2.5%. Parallel cuts should be made of the parenchyma to detect any alterations in color and consistency in particular corresponding to lesions found externally. At the same time, the bile ducts should be examined for the presence of parasites. Samples for contaminants, histology, and microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations should be collected. Note that all cetaceans lack a gall bladder.

7.14 The pancreas

The pancreas is a peach colored, irregularly shaped, pyramidal, softer tissue that is attached to the mesentery and sits in the curve of the duodenum. It can be removed from the cavity by detaching it from the connective tissue and duodenum. Its size, shape, color and texture of the surface should be noted and described. The parenchyma should

be cut with two or three parallel cuts so that changes in color or texture can be noted. The ducts should be examined for parasites. Samples for histology, microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations should be collected.

7.15 The stomach chambers

The stomach of most odontocetes are composed of three chambers: the fore stomach, main stomach and the pyloric stomach. The omentum is the thin, net-like connective tissue that is attached to the visceral side of the stomach. To avoid contaminating the remaining tissues in the body cavity or losing contents, it is necessary to tie off both ends of the stomach prior to extracting it. A tight, secure knot should be made at the location of the attachment of the esophagus to the fore stomach. A second one should be made just below the base of the pyloric stomach where the small intestines begin. The stomach can be extracted from the carcass by cutting beyond both knots. The serosal (external) surface of the stomach should be examined for discoloration and lesions. A gastric pathology can generally be suspected when the peri-gastric lymph nodes attached to the stomach are noticeably enlarged. Samples for histology, microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations should be collected and a note about this should be made on the inventory list. Otherwise all excess attached tissue should be removed from the exterior of the stomach and it should be weighed.

Using a scalpel an incision should be made through the wall along the greater curvature of each stomach large enough to allow examination of the contents and the entire mucosal surface. Each compartment should be described as well as the composition of the stomach contents (fluid; whole or partially digested fish; fish bones; parasites; foreign objects) and their quantities, color and appearance. Before going on to further investigations, a sample of contents must be collected for biotoxins. The remaining contents can be emptied and rinsed into a sieve to ensure solid material is not lost and is thoroughly examined. All foreign objects must be saved for human interaction evaluation.

Once empty, the mucosa of the stomach should be examined and the color and texture of the mucosa of each compartment must be noted and described. The mucosa of the fore stomach is composed of squamous tissue and is usually white. The wall of the main stomach is stratified and usually thicker than that of the fore stomach and the mucosa is usually dark red. The pyloric stomach tends to be thin walled, glandular, and the mucosa is pink or stained (yellow) with bile. The presence of ulcers, areas of discoloration and other abnormalities should be noted and described. The stomach should be weighed empty and samples of each compartment should be taken for histology.

7.16 The intestines

Examination of the intestines is preferably left until the end of the necropsy, even if it has already been extracted, in order not to contaminate the other organs. There is not a clear demarcation of the small and large intestines and as such the two can be examined together.

The transition from the colon to the rectum is indicated by the presence of a rectal lymph node near to the intestinal wall. It is to be remembered that cetaceans have anal tonsils near to the mucous-epithelial tissue junction near the anus.

The serosal surfaces of all the pieces should be examined for the presence of signs of hemorrhage, discoloration or parasites. The intestinal lumen can be inspected by making five to ten longitudinal cuts about 20-30 cm long. The colour, consistency, and appearance of the contents, the diameter of the lumen, the color and the appearance of the enteric mucosa and the wall thickness should be noted and described. Samples should be taken for histology. Feces should be collected for biotoxin analysis.

7.17 Mesenteric lymph nodes

Once called the pseudo-pancreas, the mesenteric lymph nodes are gray to cream colored finger-like connective tissue bands that are centrally attached to the mesentery. The lymph nodes should be removed from the mesentery and their form, dimensions, color and consistency should be noted and described. As these lymph nodes tend to have a more defined cortex and medulla, all of their parts and structures should be described. Samples for histology, microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations should be collected.

7.18 The bladder

The bladder is a small, light pink organ that is found along the central body wall. It may appear as a thick walled, muscular organ, but if distended with urine, the walls may be thinned and semi-translucent. Before removing the bladder from the body, the contents should be extracted using a sterile syringe and a medium gauge needle. If none are available, the attempt should be made to clamp the bladder before removing it and to recuperate its contents without dissipating or contaminating them. The color, consistency and amount of urine must be described. Any stones detected must be described. Once the bladder is removed it should be examined internally by cutting along its length to expose the mucosal surface whose color and texture must be described. A sample of the cranial tip of the bladder should be taken for histology.

7.19 The reproductive tract

Female: Ovaries and uterus

The uterus and ovaries can most easily be identified by following the reproductive tract from the vagina to the uterus where it bifurcates to a right and left horn, each ending at the attachment of the ovaries. The uterus is a tan to pink tissue that varies in size and thickness depending on the maturity of the animal and its reproductive history. The size, shape, color and texture of the external and internal surfaces of the organ should be noted and described. The vagina and the lumen of the vagina should be examined and alterations in the mucous and/or the presence of lesions, foreign bodies or exudate should be noted.

If a fetus is present but is too small for a sufficient individual necropsy, the abdomen should be incised and microbiology and molecular samples should be taken and the fetus should be preserved whole in formalin. If the lung tissue floats in formalin or water this signifies that bronchiole expansion of the fetal lungs has taken place.

Off-white spindle-shaped ovaries are attached to the end of each uterine horn and their dimension, shape, color and appearance should be described. A mature ovary possesses random darkened notches or scars (corpora albicans) which signify previous ovulations. The ovary of a pregnant female possesses a corpus luteum or a large yellow mass attached to the ovary. Before examining the organs internally the ovaries should be measured and weighed (length x depth x height), the scars should be counted, and the presence or absence of a corpus luteus should be recorded. The tissue should be examined internally and its color and texture should be recorded. Both the uterus and ovaries should be sampled for life history, histology, microbiology molecular and ancillary investigations.

Male: The testis and penis

The elongated off-white paired testes are located within the caudal abdominal cavity along the ventral wall, posterior to the kidneys and near to the midline. The testes (with the epididymis attached) should be removed from the body and measurements (length x depth x height) should be taken and the organs should be weighed. The size, shape, color and texture should be examined internally and externally. The epididymis should be sectioned to evaluate the presence/absence of sperm. Samples of each testis should be obtained for life history, histology, microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations. The penis should be examined externally and evaluated for the presence/absence of discharge, papillomas or other lesions.

7.20 The central nervous system

As the brain is the most fragile and easily disrupted tissue in the entire body, extreme care should be taken when it is being removed from the skull. Before removing it, a sample of the cerebrospinal fluid should be taken for cytology and culture. To do so the overlying soft tissue at the back of the head and neck must be removed to gain access to the atlanto-occipital joint. Then a sterile needle and syringe should be used to collect the clear, viscous fluid.

The head should first be detached from the body to safely remove the brain. This can be done by cutting behind the blowhole down to the joint between the skull and cervical vertebrae, and then completing the cut ventrally. Then the articular capsule of the atlanto-occipital joint can be cut severing transversally the spinal cord, the meninges, and the ligaments in the vertebral canal. It is then possible to remove all excess skin, blubber, muscle and connective tissue

from around the dorsal and caudal skull. Using a stryker saw or a hacksaw, transversal cuts can be made both to the left and to the right on the occipital condyles, then going up laterally to the cranium and crossing dorsally the cranial vault just posterior to the marked transverse ridge at the apex of the skull. It is important to be extremely careful and to fully penetrate the bone while avoiding contact with the brain. A chisel should be carefully placed in the incision between the cut bone and then turning the instrument in more than one place until the last bone fragments become detached and the skull comes away in one piece. Once again, the operation must be carried out cautiously and being careful not to penetrate the encephalic tissue and not to use edges or borders as levers so that the bony shelf (the tentorium cerebelli) does not damage the underlying tissue. Using their fingers, the cutters should try to separate the meninges from the cranium and to work under the brain to sever the cranial nerves. At times inversion of the head allows the brain to gently descend into the palm of the cutter's hand.

