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WESTERN AFRICAN TALKS ON CETACEANS AND THEIR HABITATS

DISCUSSIONS D'AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE SUR LES CETACES ET LEURS HABITATS

REPORT

GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATION SESSION

18-20 October 2007

Adeje, Tenerife, Spain
Hotel Jardin Tropical

Western African Talks on Cetaceans and their Habitats (WATCH)



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1. Opening Remarks

Robert Hepworth, Executive Secretary of CMS, opened the meeting. Juan Luis Rodriguez Luengo welcomed the delegates on behalf of the Government of the Canaries. Borja Heredia from the Ministry of Environment of Spain also welcomed delegates in the name of Spain and explained the meeting in terms of CMS priorities for cetacean conservation worldwide. Everyone present was aware of conservation problems faced by these species and international cooperation was essential to address them. Cetaceans were very mobile and needed effective, transboundary conservation measures.

Mr Hepworth explained that the WATCH meeting was the first of a series of meetings aimed at negotiating new CMS instruments being organised in the last few months of the year. The others concerned gorillas, raptors, dugongs and sharks, all of which were relevant to Africa. Africa was one of CMS's main strongholds with a high number of parties from the region among the total of 104. In West Africa membership was nearly 100% with just Sierra Leone left to be recruited. There were two exclusively African Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) concerning marine turtles and African elephants and it was expected that in the course of this meeting, a new MOU on the conservation of the Atlantic populations of the monk seal would be signed.

CMS had a long established and growing interest in marine mammals. Several instruments for the conservation of marine mammals were already in place, including an Agreement for the conservation of Wadden Sea seals, an Agreement on the conservation of small cetaceans in the Baltic and North seas (ASCOBANS), an Agreement on the conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean and Black Seas (ACCOBAMS) and an MoU on the conservation of cetaceans in the Pacific Islands Region. A meeting aimed at finalising an instrument for the Dugong was due to take place later in the year and there were plans for another small cetacean instrument in South-East Asia. The year 2007 had been declared Year of the Dolphin and it had proved such a success that the founding partners, CMS, TUI, ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS and WDCCS had agreed to its extension into 2008.

The WATCH negotiations were the culmination of resolutions from COP7 and COP8 and research work undertaken over the past ten years in West Africa by Koen van Waerebeek with support from CMS. It was now for the range states to determine what sort of instrument they wanted and what taxonomic scope to cover and to elaborate Action Plans for the cetaceans and manatees of the region. In conclusion, Mr Hepworth thanked the hosts, the donors and the supporting organisations and hoped the meeting would leave a tangible legacy for conservation.

Later on, Francisco Leon of the Government of the Canaries, also welcomed everyone, promised the commitment of the Canaries to cetacean conservation and thanked the organisers for honouring the islands. He also acknowledged the support of UNESCO, the town council of Adeje and the Spanish Environment Ministry. The Director General of Natural Environment passed on the good wishes of the President and the Environment Minister of the Canaries Government and stressed the importance to the Canaries and the whole Eastern Atlantic of maintaining its cetacean populations. In reply, Robert Hepworth commented on the warm welcome he and other delegates had received in the Canaries.

Marco Barbieri (CMS Scientific Officer) read out a list of observer organisations and



experts present or registered who would be allowed to participate unless range states objected. No objections were made. A complete list of participants is attached to the report as Annex 1.

2. Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Conservation Measures for the Eastern Atlantic Populations of the Mediterranean Monk Seal

