



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 ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF ACCOBAMS



Monaco, 7-9 February 2017

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REPORT OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF ACCOBAMS

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The Eleventh Meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC11) of ACCOBAMS was convened in Monaco from the 7 to 9 February 2017. It was attended by Members of the Scientific Committee and Representatives from International Organizations and Observers, including Partners of ACCOBAMS.
2. The full list of participants appears as [Annex I](#) to this report.
3. Florence Descroix Comanducci, Executive Secretary of ACCOBAMS welcomed the participants and opened the meeting at 9 am, on Tuesday 7 February 2017, at the Novotel Hotel in Monaco.
4. She thanked CIESM and IUCN for their support. She indicated that this is the first meeting of the Scientific Committee for the new triennium. She underlined the importance of this Meeting which should nominate its Chair and its Vice Chair and should agree on concrete activities to facilitate the implementation of the Work Program, bearing in mind the Resolutions adopted by the Meetings of the Parties.
5. She informed the participants that, according to MOP6, Mrs Ayaka OZTURK and Mr Simone PANIGADA have been appointed respectively by CIESM and IUCN to second the Permanent Secretariat in the preparation of the first Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the triennium.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The provisional agenda of the Meeting contained in the Document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc01.Rev1 was presented and the participants were invited to review and comment it.

Conclusion 1.

The Scientific Committee adopted the agenda, as it appears in [Annex II](#), and the proposed timetable.

3. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

3.1 Designation of the Chair and of the Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee

7. The Executive Secretary recalled that Resolution 6.7 adopted by the Contracting Parties asking the Scientific Committee to appoint its Chair from among the IUCN experts and its Vice Chair from among the CIESM experts.

Conclusion 2.

The Scientific Committee nominated Simone PANIGADA as the Chair of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee for the period 2017-2019.

Conclusion 3.

The Scientific Committee nominated Ayaka Amaha OZTÜRK as the Vice Chair of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee for the period 2017-2019.

3.2 Terms of Reference for Task Managers

8. The Chair presented the terms of reference for Scientific Committee Task Managers (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/04), recalling that pursuant to the Resolution 6.7 related to the Scientific Committee, the Scientific Committee shall assign specific topics for each task manager taking into account the priorities set in the Work Programme for the triennium.
9. The Executive Secretary recalled that, in line with Resolution 6.7, the chair and the Vice chair could act also as task manager.

Conclusion 4.

The Scientific Committee adopted the terms of reference for the Scientific Committee Task Managers presented in in [Annex III](#).

3.3 Report of each Regional Representative

10. The Chair recalled that in accordance with the rules on the Scientific Committee adopted by MOP6, each regional representative should provide a report to the Meetings of the Scientific Committee on the conservation status of cetaceans and relevant activities in the region he or she has the responsibility of. He invited the regional representatives to introduce their respective reports contained in the following documents:
 - Report on the conservation status of cetaceans and relevant activities in Western Mediterranean and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc 05)
 - Report on the conservation status of cetaceans and relevant activities in Central Mediterranean (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc 06)
 - Report on the conservation status of cetaceans and relevant activities in Eastern Mediterranean (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc 07)
 - Report on the conservation status of cetaceans and relevant activities in Black Sea (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc 08)

Western Mediterranean and contiguous Atlantic area

11. Vincent Ridoux, through a Skype call, presented the report of the Western Mediterranean and contiguous Atlantic area. He indicated that structure, size, habitat use and connectivity of coastal small cetaceans are research topics shared by all Parties of the northern part of the Region. Other topics are less developed or less shared. The impact of noise is emerging in research and monitoring programs in several countries, including in the south of the Western region.

Regarding stranded cetacean, the monitoring is in place in all Member States of the Western Region of the Agreement, with efforts to upgrade protocols, ensure coordination and maintain a national database. Similarly, some monitoring of interactions between fisheries and cetaceans is present in all countries. Abundance and demographic monitoring is found in some places only.

The development of mitigation actions regarding direct anthropogenic pressures like fisheries, whale-watching and seismic surveys is found in various countries, but the level of consistency of these actions between countries could not be assessed. Several countries have recently upgraded the legislative tools relevant to the conservation of cetaceans.

12. In general, the Habitats Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive are considered as strong levers to develop research, monitoring and conservation actions in Parties of the northern part of the Region. The Agreement is playing a key role in reducing the difference of conservation measures implementation between North Med and South Med Countries.

Central Mediterranean

13. Hédia El Hili presented the report of the Central Mediterranean. She explained that, with the aim of assessing the degree of implementation of cetacean conservation measures in the countries of the central Mediterranean (Albania, Croatia, Italy, Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Slovenia and Tunisia), she has considered three implementation aspects (administrative and organizational legal aspects, research and monitoring programs, and other measures for the improvement of conservation) in the report.
- According to information taken from the sixth Meeting of the Parties, countries would fit in two categories for their level of implementation of cetacean conservation measures (“few conservation actions implemented” and “several conservation actions implemented or even improved”).
14. The regional representative made suggestions on how to improve the conservation actions at the national level, considering the following three approaches:
- To sensitize and encourage the authorities of countries to work in legal, administrative and organizational terms for the conservation of cetaceans in their country (to ratify the international conventions related to the protection of cetaceans, to establish national regulations that require the protection of cetaceans and prohibit a number of practices such as captivity, etc.);
 - To develop studies and monitoring programs to improve cetacean knowledge (to develop research projects that can provide data to help decision-makers in taking favourable measures for the protection of cetaceans, to establish a national monitoring structure able to intervene in emergency situations, etc.);
 - To implement measures and decisions to improve the conservation of cetaceans (to statute the marine protected areas, to establish national regulations that reduce the negative impacts of cetacean interactions with human activities).

Eastern Mediterranean

15. Vasileios Petropoulos presented the report for the Eastern Mediterranean. He indicated that the following activities were undertaken: Cetacean acoustic and visual survey in the marine waters of the Republic of Cyprus, the first field survey implemented in the Egyptian Mediterranean water, the Surveillance of conservation status of marine habitat types and species in Greece, the Introduction to teaching module on cetaceans in three Universities in Lebanon: Lebanese University, University St. Joseph, University St. Esprit Kaslik.
16. The regional representative suggested that ACCOBAMS supports an action plan with monitoring programme, to be shared with all the stakeholders and involving research centres in Syria. Finally, he also suggested that a publication be prepared by all the Eastern Mediterranean region countries at the occasion of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative in order to strengthen the link between countries.

Black Sea

17. Romulus-Marian Paiu presented the report for the Black Sea. He indicated that 4 projects on cetacean conservation were implemented in Bulgaria, 3 in Georgia, 5 in Romania, 3 in Ukraine and 4 in Turkey (included in the report even if not Party to the ACCOBAMS).

He presented an overview of activities in the Region since last Scientific Committee Meeting in 2015. 18 projects were identified including one starting in summer of 2017 in Bulgaria. The projects are diverse and cover a wide range of the Agreement agenda, from awareness campaigns and citizen science to research (genetic analyses, disease) and monitoring (strandings, bycatch, visual and passive acoustic) and not least capacity building.

During this period, two major pressure factors have brought concerns: oil and gas exploration and exploitation and military exercises as response to conflictual situation in Black Sea, both generating noise.

Regarding strandings, if in 2012, the North-Western Black Sea area has encountered unusual high number of stranded cetaceans, in 2015-2016 the episode occurred again but in the South and South-Western Black Sea area. An important asset for Black Sea region was the recent development of mobile app for smartphones and website in order to raise knowledge about the flora and fauna inhabiting the Black Sea and to promote involvement of public into "citizen science" in the region.

18. The regional representative presented the following Recommendations / suggestions for Improvement:

- Authorities should have a greater involvement in the implementation of the Agreement since most of the projects are developed without any governmental assistance;
- Mass mortalities events showed a lack in managing the situation at the Parties level, there is a need for a data bank and expertise in pathology at regional level;
- Revitalization of the Regional Cetacean Stranding Monitoring Network and establishment of national task forces able to intervene in emergency situations;
- A review of the impact of the fishing tools (nets) used in the Black Sea area and the impact of different types of material need to be assessed. For example, in Romania, the fishermen push the authorities to introduce monofilament mesh instead of the traditional nets using textile;
- MMO should be mandatory for oil and gas activities. There is a need for the ACCOBAMS MMO certificate;
- It is suggested that the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative covers the needs of Black Sea and that guidelines are elaborated for establishing the Good Environmental Status for cetaceans according to the MSFD.

Conclusion 5.

The Scientific Committee took note of the reports of each Regional Representative.

19. The RAC/SPA representative recommended that Regional representatives should work in collaboration with the SRCUs to ask for additional information in the regions.

20. Some participants noted that the four regional representatives did not use the same methodology to report and to present the relevant activities in their region. They proposed to amend the format of the regional representatives' report with information about actual threats in the region. Furthermore, when presenting the report to the meeting, it would be useful to specify cetacean conservation activities implemented in the region.

Conclusion 6.

The Scientific Committee decided to create a working group with the four Regional Representative, Léa David and Marina Sequeira to propose templates before the next Scientific Committee Meeting for:

- the collection of information to be provided in the report;
- the format of the report;
- the presentation of outputs.

4. PRIORITIZATION OF THE ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE WORK PROGRAMME 2017-2019

4.1 Priorities and key conservation issues identified by Parties

21. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that during MOP6, she was requested “*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 Program, taking into consideration the availability of financial resources, to facilitate its effective and timely implementation*”.
22. She introduced the document regarding Key Conservation Issues and priorities of activities included in the Work Program 2017-2019 identified by Parties (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/**Doc 09**) explaining that:
- Item underlined and surrounded in red: key conservation issues identified by Parties at MOP6 in November 2016;
 - Actions underlined in blue: list of actions, included in the work program, that have been identified with a high priority by France and/or Italy only (as allowed to Parties under Resolution 6.5);
 - Actions underlined in green: actions that have been identified with a high priority during the ACCOBAMS Regional workshops (April 2015, Menton, France);
 - Actions underlined in yellow: actions considered as a priority by both Parties (France and Italy) and the Regional workshop.

4.2 Prioritization by the Scientific Committee of the implementation of activities included in the Work Programme 2017-2019

23. The Chair invited the Scientific Committee to propose implementation level priorities and relevant budgetary implications for actions described in the work program:
- **Level 1** : Activities to be initiated in 2017
 - **Level 2** : Activities to be initiated in 2018
 - **Level 3** : Activities to be initiated in 2019
 - **Level 4** : Activities that could be postponed to the next triennium (pending on funds availability)
24. This prioritization will help the Permanent Secretariat in preparing a proposal to prioritize the implementation of the activities included in the Work Program, taking into consideration the availability of financial resources, in order to facilitate its effective and timely implementation.
25. Participants stressed the importance of some activities, especially regarding knowledge of population structure and abundance as well as threats and mitigation measures, recognising that such work is complex and can be expensive. They underlined that some issues considered as very important would not be resolved within the triennium, even if activities will be initiated.

Conclusion 7.

The 2017-2019 Work Programme with the proposed priority implementation levels is presented in [Annex IV](#).

4.3 Nomination of relevant four Task Managers

26. The Executive Secretary recalled that Resolution 6.7 allows the Chair and the Vice Chair to act also as task manager. Four Task Managers were identified according to the work programme priorities and the terms of reference presented in the document ACCOBAMS/SC11/2017/Doc04 (ToR of Scientific Committee Task Managers). Other members of the Scientific Committee as well as ACCOBAMS Partners offered their support to the Task Managers.

Conclusion 8.

Taking into account the above priorities, the Scientific Committee appointed the following Task Managers:

- Interaction with Fisheries:
 - Task Manager: Ayaka Amaha OZTÜRK, with a focus on bycatch
 - Vice-Task Manager: Joan GONZALVO, with a focus on depredation
 - Support Group: Léa DAVID, Greg DONOVAN, Théa JACOB, Romulus-Marian PAIU and Aviad SCHENIN

- Species Conservation Management Plans:
 - Task Manager: Greg DONOVAN
 - Vice-Task Manager: Vasileios PETROPOULOS
 - Support Group: Ibrahim BEN AMER, Joan GONZALVO, Théa JACOB, Hélène LABACH, Barbara MUSSI, Romulus-Marian PAIU, Simone PANIGADA, Massimiliano ROSSO, Aviad SCHENIN and Ana STRBENAC.

- Functional Stranding Networks and Responses to Emergency Situations:
 - Task Manager: Aviad SCHENIN
 - Vice-Task Manager: Vincent RIDOUX
 - Support Group: Hédia ATTIA EL HILI, Greg DONOVAN, Hélène LABACH, Romulus-Marian PAIU and Vasileios PETROPOULOS

- Protected Areas for Cetaceans:
 - Task Manager: Léa DAVID
 - Vice-Task Manager: Simone PANIGADA
 - Support Group: Ibrahim BEN AMER, Lobna BEN NAKHLA, Christopher COUSIN, Fannie DUBOIS, Joan GONZALVO, Théa JACOB, Hélène LABACH, Aurélie MOULINS, Daniela Silvia PACE and Ana STRBENAC

Support Groups remain open. The list will be circulated to the Scientific Committee and to the ACCOBAMS Partners.

