



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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NINTH MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Rome, 1-5 December 2008
Agenda Item 9.0

REVIEW OF ARTICLE IV AGREEMENTS ALREADY CONCLUDED

- I. The Secretariat is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species, the report provided by the Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), to accompany document UNEP/CMS/Conf.9.9.
2. The report is provided unedited in the format and language that it was submitted.

EXAMEN DES ACCORDS DE L'ARTICLE IV DEJA CONCLUS

1. Le Secrétariat diffuse ci-joint, pour l'information des participants à la neuvième session de la Conférence des Parties à la Convention sur les espèces migratrices, le rapport développé fourni par le Secrétariat de l'Accord sur la Conservation des Cétacés de la Mer Noire, de la Méditerranée et de la zone Atlantique adjacente (ACCOBAMS) pour accompagner le document UNEP/CMS/Conf. 9.9.
2. Le rapport est fourni sans avoir été mis au point, dans le format et la langue dans lesquels il a été soumis.

Accord sur la Conservation des Cétacés de la Mer Noire, de la Méditerranée et de la zone Atlantique adjacente (ACCOB AMS)

REVISIÓN DE ACUERDOS ARTÍCULO IV YA CONCLUIDOS

1. La Secretaría adjunta, para información de los participantes a la Novena Conferencia de las Partes de la Convención sobre Especies Migratorias, el informe completo presentado por la Secretaría del Acuerdo sobre la Conservación de Cetáceos del Mar Negro, el Mar Mediterráneo y la zona Atlántica contigua (ACCOBAMS), en complemento en el documento UNEP/CMS/Conf. 9.9.
2. El informe se presenta sin modificaciones editoriales, bajo la forma y en el idioma originales.



CMS COP 9 ACCOBAMS REPORT

Point 1: Conservation and management of cetacean species in the ACCOBAMS Area

1.1 Review of status of and conservation actions for cetacean species

- **ACCOBAMS Third Meeting of the Parties (October, 2007):** a network of 18 marine areas, extending beyond territorial waters, has been proposed by scientists from the countries of the ACCOBAMS area. The Alborán Sea, the Straits of Gibraltar and the waters off Sicily have been specifically recommended for this purpose. The Meeting agreed to a new conservation plan for the strategically important Black Sea region. It also adopted a resolution on the dramatic situation of the Mediterranean common dolphin, which is projected to disappear by 2010 in certain parts of the Agreement Area. The question of drift nets was addressed, and the Parties agreed to include in the text of the Agreement the prohibition of their use and of their presence on board fishing boats, to bring the Agreement into line with other international instruments. Various guidelines were adopted, to be used by governments in attaining their objectives for 2010, including in particular the rescue of animals in distress, centralized collection of tissue samples from stranded animals and the release of cetaceans into the wild to ensure their conservation.
- **Fifth Meeting of the Scientific Committee (April, 2008):** Following the discussion about the harmonisation of the CMS Appendices and the provisions of ACCOBAMS, the Scientific Committee declared its availability to support the preparation of proposals to include the eastern Mediterranean population of *Tursiops truncatus* and the Mediterranean population of *Grampus griseus* in Appendix II of CMS.

1.2 Indices for measuring the status and trends of cetacean species within the Agreement Area

- **The ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative Workshop (Mai, 2008):** The Workshop was held at the Centre de Congrès Auditorium Rainier III. Monaco, from 15-17 May 2008. The origins of this initiative came in a recommendation made by the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee in 2003 that complemented an earlier proposal for a basin-wide survey for sperm whales. The Resolution was then adopted by the ACCOBAMS Parties (e.g. most recently at MOP3 Resolution 3.15). It had agreed that the highest priority for research in the area was to ‘obtain baseline population estimates and distributional information of cetaceans within the ACCOBAMS area as soon as possible (including information on stock structure)’. Without such information, and a suitable monitoring programme, it is impossible to *inter alia* determine whether ACCOBAMS is meeting its conservation objectives. Such information is essential for the assessment of risk, the determination of appropriate mitigation measures and the associated determination of priority actions. The first stage of the proposed project is to obtain baseline population estimates (stock structure and abundance) and distributional information of cetaceans within the ACCOBAMS area. A number of additional actions related to management tools, capacity building and public awareness have also been developed and incorporated into the draft specification document. The finalized project is available on the ACCOBAMS Web site (.....). A booklet form to present to policy makers and potential funders that will be translated in all the ACCOBAMS languages was distribute to Countries.