The representatives of Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal and Spain together with the Executive Secretary of CMS signed the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Conservation Measures for the Eastern Atlantic Populations of the Mediterranean Monk Seal. Borja Heredia (Spain) gave a presentation outlining the history and aims of the Monk Seal MoU. In his presentation he spoke about the two colonies of Monk Seals existing in the Atlantic, which represent half of the total population in the world, estimated at 400 individuals. He highlighted that this species was classified as critically endangered by the IUCN. Among the main threats to the Monk Seal, he underlined by-catch, habitat disturbance and direct hunting. He also acknowledged the labour of the scientific work group and outlined the negotiation process since it began in Las Palmas in 2000, through the Segovia meeting (2001), Dakhla (2004) and Funchal (2006), until the approval of the Action Plan in Nairobi (2005). By means of this Action Plan, the MOU would be implemented and it was hoped would lead to the species' recovery. The representative of Morocco also expressed his delight at being able to sign the agreement and said that conservation measures had been taken since the 1990s, including a fisheries exclusion zone. The representative of Senegal reported that sporadic sightings of the species were being reported in that country. Robert Hepworth, the Executive Secretary stressed the importance of the agreement in the light of the species' threatened status and thanked all the people involved in the negotiation process.

3. Weaving a Fabric of International Conservation: The Potential of CMS for Protecting and Conserving Cetacean Populations

Nicola Hodgins (WDCS) made a presentation entitled "Weaving a Fabric of International Conservation: the Potential of CMS for Protecting and Conserving Cetacean Populations". She highlighted CMS's role and the main threats faced by cetaceans, namely bycatch, climate change, ship strikes, pollution, habitat degradation, noise, direct take and harassment. In the face of growing threats, there was a greater need to foster international cooperation, especially for long-ranging migrant species using different habitats and crossing national and international maritime boundaries. National authorities could not manage the habitats in isolation and CMS provided an appropriate legal framework facilitating effective protection through international cooperation by means of regional instruments: Agreements and MoUs with their associated Action Plans. So far 16 agreements had been concluded with more in the pipeline.

Three existing agreements dealt with cetaceans – ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS and the Pacific Island Cetacean MoU. WATCH would deal with the West coast of Africa and there were moves for an initiative in South East Asia and the Bay of Bengal. The Conference of the Parties had passed resolutions on bycatch leading to the appointment of a specialist scientific councillor to lead on the issue. The COP had also considered the impacts of oil spills and climate change.

CMS had a varied role, with contributions to research, species monitoring, whale watching, networking, idea sharing, capacity building and acting as a conduit for funding. In the global strategic aims set by CBD for the year 2010, CMS had been recognised as the lead partner for migratory species.

Ms Hodgins concluded by saying that cooperation was the key. The watchwords were: Consistency, Continuity and Connectivity. She hoped that the range states would be ambitious and ensure that the High Seas were covered and committed the NGO community to support their efforts, citing the positive experience of WDCS as partner to CMS.

4. Adoption of the Meeting Agenda, Schedule and Objectives

The meeting was invited to adopt the agenda and schedule, subject to one change to the timetable set out in Document 1 rev 1 involving delaying the signing ceremony for the Monk Seal MoU (Item 2) until the afternoon session. In addition to the main plenary session, *ad hoc* working groups would be established as appropriate and needed, which might need to operate during meal breaks and in the evening. The agenda is attached to the report as Annex 2. The broad objective of the meeting was to determine what sort of instrument the range states wanted to conclude together with its taxonomic and geographic scope and to make as much progress as possible towards its conclusion.

5. Election of Officers

An informal heads of delegation meeting had proposed that John Mshelbwala (Nigeria, Chair of the CMS Scientific Council) should chair the meeting. He was elected by acclamation.

Thanking the delegates for their confidence, Mr Mshelbwala asked for a forthright, open and honest discussion. He reminded the meeting that CMS operated on the basis of sound science and the Scientific Council had recommended that action be taken for cetaceans in the Eastern Atlantic. The meeting presented an opportunity of policy officials from Ministries to discuss conservation issues with the scientists.

6. Establishment of Credentials Committee

The following countries volunteered to serve on the Credentials Committee: Morocco, Nigeria, Chad, Congo and South Africa and they elected Chad to the chair. Marco Barbieri (Secretariat) requested all delegations to submit their credentials to the Secretariat.

The Credentials Committee reported daily on their activities. In conclusion, Chad reported that credentials had been submitted by 17 countries, namely Angola, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Portugal, Senegal, Spain and Togo, thirteen issued by Foreign Affairs ministries and four by Environment ministries. All credentials had been accepted.