27. The Permanent Secretariat will circulate the list of Task Managers and their Support Group for information and as call for any other interested participants.

5. CONSERVATION ACTIONS

5.1 Improve knowledge about state of cetaceans

5.1.1 *Cetacean population estimates and distribution*

28. The Permanent Secretariat reported about the development and fundraising process undertaken during the 2014-2016 triennium to secure the funds required for the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI). The project was officially launched during MOP6 in November 2016 and the ASI Project Officer is to be starting her functions at the Permanent Secretariat by early April 2017.
29. Taking into consideration the geographic areas priorities of the external funders that have agreed to support the project so far (the MAVA Foundation and the Prince Albert II Foundation), the activities will start in the Mediterranean with the view of carrying out the survey during summer 2018. Fundraising efforts will continue for the Black Sea, in particular through exchanges with scientists from the Black Sea who are developing a project proposal to be submitted to a call for proposals launched under the ENI CBC Black Sea Basin Programme in order to implement the ASI in the Black Sea.
30. The Executive Secretary indicated that the ASI Project Steering Committee reviewed the applications for the ASI Scientific Coordinator. A candidate and his support team were identified. Final nomination by the Steering Committee is pending the revision of the support team to better represent the Agreement area and to further detail the capacity building aspect of the mission.

Conclusion 9.

The Scientific Committee took note of the information document on the project development and fundraising of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative.

5.1.2 *Population Structure*

31. The Chair of the Scientific Committee informed the participants that the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS had recommended the re-establishment by the Scientific Committee of a working group on population structure. The 2 co-chairs of the previous working group were contacted but were not available to contribute to it.

Conclusion 10.

The Scientific Committee decided to postpone this issue which will be addressed during its next meeting in 2018.

Conclusion 11.

Aspects on population structure will be considered in the context of Conservation Management Plans.

5.1.3 *Monitoring cetaceans status*

32. The Chair presented Resolution 6.15, adopted by the Sixth Meeting of the Parties, regarding the assessment of the IUCN conservation status of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area.

33. He reminded that Parties requested the Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to liaise with the initial assessors to:
- consider whether there was sufficient new information to re-assess the species that were still Data Deficient and, if so, submit new assessments for consideration by the appropriate evaluators;
 - consider whether there was sufficient information to evaluate species within the Agreement area not previously assessed and, if so, submit an assessment for consideration by the appropriate evaluators;
 - re-assess the status of 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, and submit such re-assessment for consideration by the appropriate evaluators.

Conclusion 12.

The Scientific Committee decided to assess the IUCN threat status of killer whale in priority and to postpone the (re)assessment of the other species after the results of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative, when data on population abundance and distribution will be available.

5.2 Reduce human pressures on cetaceans, in particular those related to bycatch, habitat loss and degradation (pollution)

5.2.1 *Interaction with fisheries*

34. The ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat introduced the draft Terms of Reference for the Joint ASCOBANS/ACCOBAMS Bycatch Working Group included in document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/10. It was reminded that the Parties to ACCOBAMS requested the ACCOBAMS 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” (Resolution 6.16).
35. The ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat informed the meeting that these draft Terms of Reference are to be presented and discussed during an expert workshop on bycatch organized by ASCOBANS on 22-23 February 2017 in Bonn. After this workshop, the final draft will be circulated to the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and to the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee for final review and comments.
36. The IWC representative commented that IWC has agreed on a new bycatch initiative, as matter of priority since bycatch on specific species/areas is relevant to CMPs. Discussions on the implementation process are underway.

Conclusion 13.

The Draft Terms of Reference for the joint ASCOBANS/ACCOBAMS Bycatch Working Group were revised by the Scientific Committee as it appears in [Annex V](#). The GFCM will be invited to participate in the joint Working Group.

37. The ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat informed the Meeting about the progress made in the ACCOBAMS/GFCM Project on mitigating the negative interactions between threatened marine species and fishing activities, as contained in document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Inf 06. She also informed the meeting about the process initiated by the MAVA Foundation for developing a new project on bycatch that should include different fishing gears and follow a multitaxa approach, in collaboration with different regional partners (ACCOBAMS, GFCM, RAC/SPA, BirdLife and MEDASSET). This new project should include data collection and testing mitigation measures.

Conclusion 14.

The Scientific Committee reiterated its willingness to provide support and its availability to sustain the GFCM/ACCOBAMS joint project by providing scientific advices (through the Task Manager and relevant experts).

5.2.2 Anthropogenic noise

38. The Executive Secretary opened the agenda item with a projection of an ACCOBAMS teaser on noise which will be available on the ACCOBAMS website. She outlined that noise issue was one of the main priority during the previous triennium.
39. The Chair of the Scientific Committee invited relevant experts on noise to present:
- an overview of the study regarding noise hot spots in the ACCOBAMS Area (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/**Doc 11**),
 - a progress report of the implementation of an ACCOBAMS noise demonstrator (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/**Doc 12**),
 - a Workshop proposal for the ECS “Strengthening cooperation between regional impulsive noise registers existing for countries bordering the seas around Europe” (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/**Doc 13**),
 - Terms of Reference for a NATO/ACCOBAMS workshop (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/**Doc 14**),
40. The Permanent Secretariat also presented a concept note regarding a regional project on underwater noise (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/**Inf07**).
41. Alessio Maglio presented an update of the study regarding noise hot spots in the ACCOBAMS Area. The update concerns an additional analysis on the opportunity to plot together continuous and impulsive noise sources with the aim to study the impact of noise on cetaceans. Expert’s views globally agreed on the fact that this analysis exercise does not appear as scientifically justified when aiming at assessing the specific impacts caused by noise on the marine environment and particularly on cetaceans. Instead, this exercise appears useful to study the distribution in time and space of the multiple stressors potentially adding a pressure on the environment.
42. A member recognised the strengths and weaknesses of the process to determine ‘hot spots’. He commented that as part of the future work there is a need to be more refined noise mapping that incorporates temporal as well as spatial components, as the authors recognised.
43. The IWC representative indicated that IWC and IUCN are happy to collaborate on the further work under this project. Additional measures/encouragement to supply data for analysis are required in addition to scientific and analytical improvements. He explained that, in addition to recent IWC Scientific Committee reports (published in the *Journal of Cetacean Research and Management*), there are two documents that are especially relevant: Nowacek *et al.* (2013) and the new IUCN advice (Nowacek and Southall, 2016). He stressed the value of consistency of advice provided by IGOs on matters such as mitigation measures and data collection across jurisdictions and in the high seas.
44. The progress report on a Noise Demonstrator presented the project aiming at developing a web tool containing a common database for the ACCOBAMS Agreement area on impulsive noise sources. This tool was made according to the involvement of ACCOBAMS in the MSFD and the EcAp processes. A cooperation with the ICES, which developed and manages the noise register for northern European waters, was established in order to create a compatible tool from a technical point of view. The tool is available at “accobams.noiseregister.org”. The current version of the website is at a demonstration phase, and allow performing several operations, including: selecting,

filtering and displaying data on a map; uploading and downloading data on/from the database; calculating, displaying and downloading impulsive noise indicators in different readable formats; creating and managing user's accounts and account rights. Further effort is needed to turn this demonstrator into an operational tool which is ready for the monitoring and assessment purposes of the MSFD and EcAp processes. Further opportunities can be explored in order to increase the value of this tool, including a link with national or international stranding databases, and further databases on biological features and anthropic activities.

45. Finally, a workshop was proposed to the Organising Committee of the 31st ECS Conference in order to gather together experts on noise from relevant regional organisations, as well as relevant national experts for (i) presenting their regional/national noise register efforts to date and (ii) discussing how to improve and streamline the ACCOBAMS noise register under development.
46. The IWC representative indicated that the IWC has held an expert workshop on noise mapping ([SC/65b/Rep03](#)) and that all mapping approaches require reasonably good data. ACCOBAMS Parties can and should assist in obtaining such information even if additional measures/encouragement to supply data for analysis is required in addition to scientific and analytical improvements.
47. OceanCare, referring to Resolution 6.17 Anthropogenic noise, informed the Meeting about a planned hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation activities in the waters off Montenegro without adequate Impact Assessment having been conducted. They recommended the Secretariat to provide the Focal Point of Montenegro with the two documents prepared by the JNWG providing guidance to address exploration activities in the Adriatic Sea as well as in sensitive areas within the Mediterranean Sea, and to invite Montenegro to provide detailed information in line with Resolution 6.17 point 3, and to inquire whether habitat usage and cetacean occurrence has been examined.
48. The National expert from Croatia, informed the meeting that European Commission requested Croatia to prepare guidelines for mitigation of anthropogenic noise impacts on marine mammals and sea turtles. The guidelines are prepared using the ACCOBAMS guidelines with some amendments. Croatian authorities should adopt the guidelines in the first half of 2017. In addition, all plans for further seismic surveys have been stopped since 2015 and the future is at the moment not clear.

Conclusion 15.

The Scientific Committee welcomed all the documents presented under this agenda item. It also welcomed the workshop planned for the 31st ECS Conference which will allow to identify the most effective way to assess the pressure of impulsive noise on the marine environment, especially by harmonizing existing or under development regional registers (ICES/OSPAR and ACCOBAMS/UNEP-MAP). IUCN and IWC will be involved in this issue thanks to their expertise.

49. In accordance with the Resolution 6.17 "Anthropogenic Noise" adopted at MOP6, Terms of Reference for a NATO – ACCOBAMS Workshop were presented by Vassileios Petropoulos. The aim of the workshop is to improve dialogue and cooperation between NATO and national navies with ACCOBAMS, meaning that it addresses military activities of navies, including NATO and Non-NATO countries in the ACCOBAMS area.
50. It was suggested to contact scientists with past experience with working with the military to determine the best way to approach NATO.

51. OceanCare raised the attention of the Scientific Committee about the several manoeuvres upcoming for which to their knowledge, very little information is made publicly available. Only NATO communicated the following exercises:
- Exercises Dynamic Move (from January 30 to February 11)
 - Dynamic Guard (from February 6th to 12th)
 - Dynamic Manta (from March 13 to 25), Dynamic Merci (from May 1st to 13th)
 - Dynamic Mongoose (from June 26th to July 8th).
- Ocean Care highlighted that such manoeuvres show the matter of urgency to progress the proceedings to organise the planned workshop. They encourage the Secretariat to engage in a dialogue with focal points inviting and offering close dialogue between national navies, NATO and the Scientific Committee.
52. Participants, with respect to the proposed joint NATO-ACCOBAMS workshop, commended the initiative. The IWC representative suggested that the Scientific Committee considers developing a full workshop report outline to enable the provision of a prompt publicly available report with recommendations, including, where appropriate, recommendations on how they to develop a predictive noise modelling approach in advance of activities that will inform a case-specific mitigation approach. The approach for seismic surveys recommended in Nowacek *et al.* 2013 and the new IUCN advice based upon that, could provide an initial model for a similar approach to military sonar exercises. It was proposed that the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee volunteers to provide cetacean input into any guidelines/protocols. It was also suggested to contact scientists with past experience in working with the military to determine the best way to approach NATO.

Conclusion 16.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the Terms of Reference for a NATO – ACCOBAMS Workshop.

53. Some members and observers, recalling Resolution 6.17 Anthropogenic Noise in operative paragraph 9 and referring to document ACCOBAMS-SC10/2015/Inf 33, recommended to the Scientific Committee and the JNWG to further develop in the next triennium the concept of “quiet zone” as outlined in Recommendation 10.5 of the last meeting 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.

Conclusion 17.

The Scientific Committee suggested to create a specific sub group regarding “Quiet Zones” within the JNWG.

Conclusion 18.

The Scientific Committee took note of the information sent by the co-Chairs of the JNWG referring to the draft “CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities” which are available for final comments by Focal Points and members of the advisory bodies and relevant working groups of CMS, ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS until **15 February 2017**. After this date no input will be possible anymore and the draft will be sent to the CMS Scientific Council.

5.2.3 Ship strikes

54. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that during the MedMPA Forum (29 November – 1st December 2017), she has participated to the IMO Focus Session which aimed at exploring how the International Maritime Organization can contribute to protect sensitive marine environments and mitigate international shipping risks

on MPAs in the Mediterranean. IMO representative noted that marine conservation issues that could be improved with measures under IMO (including PSSAs, TSS, etc.) need to be identified at a regional scale, prioritized and addressed within an action plan and involving all regional stakeholders as ACCOBAMS (Areas of conservation importance for cetaceans located in areas with high maritime traffic)

55. The Chair of the Scientific Committee presented updated Terms of Reference of the Working Group on collisions and relevant time schedule (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc 15), taking into account provisions of the Resolution 6.19.