The brain should not be handled excessively. The external surface and any asymmetries of any of the structures (right and left cerebral hemispheres, cerebellum and brain stem) should be observed. The color, texture and presence of parasites or lesions should be noted and described. Samples should be taken for microbiology, molecular and ancillary investigations. The brain in toto should be placed in formalin for histology. It should be kept immersed in the fixative solution for an hour at -20° to achieve consolidation of the encephalic mass and cutting it in transversal parallel sections 1 cm thick permits a rapid and correct fixation of the nervous tissue.

Once the brain has been removed, the pituitary which is situated in a recessed bone at the base of the brain next to the optic chiasm, is exposed. It can be recuperated by lifting it out with tongs and/ utilizing a scalpel.

8 Samples management

The necropsy of a stranded cetacean is carried out to gain further insight into the species and into the cause of death. As a necropsy produces a series of gross observations, these can be utilized to establish not only the cause of death but, at times, also the cause of the stranding. Subsequent investigations such as histopathology are part of this process and can help to formulate the final diagnosis. Laboratories can also screen specific tissues for a wide array of potential pathogenic agents. It is important in any case that while meeting the objectives of ordinary screening regimens, samples are taken to ensure that a full differential diagnosis can be attained. The entire process requires a precise sampling protocol. A necropsy sample inventory list is necessary to ensure that all the samples needed for the planned analyses have been taken and that the quantity of tissue/material needed and the opportune modality of taking and storing samples have been provided for/organized. It is thus of utmost importance that all involved understand the priority that should be giving to collecting samples. As a general rule, when in doubt, it is better to take unnecessary samples which can be disposed of at a later time. The table at the end resume sampling and preservation for each investigation it is possible to carry out on stranded cetaceans.

8.1 Sampling for Histopathology

Histopathology is the microscopic examination of tissue samples which leads to the diagnosis of disease. Histopathology is most effective when collected from the freshest (code 2) carcasses. Decomposition significantly alters the structures of tissue cells and diminishes the value of histopathological investigations. Only a limited reading can thus be expected from carcasses of later codes.

Two sets of samples should be collected for histological analysis: one for analysis and the other to archive. As a rule, the tissues should be fixed using a ratio of 10:1 of 10% neutral-buffered formalin to tissue. A lower ratio will prevent adequate fixation causing the tissues to decompose. It is helpful to rinse excessively bloody samples with a light stream of water to allow for more efficient fixation.

When sampling tissue for histological analysis, only a small 1 to 2 cubic cm sized section of the tissue is required in view of the fact that formalin penetrates at a velocity of 0.8-1 cm/24 hours, a parameter that varies depending on the tissue and the quantity of blood that are present. If the tissue is larger, it is helpful to make one or two parallel incisions to allow the formalin to adequately penetrate and to fix the tissue.

It is important to avoid altering the surface layers or mucosa of tissues intended for histology as these could cause artifacts that will be evident under the microscope. The best way to ensure that the highest tissue quality is submitted for histology is to trim tissues on a cutting board with a sharp knife or scalpel and to avoid using scissors.

Plastic, wide-mouth, screw-top jars are preferred for storing histology samples. Ideally the fixative should be changed after the first hour of exposure.

The list of histological samples includes the greater part of all of the tissues. Unless an abnormality is observed in lymph nodes in other locations throughout the body, only the tracheo-bronchial, prescapular, and mesenteric lymph nodes are suggested for histology. If tissues appear abnormal, it is important to obtain a single section that includes both normal and abnormal tissue. All samples should be clearly labeled. Representative samples from all sections (caudal, cranial, medial and distal) of larger, major tissues (i.e. Lung and liver) should be collected. Any additional tissues collected for histology should be listed at the bottom of the inventory list.

8.2 Sampling for cytology

Simple impression smears can furnish real time feedback to help formulate possible hypotheses. Impression smears are collected by pressing a clean microscope slide on a cut surface of interest, leaving it to dry, and staining it with one of the common staining protocols. It can then be examined under a microscope, if available.

8.3 Sampling for virology

For most virology screening protocols, the basic reference samples are: serum, lung, liver, spleen, lymph nodes and brain. Additional samples can include skin, muco-cutaneous junctions or the oral cavity, rectum, and urogenital tract. If a fetus is present, the same samples outlined above should be collected, as well as the adrenal glands and placenta. Tissues to collect and suggested storage media with regard to Morbillivirus screening tests are itemized on the sample inventory list provided in the appendix. For other specific tests, the reference laboratory should be contacted for the tissues they require and the proper storage protocols.

The most accurate virology results are derived from code 2 carcasses. Code 3 carcasses can, however, be successfully screened for virology by Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) analysis. Fresh tissue should be stored in sealed, sterile whirl-pack bags and transported on ice to the receiving laboratory as soon as possible. If fresh tissues will not be sent for immediate analysis, these should be stored at -80°. Virus isolation from frozen samples can be detected through PCR. Samples should be transported to the receiving laboratory on dry ice.

In some cases, fixed tissue can also be utilized for specific antigen detection by means of immunohistochemistry (IHC). Viruses can also be detected morphologically using electron microscopy.

8.4 Sampling for microbiology

Culture Swabs: it is of utmost importance that the necropsy unit be in agreement with the microbiology laboratory about the nature of the swabs and storage and transportation media to use to ensure the best results and the greatest diagnostic capacity for aerobic and anaerobic bacteria. Modalities guaranteeing sterility while samples are being taken are essential to prevent contamination of tissues for microbiology culture swabs. Samples of internal organs should be carried out in situ. A new sterile stainless steel scalpel blade can be sterilized using a butane torch and the intended incision site can be flamed for one to two seconds. Then a single straight incision can be made to the tissue or cavity. The culture swab can then be inserted into the incision and rotated to facilitate imbibition. Fluids can be aspirated into a sterile syringe and microbiology, cytology and PCR cultures can be undertaken. Swabs should then be placed in appropriate transportation containers to decrease the chances of contamination and if possible sent for analysis to the laboratory on the same day. If the analysis must wait until the next day, the swabs should be stored at room temperature.

Results from culture swabs should be interpreted with caution as bacteria tend to multiply and travel through multiple organs soon after death. For this reason, culture swabs are preferably taken from fresh carcasses (codes 1-3) unless an unusual lesions is observed in a carcass of a later code.

Tissue samples and PCR: PCR analysis can be utilized to identify the pathogenic agents found in the tissue samples of carcasses of varying conditions. Target tissues for these analyses can vary but generally include: liver, kidney, lung, spleen, pancreas, gonads, brain, lymph nodes, conjunctiva, and muco-cutaneous junctions of the oral and urogenital tracts. It is of utmost importance to consult with laboratory technicians in advance to come to an agreement about the tissues to sample. Only a small amount of tissue which can be collected in centrifuge tubes is needed. Sterile dry swabs can also be used to collect DNA for analysis. The swabs should then be placed in collections tubes. Swabs and tissues should be stored at -80° C.

8.5 Sampling for parasitology

The collection of parasites is important not only for species identification and documentation of specific parasites in marine animals, but they may also harbor pathogens and could be useful in viral isolation, such as morbillivirus. After fully rinsing the dead parasites with saline, these can be stored in ethanol at room temperature. If an in-house parasitologist is available and able to examine the parasites while they are still alive within a short time, samples should be stored in saline. The parasitologist can, in any case, furnish further information.