7. Background to the CMS Initiative on Western African Aquatic Mammals

Marco Barbieri (Secretariat) explained the historical background leading to the WATCH negotiations. The Scientific Council had sanctioned some research work, with an initial project in Senegal, Gambia and Guinea-Bissau in late 1990s (known as WAF CET-1). This was followed by a second project in the Gambia and Senegal with special focus on the Atlantic hump-backed dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*) (WAF CET-2) and a third project aimed at assessing cetacean bycatch and exploitation in Ghana and Togo (WAF CET-3). Koen van Waerebeek had led much of this work with assistance from IFAW.

In 2000 a workshop was held in Conakry hosted by Guinea and attended by representatives of seven West African countries. This meeting recommended that a

CMS instrument be concluded and that it should also cover manatees. The CMS Conference of the Parties in 2002 (COP7) passed a resolution and a recommendation concerning a West African instrument, reaffirmed at COP8 in 2005 through Resolution 8.5.

8. Synergies with the Abidjan Convention

Nasséré Kaba, the interim coordinator of the Abidjan Convention, explained the role of the Convention, which had been adopted in 1991 and entered into force in 1994. It covered the west coast of Africa from Mauritania to South Africa and also had a protocol concerning combating pollution.

The components of the Abidjan Convention's Action Plan were designed to address fundamental national and regional problems, and progress had been achieved regarding marine and coastal pollution and coastal erosion (WACAF8). The Convention collaborated with IUCN over identifying the areas needing special protection. Evaluations had been carried out on the conditions of deltas, coral, swamps and mangroves and guidance published on the management of sensitive habitats in collaboration with IUCN, UNEP and national authorities. WACAF9 focused on manatee and cetacean populations and was again a collaborative effort with IUCN. The Abidjan Convention worked also with Wetlands International.

There were a number of examples of overlaps with CMS where synergies could be found. An institutional MOU between CMS and the Abidjan Convention was under consideration.

The regional marine conservation programme (PRCM from its French title) focused on the manatee in the countries of Senegal, Mauritania, Gambia, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau. All levels of government were involved together with local communities.

Mauritania pointed out that there were other regional initiatives with which the CMS Agreement would have to harmonise, one example being the WWF action plan. Mamadou Diallo (WWF) informed the meeting that a presentation of the action plan would have been given later in the agenda, and that specific questions concerning synergies could be raised at that time. He wanted to point out that WWF had coordinated the elaboration of the Action Plan, which however was the result of a cooperative effort undertaken within the regional marine conservation programme (PRCM from its French title) in which 6 countries (Senegal, Mauritania, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone) had participated. The Action Plan had been endorsed by those countries and efforts were being undertaken to identify resources for its implementation.

Marco Barbieri explained the perspective of CMS concerning synergies of the new instrument with other relevant tools and initiatives. CMS had no intention to replace with the new instrument any initiative which was already existing or under development. The spirit with which CMS was developing the new instrument was to provide a suitable legal and institutional framework that could facilitate the implementation and further development of all those initiatives, promote synergies, reduce duplication and optimise use of resources. It was in that perspective that a new instrument could have an added value to the existing tools addressing similar issues. The rationale of focusing on the Abidjan Convention, which was indeed just one of many initiatives undertaking relevant work, was that the Abidjan Convention had a geographic coverage very similar to the one foreseen for the new CMS instrument, and a clear mandate from its parties to deal with cetaceans and manatees. CMS had positive experience of collaboration with regional seas conventions and action plans, notably in the Mediterranean and Black Seas, where ACCOBAMS worked hand in hand with the Barcelona and Bucharest Conventions, and in the Pacific where a harmonious relationship had been established with SPREP. Synergies were to be developed also with the Ramsar Convention, which was relevant

for freshwater and marine coastal habitats, and with the African Convention on the conservation of nature and natural resources.