The idea was to limit the WG to ship strikes only, since fin whales will be covered by the CMS correspondence group. The collaboration with the IWC on ship strikes is presented and described, with an emphasis on the need to provide data to the global database and to rely on the recommendations approved by the joint ACCOBAMS-IWC workshop on ship strikes in 2010. The membership of the working group has also been updated and new members are welcome to join the group.

56. The IWC representative reiterated the already strong co-operation between IWC and ACCOBAMS on ship strikes and noted that the IWC is keen to continue and enhance co-operation on this high priority issue.

Conclusion 19.

The Scientific Committee updated the composition of the Ship strikes Working Group. Terms of Reference ([Annex VI](#)) will be circulated to all members of the Working Group.

57. Théa Jacob from WWF France was invited to present the study conducted by WWF in 2014 “Characteristics of maritime traffic in the Pelagos Sanctuary and analysis of collision risk with large cetaceans”. She explained that in order to characterize maritime traffic within Pelagos Sanctuary and select as precisely as possible best candidates for REPCET system, WWF conducted an extensive study using AIS signals in 2014 (in partnership with Quiet Ocean and Eco Ocean). It appeared that vessels presenting more important travelled distance in the Pelagos Sanctuary are Passenger ships (33%) and Cargos (29%). Using Injury Weight Travelled Distance indicator (IWTD) and Near Miss Event Methodology (NME), conclusions were that 26 vessels account for 30% of collision risk traffic, and 84 vessels for 50%. This mean little effort with REPCET deployment would cover great amount of collision risk. Mostly 6 companies are concerned, 4 Italian and 2 French. The ships of those companies represent almost half of the traffic risk (IWTD) in the Pelagos Sanctuary and one third of the collision theoretical probability (NME). In April 2016, anti-ship strikes system were made compulsory for French ships by law (Biodiversity Law), this measure should be implemented in 2017. WWF France along with WWF Mediterranean Initiative is working towards REPCET deployment for a selection of Italian companies (those with the highest collision risk).

Conclusion 20.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the study on marine traffic presented by WWF France and requested WWF France to circulate the relevant document to all the Scientific Committee Members.

58. The Chair recalled also the ongoing effort on the possibility of adapting the US “Whale Alert” cell phone application to the Mediterranean Sea.

Conclusion 21.

The Scientific Committee agreed on the importance of testing REPCET in order to statistically evaluate its efficiency, and encouraged a strong collaboration with the Pelagos Agreement on this issue.

5.2.4 Cetacean watching

59. The Permanent Secretariat introduced document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc16 regarding the Terms of Reference of the Working Group on whale watching and relevant time schedule and document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc17 regarding the definitions of the different types of whale watching operators.
60. The Permanent Secretariat reminded that both documents were prepared taking into account provisions of the Resolution 6.20 adopted by Parties during their last Meeting.
61. It was underlined that the proposed time schedule would have to be revised according to the prioritization of the 2017-2019 work programme.
62. The CIMA Foundation suggested to review the definitions of the different types of operators in order to include those people having commercial marine activities (e.g. pesca-tourism, charters...) not directly linked to whale watching but who occasionally do actual whale watching.
63. The Permanent Secretariat suggested to send an email to ACCOBAMS Partners and to the Scientific Committee to let them know that the Working Group on whale watching was opened and eager to include additional members.
64. The Permanent Secretariat suggested to circulate the list for the operators' inventory to the ACCOBAMS Partners in order to have their inputs since this list was only compiled according to the information received by the National Focal Points.
65. A member proposed that the Scientific Committee encourages scientists that conduct whale watching activities in the Pelagos Sanctuary to kindly offer, on a voluntarily basis the audio/visual recordings to ACCOBAMS community to create a database in order to use it for research purposes.

Conclusion 22.

The Scientific Committee recommended continuing focusing on the promotion of the "High Quality Whale Watching[®]" Certificate.

66. The IWC representative reiterated that IWC is very happy to collaborate on cetacean watching issues. He indicated that, if any field testing is intended to occur in this triennium, the Scientific Committee should review and advise on any draft protocols for testing common procedures and monitoring.
He also noted the importance of developing a common set of definitions related to whale watching with the IWC which is also working on such definitions in the context of its online handbook.

Conclusion 23.

Concerning the guidelines and the testing of the guidelines, the Scientific Committee should advise the Working Group on the protocol for testing common procedures and monitoring between now and the next Scientific Committee Meeting in collaboration with the IWC.

Conclusion 24.

The Scientific Committee noted the importance of developing a common set of definitions related to whale watching (kind of activities, operators) with the IWC which is also working on such definitions in the context of its online handbook.

Conclusion 25.

The Scientific Committee encouraged the Working Group to review the proposed schedule according to the revised work programme.

Conclusion 26.

The Scientific Committee requested the Permanent Secretariat to circulate the list for the operators' inventory to ACCOBAMS Partners in order to complete it.

5.2.5 Marine debris

67. The Chair introduced the marine debris item recalling that following the discussions of the previous session the Scientific Committee decided to adjourn this issue to the next Scientific Committee meeting in 2018.
68. He also recalled that Mark Peter Simmonds was asked to prepare the list of work and effort to be undertaken regarding marine debris.
69. The IWC representative shared with the Meeting the IWC work on marine debris including ghost nets and indicated that collaborative approach with ACCOBAMS and other relevant organisations is essential. He noted that addressing the issue of impacts is complex and requires knowledge of cetacean population structure, abundance and dynamics combined with information on the extent and distribution of ghost gear.

Conclusion 27.

The Scientific Committee suggested to use the work done by the IWC on this issue that will benefit the document to be presented at the next Scientific Committee Meeting regarding the assessment of plastic materials impacts on cetaceans.

70. The meeting was informed by the IUCN, the IWC and by the Pelagos Agreement that there were ongoing efforts on marine debris.

Conclusion 28.

It was suggested to wait for the results of the projects from the Pelagos Agreement and the effort ongoing by the IUCN on this subject.

71. Addressing marine plastic pollution, OceanCare supported the creation of a baseline reference which will allow the measurement of plastic pollution extents and trends.

Conclusion 29.

The Scientific Committee requested the Permanent Secretariat to contact OceanCare in order to ask them to prepare for SC12 a more detailed document regarding the concept "marine litter baseline reference".

Conclusion 30.

The Scientific Committee decided to postpone this issue until its next meeting in 2018.

5.2.6 Climate change

72. Referring to Document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc 18Rev1, the Chair of the Scientific Committee introduced a note regarding work in progress in the CMS Working Group on Climate Change. This note was prepared by the Chair of the CMS Climate Change Working Group, Pr. Colin Galbraith, in order to provide information on a CMS Climate Change workshop to be organized in Bonn on the 20th and 21st February 2017.

Conclusion 31.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the designation of Mark Peter SIMMONDS to represent both ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS during the CMS Climate Change workshop in February 2017 and approved the content of the note provided by the Chair of the CMS Climate Change Working Group re the next workshop.

Conclusion 32.

The Scientific Committee decided to postpone this issue until its next meeting in 2018.

5.2.7 Species Conservation Plans

73. Greg Donovan, Task Manager on Species conservation plan, presented the draft Terms of Reference for the ACCOBAMS Conservation Management Plan (CMP) Correspondence Group, as requested by Resolution 6.21 adopted at MOP6. He provided a brief introduction to the issue of Conservation Management Plans. He recalled that Resolution 6.21 had *inter alia* supported the use of the template from IWC and the general principles of CMPs and had proposed the establishment of an ACCOBAMS CMP correspondence group to take this work forward and identified a number of priority topics. These were:
- (1) use the CMP template and general principles outlined in the Resolution as the basis for its work;
 - (2) develop a draft fin whale CMP in time for presentation at the 7th Meeting of Parties;
 - (3) complete a CMP for the bottlenose dolphin as soon as possible based upon the existing work and the new template;
 - (4) review existing ACCOBAMS conservation plans in light of the CMP template and consider updating them as appropriate;
 - (5) review the findings of the workshop 'Conservation and research networking on short beaked common dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea' and consider whether the development of a CMP is an appropriate follow-up action;
 - (6) provide advice on the conservation plan for the common dolphin in the eastern North Atlantic under development by ASCOBANS.

Conclusion 33.

The Permanent Secretariat will forward to the ACCOBAMS Bureau the updated document on the Terms of Reference for the Correspondence Group on Conservation Management Plans for approval ([Annex VII](#)).

Conclusion 34.

Once reviewed by the Bureau, the final Terms of Reference will be used to develop a workplan for the CMP correspondence group.

74. Referring to Resolution 6.21 which asks the Scientific Committee to review the findings of the workshop 'Conservation and research networking on short beaked common dolphin in the Mediterranean Sea' (Ischia Island, Italy, 13-15 April 2016) and identify follow up activities, as appropriate, OceanCare suggested to reinstate the common dolphin working group. Its task will be to update the 'Conservation Plan for Mediterranean Common Dolphins', to use National Action Plans to design a qualitative reporting method to be used by all Parties in 2018, which will be used by the Scientific Committee for assessment in 2019, in order to provide recommendations for Parties at ACCOBAMS MOP7.

Conclusion 35.

The Scientific Committee will update the Terms of Reference of the common dolphin steering committee, which will be circulated to the Scientific Committee.

5.2.8 Captivity related issues

75. The Executive Secretary explained that in 2015/2016, the ACCOBAMS Secretariat was approached by NGOs and Parties regarding the captivity issue both in dolphinarium and in their natural environment ("dolphinarium-like"). In this context, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to review and update, a document presented in MOP5 "Taking of cetaceans and dolphinarium: a legal analysis within the framework of ACCOBAMS" in order to include the "quasi dolphinarium" together with the re-introduction issue.
76. The Executive Secretary introduced this revised document (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Inf10).
77. The Meeting was informed about the willingness of the author (Prof. Tullio SCOVAZZI) to publish this study in a legal journal. In this context, before presented the document to ACCOBAMS, he had requested for a scientific review by Joan Gonzalvo and Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara.

Conclusion 36.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the legal analysis regarding the taking of cetaceans, and took note of the ongoing scientific review done by Joan GONZALVO and Giuseppe NOTARBARTOLO DI SCIARA.

Conclusion 37.

The Scientific Committee suggested that participants forward all relevant comments to Prof. Tullio SCOVAZZI through Joan GONZALVO for consideration before the study is published.

5.2.9 Chemical and biological pollution

78. The Chair introduced the item on chemical and biological pollution. He reminded that it was suggested to contact scientist and researchers working on chemical and biological pollution in the ACCOBAMS area through the support of Mark Peter Simmonds and the IWC and with the cooperation with the University of Sienna, in order to prepare an updated document including priority actions to be implement before this end of the triennium. This document will be presented at the next meeting of the Scientific Committee.

79. The IWC representative noted the long-standing co-operation between the IWC and ACCOBAMS on chemical pollution issues. He agreed to provide a summary of the IWC's Pollution 2020 programme to the next meeting of the Scientific Committee.

Conclusion 38.

The Scientific Committee decided to postpone this issue to their meeting in 2018 and to benefit from the expertise of the IWC in order to prepare a document for the next Scientific Committee meeting.

Conclusion 39.

The Scientific Committee took note of call of proposals of the Pelagos Agreement on this issue.

5.3 Improve capacities of national organizations and experts

5.3.1 *Functional stranding networks and responses to emergency situation*

80. 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. This review was undertaken by an expert jointly agreed by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat and the RAC/SPA. The review was presented and the actions adopted in the program of work by the MOP.

81. The expert in charge of the review recalled 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 SC11.Doc20_Review of the functioning of MEDACES, he presented the recommendations proposed in order to improve the functioning and the efficiency of MEDACES, in particular the designation of a national representative and the development of a dedicated smartphone application.

Conclusion 40.

The Scientific Committee took note of the review of the functioning of MEDACES and agreed on all the proposed recommendations presented in [Annex XIII](#).

The Scientific Committee inquired also on the possibility of providing information on tissue availability in MEDACES.

Conclusion 41.

The Scientific Committee decided to report on this issue during the next Meeting of the Parties and recommended that the Permanent Secretariat evaluates the cost implication of the smartphone application to this purpose.

Conclusion 42.

The Scientific Committee agreed to provide their inputs to go ahead on this issue and encouraged the Permanent Secretariat to work closely with UNEP-MAP RAC/SPA.

Conclusion 43.

The Scientific Committee underlined the need for an analysis of the national stranding networks and make the following inquires;

- to ask the Task Manager on strandings to work together with Scientific Committee in order to define the scientific needs from the database and the subsequent improvements,
- to facilitate trainings for tissue collection and storage.