8.6 Sampling for toxicology

Toxins and other chemicals that exist in the marine environment, be they naturally occurring or human produced, can be ingested by marine life and incorporated into their tissues. Contaminants can bio-accumulate in the tissues of marine life during the lifetime of the animal and, as they are the top of the food chain, marine mammals have the potential to retain high levels of toxins in their tissues. High contaminant levels can have numerous, negative impacts on the health of marine mammals, including compromising their immune system and affecting their behavior and/or development through hormonal disruption. Sampling tissues for the presence of contaminants can, therefore, lead to a better understanding of the factors involved in the deterioration of the general health conditions of these animals. The tissues collected for the analysis of contaminant levels are blubber, muscle, liver and kidneys. The laboratory may require that the skin and muscle attached to the blubber be removed. Each tissue section should weigh at least 100 grams and be wrapped completely in acetone washed aluminum foil and placed in ziplock bag and stored in a freezer at -20°C.

8.7 Sampling for biotoxins

Biotoxins are naturally occurring toxins produced by dinoflagellates and other marine algae that accumulate in animals and which are transmitted by the food chain. Fish and invertebrates contain biotoxins which, when ingested in large quantities, prove to be harmful in larger predators such as marine mammals. The most frequent algal biotoxins include domoic acid, brevetoxin, and saxitoxin, which are all neurotoxins. Biotoxin samples should be collected when an algal bloom is suspected in the surrounding area and/or the live animal exhibited neurological symptoms.

Biotoxin samples include tissues and fluids such as: liver, kidney, serum, aqueous humor, stomach contents, intestinal contents, feces, urine. Tissue samples can be stored in plastic, zip-lock bags. Stomach and intestinal contents, feces and urine can be collected in appropriate sized vials, usually 10-20 ml. Five to ten ml of urine and one to two ml of aqueous humor – the thick, watery substance that is located in front of the lens of the eye – should be collected using sterile syringes and needles and stored in appropriate sized vials. These samples should be stored at -80°C unless being shipped immediately on dry ice.

8.8 Life history and genetics

On the basis of data that is collected and information that is registered it is possible to evaluate the biologic parameters of the exemplar being investigated. Age, genetics, trophic position, habitat, and the reproductive status of a stranded

animal can be assessed by collecting teeth, skin, stomach contents, gonads and skeleton. This information not only helps us to understand the dynamics of the specific exemplar and its species but it can also aid us to interpret other findings such as those concerning histopathology and contaminants. More can also be learned with regard to the impact and vectors of potential threats to the marine environment at large.

- Life history data

- Four to six teeth from the mid-lower left mandible of an odontocete should be collected and placed in a ziplock bag; half of these should be frozen and the other half should place in formalin.
- Any discharge from the mammary glands should be collected in a tube and frozen at -20°C.
- Sections of both gonads of both sexes and the uterus of the female should be fixed separately from all other tissues intended for histology clearly labeling the right and left sections.
- If a fetus is present and not large enough for a separate necropsy, the entire body should be placed in formalin.
- Collect the stomach contents and freeze it at -20°C for analysis. Diet scientists generally request an unopened stomach but this may compromise microbiology analyses.
- The entire skeleton should be conserved for osteological analysis, cleaning and museum archiving. It should be stored at -20° C until it can be cleaned.

- Genetics

Two, full thickness skin samples should be taken from each animal for genetic analysis. One sample should be conserved entire in a ziplock bag at -20° while the other can be diced into 1 mm cubic pieces and placed in 20% dimethylsulfoxide (DMSO) solution.

8.9 Labelling and grouping

It is wisest to use a double labeling system so that there is a legible, complete label available both within the container and another outside of it. The one on the inside should be written on water proof material in indelible ink. Each label should indicate the animal’s field number, genus, and species ID, its sex, the date of death and/or stranding, its conservation code, how it died (use E for euthanasia and D for natural death), the place it was stranded and the tissue type. For histology samples it is possible to attach the label directly to the container or to write the information with an indelible pen on a dry surface.

Once the samples have been collected and placed in appropriately labeled containers, these should be grouped together and placed in larger containers according to the type of storage they require; frozen samples taken for life history or genetics can, for instance, be placed in larger containers and labeled as life history and genetics. All samples for contaminants can be grouped together in larger containers, etc.

8.10 Tracking Samples

It is extremely important that all samples archived or sent for analysis are well documented in view of the fact that these animals are to be considered property of the state and are protected by the Convention of Washington.

DIAGNOSTIC INVESTIGATION	ORGAN OR TISSUE	COLLECTION MODE	CONSERVATION MODE
Virology	Lung	2 cm3 of aseptic sample	Freeze, -20°C
	Liver		
	Spleen		
	Brain		

	Intestine Kidney Muscle Placenta and fetal tissue		
Microbiology	Lung Liver Heart Blowhole Spleen Kidney Brain Other pathological tissue	Aseptic sample or swab	Refrigerated, +4°C
Brucella spp.	Spleen Lymph node Blubber lesions Prostate Testicles Epididymus Uterus Placenta	Aseptic sample	Refrigerated, +4°C
Hystopathology	All organs and lesions	1 cm ³ of tissue	10% Formalin
Parasitology	Parasites		70% Ethanol
	Intestine Liver Lung Organs with parasites	5 cm ³ of aseptic sample	Freeze, -20°C
Age estimate	Gonads	At least one	10% Formalin
Diet and life history	stomach content	Plastic box	Freeze, -20°C
Serology	Blood	From right ventricle with a sterile syringe	Spin-dry the blood at 3000 rpm and freeze the serum at -20°C
Contaminants	Muscle Fat tissue Liver Spleen	15x20 cm of aseptic sample	Freeze, -20°C
Algal biotoxins	Stomach content Urine Faeces	Plastic box	Freeze, -20°C

Life history and morphometric studies	Skeleton, skull		Freeze, -20°C
Genetic	Muscle	1 cm ³ of aseptic sample	Freeze, -20°C

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Appendix III - NECROPSY FORM

Event Info
Stranding Date: _____
Recovery Date: _____
Euthanized / Died
Date : _____
Necro Date & Time: _____
Storage Prior to Necropsy: _____
Stranding Location: _____

Lat/Long: _____ N/ _____ W

Animal Info
Sex: M F CBD
Length: _____ cm / in / ft
Weight: _____ lbs / Kg
Pup / Calf / Young / Sub-adult / Adult
Condition at Stranding: 1 2 3 4 5
Condition at Necropsy: 1 2 3 4 5
Human Interaction: Yes / No / CBD / NE
Mass Stranding: Yes / No
Animals: _____

CARCASS DISPOSITION:

HISTORY:

COMMENTS:

Necropsy Observations: Please note general observations of color, condition, textures, etc. even when utilizing NA= not applicable, NE= not examined, NSF= no significant findings, NVL= no visible lesions. List weights (g) next to each organ examined.

EXTERNAL EXAM

Body Condition: Robust 5 - Normal 4 - Moderate 3 - Thin 2 - Emaciated 1

Skin / Hair Coat (color, condition):

Wounds / Scars:

Lesions:

Parasites:

Nostrils / Blowhole:

Mouth (tongue, teeth condition, ulcers) / Mucous membranes (color)

Eyes (discharge, color, ruptures):

Ears:

Genital slit / anus:

Umbilicus: Pink Open Healed:

INTERNAL EXAM**MUSCOLO/SKELETAL SYSTEM**

Blubber:

Muscle:

Diaphragm:

Skeletal:

CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

Pericardium:

Heart:

Vessels:

PULMONARY SYSTEM

Trachea:

Bronchi:

Lungs (colour, condition, edema, congestion, consolidation, granulomas, emphysema, lesions):

(R)

(L)

GASTROINTESTINAL SYSTEM

Esophagus:

Stomach (contents, ulcers, mucosa, parasites):

Weight Full: _____ Weight Empty: _____

Small Intestine:

Large Intestine:

Colon:

Omentum, Mesentery, Peritoneum:

Liver (colour, congestion, lesions, size):

Gall Bladder / Bile Duct / Pancreaticoduodenal Duct (colour, amount):

Pancreas:

LYMPHATIC SYSTEM

Thymus:

Spleen:

Scapular Lymph Node:

