

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



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

Report of the Sixth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Bureau



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SUMMARY

1.	Adoption of the Agenda	3
2.	Report of the Secretariat.....	3
3.	Progress report on the activities of the Scientific Committee	5
4.	Budgetary matters.....	6
5.	Administrative issues	6
6.	Preparation of the MOP4.....	8
7.	Partners.....	8
8.	Other business	10
9.	Date, venue and draft provisional Agenda of the next Extended Bureau Meeting	10
10.	Closure of the Meeting	10

LIST OF THE ANNEXES

Annex 1.	List of the participants	12
Annex 2.	Agenda.....	14
Annex 3.	List of the Scientific Committee Recommendations	15
Annex 4.	Draft list of the Resolutions	16



REPORT OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE ACCOBAMS BUREAU

The Sixth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Bureau was convened to take place in Monaco in the premises of the Agreement's Permanent Secretariat (PS), on the 9th and 10th of February, 2010. It was attended by: Mrs. Ana Strbenac, Chair of the Bureau (Croatia); Mr. Oliviero Montanaro (Italy), Mr. Abderraouf Ben Moussa (Morocco); Mr. Volodymyr Domashlinets (Ukraine). It was also attended by Mr. Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara (Chair of the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS); and the Secretariat. The List of Participants appears in Annex 1 to this report.

The Chair of the Bureau welcomed the participants and opened the Meeting at 9.00 a.m., on Tuesday the 9th of February, 2010.

1 Adoption of the Agenda

The Executive Secretary (ES) introduced the draft Agenda (BU6/Doc01Rev1) and the List of Documents (BU6/Doc03Rev1). The Meeting reviewed and adopted the Agenda. It appears as Annex 2 to this report.

2 Report of the Secretariat

The ES introduced Ms. Maylis Salivas and Fannie Dubois as new personal of the Secretariat and presented Document BU6/Doc2.

2.1 Implementation and extension of the Agreement

The ES informed the Meeting that, despite the numerous contacts she undertaken, the Secretariat didn't receive yet from Greece the nomination of the National Focal Point for ACCOBAMS. As for the new ratifications, she informed the Bureau that according to recent information the ratification procedures were finalised in Montenegro and were in advanced stage in Egypt.

The ES communicated also to the Meeting that the Secretariat was informed about ongoing initiatives to propose the extension of geographical coverage of the Agreement, including a proposal from the Arab League concerning the extension of ACCOBAMS to the red Sea.

Following the presentation of the Adriatic Survey by the Chair, the meeting stressed that this initiative is an opportunity to promote ACCOBAMS activities.

Following the discussion on the issues raised by the Secretariat, the Bureau invited the ES to:

- **pursue her contacts with the Greek authorities in charge of fisheries and environment in order to have a nomination by Greece of a National Focal Point;**
- **undertake contacts with the relevant DGs in the European Commission concerning the ratification by the EU of the ACCOBAMS.** ACCOBAMS Parties that are members of the EU were also invited to assist within their competences to ratification of the Agreement by the EU;
- **prepare a document analysing the legal and practical implications of the extension of the Agreement geographical coverage and proposing recommendations on this issues. The document will be submitted to the next MOP as an information document;**
- **Assess the legal and technical implication of extending the Agreement area to cover the maritime areas of the North-East Africa (Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia and Cape**



Verde). These countries are members of the Sub Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC).



2.2 Projects and activities

Ms. Fannie Dubois presented, on behalf of the Secretariat, the ongoing and futures projects and activities developed by the Secretariat of ACCOBAMS in collaboration with the national authorities and the ACCOBAMS partners.

The Meeting commended the work being done and invited the Secretariat **to post on the web site of ACCOBAMS information about the ongoing projects.**

The Bureau mandated the PS to prepare a document about the needs of the Parties for the implementation of the ACCOBAMS. The document should take into account the conclusions and recommendations of the Regional Workshops being organised by the Secretariat to take stock of the activities undertaken by the Parties to implement ACCOBAMS and to identify gaps and priority actions. The document should also propose orientations for the elaboration of a mid- term strategy according to which the ACCOBAMS activity and the voluntary contributions will be oriented.