82. The IWC representative underlined that IWC is happy to assist and co-operate with ACCOBAMS and others in these issues. He stressed the importance of common guidelines and advice as scientifically beneficial leading ultimately to better conservation outcomes. He noted that the IWC is setting up an international strandings expert panel to provide advice when requested. He noted that ACCOBAMS will be consulted over experts and looks forward to further co-operation on this priority item.
83. The chair gives the floor to the Romulus- Marian-PAIU for a presentation of a PowerPoint prepared by Ayaka Amaha Ozturk's related to an "Unusual mass mortality of harbour porpoises on the coast of the western Black Sea (Bulgaria and Turkey) in summer 2016".
84. Between late June and late August 2016, an unusual mass mortality of Black Sea harbour porpoises *Phocoena phocoena relicta* was observed on the western Black Sea coasts of Turkey and Bulgaria. In total 443 stranded cetaceans were reported in Turkey on the 300km coastline and 234 along the southern Bulgarian coast of 238 km. Most of them were harbour porpoises. Highest cetacean stranding rate was recorded (7.1 ind./km) in Turkey since 2003 compared to normal rates ranging between 0.1 and 1.1 (ind./km) in summer months. Almost all specimens were at the advanced stage of decomposition (stage 4-5), which made it impossible to determine the reason for such mortality. Most of them (about 90%) were neonates (<1 year of age), around 70cm in body length, which indicates that potential causes such as bycatch, biotoxin, infectious diseases, starvation, acoustic trauma, heavy metals and chemical contamination are unlikely causes. It is assumed that thousands of juveniles died during this mortality event in western Black Sea coast. Such damage to an already threatened population of Black Sea harbour porpoises needs to be monitored and taken into consideration for elaborating the conservation plan.

Conclusion 44.

The Scientific Committee made the following inquiries:

- to develop a regional task force for mass strandings in the Black Sea to respond in the most efficient way to ensure that tissue samples are properly collected and stored for further analyses (in accordance with the revised regional Conservation Plan for Black Sea cetaceans),
- to provide a list of relevant experts in the ACCOBAMS area who may intervene during mass stranding events (in accordance with the ACCOBAMS-MOP4/2010/Res4.16).

5.3.2 Capacity building

85. Léa David, Chair of the MMO Working Group, reported on the implementation of an ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM as contained in Document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc 21. Referring to Resolution 6.18 adopted at MOP6, she recalled the ongoing process. She explained that the composition of the MMO Working Group has been updated, welcoming new relevant members, and that role of the WG has been clarified in order to ensure a transparent and fair process in the development of the Certification scheme. She also

presented the Terms of Reference for the experts of the ACCOBAMS MMO Courses Committee to be established and the different tasks of the MMO WG planned for 2017.

86. Precisions were provided about several points, concerning the safety accreditation that will not be included in the MMO accreditation; the specific course that will be created for militaries; and how training will be financed over the long term.
87. The meeting also considered the issues to be addressed to ensure that accredited MMOs are recruited in the ACCOBAMS area, in particular on the need to communicate towards Focal Points and private companies on this Certification scheme and to establish a database of qualified MMOs, for example on NETCCOBAMS.

Conclusion 45.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the progress report on the implementation of an ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified MMOs.

Conclusion 46.

It was recommended to keep the Scientific Committee involved in reviewing any training materials to be prepared and used.

Conclusion 47.

The MMO Working Group was requested to provide the Scientific Committee with titles of the training modules as soon as possible to allow it to review the scope of the training envisioned and to comment if any contents were considered missing.

88. Under this agenda item, the Executive Secretary introduced document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Inf 11 presenting an overview of capacity building activities in the ACCOBAMS area. She explained that this document was first prepared for the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific Committee (Monaco, 15-17 April 2014) and that it has been updated twice based on information provided by Parties during regional workshops in June 2015 and taking into consideration the Regional Representative reports, the National reports and Partner reports prepared for MOP6 in 2016.

5.4 Enhance effective conservation of Cetaceans Critical Habitats

89. The Chair invited Léa David to present a progress report on the current threat based management approach (ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/**Doc 22**) as well as the Terms of Reference of a workshop proposed for the 31st ECS Conference "Inputs to the ACCOBAMS ongoing effort to map human threats on cetaceans in the Mediterranean and Black Seas "(ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/**Doc 23**).
90. These documents presented the main advance of the initiative: a work was undertaken in collaboration with OBIS-Seamap to allow an update of the "special page for ACCOBAMS", with all relevant Mediterranean data files. She explained that outputs from the IMMA workshop held in Crete in October 2016 will be very useful. Agreements have also been received to use recent maps of human activities, namely: from the EU DG MARE commission for the map of fishery in the Black Sea from the report of Birkun et al., 2014; and the map of the fishery in the Mediterranean Sea from Piante and Ody, 2015. Finally, it was announced that a workshop on "threats" will be held during the 31st ECS conference in Denmark (30th April 2017), and that the expected outputs will be maps with drawn areas (in GIS format) where threats occur, like ship-strike, harassment bycatch, etc....

91. Participants commended the excellent progress on the threat based management approach. However, it was highlighted that the most difficult part of such complex work is the integration of quite different kinds of information available at different geographical and spatial scales and at different levels of quantified reliability.

Conclusion 48.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the progress report on the threat based management approach as well as the workshop proposal to map human threats on cetacean.

Conclusion 49.

It was recommended to pay special attention on the risk of misinterpretation of the use of precise delimitation in maps. It was requested to provide information to the Scientific Committee on how it will intend to address this so that the Committee could have an opportunity to comment.

6. COMMUNICATION AND INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

6.1 Information and communication

92. The Executive Secretary introduced the item on information and communication. She recalled that during the past triennium strong emphasis has been put on improving the ACCOBAMS communication tools.
93. The Executive Secretary informed the meeting that the 4th edition of the Biennial Conference will be held in Algeria in October 2017.
94. The Permanent Secretariat presented the new ACCOBAMS website guiding the meeting through the new functioning of the website. The Permanent Secretariat indicated that the new design was in harmony with the websites of the CMS Family.

Conclusion 50.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the new website.

95. The Permanent Secretariat also informed the meeting about its participation to the 10th edition of Monacology which will be held in Monaco in June 2017.
96. Some questions were raised on the Cetacean Days and it was concluded that it was more convenient to let every country to choose the date in order, *inter alia*, to link the event with other relevant national manifestations. In relation with the relevance of Citizen Science possible input, it was recommended to the Permanent Secretariat to look on similar actions by other relevant organisations (French Part of the Pelagos Agreement, IWC, etc.) or in countries like Israel and Greece.

6.2 Improve the level of implementation and compliance with ACCOBAMS Resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress

97. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting about the First Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Committee convened in Monaco on 2nd March 2016. During this meeting, it was 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

(in 2019). The main Recommendations regarding scientific issues request to review, under Article 6, paragraph 1,d, of the ACCOBAMS Follow up Procedure, the following legal and technical:

- existing obligations and commitments related to seismic and military activities producing underwater noise,
- interactions between humans and dolphins addressed by Resolution 3.13 (Dolphin interaction programme).

98. She also informed the Meeting that the follow up procedure has been amended by MOP6 and that the Committee meetings are now open, as observers, to one member of the Scientific Committee, as nominated by it, and, unless the Party whose follow up is in question requests otherwise.

Conclusion 51.

The Scientific Committee will designate a member of the Scientific Committee to participate as observer to the meeting of the Follow up Committee, taking into account the points included in the provisional agenda.

6.3 Cooperation with international organizations

6.3.1 *Contribution to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive*

99. Taking into account the recommendations from the Overview of the implementation of MSFD and EcAP processes (regarding cetaceans) in the ACCOBAMS Area presented to Parties during MOP6, the Chair of the Scientific Committee invited Jerome Spitz, from University of La Rochelle, to introduce Terms of Reference for a MSFD / EcAP correspondence working group on ACCOBAMS area (ACCOBAMS/SC11/2017/Doc24) to foster transnational initiatives and ensure the coherence of the determination of Good Environmental Status regarding marine mammals.

100. Jerome, through a Skype call, explained that the proposal for the creation of the working group on the MSFD and EcAP came from the work conducted during the two last years on the implantation of MSFD regarding cetaceans in ACCOBAMS area. The rationale for this working group follows the recommendations from the European commission which encourage the Member states to collaborate to implement the MSFD at a coherent evaluation scale for mobile species such as marine mammals. Therefore, Regional Seas Conventions and Agreements have been identified to stimulate the cooperation among Member States and assist the European Commission. This working group shall consist primarily of scientific experts in charge of the implementation of MSFD regarding marine mammals in each European Member states in the ACCOBAMS area. Additionally, a scientific expert in charge of the implementation of the EcAP Initiative or similar initiatives in the Black Sea shall be also contributing to this group.

101. Following questions of participants regarding the composition of the proposed working group and the timeframe, Jerome Spitz specified that the main objective of this working group will be to collect and share information on monitoring programs and associated indicators as well as initiate and stimulate transnational initiatives / efforts.

Conclusion 52.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the draft Terms of Reference for a MSFD/EcAP correspondence working group on the ACCOBAMS area ([Annex IX](#)).

Conclusion 53.

They invited the author to update the document by:

- providing some information on the composition of the Working Group (name of experts), especially by liaising with the two ACCOBAMS Sub regional coordination Units (Black Sea Permanent Secretariat and RAC/SPA),
- adding a representative of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative in the Working Group
- adding a workplan to know the timeframe before the next Scientific Committee Meeting in order to liaise with the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative.

6.3.2 Collaboration with Sub Regional Coordination Units**Mediterranean and Atlantic contiguous area SRCU**

102. The representative of RAC/SPA presented the activities that will be supported by its organisation during the next triennium, based on the ACCOBAMS PoW (2017-2019). It will concern mainly the contribution of RAC/SPA in the implementation of ASI, the bycatch GFCM-ACCOBAMS, the support of MEDACES functioning, the Development or revision of National Action Plans, promotion of public awareness, coordination of anthropogenic noise activities through the EcAp process, co- organisation of the next biennial conference including MMOs training. At the end, she asked for ACCOBAMS support to the organisation of two sub-training sessions on biodiversity integrated monitoring planned within EcAp project in summer 2017, mainly for cetacean's issue.

103. The Executive Secretary informed the meeting that the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat and the UNEP/MAP-RAC/SPA will sign a new Memorandum of Understanding which will include the list of activities for the triennium.

Black Sea SRCU

104. The representative of The Black Sea Commission presented the activities that will be supported by her organization during 2017:

- Linking the NETCCOBAMS with the BSIS (Black Sea information system) prototype to maintain and regularly update information about cetacean conservation scientists and experts operating in the Black Sea region;
- Coordinated input during the CBD Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea region, 24 to 29 April 2017 in Baku, Azerbaijan;
- Introduction of the "Cetacean conservation" modules in the existing postgraduate programs and enrolling the English-speaking universities of the ACCOBAMS area (planned tentatively to hold such workshop for teachers and PhD students in Romania in 2017);
- Comprehensive survey of abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Black Sea (based on 2013 survey and conclusions in the final report to EC DG MARE, 2014, as well as results of dolphin observation during open sea surveys undertaken within EMBLAS Project in 2016 and 2017);
- Identify indicator species in the Black Sea and propose a monitoring system for these species (within Black Sea Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Program (BSIMAP for 2017-2022) adopted in 2016);
- Establishment of links with the BSC CBD Regional Activity Centre (Batumi, Georgia);
- Revision of Regional Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans (prepared in 2014) and its endorsement by BSC CBD Advisory Group and Black Sea Commission;
- Contribution to the First Report on the Implementation of the (amended) BS SAP (2009) – SAPIR and "State of the Black Sea Environment" Report – SoE for 2009-2014;
- Update of the inventory of specimens of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins kept in the captivity;

- Support of the efforts of ACCOBAMS Secretariat on underwater noise, namely project on mapping the anthropogenic underwater noise in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea;
- Initiate the exchanges between universities and laboratories for training on genetic and molecular biology in the Black Sea;
- Information on cetaceans in the Official Black Sea Commission' Newsletter 2017;
- Coordination of Red Books of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area with the Black Sea Red Data Book to be published in 2017
- Identify possible sources of funding for developing activities on cetaceans bycatch.

6.3.3 Collaboration with ACCOBAMS Partners

105. The Permanent Secretariat introduced the item regarding the collaboration with ACCOBAMS Partners. It informed the meeting that the workshop for ACCOBAMS Partners will take place in 2018, the date and venue will be announced in due time.

106. The Chair reminded that the contribution of Partners to the Agreement and to the Scientific Committee was crucial and of vital importance therefore he encouraged all the Partners to maintain their interest and a high level of collaboration within the Scientific Committee and the Permanent Secretariat.