Tracheobronchial Lymph Node:

Mesenteric Lymph Node:

Other Lymph (list location):

URINARY/REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEMS

ENDOCRINE SYSTEM

CNS

Thyroid:

Adrenals:

(R) L x W x H cm:

(L) L x W x H cm:

Other:

Kidneys (reniculi differentiation, colour, condition):

(R)

(L)

Bladder:

Testes / Ovaries: Immature / Mature

(R) L x W x H cm:

(L) L x W x H cm:

Mammary glands:

Uterus / Cervix / Vagina:

Pregnant? : Y N NA (male)

Spinal Cord:

Brain:

Pterygoid Sinuses:

OTHER FINDINGS

Thoracic Cavity:

Abdominal Cavity:

Head:

Internal Parasites (location, type, number):

Differential Diagnosis from Gross Exam:

**Appendix IV
NECROPSY FORM FOR HUMAN INTERACTION**

1. GENERAL INFORMATION				
N. ID			Species	
Sex	Length		Examiner	
Cause of death			Date of death	
Location of necropsy examination			Date of exam	
Video	YES	NO	Photo	YES NO
Conservation Code			Fresh o frozen	
1	2	3	4	5
Note				

ND: Not Determined – NE: Not Evaluable

2. EXTERNAL EXAM				
a. Body condition				
Emaciated	Not emaciated		ND	NE
b. Signs of fishing net or lines. (indicate if YES, NO, ND, NV for each area and in the positive case describe the lesion)				
Head	Dorsal fin			
Pectoral fin left	Pectoral fin right			
Caudal peduncle	Other			
c. Presence of fishing nets on the animal				
	YES			NO
Fishing nets have been preserved?				
	YES			NO
d. Penetrating wounds				
YES	NO	ND	NE	
Describe gunshot wounds, puncture wounds, from harpoon, etc.				
e. Mutilations				
YES	NO	ND	NE	
Describe cuts, tears, cracks in the body wall, missing appendages, etc.				
f. Hemorrhages and hematomas				

2. EXTERNAL EXAM			
YES	NO	ND	NE
Describe extension and area.			
g. Post-mortem damage from scavengers and opportunists			
YES	NO	ND	NE
Describe extension and area.			

3. INTERNAL EXAM				
a. Sub-epidermal haemorrhages				
YES	NO	ND	NE	
Describe extension and area.				
b. Fractures				
YES	NO	ND	NE	
Describe.				
c. Content of airway and lung				
AIR	FLUID	FOAM	ND	NE
Describe lungs' appearance (heavy, consolidated areas, colour variations, etc.) and airway's content.				
d. Stomach content				
Describe stomach content, amount, presence of parasites and foreign bodies.				
Stored in frozen		YES	NO	
e. Histopathology		YES	NO	
f. Presence of macroscopically visible lesions				
YES	NO	ND	NE	
Describe.				
g. DIAGNOSTIC HYPOTHESIS:				

**Appendix V
STANDARD SAMPLES**

	Standard Samples						
	Life History	Genetics	Contam.	Histo.	Morbilli	Brucella	Biotox
Tissue	(Frozen or fixed)	(Frozen &/or DMSO)	(Foil wrapped and frozen)	(10% Formalin)	(Frozen)	(Frozen)	(Frozen)
Adrenal (R)	///	///	///		///	///	///
Adrenal (L)	///	///	///		///	///	///
Aqueous humor	///	///	///		///	///	
Bladder	///	///	///		///	///	///
Blood/Serum	///	///	///		///	///	
Blubber	///	///			///	///	///
Brain	///	///	///				///
Colon	///	///	///		///	///	///
Diaphragm	///	///	///		///	///	///
Esophagus	///	///	///		///	///	///
Feces	///	///	///		///	///	
Heart	///	///	///		///	///	///
Intestine	///	///	///		///	///	///
Kidney (R)	///	///			///		
Kidney (L)	///	///			///		
Liver	///	///			///		
Lung (R)	///	///	///				///
Lung (L)	///	///	///				///
Mesenteric Lymph.	///	///	///				///
Milk/Mammary Discharge		///	///		///	///	
Muscle	///				///	///	///
Oral Mucosa	///	///	///		///	///	///
Ovary		///	///		///		///

Pancreas	///	///	///		///		///
Prescapular Lymph.	///	///	///				///
Skin	///		///		///	///	///
Spleen	///	///	///				///
Stomach	///	///	///		///	///	///
Stomach Contents		///	///		///	///	
Teeth		///	///		///	///	///
Testis		///	///		///		///
Thyroid	///	///	///		///	///	///
Trachea	///	///	///		///	///	///
Tracheobronchial Lymph.	///	///	///				///
Urine	///	///	///		///	///	
Uterus		///	///		///		///

Appendix VI
LIST OF EQUIPMENT FOR NECROPSY ON THE FIELD

Here below is a complete list of instruments and equipment, besides individual protection tools (overall, gloves, glasses and facemasks, possibly disposable). Those items considered indispensable are written in bold form.

- First aid kit with multiple small and large bandages and disinfectant;
- Kit for severe injuries including large compression bandages, tourniquets, and shock treatments; eyewash canisters containing sterile solution; thermal blankets;
- blade guards;
- necropsy jumpsuit (canvas and disposable kinds);
- a portable GPS;
- Digital camera (w/ disc space for at least 100 images);
- A video camera and video tape for 8 hours;
- Photo ID board to insert in all photo images;
- 2- metric tapes, 30 m long;
- A portable blackboard to write out communications/data;
- 30 m of 2 cm braided line;
- 30 m of 1 cm line;
- 1 very heavy (10cm wide) nylon towing strap;
- 4-6 high quality knives w/ 30 cm blades;
- 4-6 high quality knives w/ 20 cm blades;
- 4-6 high quality knives w/ 15 cm blades;
- 2 diamond "flat" steels;
- 2 normal "draw through" knife sharpeners;
- 2 ball shears or large boning shears;
- 4 30 cm metal meat hooks;
- 4 15 cm metal meat hooks;
- 4 n.4 scalpel handles and a box of blades;
- 4 large rat-tooth forceps;
- 4 small forceps;
- 2-4 15 cm plastic rulers;
- 2 30 cm plastic rulers;
- 2 plastic "turkey basters" for collecting urine and fecal samples;
- a meter long bow saw used for trimming tree branches;
- aerobic and anaerobic swabs;
- 100 tyvek labeling tags;
- Fine and large point indelible ink markers;
- Permanent ink pens;
- Pencils for recording data on datasheets and cassettes;
- Some 5 liter plastic containers to wash the jumpsuits;
- 2 rolls of scotch tape;
- Heavy garbage bags;
- 2 large plastic cutting boards to cut and photograph tissues;
- One box each of large, medium and small latex gloves;
- 4 pairs of fish cutting gloves in each of the above sizes;
- Boots, overalls and rain gear
- 2 torches;
- 5 medium to large coolers: 2 for dry equipment storage; 2 for tissue containment on site and during transport; one for food cooler for drinks and food
- A large plastic transport box for rain gear and boots;
- A large plastic transport box for plastic trash bags and ziplock bags;
- Soap and scrub brushes for cleaning;
- Safety glasses and facemasks;
- 20 litre container of 10% buffered formalin with pour spigot;

- 10 litre container of 95% alcohol;
- 2 bread box size waterproof plastic boxes for gross tissue collection;
- 2 packages of extra-large ziploc 5 liter bags;
- 4 packages of large ziplock 1 liter bags;
- 6 packages of medium ziplock .5 liter bags;
- 10 packages of small ziplock .1 liter bags;
- 2 packages of ziplock bags for macroscopic samples;
- Hito cassettes;
- 10 20 cc plastic syringes;
- 5 50 cc plastic syringes;
- Roll of aluminum foil;

ANNEX 3

COMMON DATA COLLECTION FOR ALIVE STRANDINGS

Sandro Mazzariol
DVM, PhD

One of the expectations arise during the joint ACCOBAMS/PELAGOS workshop on common transboundary procedures on alive animals organized in Monaco in 2014 (October 29th-30th) is a clear need of capacity building to create a common sense and common strategy through specific trainings and exchange of experiences and information.