Niger expressed satisfaction that the Abidjan Convention wished to collaborate with inland countries such as Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso on the conservation of the manatee; he expressed the wish that representatives of the government be involved in the process of elaboration of the relevant strategy. Togo confirmed that some involvement was at governmental level and some at non-official level. Togo added that many governments had difficulty compiling reports and data and any help that WWF could offer would be appreciated. WWF clarified that the work on manatee was coordinated by Wetlands International within the framework of the Regional Coastal and Marine Conservation Programme for West Africa (PRCM).

The Chairman said that in general coordination within countries needed to be strengthened. It seemed that sometimes governments were not aware of all aspects of what NGOs were doing within their countries and some opportunities were being lost.

In response to a question from Liberia about mechanisms for building synergies and coordination, Ms Kaba informed the meeting that coordination within countries in relation to initiatives of the Convention was expected to be achieved mainly at the level of the national focal points for the convention. With a view to improving communication and sharing information, the Abidjan Convention had established a mechanism of national reporting. At the international level, the Abidjan Convention work plan included a constituent concerning collaboration with other organisations, and it was in that context that the Abidjan Convention was negotiating a Memorandum of Cooperation with CMS. Collaboration was also established within the three Large Marine Ecosystem projects in the region, namely those for the Canary Current, the Gulf of Guinea and the Benguela Current.

Guinea suggested that synergies be looked for also with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Guinea had taken inspiration from the outcomes of the Conakry workshop (2000) to define a conservation policy for the country, which had led to the establishment of the National Protected Areas Centre, which was responsible for the implementation of conservation programmes related to international treaties such as CMS, CBD and Abidjan Convention. Togo concurred that the research baseline underpinning conservation work was low in parts of Africa. Mali was satisfied with the work done in the sub-region but there was still room for improvement possible. Communication was important and fora such as the WATCH negotiations allowed national representatives to identify common concerns and set regional priorities. Senegal was encouraged by the growing interest being shown in the region where more initiatives were being launched, but while research led to reports and action plans, they gathered dust on the shelves too often for lack of resources for implementation.

9. Conservation Status of the West African Manatee and Action Plan

Marco Barbieri introduced the next speaker, Tim Dodman of Wetlands International. He explained that after a great deal of work on the manatee, a strategy developed by several organisations under the leadership of Wetlands International for the species was close to completion.

Mr Dodman introduced the conservation strategy for the West African manatee. He briefly outlined some main features of the biology of the species, in particular its range. The species had a wide distribution covering most of the Atlantic coast of Africa, between the Senegal River and Angola, where it lived in mangroves and lagoons but not the open sea. It was also found up most main rivers like the Niger and in the Chad basin. It was rare in the Congo basin because of the cataracts.

The species' population status was in decline and its range contracting. Isolation of populations was occurring due to the construction of dams and some effects of desertification and sand deposition in rivers. It was threatened across its range according to IUCN red data listing and was listed on Annex II of CITES and on Appendix II of CMS. Although protected under national legislation in most countries, enforcement was difficult due to lack of resources.

The main threats were: bycatch in fishing nets, direct take, habitat loss through human activities and climate change, and isolation of populations. Some fisheries techniques such as long nets cast across the entire breadth of a river were particularly problematic. Manatees were taken for their meat and blubber. Despite these threats, the species had a strong cultural value in many parts of its range, and in some areas it was forbidden to kill them, or could be done only under some special traditional permit.

The manatee was a good flagship species, occurring across a range of wetlands and its presence was a sign of the health of the ecosystems. It was potentially highly valuable as a tourism asset, but this industry was in its infancy in many of the countries concerned.

Several conservation initiatives had been developed over the years. At the regional level, Wetlands International had been initially involved in work under the Niger Basin Initiative. PRCM had subsequently provided a regional framework to share tasks among international organisations and national agencies. The first regional meeting was held in 1998 and Dakar hosted a larger one in 2006. Guinea-Bissau already had a national strategy and site based initiatives were being conducted in Côte D'Ivoire, Ghana and Angola. Community-based manatee sanctuaries had been established in Chad and some relocation work had been undertaken in the Senegal River to move individuals from dwindling pools to the main river channel.