107. Hélène Labach informed the Scientific Committee, that the GIS3M prepares the organization of the first international conference on marine mammals conservation in the Mediterranean in France, end of 2017. This event could be the occasion to organize the first meeting of the Netcobams members as well as the meeting of the ACCOBAMS partners and working groups. The GIS3M will continue to work with the Permanent Secretariat in order to organize this event in close partnership with the ACCOBAMS.

Conclusion 54.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the organization of the next workshop of ACCOBAMS Partners.

6.3.4 Collaboration with other Organizations

108. The IWC representative noted that he had referred to many ongoing IWC activities throughout the relevant Agenda Items of mutual interest to ACCOBAMS and the IWC. He reconfirmed the willingness of the IWC and its Secretariat to continue and enhance its excellent co-operation with ACCOBAMS on many topics.

109. The ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary confirmed the interest of the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat to reinforce the collaboration with IWC, and to explore new areas of collaboration with IMO and NATO. She also informed the Meeting about the Memorandum of Understanding that was signed with the Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention on February 2016 and about the development of a Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity prepared among the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN, in order to optimize efforts and to strengthen synergies between activities and work programs of these Organizations.

110. Ms Fannie Dubois, Executive Secretary of the Pelagos Agreement, informed the Meeting that the Permanent Secretariat of the Pelagos Agreement is operational and ready to pursue the collaboration with ACCOBAMS, in particular for preparing 3 calls for proposals on chemical and biological pollution, marine litters and ship strikes, and for reducing anthropogenic noise, managing whale watching activities and strengthening the cooperation

between National Stranding Networks in the Pelagos area. She also informed the Meeting that the 10th Technical and Scientific Committee and the 7th Meeting of the Parties to the Pelagos Agreement will be organized in 2017 in Monaco. Cooperation between the Permanent Secretariats of both Agreements would be formalized after the signature of the Pelagos Headquarters Agreement, through a Memorandum of Understanding.

111. The ECS representative, informed the Meeting about a Memorandum of Understanding signed between ECS and ACCOBAMS regarding the student awards and thanked ACCOBAMS for offering to sponsor the student awards.

Conclusion 55.

The Scientific Committee stressed the importance and the value of collaboration with other organizations.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

112. Théa Jacob from WWF France raised the issue of the process launched by the European Commission for developing a new framework for Technical Conservation Measures (TCM) in the reformed Common Fisheries Policies, inviting ACCOBAMS to stay informed about this process as some aspects of TCM are related to cetaceans' interactions with fisheries. It would allow the ACCOBAMS Secretariat to be fully aware of potential contradictions between ACCOBAMS resolutions and EU regulation. An example was taken with the total driftnet ban, that Parties agreed on in 2007 (Res. 3.1) but still allowed under EU regulation (driftnet <2.5 km that is not for tuna or swordfish use).

Conclusion 56.

The Scientific Committee recommended to the Permanent Secretariat to liaise with European Commission, directly and through GFCM, in order to be involved in the revision of all EU regulations related to cetacean interactions with fisheries, including the Technical Measures Framework.

8. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEETING

113. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that the Twelfth Scientific Committee Meeting will be held in autumn 2018.

9. ADOPTION OF THE CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 57.

The Scientific Committee adopted the conclusions.

10. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

114. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair closed the Meeting at 11:15 a.m. on Thursday 9th February 2017.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

| MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE |
|---|
| CIESM |
| <p>Aviad SCHENIN Dolphin & Sea Center Manager, IMMRAC - Israeli Marine Mammals Research & Assistance Center. The Morris Kahn Marine Research Center - Top Predators Project manager, University of Haifa, Israel Hairusim 33, Nes-Zionna - ISRAEL Tel: (+)972-8-9408463 / (+)972-52 357 11 93 shani.aviad@gmail.com</p> |
| IUCN |
| <p>Ibrahim BEN AMER Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Science Omar Mukhtar University (OMU) El-Beida - LIBYA P.O. Box 919 El-Beida Tel: +218 92 85 97 651, +44 7901501587 benamer.ly@gmail.com</p> |
| <p>Léa DAVID EcoOcéan Institut Dr écologie marine cétologie/ornithologie 18 Rue des Hospices - 34090 Montpellier FRANCE Tel : +33 4 67 84 28 87 - Mob : +33 6 09 49 68 39 lea.david2@wanadoo.fr</p> |
| <p>Simone PANIGADA Tethys Research Institute Viale G.B. Gadio 2 20 121 Milan – Italy Tel: (+39) 02 7200 1947 – (+39) 02 6694 114 E-mail: panigada69@gmail.com</p> |
| REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES |
| <p><i>Black Sea region</i> Romulus-Marian PAIU Mare Nostrum NGO Head of the Biodiversity Conservation Department BD 1 decembrie 1918 900711 Constanta, Romania Tel: +40763255731 E-mail: romulus.marian@gmail.com</p> |
| <p><i>Central region</i> Hedia EL HILLI Institut National des Sciences et Technologies de la Mer (INSTM) 28, Rue 2 Mars 1934, 2025 Salammbô, Tunis – TUNISIE Tel : +216 71 730 420 / +216 273 765 63 hedia.attia@instm.rnrt.tn</p> |

Eastern region

Vasileios PETROPOULOS

University of Athens / NATO Rapid Deployable Corps - Greece
Marine Biologist
Oceanography / Military Oceanography
Almanas 12
15342 Agia Paraskevi-Athens
GREECE
Tel: (+30) 6906753205
c13petr@ionio.gr

ECS

Joan GONZALVO

Tethys Research Institute
Viale G.B.Gadio 2
20121 Milano – ITALY
Tel: +34 650434808
Joan.gonzalvo@gmail.com

IWC

Greg DONOVAN (*remotely*)

International Whaling Commission (IWC)
Head of Science
135 Station Road, Impington
CB24-9NP - Cambridge – UK
Tel: +44 1223 233971
greg.donovan@iwc.int

OBSERVERS

ACCOBAMS SUB-REGIONAL COORDINATION UNITS

Lobna BEN NAKHLA

UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC)
Programme Officer
Bd. Du Leader Yasser Arafat B.P. 337 1080 Tunis cedex. Tunisia
Tel: +216 71 206485- Fax: +216 71 206490
lobna.bennakhla@rac-spa.org

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

CIESM Mediterranean Science Commission

Paula MOSCHELLA

Scientific Programme Officer
16 Bd de Suisse
98000 Monaco
Tel: +93303888
pmoschella@ciesm.org

IUCN

François SIMARD

Deputy Director and Senior Advisor for Fisheries
IUCN Headquarters
IUCN Global Marine and Polar Programme
Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 999 0298 - Fax: +41 22 999 0025
francois.simard@iucn.org

Pelagos Agreement

Fannie DUBOIS

Executive Secretary
Tour Odéon B1
36 avenue de l'Annonciade
98000 Monaco
Tel: +377 92 16 11 55
secretariat@pelagos-sanctuary.org

OTHER ORGANISATIONS / EXPERTS

Christopher COUSIN

Environment & Resources Authority
Senior Environment Protection Officer
Biodiversity Unit
Spencer Hill
MRS1441 Marsa, Malta
Tel: +356 2292 3665 / 2292 3676
Christopher.a.cousin@era.org.mt

Boris DANIEL

Agence française pour la biodiversité
Antenne Méditerranée - Département milieux marins
Chargé de mission - Patrimoine naturel marin et référent scientifique de façade
26 rue de la République
13001 Marseille - France
Tel : +33 (0)4 96 17 56 74 - 06 87 91 07 05
boris.daniel@afbiodiversite.fr

Théa JACOB

WWF France

Marine Mammals and Fisheries Officer, BEE
6 rue des Fabres
13001 Marseille – France
Tel : +33 630037882
tjacob@wwf.fr

Hélène LABACH

GIS3M
Coordinatrice, Chargée de projets
Avenue Clément Monnier
13960 Sausset-les-pins – France
Tel: +33 953929263
Hlgis3m@gmail.com

Alessio MAGLIO

SINAY
Chargé d'étude
Bureaux Norlanda
117 Cours Caffarelli
14000 Caen - France
Tel : +33 7 86 17 92 85
alessio.maglio@sinay.fr

Aurélie MOULINS

CIMA Research Foundation
Senior Researcher
Via Magliotto, 2
17100 Savona - Italy
Tel: +39 019 230 271
Fax: +39 019 230 27240
aurelie.moulins@cimafoundation.org

Barbara MUSSI

Oceanomare Delphis Onlus

Vice President

Viale Rimembranze 14

47924 Rimini – Italy

Tel: +39 349 574 99 27

barbara@oceanomaredelphis.org

Massimiliano ROSSO

CIMA Research Foundation

Senior Researcher

Via Magliotto, 2

17100 Savona - Italy

Tel: +39 019 230 271

Fax: +39 019 230 27240

massimiliano.rosso@cimafoundation.org

Ana STRBENAC

Croatian Agency for Environment and Nature

Head of the Expertise Division

Radnička cesta 80/7

10000 Zagreb – CROATIA

Tel: +385 1 5502 912 – Fax: +385 1 5502 901

ana.strbenac@dzzp.hr

Florence DESCROIX-COMANDUCCI

Executive Secretary
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO
MC-98000 Monaco
Tel: +377 98 98 42 43 – Fax: +377 98 98 42 08
fcdescroix@accobams.net

Jean-François CHEVALLIER

Administrative Assistant
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO
MC-98000 Monaco
Tel: +37798 98 80 10 / 20 78 – Fax: +377 98 98 42 08
jfchevallier@accobams.net

Célia LE RAVALLEC

Project Officer
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO
MC-98000 Monaco
Tel: +377 98 98 40 74 – Fax: +377 98 98 42 08
cleravallec@accobams.net

Camille MONTIGLIO

Communication Officer
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO
MC-98000 Monaco
Tel: +377 98 98 20 78 – Fax: +377 98 98 42 08
cmontiglio@accobams.net

Maÿlis SALIVAS

Scientific Officer
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO
MC-98000 Monaco
Tel: +377 98 98 42 75 – Fax: +377 98 98 42 08
msalivas@accobams.net

Patrick VAN KLAVEREN

Expert
Les Terrasses de Fontvieille, Jardin de l'UNESCO
MC-98000 Monaco
pvanklaveren@libello.com

ANNEX II - AGENDA

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

3.1 Designation of the Chair and of the Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee

3.2 Terms of Reference for Task Managers

3.3 Report of each Regional Representative

4. PRIORITIZATION OF THE ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE WORK PROGRAMME 2017-2019

4.1 Priorities and key conservation issues identified by Parties

4.2 Prioritization by the Scientific Committee of the implementation of activities included in the Work Programme 2017-2019

4.3 Nomination of relevant four Task Managers

5. CONSERVATION ACTIONS

5.1 Improve knowledge about state of cetaceans

5.1.1 *Cetacean population estimates and distribution*

5.1.2 *Population Structure*

5.1.3 *Monitoring cetaceans status*

5.2 Reduce human pressures on cetaceans, in particular those related to bycatch, habitat loss and degradation (pollution)

5.2.1 *Interaction with fisheries*

5.2.2 *Anthropogenic noise*

5.2.3 *Ship strikes*

5.2.4 *Cetacean watching*

5.2.5 *Marine debris*

5.2.6 *Climate change*

5.2.7 *Species Conservation Plans*

5.2.8 *Captivity related issues*

5.2.9 *Chemical and biological pollution*

5.3 Improve capacities of national organizations and experts

5.3.1 *Functional stranding networks and responses to emergency situation*

5.3.2 *Capacity building*

5.4 Enhance effective conservation of Cetaceans Critical Habitats

6. COMMUNICATION AND INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

6.1 Information and communication

6.2 Improve the level of implementation of and compliance with ACCOBAMS Resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress

6.3 Cooperation with international organizations

6.3.1 Contribution to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive

6.3.2 Collaboration with Sub Regional Coordination Units

6.3.3 Collaboration with ACCOBAMS Partners

6.3.4 Collaboration with other Organizations

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. ADOPTION OF THE CONCLUSIONS

9. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

ANNEX III - TERMS OF REFERENCE OF SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE TASK MANAGERS

I- General considerations

1. *Which members of the Scientific Committee can be designated as Task Manager?*

Pursuant to the Resolution 6.7 relative to the Scientific Committee, at its first Meeting, the Scientific Committee shall designate four "task managers" among the following experts:

- experts appointed by CIESM,
- experts appointed by IUCN,
- regional representatives,
- representative from ECS,
- representative from IWC,
- representative from CMS.

Additional members of the Scientific Committee, designated by the Parties on a voluntary basis, cannot be designated as Task Manager.

2. *Which topics will be assigned to the Task Managers?*

Pursuant to the Resolution 6.7 relative to the Scientific Committee, it is asked that 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.