Since the experience with alive animals are limited to few cases per year and, in most of the countries of the ACCOBAMS area, there are no established protocols or skilled personnel, sharing of procedures and guidelines built on the experience of rescue teams or experts has been considered fundamental in order to increase knowledge on this delicate topic. For this reason, the first step towards a common approach should be the circulation of information on strandings involving alive cetaceans. Data and information exchange could be done on the basis of a common way to collect them. These feelings has been discussed also with ASCOBAMS and IWC and further cooperation among these International Agreements have been recommended

The main aim of this document is a first standardization of data collection in case of cetaceans stranded alive within the ACCOBAMS area. These information should be compared and assess also with ASCOBAMS and IWC with the main goal of ameliorate and share internal procedures in case of live animals strandings and to create a common database where it should be possible to compare practices, approaches and results. When other international agreements will define their own procedure, the present standardize approach could be revise.

1. Preliminary information

In order to establish which are main data and samples to collect during a stranding involving alive cetaceans, we should think to the main steps in the management of this kind of events. Environmental and logistic factors (during stranding, rehabilitation and release efforts), features of the species involved, results of a physical examination on the stranded cetacean stranded and its clinical parameters should at least collected. More in detail, the previously mentioned items should be resume in a proper triage matrix in order to facilitate the decision process and define the final destiny of the stranded animal (release, rehabilitation or euthanasia) with the possible follow-up.

The triage procedure should be implemented for any country under veterinarian expert supervision and it should be applied only by trained personnel.

1. Logistic: several logistic factors including the availability of means of transportation, weather conditions, features of the stranding site and chances of rehabilitation and release must be taken into consideration. Human safety in the rescue operations must in any case be guaranteed. International guidelines and conventions recommend that all efforts should be directed to release the animal rather than attempting prolonged rehabilitation which could be a useless dispersion of energy and resources making later liberation impossible as the animal has become conditioned or no longer accustomed to life in nature. Lacking of trained veterinarians, volunteers and/or facilities impair any rehabilitation effort and possible choices could be limited to an immediate release or euthanasia. Also the absence of a post-release monitoring is a limiting factor.
2. Stranded animal information: it is important to know how long the specimen has been stranded, the

species involved, and the subject's physiological features, as all these details may influence the outcome of rescue attempts. Knowing these parameters may help responders to select the animals with higher chances of a successful release. Independent juvenile and young adults of small dimensions are good candidates since they are easy to move and to transport and respond to veterinary procedures. Coastal species certainly have more chances in respect to pelagic ones. Large size cetaceans could lay for shorter period on the shore due to circulatory impairment and subsequent hypoxic changes. In cases of mass strandings and mass mortalities, rescuers should use even greater caution in releasing single individuals to avoid further strandings of the same subject or to avoid transmitting infective agents to wild animals possibly responsible for the event.

3. **Physical examination:** the clinical examination for cetaceans does not differ greatly from the clinical evaluation carried out on terrestrial mammals; it should be performed by a veterinarian.

a. **General examination:** before carrying out the other parts of the examination, the veterinarian should observe the exemplar closely to evaluate its general physical condition and how it reacts to the environment, human exemplars, and other members of its species (if there should be any). Any external signs as well as the animal's attitude towards the external world should be evaluated. Nutritional status (i.e. malnutrition and cachexia), any skin lesions (i.e. wounds and traumas) and mucous membranes (possible inflammatory discharges and hemorrhages) changes should be reported.

b. **Buoyancy:** If the animal is in the water or has been observed while it was in the water, it is possible to note if there are problems with floating and/or swimming. In particular it is important to note if floating appears to be normal taking into consideration the surface during both the apneic and inspiration phases and during rest. An increase in the buoyancy is generally the consequence of an accumulation of gas (intestinal bloating, pneumothorax etc.). Impairment in swimming is generally associated to a reduction in lung capacity. Another parameter to evaluate is equilibrium and possible rotation respect the longitudinal axis.

c. **Behavior:** behavioral alterations may not be relevant at first glance unless the subject is in the water with others of its species or if it is compared with animals being rehabilitated. In the case of stranded animals, these should be evaluated in relation to their behavior towards humans and towards other members of their species and, above all, in relation to potential risks for operators. The animal's attitude toward the water and the beach should be evaluated; the exemplar, could, for example, appear lethargic or reactive. An ill animals may seem to be resting. It is important to note if the animal seems bright and alert or depressed and unresponsive.

d. **Clinical Evaluation:** once the exemplar's life history data has been collected and a general and behavior evaluation has been made, the physical part of the examination should be carried out and biological fluids for collateral examinations should be collected even if there are no signs indicating pathological states. These operations should be carried out as quickly as possible to avoid stressing the animal even further. The appearance of the mucous membranes, an assessment of main reflexes and muscular tone, associated the animal's breathing rate should be evaluated and reported. Temperature should be assessed in order to evaluate any relevant changes due to stranding or ongoing pathological condition. Respect to terrestrial mammals palpation of lymph nodes and heart's auscultation is limited due to their anatomy.

e. **Collected Samples:** blood samples can provide useful information about living, stranded exemplars and should be taken, whenever possible, and sent to the reference laboratory; the results may be useful when decisions about releasing the exemplar are being made. Even if there is little time to collect the samples and to have them analyzed in cases in which a healthy cetacean is released immediately, laboratory results can in any case be of retrospective value.

Samples from the blowhole are taken with the intention of carrying out culture tests and cytological examinations which can be conducted indirectly by positioning agar plates over the operculum or taking

biological material with swabs. This kind of sampling makes it possible to evaluate the conditions of the upper airways although it does not provide extensive information about the entire respiratory system. Other samples that should be collected are those of urine, feces and milk.

Further information and data useful to be collected shared are those related to any diagnosis coming from the diagnostic procedure, results of any related therapy and the destiny of the animal after the triage and rehabilitation efforts. If any, the outcomes of a post-release monitoring should be collected in order to understand the success of different approaches. Specific protocols and procedures namely dedicated to

- . first aid and stabilization of the animal/s
- . diagnostic and laboratory analyses
- . therapeutic and euthanasic procedures
- . movement and transportation

should be implemented in any country according to national and/or EU legislation involving the supervision of expert veterinarians and biologists. International mentors and existing guidelines (i.e. British Divers Marine Life Rescue and NOAA protocols - listed in Annex I) could help in preparing these documents. Best practices and guidelines prepared by International Agreements (IWC, ACCOBAMS and ASCOBAMS) to support their implementation in each country could be useful.

2. Common data collection

Similarly to stranding events involving dead animals, data collection in case of cetaceans stranded alive may be basic (Level A), intermediate (Level B), or detailed (Level C) considering the capability of the stranding network to intervene in reasonable times and the involvement of trained personnel and/or veterinarians. The use of standardized data sheets and forms is recommended working on the field. Samples of these forms are suggested by already existing guidelines, as those proposed by the British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) which already implemented in the UK well-structured protocols with the relative datasheets and forms to collect proper data.

2.1 Level A Data: Basic Minimum Data collected on the field

This level is aimed to report any stranding event to national and/or international Stranding Databases. Geographic information, as well as biological and logistics details concerning the stranding should be recorded and national datasheets concerning measures should be filled out. Once the event has been recorded, a unique identification number (ID), which should be used at all subsequent contacts, will be assigned to it. Information relative to the following data must be collected.

This level allow to know exactly how many stranding events involve alive cetaceans and how many animals strand alive; furthermore, main features of these events could be understand in order to focus properly any possible procedure and support for this relevant problem.