- **The IUCN Red List of cetacean in the Mediterranean and Black Sea:** Recalling Resolution 1.3 acknowledging the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as a full member of the Scientific Committee, Resolution 2.22 on strengthening relations with the IUCN, Resolution 3.9 on guidelines on tissue banks and an ethical code, Resolution 3.10 on guidelines to address the impact of anthropogenic noise and Resolution 3.15 on comprehensive cetacean population estimates and distribution in the ACCOBAMS area; the Parties adopted the following IUCN–ACCOBAMS Red List assessment (Resolution 3.19):

Species	IUCN category
Killer whale (<i>Orcinus orca</i>)	Critically endangered
Sperm whale, Mediterranean population (<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>)	Endangered
Short-beaked common dolphin, Mediterranean population (<i>Delphinus delphis</i>)	Endangered
Short-beaked common dolphin, Black Sea sub-species (<i>Delphinus delphis</i>)	Endangered
Common bottlenose dolphin, Black Sea sub-species (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	Endangered
Harbour porpoise, Black Sea sub-species, including animals in the northern Aegean Sea (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>)	Endangered
Common bottlenose dolphin, Mediterranean population (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	Vulnerable
Striped dolphin, Mediterranean population (<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>)	Vulnerable
Fin whale, Mediterranean population (<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>)	Data deficient
Cuvier’s beaked whale, Mediterranean population (<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>)	Data deficient
Long-finned pilot whale, Mediterranean population (<i>Globicephala melas</i>)	Data deficient
Risso’s dolphin, Mediterranean population (<i>Grampus griseus</i>)	Data deficient

1.3 Emerging and existing threats to cetaceans and obstacles to migration identified and reviewed at regular intervals and guidelines for appropriate actions developed

- **Marine Protected Areas:** During the last MOP (October 2007) the Parties adopted criteria for the selection of MPAs for cetaceans, a special format for cetacean MPA proposals, and made recommendations concerning sites in the Agreement area known to contain important cetacean habitats (listed in Annex 5 to the Report of the 4th Meeting of the Scientific Committee), which could be candidate areas for the establishment of special MPAs. A map presenting the Existing and potential areas of importance for cetaceans was widely distribute in the international forum (<http://www.accobams.org/2006.php/parties/documents/5>)
- **The REPCET Project:** The project will be managed jointly by the participants of the Steering Committee, established under the auspices of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and the PELAGOS Sanctuary Secretariat. This will allow placing the effort into a global context, to provide the necessary expertise from other contexts and to assist in identifying research priorities and select mitigation actions. The work carried out will ultimately lead to the creation of a network, including different research institutes and concerned shipping companies to build a central database on ship strikes to facilitate information exchanges and data sharing, and to apply and test the suggested mitigation measures.
- **International Workshop on Bycatch:** The Secretariat, in collaboration with the GFCM, has convened a workshop on cetacean incidental captures within the Area of the Agreement (FAO HQs, Rome, 17th – 18th September 2008), according to the decisions of the Third Meeting of the Parties of ACCOBAMS (Resolution 3.12) and as part of the project for the “Assessment and mitigation of the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS Area” (also known as ByCBAMS), supported by the ACCOBAMS Contracting Parties in 2004 (Resolution 2.21).

The workshop was attended by 14 Contracting Countries (Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Italy, France, Lebanon, Malta, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia and Ukraine), 3 Non-Parties (European Commission, Egypt and Montenegro), 4 Intergovernmental Organisations (the Black Sea Commission, the Convention on Migratory Species, the GFCM and PELAGOS Sanctuary) and several other scientists. This meeting was preceded by a workshop on bycatch in general organized by GFCM and regarding all the species concerned.