Different ways of defining priorities were used by Parties:

- some actions have been identified with a high priority during the ACCOBAMS Regional workshops (April 2015, Menton, France);
- during MOP 6, Parties consider as a priority the implementation of Key conservation issues listed in Annex 2 of the Resolution 6.7;
- some Parties (France and Italy), in accordance with the Resolution 6.5 have submitted a list of their proposed priorities for the actions included in the work programme.

All these information are included in the document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc 09 (Key conservation issues and priorities of activities included in the work programme 2017-2019 identified by Parties).

The priority tasks of the Work Program will be shared between four task managers according to their respective fields of expertise and the conservation action priority levels. The assignment of topics will be adopted by the Scientific Committee.

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.

Taking into account experience from the previous triennium, it is also proposed:

- to identify "vice task managers" to assist each task manager in their tasks,
- to create some supporting group for each task manager.

II- Terms of reference for the task managers

1. The task managers, in addition to their role as members of the Scientific Committee, will coordinate, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, the works of the Scientific Committee concerning the topics that has been assigned by the Scientific Committee.
2. The task managers, together with other members of the Scientific Committee, the Permanent Secretariat and Bureau, the Sub-Regional Coordinating Units, ACCOBAMS Partners and international and national non-governmental Organizations, will contribute to promoting the actions necessary to facilitate implementation of the Work Program, bearing in mind the Resolutions adopted by the Meetings of the Parties.
3. The task managers, together with other members of the Scientific Committee, will further contribute to promote cooperation with scientific Institutions in the ACCOBAMS area.
4. The task managers will conduct their work in close collaboration with the Chair of the Scientific Committee, with the Secretariat of the agreement and, when actions are interconnected, with the other task managers or with relevant ACCOBAMS working groups as appropriate.
5. The task managers will mainly work by email; they will try to meet other relevant experts possibly when other meetings are already scheduled (e.g. ECS, IWC, etc.).
6. The task managers may be asked to attend meetings on behalf of the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat, pertinent to their field of expertise.
7. Each task manager shall provide a report to the meetings of the Scientific Committee on the topics he or she is in charge of.
8. During the Scientific Committee meeting, each task manager will assist the Secretariat by providing a summary of relevant discussions and conclusions for inclusion in the Meeting report.

**ANNEX IV - KEY CONSERVATION ISSUES AND PRIORITIES OF ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE WORK PROGRAMME
2017-2019 IDENTIFIED BY PARTIES**

Item surrounded in red: key conservation issues identified by Parties at MOP6 in November 2016

Actions underlined in blue: list of actions, included in the work programme, that have been identified with a high priority by France and/or Italy only (as allowed to Parties under Resolution 6.5)

Actions underlined in green: actions that have been identified with a high priority during the ACCOBAMS Regional workshops (April 2015, Menton, France)

Actions underlined in yellow: actions considered as a priority by both Parties (France and Italy) and the Regional workshop

Scientific Committee members have proposed implementation level priority and relevant budgetary implications during the SC11 Meeting:

1 : Activities to be initiated in 2017

2 : Activities to be initiated in 2018

3 : Activities to be initiated in 2019

4 : Activities that could be postponed to the next triennium (pending on funds availability)

| |
|----------------------------------|
| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 Parties 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 | 1 |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 | 4 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*This issue will be considered as action in CMP since structure is essential to understand the conservation implications of threats</i> |

Actions underlined in blue: list of actions, included in the work programme, that have been identified with a high priority only by France and/or Italy - **Actions underlined in green:** actions that have been identified with a high priority only during the ACCOBAMS Regional workshops (April 2015, Menton, France) - **Actions underlined in yellow:** actions considered as a priority by both Parties (France and Italy) and the Regional workshop

| | | | | | |
|---|---------|--|---|----|---|
| 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 | 4 |
| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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) | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*Minimum budget implication</i> |
| 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) | 1 for killer whales 3 for other species <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*Minimum budget implication</i> |
| 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) | 3 |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> *Ongoing effort *Activity already funded by MAVA |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> *Under the MAVA project proposal |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> *Ongoing collaboration *No budget implication |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> *No budget implication |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> *Please refer to the Draft ToR for a joint WG on bycatch (Annex V of the SC11 report) *No budget implication |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*The Secretariat should ask to FP the relevant information (identified by the JNWG).</i> |
| 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 Parties Scientific Committee, Partners RAC/ SPA Other experts | Regional Project | 2017 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*Project funded by EC</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Efforts should be initiated in 2017 in order to present final document to MOP7</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Efforts should be initiated in 2017 in order to present final document to MOP7</i> |

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|------|---|
| 6- Develop cooperation on noise issue with other international Organizations such as CMS Family, EC, OSPAR, ICES, the Barcelona Convention, Black Sea Commission, CBD, IWC, NATO and with relevant international NGOs | Secretariat | Parties, Non-Party Range States Scientific Committee, JNWG, Partners Other experts | Joint activities Meetings Workshop | ET | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>* Ongoing effort</i> <i>*Collaboration should also include IUCN</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |
| 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 | Not relevant for SC |
| 9- implement the CMS Family Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessments for Marine Noise-generating Activities | | | | ET | Not relevant for SC |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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) | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*No budget implication</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*No budget implication</i> |
| 3- Promote use of mitigation measures to shipping companies in the region (speed restrictions, avoidance area) in particular in CCH | Secretariat, Scientific Committee | Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners Pelagos Agreement, IWC | Ships/boats in areas inhabiting large whales using the REPCET or other systems | ET | 1 |
| 4- Encourage the use of tools such as REPCET in the Pelagos Sanctuary as a pilot area to facilitate statistical testing of the system | | | REPCET statistically tested | 2017 (SC11) | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Should be done in collaboration with the Pelagos Agreement</i> |
| 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 | 2 |
| 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-Parties Partners IWC, Other experts | Protocol for investigating and documenting ship strikes injuries and mortalities | 2017 | 1 |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> *Ongoing effort *No budget implication |
| 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) | 1 <u>Comments:</u> *Ongoing effort *No budget implication *Please refer to the Document ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Doc17 |
| 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 Sanctuary, 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 | 2 <u>Comments:</u> *Ongoing effort *Documents should be updated for SC12 *Minimum budget implication |
| 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 | | 4 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|----|---|
| 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 | 4 |
| 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 | 4 |
| 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 | - | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*No budget implication</i> |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*The Secretariat should communicate with MEDPOL and GFCM to address feasibility of assessing ghost nets impacts on cetaceans (Focus first on presence of ghost nets and then on their impacts on cetaceans)</i> |

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|--|---|----------------|--|
| 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 | 2018 (SC12) | 2 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*A document should be presented to SC12</i> <i>*The Secretariat should liaise with FPA2, IWC and Pelagos Agreement</i> |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on secondary effects more than ingestion • Suggested mitigation measures | 2018 (SC12) | 3 |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*Minimum budget implication</i> <i>A document will be prepared for the Medpol Meeting on marine litter end of February 2017.</i> <i>This note will be circulated to the Scientific Committee and will then be provided to the RAC /SPA representative who will encourage the Meeting to consider cetaceans as indicator species</i> |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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) | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort (Expert representing ACCOBAMS will participate in the CMS workshop on 20-21 February 2017)</i> |
| 2- Liaise with the relevant CMS Working Group to participate to its future activities | Scientific Committee | Secretariat | Joint activities | ET | |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 1- Revise regional conservation plan for Black Sea cetaceans (prepared in 2014) , in cooperation with relevant stakeholders | Scientific Committee | Parties, Non-Parties 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) | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort. *Please refer to ACCOBAMS-SC11/2017/Inf09</i> |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|----|--|
| 2- Complete the Conservation Plan for Bottlenose dolphin | Scientific Committee, Secretariat, SRCUs | Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners, IWC Other experts | Scientists in charge of relevant Conservation Plans identified | ET | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*Common approach to CMPs with the IWC and ACCOBAMS is important</i> <i>*There will be an overall CMP Working Group to consider general issues and that might have the ability to establish species-specific sub-groups (including fin whales and the other species noted in the Resolution) as necessary</i> |
| 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 | | | Finalized Conservation Plan for Bottlenose dolphin | | |
| 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 | | | Drafts of Conservation Management Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fin whale ○ Cuvier's beaked whales ○ Killer whales ○ Long finned pilot whales List of other species of interest | | |
| 5- Consider update existing conservation plans (e.g. short-beaked common dolphins) | | | Existing conservation plans updated and implemented | | |
| 6- Implement existing conservation plans (e.g. short-beaked common dolphins) | Scientific Committee, Secretariat | Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners, SRCUs IWC Other experts | | ET | |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |
| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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) | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| 3- Make Parties aware of new captivity issues: disseminate the document "Taking of cetaceans and dolphinarium: a legal analysis within the framework of ACCOBAMS" updated with the "quasi dolphinarium" 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*No budget implication</i> |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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) | <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p><u>Comments:</u> <i>*Liaise with the pollution 2020 initiative, IWC and Pelagos Agreement (who will launch a specific call for proposal on this issue)</i></p> |
| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |
| 2- Create and disseminate communication tools targeted to future generations | Secretariat | SRCUs, Partners, Parties, Non-Parties Other relevant organisations | Communication tools distributed to relevant subjects | ET | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |
| 3-Promote ACCOBAMS activities using the social networks (such as Facebook, Twitter,..) | Scientific Committee | | | | |
| 4- Organise public awareness related survey (Opinion of public) | Parties | SRCUs, Secretariat, Partners | Survey format and instructions Survey report | ET | Not relevant for SC |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |
| 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 | 2 |
| 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 | 2 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Document to be presented to SC12</i> <i>*No budget implication</i> <i>*SC can provide data offer inputs/ review what has been done</i> <i>*Should be done in collaboration with IWC</i> |

| | | | | | |
|--|---------|--|---|----|--|
| | | | | | / French Part of the Pelagos Agreement |
| 8 - Implement specific national activities on public awareness | Parties | Secretariat, SRCUs Partners Non Parties | National specific public awareness activities implemented | ET | Not relevant for SC |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> <i>*Cooperation with IWC</i> |
| 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) | | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| 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 July 2016) | Secretariat Parties | SRCUs SC Partners Others experts | Provided relevant Parties with photo-id equipment (camera, lenses), upon funding availability (approach Companies for sponsorship) | ET | 1 |

| 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 | Proposed priority level and budgetary indications |
| 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 | Not relevant for SC <u>Comments:</u> <i>*SC available to provide support and advices</i> |

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|----|--|
| 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 | Not relevant for SC <u>Comments:</u> <i>*SC available to provide support and advices</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*SC available to provide support and advices</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*SC available to provide support and advices</i> |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort *SC available to provide support and advices *Use existing events / webinar</i> |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 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 | Not relevant for SC <u>Comments:</u> <i>*SC available to provide support, advices and review the material prepared</i> |

| | | | | | |
|--|---------|--|---|----|--|
| 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 | Not relevant for SC <u>Comments:</u> <i>*SC available to provide support and advices</i> |
| 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 | Not relevant for SC <u>Comments:</u> <i>*SC available to provide support and advices</i> |

| 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 | Proposed implementation level priority and budgetary implications |
| 1- Update regularly a list of areas containing habitats of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS region (Res 4.24) | 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) -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 | ET | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*National and regional project outputs focused on conservation should also be taken into account</i> |
| 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 | | | |
| 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-Parties 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|-------------|--|
| 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) | 2 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Can only be done with knowledge of stock structure and abundance + threats and mitigation measures. *It is not expected that this issue can be resolved within the triennium.</i> |
| 5-Provide advices on Promote the use of Passive Acoustic Monitoring in MPAs, when feasible , 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 | 2 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*SC can prepare a study on feasibility for SC12 (which criteria will be adequate to make MPA / corridor a good candidate) *There is also a need of information regarding stock and population structure</i> |
| 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 | 4 |
| 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 | 1 <u>Comments:</u> <i>*Ongoing effort</i> |

**ANNEX V - DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A JOINT BYCATCH WORKING GROUP
OF ACCOBAMS AND ASCOBANS**

Note of the Secretariat:

Through the adoption of Resolution 6.16 “Interactions between fisheries and cetaceans” at the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS (Monaco, 22-25 November 2016), the Parties to ACCOBAMS requested the ACCOBAMS 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”.

The present document is aimed at facilitating the discussions on this matter to be held during the Eleventh Meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC11, Monaco, 7-9 February 2017).

This document is composed of a preliminary draft Terms of Reference for a Joint Bycatch Working Group of ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS (JBWG), mainly based on the current Terms of Reference for the ASCOBANS Working Group on Bycatch. In a second part are included the main elements adopted by the Parties to ACCOBAMS as regards the bycatch issue. These elements are taken from the ACCOBAMS Resolutions related to interactions between fisheries and cetaceans, the ACCOBAMS Strategy and the Work Programme 2017-2019.