- a. Investigator: name and address (institution)
- b. Reporting source
- c. Responsible Veterinarian/Rescue Team
- d. Location
 - preliminary description (local designation)
 - latitude and longitude, GPS
- e. Date (mm\dd\yy), time of first discovery and of intervention of the rescue team
- f. Weather and tide conditions
- g. Offshore human/predator activity
- h. UME/Diseases outbreak ongoing

- i. Species
- j. Number of animals, including total and sub-groups (if applicable)
- k. Length
- l. Sex
- m. Refloating efforts attempted by person not being part of the stranding network/rescue team

2.2 Level B Data: Information collected by direct observation or reported and/or clinical examination by trained personnel.

This level of data collection allows to collect information in similar events: more in detail, data on physical parameters of the involved animals could help to assess and improve any procedure of clinical evaluation as well as features of cetaceans stranded alive. This level requests basic skills on animal physiological parameters and management. Veterinarian is preferred for physical examination but also trained biologists could carry out the examination.

- a. Veterinarian/biologist responsible for physical evaluation
- b. Behavior
 - pre-stranding (e.g., milling, directional swimming)
 - stranding (e.g., determined effort to strand, passive, thrashing)
 - after return to sea (e.g., disoriented swimming, listing); note also ID number given after release and color; location of sighting
- b. Reaction to environmental stressors
- c. Buoyancy
- d. Nutritional condition
- e. Skin conditions; evidences of wounds and traumas
- f. Orifices and Mucosal discharges and hemorrhages
- g. Reflexes and muscular tones
- h. Abnormality in breathing (i.e. rate and smell)
- i. Samples collected
- j. Diagnosis
- k. First aid and rehabilitation procedures attempted.
- l. Release/euthanasia/rehabilitation
- m. Time lapse between first reporting/first intervention/release or euthanasia

3. Level C Data: Veterinary Physical Examination, Samples Collection, Therapy and Follow-Up

This last step foresees the involvement of trained and skilled personnel able to perform advance diagnostic procedures, propose therapeutic approaches and follow the animal after the release into the wild. The collected data could be shared in order to increase knowledge, approaches and possible procedures in order to increase the knowledge on first aid and rehabilitation efforts for cetaceans stranded alive.

- a. Veterinarian/rescue team leader involved
- b. Results of any blood samples analysis
- c. Results of any urine analyses
- d. Results of any microbiological examination considering also DMV
- e. Results of any diagnostic imaging investigations (x-ray, TAC) and ultrasonography
- f. Diagnosis
- g. Final decision: release/euthanasia/rehabilitation
- h. Summary of any therapy and procedures adopted during rehabilitation

- i. Time of rehabilitation efforts.
- j. Logistics of rehabilitation efforts
- k. Procedure for release efforts
- l. Follow-up

References

DIERAUF, L.A. and F. GULLAND. 2001. Marine Mammal Medicine. CRC Press, Boca Raton.

GERACI, J.R., and V.L. LOUNSBURY. 2005. Marine mammals ashore: a field guide for strandings, Second Edition. National Aquarium in Baltimore, Baltimore, MD.

British Divers Marine Life Rescue Marine Mammal Medic Handbook, 6th Ed., 2005

ACCOBAMS Guidelines for the release of captive cetaceans into the wild
Report of the IWC Workshop on Euthanasia Protocols to Optimize Welfare Concerns for Stranded Cetaceans

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/publications.htm>

RESOLUTION 6.23 - CAPACITY-BUILDING

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

Conscious that the current heterogeneity of management and research capacity in the ACCOBAMS Area must be addressed through capacity-building and public-awareness,

Recalling Resolution 1.10 on “Cooperation between national networks of cetacean strandings and the creation of a data base”, Resolution 4.16 on “Guidelines for a coordinated cetacean stranding response” and Resolution 5.2 on “the work programme 2014-2016”,

Taking into consideration Recommendation 10.9 of the Scientific Committee,

Recalling the value and role of stranding networks in providing valuable data for cetacean conservation,

Recalling that Article IX, paragraph 3, of the ACCOBAMS calls for voluntary contributions to increase the funds available for monitoring, research, training and projects related to conservation,

1. *Asks* the Permanent Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to assist Parties to undertake capacity-building efforts in countries where stranding networks are either not efficiently operating or absent, in particular the training of personnel on how to deal with stranding events, including rehabilitation and euthanasia, and how to run a necropsy, involving local authorities in the network and intervention teams;
2. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to contribute to the preparation of a capacity-building programme for the triennium 2017-2019 with the Permanent Secretariat and to include a follow-up on the research activities in each sub-region, as part of the efforts to ensure the continuity of the programme and the achievement of its long-term goals;
3. *Asks* the Scientific Committee to identify and prioritize needs (e.g. photo-identification, abundance surveys, assessment of interaction with fisheries and other anthropogenic impacts) in sub-regions of the ACCOBAMS area to increase the monitoring and research output quality, in collaboration with the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) and the Black Sea Commission, using standardized protocols and approaches;
4. *Asks* Parties to emphasize the use of photo-identification as a standard technique in the ACCOBAMS area, using common platforms to compare data from neighbouring regions, and to provide a wider view of bottlenose dolphin distribution;
5. *Asks* the Permanent Secretariat to assist relevant organizations, from Parties with the lowest capacities, in applying to potential donors for necessary research equipment;

6. *Encourages* the Parties, in collaboration with the Permanent Secretariat and with the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) and the Black Sea Commission to:
- promote the ACCOBAMS module on cetology (Master Programme in French and English) for use in relevant educational programs in the ACCOBAMS Area, and
 - organize public awareness campaigns regarding cetacean research and conservation, targeting different stakeholders as an initial step prior to facilitating effective capacity-building programmes.

RESOLUTION 6.24 - NEW AREAS OF CONSERVATION OF CETACEAN HABITATS

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

Aware that habitat degradation is one of the main causes of population decline for many cetacean species,

Concerned that, although some protected areas devoted to cetacean conservation have already been established in the ACCOBAMS area, many of the sites known to be particularly important for cetaceans still remain unprotected,

Recalling:

- Article II, paragraph 1, of the Agreement providing that Parties, in order to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for cetaceans shall co-operate to create and maintain a network of specially protected areas to conserve cetaceans,
- Article V, paragraph 2, of the Agreement providing that each Sub-regional Coordination Unit, in consultation with the Scientific Committee and the Agreement Secretariat, shall facilitate the preparation of a sub-regional directory of important areas for cetaceans,
- Article XI, paragraph 1, of the Agreement according to which the provisions of ACCOBAMS shall not affect the right of any Party to maintain or adopt more stringent measures for the conservation of cetaceans and their habitats,
- The Conservation Plan (Annex 2 to the Agreement), which forms an integral part of the Agreement and requires the Parties to endeavour to establish and manage specially protected areas for cetaceans corresponding to the areas which serve as habitats of cetaceans and/or which provide important food resources for them. Such specially protected areas should be established within the framework of the appropriate international instruments,

Welcoming United Nations General Assembly Resolution 68/70 on oceans and the law of the sea and *recalling* that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out,

Recalling Resolution 11.25 of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), including, where applicable, the provisions of paragraph 6 and 7 calling upon Parties to develop transboundary area-based conservation measures, including protected and other areas systems, and urging them to promote ecological networks and connectivity through, for example, the development of further site networks within the CMS Family or other fora and processes,

Considering that ACCOBAMS is an appropriate tool for achieving an updated and revised strategic plan and targets for biodiversity for the period 2011-2020 within the framework of the CBD,

Noting that 9 of the 15 Mediterranean Ecological or Biological Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) adopted by Parties of CBD (Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, October 2014) were, mostly or in part, based on the presence in such areas of cetacean critical habitat,

Conscious that establishing a network of marine protected areas:

- constitutes an important element of maritime spatial planning and will help achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for cetaceans,
- requires comprehensive inventories of sites that contain critical and/or important habitats for cetaceans,