3 **Progress report on the activities of the Scientific Committee**

The Chair of the SC informed the Bureau about the main subjects dealt with during the last Meeting of the SC, making reference to the report of the Meeting presented as Document BU6/Doc3. He presented the Recommendations issued by the SC (listed in Annex 3) and drew the attention of the Bureau members to the Declaration prepared by the SC. He emphasised that the SC was aware of the difficulties (social, economic, legal, etc.) faced by the Parties in implementing the ACCOBAMS, but the level of implementation of the Agreement provisions and of the Resolutions adopted appears to be too slow to effectively address the environmental problems that are rapidly developing in the Agreement area, generating increasing conservation challenges to cetaceans.

The Chair of the SC stressed the importance of the “Survey initiative” and the need of having a synoptic survey with the observations made in few months simultaneously in the whole Mediterranean area. He informed the Meeting that during the last SC Meeting the representative of the French *Agence des Aires Marines Protégées* announced that the *Agence* would be interested in promoting the “Survey initiative”.

The Bureau was informed of the existence of the Scientific Committees of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the Arab Organisation for the Development of Agriculture and the Council of Ministers in charge of the Environment in the Arab League.

After the debate about the conclusions and Recommendations of the SC, the Bureau requested that:

- **the ES and the Chair of the SC prepare a revised version of the “Survey initiative” project, including a revised budget, to be presented to the Extended Bureau;**
- **for the conservation of the Common Dolphin, identified as one of the elements of the Mediterranean biodiversity most threatened, links with other bodies (Bern Convention, GFCM, etc.) be established in order to share with them the conclusion and the actions recommended by the SC in Kalamos area and in other areas relevant for the species;**
- **the concept of the Maritime Spatial Planning, part of the EU Maritime Policy, should be considered in the recommendations and activities concerning the planning and management of Marine Protected Areas for cetaceans;**
- **the PS should inform the Parties about the Declaration of the SC. It was concluded that the National Report Form should be amended, in particular to enable Parties to clearly**



identify problems and difficulties they face in the implementation of the Agreement. A Synthesis of the National Reports will be prepared for the MOP4.

- **the Chair of the SC prepares an analysis note about how ACCOBAMS work could contribute to the identification of descriptors being undertaken within the framework of the Marine Strategy of the EU. The analysis note should be submitted to the Extended Bureau.**

4 Budgetary matters

The ES presented Document BU6/Doc7Rev1, informed the Meeting about the status of ordinary and voluntary contributions and the status of commitments and savings of the Trust Fund and of the Supplementary Conservation Fund. She emphasised that, since the Bureau Meeting was held early in 2010, the presented budgetary statements for 2009 should be considered as provisional until their approval by the auditor.

It appeared from the presentation of the ES that, as per 31th of December 2009, the Parties paid their ordinary contribution except Libya, Portugal and Algeria. .

Following the debates of the Meeting under this agenda item, the Bureau expressed its gratitude to the Parties that provided Voluntary Contribution (Spain, France, Italy and Monaco) and decided:

- **that the Chair of the Bureau to send a letter to the Foreign Affairs Authorities in Libya and Portugal to inform them about the unpaid pledges and invite them to take the necessary steps for the payment by Libya and Portugal of its ordinary contribution to the Trust Fund of ACCOBAMS;**
- **the Secretariat should prepare budgetary statements showing the amounts already committed from the Trust Fund, the amount of unspent budget and how the available budget will be allocated to activities in 2010.**

5 Administrative issues

5.1 Head Quarters Agreement

The ES informed the Meeting that the Head Quarters Agreement was still in preparation by the Department of Foreign Affairs in Monaco.

The document will be sent to the Chair of the Agreement by the Councillor of the Department.

The Bureau expressed its wishes to receive the document in due time in order to comment it as soon as possible.

5.2 Extended Bureau

The ES recalled the procedure adopted by the MOP for the establishment of the extended Bureau and informed the Meeting about the experts identified to be of the Extended Bureau:

- Andreas Demetropoulos (Cyprus);
- Mohamed Hadj Ali Salem (Tunisia);
- Simion Nicolaev (Romania).



She emphasised that the three experts have an extensive experience in the aspects related to the governance of the conservation, the socio-economic aspects of the sustainable use of the marine biodiversity. She also emphasised that one of the selected experts (Mr. Andrea Demetropoulos) was requested by the Secretariat, after consultation with the Chair of the Bureau, to prepare an evaluation of the functioning of the SC during the past years and submit a report with recommendations to the Extended Bureau.