During the SC11, the Scientific Committee Members will be invited to define a list of ACCOBAMS tasks to be considered for inclusion in the Terms of Reference for the JBWG.

After SC11, the ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS Secretariats will compile these tasks in a single document that will be presented and discussed during an expert workshop on bycatch organized by ASCOBANS on 22-23 February in Bonn.

After this workshop, the draft Terms of Reference will be then circulated to the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and to the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee for final review and comments.

Part I – Draft Terms of Reference for a Joint Bycatch Working Group of ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS

- Joint Bycatch Working Group composition

This Working Group will be comprised of members and observers of the scientific and advisory bodies of ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS. External experts (including those from non-Party Range States) are invited to participate in the Working Group, too, in order to ensure the best possible advice can be generated for the Parties.

- Joint Bycatch Working Group *modus operandi*

The Working Group will generally operate by using the “ASCOBANS Advisory Committee Workspace” (workspace.ascobans.org) for its discussions.

- Joint Bycatch Working Group tasks

The Working Group will address the mandates of relevant Resolutions of the two organizations, such as [ACCOBAMS Res 2.12](#), [ACCOBAMS Res 2.13](#), [ACCOBAMS Res 2.21](#), [ACCOBAMS Res A/3.1](#), [ACCOBAMS Res 3.8](#), [ACCOBAMS Res 4.9](#), [ACCOBAMS Res 6.16](#), [ASCOBANS Res.8.5](#), [ASCOBANS Res.5.5](#) and [ASCOBANS Res.3.3](#), as well as any relevant Resolutions still to be passed. It will present reports on progress and new information relevant to the respective region to each meeting of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and ASCOBANS Advisory Committee.

- 1) Collect and prepare an overview of scientific information¹ related to bycatch of all cetaceans species in ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS Agreement areas².
- 2) Review information on illegal fishing in both Agreement Areas related to bycatch
- 3) Provide a review of currently available (or under development) bycatch mitigation measures
- 4) Report on cetacean bycatch mitigation projects
- 5) Prepare an overview of national and international legislation and measures relevant to the monitoring and management of cetacean bycatch, and include an assessment on compliance with relevant national and international legislation
- 6) Prepare, as appropriate, advice on:
 - a. target setting (potential conservation and user objectives (*sensu* Hall and Donovan³), in light of the policies of the two Agreements;
 - b. monitoring (of cetaceans and fishing operations);
 - c. assessment of the management and effectiveness of mitigation measures (including compliance with their use) for the bycatch of cetaceans in the two Agreement areas;
 - d. in providing this advice the working group will liaise as necessary with other relevant bodies and fora, including working groups of the two agreements, the CMS Bycatch Councillor, the ICES Working Group on Bycatch of Protected Species, the IWC Scientific Committee, the IWC bycatch initiative, FOMLR - Advisory Group on the Environmental Aspects of the Management of Fisheries and other Marine Living Resources (Black Sea Commission) and Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RMFOs).
- 7) Collaborate with organizations which issue seafood certificates such as the Marine Stewardship Council MSC actively contributing on the assessment of relevant fisheries with respect to cetacean bycatch;
- 8) Respond to requests for information or advice of other ACCOBAMS or ASCOBANS working groups
- 9) Report back to the next ACCOBAMS SC and ASCOBANS AC meetings, and where useful provide input in other relevant meetings or working groups intersessionally

¹ related to bycatch numbers and species, fishing techniques, gears and mitigation measures.

² Including harbour porpoises in the part of the ASCOBANS area not covered by the Jastarnia Plan, the ‘Gap Area’ Plan, the North Sea Conservation Plan.

³ *To be completed*

Part II – Relevant elements from ACCOBAMS Resolutions

Resolution 2.12 - Guidelines for the use of acoustic deterrent devices

1. Adopts the “Guidelines for technical measures to minimize cetacean-fishery conflicts in the Mediterranean and Black Seas” in Annex 1;
2. Urges the Parties:
 - To strictly regulate the use of AHDs to alleviate conflicts between cetaceans and fisheries or mariculture operations in the Agreement area;
 - To strongly recommend that the use of pingers, where authorized and appropriate, only be conducted with controlled studies to ensure that they are an effective mitigation measure;
 - To link any use of pingers with an observer scheme designed to monitor their effectiveness over time;
3. Charges the Scientific Committee to update technological informations on this topic, with a view to developing common sets of guidelines for use in the ACCOBAMS area;
4. Charges the Secretariat, in relation the regional fisheries bodies and all financing agencies and donor Countries to consider helping developing Countries acquire and use relevant technology, and with appropriate education and training of fishermen.

Resolution 2.13 - Pelagic gillnets (partially amended by Amendment/Resolution 3.1)

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

Resolution 2.21 - Assessment and mitigation of the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS area (partially amended by Resolution 4.9)

1. Takes into account the draft "Project for assessing and mitigating the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS Area " (MOP2/Inf 5) presented by the Secretariat;
2. Agrees to a special action program aimed to mitigate cetacean by-catches in the project area with the following objectives:
 - To collect historical data about the cetacean by-catch in the project area;
 - To provide assistance to national authorities at their request to enable independent observers to board fishing vessels;
 - To collect data about the present cetacean by-catch in the project area;
 - To test the most appropriate mitigation measures;
 - To help Countries undertaking information campaigns for fishermen with special focus on the handling procedures in case of incidental catch of cetaceans;
3. Instructs the Agreement Secretariat to establish and reinforce relations with relevant Organisations and in particular GFCM, Black Sea Commission, European Commission, COPEMED, ADRIAMED, MedSudMed, MEDISAMAK;
4. Calls upon Parties, Riparian States, Range States, the International Organisations, the International Scientific Institutions and others to participate and support the ACCOBAMS works on man/cetaceans interactions;

5. Urges Parties to nominate one national organisation to serve as national vis-à-vis of the project and inform the Secretariat of this nomination

6. Calls upon Multilateral and Bilateral sources of funding and in particular the European Commission to support ACCOBAMS activities on the base of the draft "Project for assessing and mitigating the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS Area".

Resolution 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 drift nets

1. The Parties agree on what follows:

The paragraph 1 of the conservation plan, object of the appendix 2 of the Agreement here above aimed is abrogated and replaced by the following conditions:

Paragraph "a" (new one) work out and implement measures to minimize the fishing negative effects on the conservation of cetacean. Most particularly, no vessels will be authorized to keep on board or to use any drift nets.

Resolution 3.8 - Strengthening collaboration with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean

1. Expresses its satisfaction with the collaboration established with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean Sea (GFCM) in developing the ByCBAMS project for assessing and mitigating the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS area, and in particular the work done by the Scientific Advisory Committee's Sub-committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystems;

2. Recognizes that further strengthening of the relations between ACCOBAMS and GFCM is essential for implementation of the fishery-related measures of ACCOBAMS;

3. Urges the Secretariat to liaise with the GFCM Secretariat to find ways and means to strengthen their collaboration and, if relevant, to establish a memorandum of understanding to that end.

Resolution 4.9 - Fisheries interactions with cetaceans

1. Encourages Parties with respect to by-catches and depredation:

(a) To improve reporting by:

- establishing regular, representative onboard monitoring programmes related to the ByCBAMS project (Project for assessing and mitigating the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS area - (give some reference as to where this is specified)) to quantify cetacean by-catch and reporting on the methods used to the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee;
- reporting cetacean by-catch for different types of fisheries and ghost nets in order to provide the GFCM Task 1 (give some reference as to where this is specified) with the required information concerning cetacean by-catch;
- obtaining and reporting on local information on the nature of the depredation and its effects on fisheries.

(b) To make every effort to reduce cetacean by-catch levels and/or incidences of depredation, in co-operation with affected fishing communities by:

- raising the awareness of fishermen about the need to mitigate the impact of fishing on cetacean populations;
- effectively enforcing existing bans on relevant fishing gear in the ACCOBAMS area and report measures to the Secretariat through the appropriate online system;
- developing and implementing specific national programmes, taking into consideration advice from the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee, with (1) defined management objectives for reducing cetacean by-catches and/or alleviating conflicts between cetaceans and fisheries or mariculture operations, (2) methods for monitoring and evaluating the success of the measures implemented in national programmes and (3) mechanisms for modifying national programmes if necessary after evaluation;
- recognising that if use of acoustic mitigation devices for by-catch reduction (AMDb) or for depredation reduction (AMDd) are to form part of a national programme, great care must be given to undertaking and evaluating them using

limited controlled in situ tests of effectiveness, in conjunction with the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee, before widespread implementation is approved;

- enhancing the capacity of fishermen to properly handle and release live cetaceans caught incidentally in their fishing gear.

2. Invites the Parties to take into consideration with respect to the testing and use of acoustic mitigation measures the study on “Testing and use of AMD for depredation mitigation”, presented in document ACCOBAMS-MOP4/2010/Doc21 as well the study on “Guidelines for technical measures to minimise cetacean-fishery conflicts in the Mediterranean and Black Sea” presented in Document ACCOBAMS-MOP4/2010/Inf39 and the “Protocol for data collection on bycatch and depredation in the ACCOBAMS Region” as presented in document ACCOBAMS-MOP4/2010/Doc22;

3. Also invites non-Parties States to join the effort of the ACCOBAMS Parties in reducing cetacean mortality induced by fisheries activities in the Agreement area;

4. Takes note of the “Review on the effectiveness of acoustic devices and depredation mitigation measures”, presented in document ACCOBAMS-MOP4/2010/Doc23;

5. Invites the Agreement Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to pursue the collaboration with relevant Organizations and Bodies to consider further the relations between prey depletion and increasing interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities, proposing remedial solutions where possible;

6. Takes note of the “Technical specifications and conditions of use of acoustic deterrent devices” appearing in Annex to this Resolution;

Resolution 6.16 - Interactions between fisheries and cetaceans

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 bycatch 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.

ACCOBAMS Strategy for the period 2014-2025 (Resolution 5.1)**B.2. Specific objective: Reduce human pressures on cetaceans, in particularly those related to bycatch, habitat loss and degradation (pollution)**

| No. | Activity | Subject(s) in charge | Expected outputs | Possible sources of funding ⁴ | Priority level ⁵ | Target species | Relation to other activities |
|--|---|---|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| B.2.1. INTERACTION WITH FISHERIES (BYCATCH and DEPREDATION) | | | | | | | |
| B.2.1.1. | Assess cetaceans bycatch and depredation impacts on cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea and adjoining Atlantic area and propose mitigation measures focusing on pilot areas through a joint GFCM/ACCOBAMS project ⁶ | Secretariat, Scientific Committee, Parties in cooperation with GFCM | Analysis of cetacean bycatch in the Mediterranean Sea and proposal of mitigation measures | EF, NC | Very high - High | DD, GM, OO, PP, SC, TT (depredation) | B.1.3., A.2.1.1. |
| B.2.1.2. | Prepare a cetaceans bycatch reduction strategy for the Mediterranean Sea and adjoining Atlantic area, based on the results of the joint GFCM/ACCOBAMS project | ACCOBAMS Secretariat, Scientific Committee | Bycatch reduction strategy for the Mediterranean Sea and adjoining Atlantic area | EF, NC | High-Medium | As above | A.2.1.1. |
| B.2.1.3. | Participate in the EC research and conservation project on the Adverse Fisheries Impacts on Cetacean Populations in the Black Sea (2012-2014), addressing impacts of interaction of fisheries on cetaceans and preparing a draft Strategy for | Other experts, Black Sea Commission (Black Sea Sub regional coordination unit), Secretariat, Scientific | Analysis of cetacean bycatch in the Black Sea Bycatch reduction strategy for the Black Sea | EF, NC | Very high | All Black Sea species | A.2.1.1. |

⁴ AF= Agreement Funds (Trust Fund, Voluntary Contributions granted by specific country(ies) to the Agreements budget); NC - national co-funding/in kind through logistic, etc....;EF= External Funds

⁵ Very high = activity should be completed before the end of the first triennium, High = activity should be completed by the end of the first triennium/beginning of the second, Medium = activity should be completed by the end of the second triennium/ beginning of the third, Low = activity should be completed by the end of the third triennium/beginning of the fourth, Ongoing – for activities implemented regularly during all triennia

⁶ Development of the project started in 2012

| | | | | | | | |
|----------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|------|-----------|--------------------|
| | reducing cetacean bycatch in the Black Sea and adjacent waters | Committee, Parties | | | | | |
| B.2.1.4. | Organise a connection with the EU bycatch reporting system | Secretariat, Scientific Committee | Joint data collection system | EF,NC | High | As 2.1.2. | A.2.2.1., A.2.2.5. |

Work Program 2017-2019 (Resolution 6.5)

| 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 | Contribution to the implementation of EU Policies | 2017 /2018 | AF, NC, EF |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------|--|---|------|------------|
| | | GFCM, EC, ICES, other experts | | | |
| 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 | - |

ANNEX VI - SHIP STRIKES IN THE ACCOBAMS AREA: WORK PROGRAMME AND PROTOCOLS TO ASSESS HUMAN INDUCED MORTALITY

Simone Panigada (Tethys Research Institute)

Greg Donovan (International Whaling Commission)

Background information

ACCOBAMS and the International Whaling Commission (IWC) have recognized the problem of ship strikes and have been working together to develop a better understanding of the issue and to develop effective mitigation measures *inter alia* within the ACCOBAMS area.