Convinced that, particularly as regards highly migratory species, to be efficient, these protected areas must be of a sufficient extent and, as such, they require frequently transboundary cooperation,

Noting with satisfaction that protected areas specially devoted to cetacean conservation in the ACCOBAMS Area have already been established,

Taking into account, the “criteria for the selection and format of proposals for marine protected areas for cetaceans” adopted by the Third Meeting of the Parties,

Welcoming efforts undertaken by ACCOBAMS, RAC/SPA and MedPAN on this issue during the two previous triennia, in particular the “Cetacean Manual for MPA Managers”,

Considering a Strategic Alliance among ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN, concerning Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity Resolution 6.11,

Welcoming the Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed MPAs to Achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean adopted by the 19th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols,

Welcoming the first workshop on the Identification of Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) in the Mediterranean Sea, organized by the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force, in collaboration with ACCOBAMS and the Tethys Research Institute (Chania, Greece, 24-28 October 2016),

1. *Welcomes* the recommendations issued by the ACCOBAMS Workshop on the effectiveness of marine protected areas within Cetacean Critical Habitats (CCH) (Gammarth, Tunisia, 9-12 June 2015) during the Joint RAC/SPA-GFCM-ACCOBAMS meetings;
2. *Takes note* of the Revised Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of Marine Protected Areas for Cetaceans (ACCOBAMS/MOP6/2016/Doc33) and of the progress report on the threat based management approach (ACCOBAMS/MOP6/2016/Doc34);
3. *Invites* the Permanent Secretariat to disseminate the document “Place-based conservation of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area: a handbook on management effectiveness” (ACCOBAMS/MOP6/2016/Doc35) and encourages MPA managers of areas within CCH to implement relevant management actions;
4. *Encourages* Parties and other Governments to:
 - update regularly the list of areas containing habitats for cetaceans in collaboration with the Scientific Committee;

- use the scientific information regarding the description of areas meeting CCH criteria, in relation with the Sub Regional Coordination Units, in order to promote adequate conservation mechanisms, such as designation of protected areas;
5. *Requests* the Scientific Committee, in particular the Task Manager on CCH, the regional representatives and the coordinators of conservation plans, to :
- revise the existing CCHs, taking into account (i) the candidates IMMAs proposed and the Areas of Interest identified during the first workshop on the Identification of Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) in the Mediterranean Sea , and (ii) the threat-based management approach,
 - evaluate effectiveness of adequate management of protected areas within CCH using existing initiatives, such as MedPAN, and
 - revise and update the tools for adequate management of areas within CCH, after an assessment has been implemented;
6. *Requests* the Permanent Secretariat to continue facilitating the description of areas meeting CCH criteria through the organization of relevant workshops and to share all relevant information in NETCCOBAMS;
7. *Encourages* the Permanent Secretariat to pursue and reinforce its collaboration on this issue with other relevant organizations in particular by participating actively to a Strategical Alliance among the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN, concerning Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity.

RESOLUTION 6.25 - LIST OF RESOLUTIONS INTO FORCE

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

Recalling that in the six Meetings of the ACCOBAMS Parties held thus far, a number of Resolutions with a normative character have been adopted, explicitly replacing the previous ones on the same subject,

Considering that it would be useful to draw up a list of Resolutions having a normative character that have not been replaced,

1. *Approves* the list of Resolutions with normative character that have not been replaced, as appended to the Annex of this Resolution;
2. *Decides* that the present Resolution replaces Resolution 5.17.

ANNEX
LIST OF RESOLUTIONS WITH NORMATIVE CHARACTER THAT HAVE NOT BEEN REPLACED

MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT

Information and Communication

1.14	Adopting a Logo for the Agreement and Conditions of its Use	In force and partially amended by Resolution 4.21
4.21	ACCOBAMS Logos: Conditions of Use	In force

Strengthen Involvement of all ACCOBAMS Bodies

1.2	Establishment of the Permanent Secretariat for the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area	In force and partially amended by Resolution 4.2
1.4	Establishing the Sub Regional Co-ordination Unit for the Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area	In force
1.5	Establishment of the Sub Regional Co-ordination Unit for the Black Sea	In force
3.28	Support to the Secretariat	In force and partially amended by Resolution 4.2
4.2	Approval of the Headquarter Agreement with the Host Country	In force and partially amended by Resolution 6.2
4.20	Strengthening the Status of ACCOBAMS Partners	In force
6.2	Amendment to the Headquarters Agreement with the Host Country	In force
6.3	ACCOBAMS Staff	In force
6.4	Amendments to the Rules of Procedures for the Bureau	In force
6.7	Scientific Committee	In force

Reinforce Collaboration with other Organizations and Key Stakeholders

2.2	Strengthening Links with UNEP and CMS	In force
2.22	Relation with IUCN	In force
2.30	Recognising the Important Role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Cetacean Conservation	In force
3.8	Strengthening Collaboration with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean	In force
4.8	Contribution from ACCOBAMS to the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive	In force
5.8	Rio + 20: perspectives for the ACCOBAMS	In force

6.11	A Strategical Alliance concerning Management and Conservation Measures for the Mediterranean Environment between the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC, and IUCN-Med, in collaboration with MedPAN	In force
6.12	Implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and Relevant Ecosystem Approach Processes (EcAP)	In force

Ensure Adequate Funding, in particularly for Conservation Activities

1.7	Establishment of a Supplementary Conservation Grants Fund	In force
3.6	Procedure for Submission of Projects	In force and partially amended by Resolution 5.5
5.5	Procedure for the ACCOBAMS calls of proposals for projects to be funded under the Supplementary Conservation Fund	In force
6.6	Financial matters for the triennium 2017-2019	In force

Implementation of and Compliance with ACCOBAMS

1.8	Establishment of a triennial national report format for the Agreement on the conservation of cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area	In force and partially amended by Resolution 6.9
3.7	ACCOBAMS online reporting system	In force and partially amended by Resolution 6.9
4.6	Format for national implementation reports of the Agreement	In force and partially amended by Resolution 6.9
4.18	Guidelines on the granting of exceptions to Article II, paragraph 1, for the purpose of non-lethal in situ research in the Agreement area	In force
4.19	Model measures for the conservation of cetaceans	In force
4.24	ACCOBAMS Strategy (period 2013-2023)	In force
5.1	ACCOBAMS long term strategy 2014-2025	In force
5.4	ACCOBAMS Follow-up Procedure	In force and partially amended by Resolution 6.8
6.5	Work Programme 2017-2019	In force
6.8	Amendments to the Follow-up Procedure	In force
6.9	Format for National Implementation Reports	In force
6.25	List of Resolutions into force	In force

ACCOBAMS Extension Area

A/4.1	Amendments: Extension of the ACCOBAMS geographical scope	In force
6.10	Acceptance of the Amendments on the Extension of the ACCOBAMS Geographical Scope	In force

CONSERVATION ACTIONS (CA)

Cetacean Population Estimates and Distribution

6.13	Comprehensive Cetacean population estimates and distribution in the ACCOBAMS Area	In force
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Population Structure

3.9	Guidelines for the Establishment of a System of Tissue Banks within the ACCOBAMS Area and the Ethical Code	In force
6.14	Population Structure Studies	In force

Monitoring Cetaceans' Status

3.19	Assessment of IUCN Red List of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean and Black Seas	In force and partially amended by Resolution 6.15
6.15	Assessment of IUCN Conservation Status in the ACCOBAMS Area	In force

Interaction with Fisheries

2.12	Guidelines for the Use of Acoustic Deterrent Devices	In force
2.13	Pelagic Gillnets	In force and partially amended by Amendment/Resolution 3.1
2.21	Assessment and Mitigation of the Adverse Impacts of Interactions between Cetaceans and Fishing Activities in the ACCOBAMS Area	In force and partially amended by Resolution 4.9
2.25	Prey Depletion	In force
A/3.1	Amendment of the Annex 2 to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area Related to the Use of Driftnets	In force
4.9	Fisheries Interactions with Cetaceans	In force
6.16	Interactions between Fisheries and Cetaceans	In force