Sub-regional fisheries commissions covered the distribution range of the species, as well as river basin authorities for the Cad Lake and the Niger, Gambia and Senegal rivers. Countries were parties to relevant treaties such as CMS, Abidjan and Ramsar conventions. The need of a regional conservation strategy for the manatee to address the population decline and the threats in the origin of it had been expressed in competent fora such as CMS and the Abidjan Convention. CMS could provide an international approach towards protecting a shared resource of great value.

Field questionnaires circulated in the PRCM area had yielded positive responses. Commitment had been demonstrated through the first regional strategy meeting in Dakar in December 2006. High level governmental participation in the Abidjan and CMS processes was a good omen, although some technical experts had been excluded while others were too busy to attend.

Main objectives and expected outcomes of the Strategy were:

- The adoption, implementation and enforcement of effective policies and legislation across the region.
- Conservation and management: to address baseline knowledge and build on tried and tested techniques. Establishment of an international network through CMS. Training and capacity building.
- Habitats conservation and restoration: protection of the excellent habitat in coastal lagoons of the Congo. Restoring of degraded habitats and creation of sanctuaries. Reduction of capture and killing.
- Awareness raising and education: targeted campaigns, integrated into other public awareness programmes. Practical training for community-based organisations; media work.

In terms of relevance to CMS, the West African manatee was an international resource which lived in transboundary waters (Senegal, Niger and Congo Rivers) and to a lesser extent along the coast. Some major threats were actually directly related to the migratory habit of the species (e.g. dam construction on rivers).

The manatee was covered by several other MEAs, but no specific, international instrument existed yet. The CMS COP in recommendation 7.3 encouraged range states to consider adopting an MOU and developing an Action Plan. CMS had a role in providing a legal framework and capacity building and establishing networks.

The next steps were to publish and distribute the strategy (in English and French), investigate options for raising funds for the strategy and raise awareness. In conclusion, Mr Dodman pointed out that UNEP had shown a clear interest through the CMS and Abidjan processes and it was now incumbent on national focal points to follow up with actions at the country level. Endorsement of the Conservation Strategy was a logical initial step. Other preliminary steps included the establishment of an expert network for West African manatee that could help in turning the Strategy into real conservation action.

The chairman thanked Mr Dodman for his presentation and remarked that the manatee was present in Nigeria where it was subject of traditional hunting, its docile nature making it an easy target, especially in dry seasons when the water channels were reduced and silted up.

Mauritania asked first what the population estimates were and how many young were born each year and secondly, how in view of its status it was not listed on CMS I and why if it was revered was it slaughtered for meat and blubber.

Mr Dodman pointed out that population estimates were difficult. Local rather than regional censuses had been conducted. He personally believed that the total population was below 10,000 individuals. Marco Barbieri explained the process of listing species on the CMS appendices, which required that a formal proposal be submitted by at least one Party to the Convention for consideration by one of the regular meetings of the Conference of the Parties. A proposal for listing the species on Appendix I had not been submitted yet, while it had been already included on Appendix II. A species' listing did not automatically change as its Red Data list category changed. However, the last meeting of the CMS Scientific Council had suggested the opportuneness of a listing on Appendix I. Dr Perrin confirmed that it was up to the Parties to submit a proposal on the basis of the existing evidence of population decline, even if no accurate, overall population figures were available. Tim Collins (WCS) asked to which extent the threats of direct takes and by-catch had been acknowledged at the workshop in Dakar in 2006. Mr Dodman replied that, while it had not been possible to express those threats in quantitative terms, the workshop had nevertheless recognised their importance, as was reflected in the workshop proceedings and the conservation strategy. He suggested that at the present stage the status of the species should be assessed more in terms of trends than of absolute numbers. Information was sufficient to assess that the trend was generally declining and the species was being extirpated in several areas. Côte D'Ivoire noted that the slow reproduction rates (one calf at a time, long gestation periods and the intervals between birth and the next pregnancy) made it difficult for the manatee to recover from losses.