The Workshops aimed to address the following issues:

- National overviews on the current status of cetacean-fisheries conflicts, including bycatch and depredation, and critical review of historical data
- Discussion of the draft standard protocols for data collection prepared for the ACCOBAMS area; and
- Status of the implementation ByCBAMS framework within the ACCOBAMS area.

During the discussions, two important decisions have been adopted:

- the extension and adaptation of the draft protocol for data collection on bycatch and depredation to other species concerned by the same type of problem,
- the use of the “Task 1” Database elaborated within the GFCM in order to collect data relative to incidental catches.

As it was agreed during previous exchanges and in application of the Resolution 3.8 recognizing that “*further strengthening of the relations between ACCOBAMS and GFCM is essential for implementation of the fishery-related measures of ACCOBAMS*”. The issues of the workshops will be presented the GFCM bodies (SCEEM, SAC) for adoption by the Parties.

1.4 Criteria, indicators and guidelines for assessing the success of conservation actions for priority migratory species developed

The IUCN Red List of cetacean in the Mediterranean and Black Sea (Please refer to 1.2)

1.5 Research and monitoring priorities for cetacean species identified and recommended to appropriate institutions for action

The ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative Workshop (Please refer to 1.2)

International Workshop on Bycatch (Please refer to 1.3)

- **Guidelines on noise:** The delicate question of noise was discussed extensively. The Parties agreed to form a working group consisting of government representatives and scientists to decide on the management of this important threat to cetaceans. The new Guidelines will be presented at the Fourth Meeting of ACCOBAMS Contracting Parties in 2010.

(<http://www.accobams.org/2006.php/parties/documents/5>)

1.6 User-friendly information management system integrating the best available data on migratory species operational and regularly updated

- **ACCOBAMS-CIESM-PELAGOS joint sighting cetacean database:** According to Resolution 3.21, which recognized the importance of an ACCOBAMS– CIESM –PELAGOS joint sighting database as a tool for cetacean conservation in the ACCOBAMS area it was agreed on the following “*Joint Cetacean Sightings Database*” general aim: “supporting the conservation and scientific goals of the participating Organisations by providing a readily accessible body of knowledge, collected across time (past, present and future), concerning the occurrence, distribution, abundance and habitat use of cetaceans in the Mediterranean, Black Seas and contiguous Atlantic.”

Point 2: Ensure that cetacean species benefit from the best possible conservation measures

Marine Protected Areas (Please refer to 1.3)

Guidelines on Noise (Please refer to 1.5)

- **The Mediterranean Database of Cetacean Strandings (MEDACES):** This database has been set-up to co-ordinate all national and regional efforts for riparian countries. This project was created under the Barcelona Convention extended to the ACCOBAMS area. It is currently supported by the Spanish Ministry of the Environment, and Rural and Marine Affairs. Cetacean stranding data will be organized into a spatially referenced database of public access. The data used in MEDACES form is partly based on information given by some well-established stranding networks in Mediterranean and non-Mediterranean countries. The revision of the form was also carried out by experts on cetacean strandings. (http://medaces.uv.es/home_eng.htm)
- **Emergency Task Force:** The Secretariat, with the support of the Scientific Committee and the SRCUs, to proceed with the establishment of two Task Forces (ETFs): (a) A “mass mortality” ETF to address unusual mortality events including epizootics and atypical mass strandings (e.g. of beaked whales caused by anthropogenic sound). A workshop of experts will be organised as soon as possible to examine the draft “Guidelines for a Coordinated Cetacean Stranding Response” and finalise guidelines and procedures. Parties should ensure that appropriate support be given to implementation of the plan wherever such implementation falls within their competence, (b) A “maritime disaster” ETF to address oil or chemical spills affecting cetacean critical habitat. The Secretariat to contact REMPEC and its Black Sea homologous organisation within the Bucharest Convention framework in order to define a collaborative effort, as appropriate.
- **National Action Plan:**
Two National Action Plans have been prepared in Bulgaria and Tunisia.
- **Workshop in Lebanon:** In November 2008, key experts will meet relevant Lebanon actors for the implementation of the ACCOBAMS Agreement in Lebanon and to elaborate a Conservation Plan thanks to the RAC/SPA support. This action is part of the capacity building mission for ACCOBAMS.
- **Black Sea Conservation Plan:** A Conservation Plan for cetaceans in the Black Sea, presented at the 3rd Meeting of the Scientific Committee, was discussed at a round table organised in Istanbul in 2006 during a Black Sea Science Conference. The roundtable concluded that some actions need further coordination and identified the following **four high priority actions**: (a) completion of the basin wide survey; (b) establishment of a regional bycatch network; (c) establishment of a stranding network; and (d) establishment of an MPA network.