Anthropogenic Noise

2.16	Assessment and Impact Assessment of Man-Made Noise	In force and partially amended by Resolutions 4.17 and 5.15
3.10	Guidelines to Address the Impact of Anthropogenic Noise on Marine Mammals in the ACCOBAMS Area	In force and partially amended by Resolutions 4.17 and 5.15
4.17	Guidelines to Address the impact of anthropogenic noise on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area	In force and partially amended by Resolution 5.15
5.15	Addressing the Impact of Anthropogenic Noise	In force
6.17	Anthropogenic Noise	In force

6.18	Implementation of an ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified Marine Mammals Observers	In force
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Ship Strikes

5.11	Ship Strikes on Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea	In force and partially amended by Resolution 6.19
6.19	Ship Strikes on Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea	In force

Cetacean Watching

3.23	Commercial Whale-Watching: Towards a Label	In force
4.7	Commercial Cetacean-Watching Activities in the ACCOBAMS Area	In force
6.20	Commercial Cetacean Watching Activities in the ACCOBAMS Area	In force

Climate Change

4.14	Climate Change	In force
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Species Conservation Plans

1.12	Conservation of the Black Sea <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> : Bottlenose Dolphin	In force
3.11	Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans	In force
4.13	Conservation of the Mediterranean Short-Beaked Common Dolphin	In force
5.12	Work Towards a Conservation Plan for Fin Whales in the Mediterranean Sea	In force
5.13	Conservation of Cuvier's Beaked Whales in the Mediterranean	In force
6.21	Species Conservation and Management Plans	In force

Captivity Related Issues

3.13	Dolphin Interaction Programmes	In force
3.20	Guidelines on the Release of Cetaceans into the Wild	In force
5.14	Live Removals of Bottlenose Dolphins in the Black Sea (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	In force

Public Awareness

2.23	Education Strategy and Programs	In force
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Functional Stranding Networks and Responses to Emergency Situation

1.10	Cooperation between National Networks of Cetacean Strandings and the Creation of a Database	In force
2.10	Facilitation of Exchange of Tissue Samples	In force
3.25	Cetacean Live Stranding	In force
4.16	Guidelines for a Coordinated Cetacean Stranding Response	In force
6.22	Cetacean Live Strandings	In force

Capacity to Use Cetacean Photo Identification Methods

2.28	On the Promotion of Photo-Identification Activities	In force
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Capacity Building for Other Cetacean Conservation Issues

2.11	Facilitation of Scientific Research Campaigns and Programs	In force
6.23	Capacity Building	In force

Protected Areas for Cetaceans

3.22	Marine Protected Areas for Cetaceans	In force and partially amended by Resolution 4.15
4.15	Marine Protected Areas of Importance for Cetacean Conservation	In force
6.24	New Areas of Conservation of Cetacean Habitats	In force

RESOLUTION 6.26 - TRIBUTE TO ORGANISERS

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

Recalling the offer of the Government of the Principality of Monaco to host the Sixth session of the Meeting of Parties,

Appreciating the efforts undertaken by the Government of the Principality of Monaco in the organisation of the current session of the Meeting of the Parties and its financial support to facilitate the preparation,

Reiterating its appreciation for more than 20 years of continuous support provided by the Government of the Principality of Monaco to the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat Staff, to the Scientific Committee, to the Bureau, to the ACCOBAMS Partners and to Parties in need of capacity building,

Aware of the significant efforts required in preparing and organizing the present session of the Meeting of the Parties,

1. *Expresses* its gratitude for the invaluable support of the Government of the Principality of Monaco, and the Permanent Secretariat for the arrangements made to provide an excellent venue and facilities for the Sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties and for the celebration of the ACCOBAMS 20th anniversary;
2. *Congratulates* the Permanent Secretariat on the excellent preparation for the present session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement;
3. *Expresses* its appreciation to all the support of the Extended Bureau, the Sub Regional Coordination Units and the Scientific Committee which contributed to the preparation of the Meeting of the Parties.

RESOLUTION 6.27 - DATE OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES

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

Recalling Article III, paragraph 2, of the Agreement, which states that the Agreement Secretariat shall convene, in consultation with the Convention Secretariat, ordinary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties at intervals of not more than three years, unless the Meeting of the Parties decides otherwise,

Noting that the Sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties was hosted by the Government of the Principality of Monaco, from 22th to 25th November 2016,

Aware of the benefits that can accrue to the Agreement and to Parties, particularly developing countries and those with economies in transition, that host sessions of the Meeting of the Parties in regions in the Agreement area,

1. *Decides* that the Seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties shall take place at the end of 2019.

ANNEX XIII

**CLOSING REMARKS ON BEHALF OF ECOOCÉAN
INSTITUT, GIS3M, HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR
ANIMAL WELFARE (IFAW), MARE NOSTRUM, NRDC,
OCEANCARE, OCEANOMARE DELPHIS ONLUS,
WHALE AND DOLPHIN CONSERVATION, WWF**

ANNEX XIII - CLOSING REMARKS ON BEHALF OF ECOOCÉAN INSTITUT, GIS3M, HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE (IFAW), MARE NOSTRUM, NRDC, OCEANCARE, OCEANOMARE DELPHIS ONLUS, WHALE AND DOLPHIN CONSERVATION, WWF

Dear Chair, dear Madam Executive Secretary, dear Representatives of the Parties to ACCOBAMS,

This statement is provided on behalf of EcoOcéan Institut, GIS3M, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Mare Nostrum, NRDC, OceanCare, Oceanomare Delphis Onlus, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, WWF

First of all, we would like to thank Monaco for its hospitality and for providing excellent facilities to make us all feel comfortable and welcome during this 6th Meeting of the Parties of ACCOBAMS.

We would like to use the opportunity of providing a closing remark - a kind of reflection about the purpose of why we have met and why we celebrate the 20th anniversary of ACCOBAMS.

When ACCOBAMS was originally developed, it was a reaction to the fact that cetaceans in the region were in trouble. A spirit rose to take on the challenge to protect these important marine mammals that contribute to the health of the Mediterranean and Black Seas and the people that depend on these ecosystems.

Twenty years are now gone, dozens of decisions have been adopted; plans developed; and actions defined. We still believe in this Agreement; we believe that we have jointly made progress and achieved successes. And that “success” is only defined by one parameter: that the situation for the animals improved.

And yes, there are many examples for such successes. And this is the reason why we celebrate the existence of this Agreement, the only reason.

At the same time, there is also an important reason why we continue to meet. Because we still witness that some species and populations are still in peril and decreasing; new threats are arising and old ones are returning.

For us, though the two decades of its life, ACCOBAMS has been a friendly and cooperative agreement – built on parties working hand in hand with their NGO friends and Partners. However, in our discussions this week, we fear something significant may have been lacking.

Yes, procedure, provisions, sound preparation and rules are important and are the framework and solid platform for the professional delivery of work. However, we are concerned that there was very little time available during this MOP to explore, debate and discuss the substance of many of the very important issues affecting cetaceans and their environment, leaving many documents and plans provided for us largely “untouched”.

We note that the ACCOBAMS observer organisations have spent many hours volunteering whether in the field or within the bodies of the Agreement, and contributed a significant amount of funds to the objectives of the Agreement. Indeed, the bodies of the Agreement rely to a certain extent on these contributions to cope with their tasks.

To conclude: Yes, we do appreciate many of the decisions adopted and progress being made, but at the same time we would like to remind all here that it is the conservation of cetaceans that the shared purpose of this gathering, and the motivation to continue engaging in this fora.

So, we encourage everyone here to rekindle the spirit which established the Agreement; find again our enthusiasm, our energy and again join forces to prevent whale and dolphin populations from continuing to decrease or even disappear.

Thank you.