Dr. Perrin urged the range states to engage with scientific experts to work up a credible proposal for submission to the next CMS COP to have the manatee listed on Appendix I.

The participants from Cameroon referred to observations that manatees occasionally became fish eaters during the dry season and asked for more information about this possible change of eating habits, because this could lead to conflicts with fishermen and

greater risk of by-catch. The Wildlife Trust said that research in Gabon showed that manatees migrate seasonally between different habitats where different foods are eaten. The manatees were more vulnerable during their rainy season migration to enclosed waters of flooded forests, where they were hunted. Côte d'Ivoire said that analysis of manatee faeces did not indicate that the species ate fish; the proportion of grass and other vegetation varied. Manatees could not be *strictly* herbivorous, but they are for the most part. Guinea insisted that the manatee is a strictly herbivorous species. In the Congo, conflicts with fishermen had led to manatees being killed because they ate the mandioca in the fishing nets rather than the fish. Angola as a country with a major fisheries sector stressed the need for more research to be done in the region, in order to assess the status of the manatee population because of potential impacts on the species. Angola also asked for more interaction between regional research institutes and the Scientific Council.

The participant from Ghana explained that even in Florida's clear waters and with helicopters available, the American authorities were not able to assess populations accurately, so there was little chance of poorer African states doing so in muddy rivers. It was clear that manatees were in decline and there was little point in waiting for definitive proof of the blatantly obvious before taking appropriate action. He called for a time frame to be established and for the manatee to be listed on Appendix I. The Wildlife Trust supported this sentiment and urged the development of an Action Plan for the Manatee.

Senegal commented that manatee conservation had begun in the 1940s under French rules and continued to the present. Despite these efforts, numbers were declining. Data was lacking and one source of information was the fishermen when scientific studies were not undertaken. Where conferences were held, information exchange had to follow to maximise the spread of knowledge. There were a number of initiatives from different organisations for the conservation of the manatee. Efforts needed to be coordinated and the Wetlands International project was an important contribution.

Tim Dodman said that the Action Plan and the strategy were in the final stages of editing and would be circulated when completed. The chairman then sought to set up a working group to progress the manatee action plan, start coordinating a proposal for listing the manatee on CMS Appendix I and plan synergies with the Wetlands International initiative. The Working Group would meet and report parallel to the plenary session. Recalling the positive experience of the monk seal initiatives, Mauritania thought that a specific group for manatees was a good way of making progress and Morocco pointed out that the monk Seal Action Plan could serve as a useful model.

Chad thought that the preliminary strategy already would provide the Working Group, which would benefit from the presence of several experts, with an excellent springboard for formulating an Action Plan. Dr Perrin agreed.

Côte d'Ivoire announced a list of participants in the Manatee Working Group, which would include delegates from Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Cameroon, Senegal, Ghana, Angola, Mali, Niger, Guinea, Chad, Nigeria, the Wildlife Trust and Wetlands International. The chairman reminded single person delegations from coastal countries that their presence was desirable in the main negotiation session, but left it to them to decide where their time would be better spent. No interpretation would be available in the manatee working group and French would be the working language.

10. Conservation Status of Small Cetaceans of the Eastern Atlantic Basin

Marco Barbieri explained that it had been intended to benefit immediately from the symposia held at the beginning of the week by feeding their outputs into the discussions. The scientific session on conservation of cetaceans in the eastern Atlantic had been

chaired by Antonio Fernandez Rodriguez and Koen van Waerebeek had acted as rapporteur. Dr. van Waerebeek referred to a draft report from the scientific sessions which had been circulated and briefly outlined the presentations and discussions of the two sessions of the Open Symposium. He stressed that it was a draft and needed to be refined and therefore comments were welcome. The revised summary report is appended as Annex 3.