The Meeting, after a debate about the profile of each expert and the geographical balance of the team of three experts, and in accordance with the procedure agreed by the Parties, mandated **the Secretariat to consult with the Focal Points of the countries of the three experts as follows:**

- **the Focal Points of Cyprus concerning the nomination of Mr. Andreas Demetropoulos;**
- **the Focal Point of Tunisia concerning the nomination of Mr. Mohamed Hadj Ali Salem;**
- **the Focal Point of Romania concerning the nomination of Mr. Simion Nicolaev.**

Concerning the duration of the mandate of the three experts as members of the extended Bureau, the Meeting agreed that, after the next MOP, could confirm or not the mandate of each of the three experts.

The Bureau requested the Secretariat to establish, in cooperation with the National Focal Points, a roster of experts in the socioeconomic aspects of the conservation of marine species.

5.3 Future Shape of CMS

The ES introduced Document BU6/Doc13, informing the Bureau about the process launched within the framework of the CMS for the definition of the future shape of the institutional components of the CMS Family.

The Bureau exchanged views and decided that **the ACCOBAMS Parties should be consulted before making any decision involving changes in the ACCOBAMS governing structure and procedures. The Bureau members agreed that for each option an analysis of the financial implication should be made.**

6 Preparation of the MOP4

The ES presented the draft list of Resolutions to be submitted to the next MOP and proposed that the Resolutions be prepared taking into account the provisions of the previous ones in order to have only one Resolution by subject that abrogates the Resolutions issued by the previous MOPs on the same subjects.

The Bureau reviewed the proposed list of Resolutions and provided the Secretariat with guidance for the elaboration of the Resolutions; the adopted list of Resolutions appears in the Annex 3 of this report.

Considering that 2010 is the UN proclaimed Year of Biodiversity, the Bureau invited the ES to prepare side events during the next MOP about the main activities and the priority issues for ACCOBAMS.

One Bureau member informed the Meeting that the Italian delegation is planning to organize a side event on the aerial survey being conducted in the Sicily Channel.

7 Partners

The ES informed the Bureau that the Secretariat received a new application for the Status of ACCOBAMS Partner from the PROJETE NINAM (Spain) represented by Gemma GONZALEZ POTRONY in quality of Director of the Organisation PROJETE NINAM (<http://ninam.lrt.cat/ca/>). **The Bureau decided to ask the PROJETE NINAM to prepare the English version of its website. The final decision about its application will be made at the Extended Bureau.**



Following a debate about the involvement of the Partners and their collaboration with ACCOBAMS, the Bureau requested the ES to prepare a draft template of Memorandum of Understanding to be approved and signed by each New Partner. The compliance of the partners with the provisions of the MoU will be regularly assessed. **The old partners should sign the MoU during a transitional period (next triennium).**



8 Other business

The Bureau mandated the Chair of ACCOBAMS and the Chair of the Scientific Committee to prepare a message/statement to be delivered to the next session of the UNGA about the vision of ACCOBAMS beyond 2010 in order to ensure that the concerns of cetacean conservation be included in the pillars of the expected “strategy/targets” at Global level for biodiversity conservation beyond 2010. **The draft message/statement should be submitted to the Extended Bureau.**

It has been also discussed the ways of possible involvement of ACCOBAMS in the International Year of Biodiversity and to reflect the issue on the ACCOBAMS website.

The Bureau was informed of the whale watching initiatives in the Moroccan Mediterranean area and in Tunisia. The Meeting invited the Secretariat to provide technical support to ensure the proper development of these initiatives.

9 Date, venue and draft provisional Agenda of the next Extended Bureau Meeting

The Bureau decided to present the draft of the Resolutions in the Mid April, 2010, before the Extended Bureau, which will take place the 18th and 19th of May in Roma or Tunis.

10 Closure of the Meeting

The Chair of the Bureau thanked the Meeting participants and closed the Meeting at 11.00 a.m., on Wednesday, the 10th of February, 2010.