Several areas of the Mediterranean Sea were identified during previous workshops on this topic as areas of particular interest due to shipping and cetacean densities:

- (1) Strait of Gibraltar;
- (2) Pelagos Sanctuary;
- (3) Hellenic Trench;
- (4) area around the Balearic Islands;
- (5) area between Almeria and Nador at the eastern side of the Alborán Sea;
- (6) Strait of Sicily.

A Working Group (WG) with an according Steering Committee (SC) was established under the auspices of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee to ensure that the recommendations of the workshops and the resolutions from the Meeting of the Parties are acted upon. The SC and WG will work in close contact with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat, the IWC, the Pelagos Agreement and other relevant experts.

An early focus for the WG should be to liaise with riparian nations and others to obtain information concerning both cetaceans and vessel traffic that will enable it to identify areas for cetaceans (especially fin and sperm whales) where they are (or are potentially) susceptible to ship strikes (based upon actual data and simulation models that incorporate information on whale and vessel distribution and predictions of collision rates). On this basis it will be better able to determine where, and what kind of mitigation measures can be taken.

This will be achieved by:

- reporting of vessel movements and density at appropriate geographical scales from maritime companies, involving both bottom-up (i.e., awareness, involvement) and top-down (i.e., regulatory) approaches;
- mapping the temporal and geographic distribution and abundance of cetaceans in relationship to similar information on vessel traffic to identify potential higher risk areas;
- estimation of numbers of ship strikes including data from:
 - strandings networks (including detailed necropsies);
 - photo-identification studies (photographs may contain evidence of non-lethal encounters with vessels);
 - data collected by the IWC ship strike data base;
- modelling exercises to assess potential threats at the population level.

The ultimate objective for ACCOBAMS is to collect enough information to allow a robust assessment of the extent of ship strikes within the agreement area, and develop and evaluate effective mitigation measures, recognising that there is no

universal solution to the problem. While the animal welfare issue applies to all individual whales, priority for mitigation measures may be directed at areas/species where there is a probable population level effect.

The work carried out by the SC and WG will lead to the creation of a Mediterranean network, including ACCOBAMS Range States, ACCOBAMS Partners, the IWC, different research institutes, and concerned shipping companies to contribute to the central data base on ship strike data developed by the IWC, to facilitate information exchange and data sharing.

Suggested list of core members for the Steering Committee, with relevant expertise:

Simone PANIGADA IWC ship strike data coordinator (coordination, distribution, abundance, threats)

panigada@inwind.it

Greg DONOVAN IWC Head of Science (monitoring, abundance, assessment,)

greg.donovan@iwc.int

Suggested list of core members for the Working Groups, with relevant expertise and geographical importance (to be expanded if needed):

Antonella ARCANGELI (fin whale distribution, ship strikes)

antonella.arcangeli@isprambiente.it

Léa DAVID (EcoOcéan Institut)

lea.david2@wanadoo.fr

Jean-Noël DRUON (fin whale distribution, ship strikes, maritime traffic)

jean-noel.druon@jrc.ec.europa.eu

Antonio FERNANDEZ (pathology, ship strikes)

afernandez@dmor.ulpgc.es

Thomas FOLEGOT (QuietOcean)

Thomas.folegot@quiet-oceans.com

Alexandros FRANTZIS (sperm whale ship strikes)

ufrantzis@otenet.gr

Thea JACOB (WWF France)

tjacob@wwf.fr

Giancarlo LAURIANO (Pelagos STC for Italy)

giancarlo.lauriano@isprambiente.it

Russell LEAPER (data base, modelling, IWC)

russell@ivyt.demon.co.uk

Aimee LESLIE

aleslie@wwfint.org

Tim LEWIS

tim.p.lewis@gmail.com

Alessio MAGLIO (Sinay)

alessio.maglio@sinay.fr

Pascal MAYOL (ship strikes, real time reporting - REPCET)

pascal.mayol@souffleursdecume.com

Aurelie MOULIN (CIMA Research Foundation)

aurelie.moulins@cimafoundation.org

Fabian RITTER (IWC ship strike data coordinator)

ritter@m-e-e-r.de

Aviad SCHENIN (Eastern Mediterranean expert)

shani.aviad@gmail.com

Terms of Reference

- (1) Members will contribute constructively to the work of the SG and WG, in a voluntary capacity.
- (2) Communication will be mainly by email, but where necessary, meetings may be organized, ideally in concomitance with some other events (e.g. ECS Conference, IWC meeting, etc.) to save money.
- (3) The SC and WG will suggest initial high priority work based on the recommendations of the workshops, to be implemented in close contact with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat and Parties, the Pelagos Agreement and the IWC Scientific Committee, as well as other relevant experts and research groups in the region.
- (4) The SC and WG will detail and prioritize the research and management recommendations developed during the last Workshops. This will include liaising with Parties, Range States and other appropriate institutions to work towards identifying high collision risk areas and appropriate mitigation measures.

Link with the Scientific Committee and of the International Whaling Commission

A strong link with the Ship Strike Working Group (SSWG) of the IWC has been established in order to use the same online database developed by the SSWG and to follow the recommendations of the previous workshops.

The IWC is funding two ship strikes co-ordinators to take forward work on this issue.

Key components of the work of the ship strikes co-coordinators involve better communication with stakeholders (e.g. shipping companies) and increased reporting of events via regional initiatives and especially the global ship strikes database (<https://iwc.int/ship-strikes>) and an increased efforts in this regard within the ACCOBAMS area. Such efforts shall include:

- (1) Promotion of the issue and the importance of reporting via a number of fora including specialist marine press;
- (2) Further evaluation and dissemination of information on mitigation approaches such as WhaleAlert app and REPCET;
- (3) Additional co-operation with IMO (and its MEPC) both via IWC and CMS agreements but also through initiatives with member states (the most appropriate mechanism for IMO action);
- (4) Improved protocols for the identification of ship strikes via necropsies (there is a global initiative led by the USA in this regard);
- (5) Investigation of incidences with regard to the nature of ship strike injuries within photo-identification studies;
- (6) Encourage studies that improve access to the temporal and spatial distribution of shipping including AIS information;
- (7) Encourage studies that improve our understanding of the temporal and spatial distribution of cetaceans within the region including telemetry studies;
- (8) Encourage studies to develop and evaluate mitigation measures, incorporating *inter alia* results from (6) and (7) above, recognizing that appropriate measures will vary depending on circumstances and areas.

This working group should continue to work so as to collate information and report on relevant studies within and outside the ACCOBAMS area. It will foster collaboration with ASCOBANS, CMS and IMO and develop priority actions and studies, including the consideration of a project to develop a standard training module.

ANNEX VII - DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ACCOBAMS CMP CORRESPONDENCE GROUP FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BUREAU

Objective

To provide advice to the Parties in accordance with Resolution 6.21 (MOP 2016) on species Conservation Management Plans.

Terms of Reference

The Working Group shall:

- (1) Use the CMP template and general principles outlined in the Resolution as the basis for its work;
- (2) Develop a draft fin whale CMP in time for presentation at the 7th Meeting of Parties;
- (3) Complete a CMP for the bottlenose dolphin as soon as possible based upon the existing work and the new template;
- (4) Review existing ACCOBAMS conservation plans in light of the CMP template and consider updating them as appropriate;
- (5) Review the findings of the workshop 'Conservation and research networking on short beaked common dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea' and consider whether the development of a CMP is an appropriate follow-up action;
- (6) Provide advice on the conservation plan for the common dolphin in the eastern North Atlantic under development by ASCOBANS;
- (7) Provide a consolidated report of the group's activities to the 7th Meeting of Parties

Membership

The Task Manager for this work within the Scientific Committee will be Greg DONOVAN, Ibrahim BEN AMER, Joan GONZALVO, Théa JACOB, Hélène LABACH, Barbara MUSSI, Romulus-Marian PAIU, Simone PANIGADA, Vasileios PETROPOULOS, Massimiliano ROSSO, Aviad SCHENIN and Ana STRBENAC.

Relevant representatives of relevant Range States (by species) and IGOs are encouraged to join.

Membership of the group is open and the Secretariat, after consultation with the Chair of the Scientific Committee and the Task Manager, may invite specific experts to contribute.

The Secretariat will also be part of the correspondence group.

Modus operandi

The primary method of working for the full correspondence group will be electronically. In addition, discussions will take place at Scientific Committee meetings, particularly with respect to those aspects of the CMP that are primarily scientific. The Task Manager, in consultation with the correspondence group, may establish species or topic specific working groups.

As noted in the resolution, at least for the development of the fin whale CMP, there will be a need for a stakeholder workshop. The correspondence group, will assist in determining the agenda, venue and participants. This will be co-ordinated with the IWC CMP working group and application may be made to the IWC to cosponsor the workshop.

Workplan

A workplan will be developed by the Task Manager in conjunction with the Chair of the Scientific Committee and Secretariat once the ToRs have been agreed by the Bureau.

ANNEX VIII – PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REVIEW OF THE FUNCTIONNING OF MEDACES

It is recommended:

1) From the Parties:

The budgetary contribution from ACCOBAMS to MEDACES is maintained for the next triennium in coordination with the RAC/SPA.

2) From the ACCOBAMS National Focal Points:

- An evaluation of the real efficiency of their stranding network;
- The transfer of data from their national stranding database to MEDACES;
- To raise the awareness of their scientific communities toward MEDACES;
- An identification of a MEDACES national coordinator in capacity to transmit directly data to the databank.

3) From the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat in close relation with RAC/SPA:

- A portal to access to MEDACES from the ACCOBAMS web-site;
- An awareness action on MEDACES utility;
- A revisit of the relations with RAC/SPA on MEDACES and the establishment of a trilateral MoU ACCOBAMS-RAC/SPA-MEDACES (or Spanish Ministry of Environment) formalizing the three years commitment;
- An analysis of the potential or the complementarity of other regional or worldwide network/databanks/reporting system (like GROMS, OBIS/SEAMAP, IWC, GBIF, UNEP/WCMC ...);
- A study of a citizen participation to the stranding networking and the feasibility of a smartphone application to this purpose (see: Whale reports application from the Vancouver aquarium) <http://www.vanaqua.org/act/direct-action/bc-cetaceans-sighting-network>.

4) From MEDACES:

- A revision of the deontological code related to the inclusion of a requirement to a feedback from the users of data when publishing, through the acknowledgment of the data providers and explicit quotation in the publication;
- The implementation of a follow-up mechanism of the interrogation of the databank by, inter alia, a counter or a registration of internet access to the databank, ...
- The inclusion, in the MEDACES reports, of the relations between the MEDACES team and the scientific communities;
- An assessment of the possibility of increasing the interactivity of the database as GIS formats and linking with NETCOBAMS;
- An updating of the available in line documentation.

ANNEX IX - DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A MSFD / ECAP CORRESPONDENCE WORKING GROUP ON ACCOBAMS AREA

Composition

- scientific experts in charge of the implementation of MSFD regarding marine mammals for each EU-Member State,
- scientific experts in charge of the implementation of the EcAP initiative under the Barcelona Convention, regarding marine mammals for each Mediterranean Countries,
- scientific experts in charge of the implementation of similar initiatives in the Black Sea

Terms of Reference for the MSFD/EcAP Working Group

This working group will operate by correspondence. This working group on the MSFD / EcAP shall mainly:

- 1) collect information on each national monitoring program regarding marine mammals;
- 2) suggest the set of species representative of each species group for the MSFD assessment of Good Ecosystem Status regarding marine mammals as recommended by the European commission (Decision 2010/477/EU);
- 3) stimulate collaboration among marine mammal scientists involved in MSFD / EcAP monitoring program for cetaceans to foster transnational initiatives (such as the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative and the Joint CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Noise Working Group);
- 4) collate how criteria elements are nationally assessed for marine mammals (indicators, reference and threshold values) in the context of the MSFD (Decision 2010/477/EU) and EcAP initiative;
- 5) ensure the coherence of the determination of Good Ecosystem Status at the relevant scale of assessment for marine mammals (MSFD);
- 6) ensure that the conclusions of this working group are brought to the attention of the relevant groups working on the implementation of the MSFD and EcAP;
- 7) assist the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat in organizing the workshop mentioned in the Resolution 6.12 "Implementation of the EU MSFD and relevant EcAP".