

CALL FOR EXPERTISE TO BECOME AN
“ACCOBAMS HIGHLY QUALIFIED MMOS/PAM OPERATOR”
TRAINER ORGANIZATION

I- PROCESS AND OBJECTIVE OF THE ACCOBAMS CERTIFICATION FOR HIGHLY QUALIFIED MMO/PAM:

In 2014, 2015, the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS has recommended to the Parties the creation of an ACCOBAMS HQMMO/PAM certification.

The Resolution 6.18 “Implementation of an ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified Marine Mammals Observers” was adopted by Parties in November 2016. It will guarantee, throughout the Agreement area, a high quality standardized training of MMOs/PAM by:

- ensuring the recognition of the ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators at the international level,
- Improving the effectiveness of conservation measures to limit the impact of noise on cetaceans.

The Resolution 6.18 explains the process, actors and their role with the objective of proposing a certification for the whole ACCOBAMS area (Mediterranean and Black Sea), and a standard training.

Relevant trainer organizations will be accredited by the Permanent Secretariat based on requirements set up by the ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM Working Group. An “ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM Courses Committee (ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM CC)”, composed by relevant experts identified by the ACCOBAMS MMO WG, will provide them with standard supports. **The accredited trainer organizations will then train and certify relevant candidates to become “Highly Qualified MMO/PAM operators”** based on the standard supports.

The objective is to encourage ACCOBAMS Parties to give permits for activities in their national area, in priority, to industrial companies employing ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators or at least other internationally agreed certifications.

II- FUNCTIONS OF ACCOBAMS HIGHLY QUALIFIED MMOS/PAM OPERATORS” TRAINER

The main role of ACCOBAMS accredited **trainer organizations**, called “Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators Trainer » is to train and certificate MMO/PAM that fulfil the requirements to be candidate.

Standard supports, written by the “ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM Courses Committee” will be provided to each ACCOBAMS accredited trainer organizations in order to ensure a standardized **theoretical training** for all ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified MMO/PAM operators.

A **practical training** (conducted on a boat out at sea) should enable future MMOs/PAM operators to test and gauge their skills and master the detection and identification of species and the use of the equipment for the MMO (binoculars, stick, angleboard, completion of forms, communication process, etc) and for PAM the set-up and deployment and use of all the PAM system, and the manipulation of the acoustic software and troubleshooting, and communication process, etc.

The entire training (theoretical and practical) must be **at least five** full days. in length. It is recommended that the theory section must be at least 3 days and shall cover all of the subjects listed by ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM CC. This should be followed by **at least two** days of practical trainings (near real conditions, the best should be session at sea), one focusing on MMO's work and the other focusing on PAM's work. The set-up and the different tasks should be simulated like in real conditions onboard (real time mitigation and reporting, with an animal entering the exclusion zone, an acoustic detection of a species, a shutdown call and non-compliance with ramp up, etc...).

III- HOW TO APPLY TO THE CALL TO BECOME AN "ACCOBAMS HIGHLY QUALIFIED MMOS/PAM OPERATORS" TRAINER

Entities or applicant organization requesting the accreditation to become "trainer" must be an **ACCOBAMS' Partner** and be involved in cetacean research or conservation and provide proof of experience in training operational staff and being a MMO and/or a PAM operator onboard a seismic vessel.

The applicant organization must submit a written application to the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat (msalivas@accobams.net) explaining its reasons for applying and describing its experience of training operational professional staff linked to MMO and PAM's skills and tasks.

Curriculum vitae are welcomed.

Applications will be reviewed by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat.

IV- COMMITMENTS OF THE "ACCOBAMS HIGHLY QUALIFIED MMOS/PAM OPERATORS"

An accreditation agreement between an "ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM Operators" Trainer and the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat will be signed.

The accredited organization commits itself:

- To increase the standing of the accreditation and to issue communications about it;
- To participate in a group on NetCCOBAMS (<http://www.netccobams.com>) relating to MMOs or PAM operators;
- To implement the training using the tools/ standard supports provided by the ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM CC;
- To issue a training certificate accredited by ACCOBAMS to the successful MMO/PAM and send the list of certified MMO/PAM to the Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS;
- To submit to certified MMOs and PAM operators a commitment agreement to be signed;
- To send the commitment agreements to the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat.

The coordinating organization (ACCOBAMS) commits itself:

- To increase the standing of organizations committed to the common quality system within the ACCOBAMS area;
- To keep accredited organizations informed of any changes to the specifications (protocols, standard forms, manual, etc.).

The accreditation is valid for two years. Following the submission of a report summarizing activity at the end of the accreditation period to the coordinator (ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat), the coordinator shall assess compliance with the specifications. In the event that the specifications have been complied with, the coordinator shall renew the accreditation; if the specifications have not been complied with, the accreditation shall not be renewed.

Procedures for assessing compliance with the accreditation specifications

The activity report shall describe the training carried out, provide evidence that the specifications have been properly complied with, list the names of the trainers and of the MMOs and/or PAM operators trained and include copies of the commitments signed by MMOs/PAM operators regarding the submission of field reports.