Point 3: Public awareness and engagement in the conservation of cetaceans amongst key actors

3.1 Level of engagement in and commitment of ACCOBAMS existing Parties

“Operation Mimo”: On the occasion of the ACCOBAMS' tenth birthday (24 November 2006), thanks to the support of the Monegasque Government, a series of conferences and events, involving the general public, kids and various clubs were organized in Monaco. The Anniversary was celebrated on 17 September 2006 through the “Operation Mimo”: H.S.H. Prince Albert II dived together with the ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary to submerge a natural-sized dolphin-shaped statue in Larvotto's

protected area. The statue was dedicated to the late memory of Rainer III for the commitment he devoted to the birth of ACCOBAMS, the achievement of its goals and the establishment of the Secretariat in the Principality of Monaco.

Several other events for public awareness were organized
(<http://www.accobams.org/2006.php/parties/documents/5>)

3.2 Level of engagement in ACCOBAMS work of priority target non-Parties to ACCOBAMS increased

As of December 1st 2007, following ratification of Algeria, the number of State Parties to the Agreement has risen to 21 (Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine).

On April 11th 2008, the Secretariat was informed by the Minister of Tourism and Environment of Montenegro on the intention of his country to launch the preparatory activities for ratification of the Agreement, arguing that the integration of the Agreement in their national legal framework could significantly improve their environmental policy.

3.3 Number of Partners supporting and participating in the work of ACCOBAMS increased

As of date, 30 Organisations are ACCOBAMS Partners

(<http://www.accobams.org/2006.php/pages/show/13>)

Two additional requests are currently examined: The écoOcéan Institute (France) and the Turkish Marine Research Foundation TUDAV (Turkey).

3.4 Public awareness regarding ACCOBAMS and its leading role in the conservation of cetaceans

- “Operation Mimo” (Please refer to 3.1)
- With the objective to raise public awareness especially among young generations, the Secretariat organized events for young people providing ACCOBAMS Games and awareness material. ACCOBAMS collaborated to the organization of a cruise in Mediterranean for groups of children during summer. The purpose was to gather the children acquired knowledge over the school year regarding environmental issues which included the protection and conservation of cetaceans. Further collaboration is planned for the coming school year.
- The “ACCOBAMS Training Kit”, aimed at being a useful supportive tool for high level training, was primarily designed for scientists officially involved in Cetacean Conservation and particularly in ACCOBAMS implementation. Its aim is to compile and synthesized the most important and most useful information regarding the Mediterranean and Black Seas cetaceans, in order to make it easily accessible and usable for the newcomers in this field. The “ACCOBAMS Training Kit” has been distributed to several ACCOBAMS Parties.
- Awareness material such as leaflets, banner and posters was also renewed and updated. An addition to the ACCOBAMS information leaflet was created. This addition contains 2 laminated sheets with all cetacean species occurring in the Mediterranean and Black Seas as well as the code of conduct for whale watching.
- The Secretariat, as a Founding Partner for the “Year of the Dolphin” 2007 campaign, continued the global CMS awareness initiative during the extension of the Year of the Dolphin in 2008. ACCOBAMS commitment included assistance in the development of the campaign’s strategies and arising public awareness on the event.

- In December 2007, the association “Whales What Else?” was created in Monaco. Its goal is to support ACCOBAMS activities through public awareness and fundraising aimed at supporting ACCOBAMS projects.
- In September 2008, ACCOBAMS was involved in the 2008/2009 Volvo Ocean Race (<http://www.volvoceanrace.org/>). The Volvo Ocean Race is organized by Knut Frostad and devoted to draw attention to endangered whales and dolphins. The Secretariat provided support in creating posters for an exhibition in Alicante, Spain (starting point of the race).