ANNEXES



Annex 1. List of the participants

MEMBERS of the BUREAU

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Annex 2. Agenda

- 1. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 2. Report of the Secretariat**
- 3. Progress report on the activities of the Scientific Committee**
- 4. Budgetary matters**
 - 4.1 2009 Budgetary issues
 - 4.2 Provisional list of activities for 2010
 - 4.3 Status of the contributions
 - 4.4 Supplementary conservation Grants Fund: Projects submitted for funding
- 5. Administrative issues**
 - 5.1 Head Quarters Agreement
 - 5.2 Extended Bureau
 - 5.3 Future Shape of CMS
- 6. Preparation of the MOP4**
- 7. Partners**
 - 7.1 New requests for ACCOBAMS partnership
- 8. Other business**
- 9. Date, venue and draft provisional Agenda of the next Extended Bureau Meeting**
- 10. Closure of the Meeting**

Annex 3. List of the Scientific Committee Recommendations

Number of the Recommendation	Name of the Recommendation
Rec 1.1	Acoustic Harassment Devices
Rec 1.2	Cetaceans by-catch estimation
Rec 1.3	Conservation of fin whales
Rec 1.4	Research
Rec 2.1	Guidelines for the use of acoustic deterrent devices – a way forward
Rec 2.2	Pelagic gillnets in the ACCOBAMS Area
Rec 2.3	Relationship between ACCOBAMS and the PELAGOS Sanctuary
Rec 2.4	The Conservation Plan for Cetaceans in the Black Sea
Rec 2.5	Fin whale workshop
Rec 2.6	National stranding networks
Rec 2.7	Man made noise
Rec 2.8	Ship strikes
Rec 2.9	The fundamental need for information on abundance and distribution of cetaceans within the area
Rec 4.1	Conservation of Mediterranean Common Dolphin
Rec 4.2	The use of driftnets in the Mediterranean Sea
Rec 4.3	Anthropogenic noise
Rec 4.4	Programme for a comprehensive survey of the abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area
Rec 4.5	Black Sea Cetacean Survey
Rec 4.6	Black Sea Cetaceans Conservation Plan
Rec 4.7	Work on fin whales and ship strikes in the Mediterranean Sea
Rec 4.8	Tissue banks
Rec 4.9	Marine Protected Areas for Cetaceans
Rec 4.10	Red List Assessment
Rec 4.11	Captive facilities
Rec 4.12	Acoustic Harassment Devices
Rec 4.13	Minimum funding for the Scientific Committee
Rec 6.1	ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative
Rec 6.2	Respect to population structure
Rec 6.3	Conservation of Mediterranean Common Dolphins
Rec 6.4	Ship strikes
Rec 6.5	Marine Protected Areas
Rec 6.6	Anthropogenic Noise
Rec 6.7	Bycatches with an emphasis on the monitoring, assessment and reducing cetacean bycatches in the Black Sea
Rec 6.8	Climate change
Rec 6.9	Minimum funding for the Scientific Committee

Annex 4. Draft list of the Resolutions

Subject of the Resolution
Granting the right to vote
Approval of the Headquarters Agreement with the host country
Financial and administrative matters for 2011-2013
Composition of the Scientific Committee
Work Programme 2011-2013
Format for national implementation reports
Revised guidelines for commercial cetacean-watching activities in the ACCOBAMS Area
Guidelines for acquiring a label for commercial cetacean-watching operators in the PELAGOS-ACCOBAMS Area
Cetacean by-catch assessment and mitigation, including guidelines for the testing and use of acoustic mitigation devices
Ship strikes on large whales in the Mediterranean Sea
Population structure studies
Comprehensive cetacean population estimates and distribution in ACCOBAMS area
Conservation of the Mediterranean Common Dolphin
Climate Change
Marine protected areas for cetaceans
Guidelines on pollution mortality and mass mortality
Guidelines to address the impact of anthropogenic noise on marine mammals in the ACCOBAMS Area
Revised Guidelines for a coordinated cetacean stranding response
Guidelines on the granting of exceptions for the purpose of non-lethal in situ research in the Agreement Area
Guidelines for the elaboration of provisions concerning the cetacean conservation
Tribute to organisers
Date, venue and funding of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties
Extension of the ACCOBAMS Agreement Area
Strengthening the status of ACCOBAMS partners