The Chairman thanked Dr. van Waerebeek for his summary of the previous days' deliberations and handed the floor to Dr. Perrin who spoke about developments at the CMS Scientific Council. The Council had discussed three draft proposals relevant to cetaceans of the region: these were the Clymene dolphin (*Stenella clymene*), the main bycatch victim in Ghana and for which no clear population estimates existed; the Atlantic humpback dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*) and a genetically discrete population of harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) distinct from the populations found further north. Dr. Perrin stressed that these had been draft proposals and although endorsed by the Council, it required a party to make a formal proposal. With the next COP taking place in December 2008, the deadline for submissions was 3 July 2008, 150 days before the conference opened.

11. Options for an International Instrument under CMS

The Chairman invited Marco Barbieri to introduce the next item. The Secretariat wanted clear guidance from range states regarding (i) the taxonomic coverage, (ii) geographic range and (iii) the legal and institutional character of the proposed instrument.

On the taxonomic scope (Agenda item 11.1) Mr Barbieri referred to Document 4, which had already been distributed. Previous Resolutions (7.7 and 8.5) and Recommendation 7.3 of the COP provided a basis for discussion with one option being to confine the instrument to small cetaceans and sirenians. CMS already had one agreement (ASCOBANS) dealing with small cetaceans (defined as all toothed whales except the sperm whale). ACCOBAMS originally had been intended to cover the same range of species, but had during negotiation been extended to all cetaceans. The Pacific Islands MOU also had full coverage of all cetacean species occurring in the region.

Most current information indicated that the large cetaceans present in the Eastern Atlantic were highly migratory whose range extended well beyond West Africa. The degradation of coastal habitats was not a major threat faced by large whales. Considering that small cetaceans and large whales are subjected to different threats, extending the instrument to cover large whales might cause delays. Spain felt that ideally the instrument should cover all cetaceans but recognised that it was important to secure an agreement, which might be extended to cover more species later. In the longer term, the agreement should be consistent with ACCOBAMS because of their immediate geographical neighbourhood. The delegate from Namibia pointed out that the region included important breeding grounds for some large cetaceans (e.g. southern right whales), which would not be covered if the taxonomic range were confined to smaller cetaceans.

Stanley Johnson suggested that a pragmatic solution would be to include only small cetaceans (and manatees) in the agreement and action plans for the immediate future, but leave the door open to extend the species range at a later date. Guinea supported this approach. Morocco thought that the agreement should learn the lessons from other CMS agreements like ACCOBAMS. Togo thought that large cetaceans should be included, though recognising that they face different threats.

Summarising, Marco Barbieri said that interventions had recognised the guidance from CMS COP resolutions. Parties wanted to make as much progress as possible at this meeting, but did not want to exclude the option of extending the instrument to cover all

cetaceans at some stage, as it was the desire of range states. Mr Johnson's proposal had the advantage that an amendment to the annexes could be used rather than requiring renegotiation of the agreement. Mauritania raised the question of overlaps with the IWC in the event of the agreement being extended to large cetaceans. The proposal to restrict the agreement, at least initially, attracted further support, from WCS, Niger, Senegal and Morocco. WCS reiterated Mr Barbieri's point that the scope must remain focused in order to effectively address the problems. Morocco added that CMS Parties were obliged to take account of their responsibilities under other treaties such as IWC. Côte d'Ivoire and Congo thought it was better to confine discussions to small cetaceans at this stage, for which the meeting had been better prepared. Mauritania pointed out that many species were already included in small cetaceans and it was better to keep a restricted scope in order to obtain better results.

WWF noted that there are sometimes contradictory practices. All African countries present at the meeting, with the exception of South Africa, were members of the IWC, but also authorised the hunting of whales.

Moving to the geographic scope of the instrument (Agenda item 11.2), Marco Barbieri commented that the guidance from the resolutions was less clear. The range of the manatee was almost certainly well defined, the riparian states from Mauritania to Angola, plus Mali, Niger and Chad. It was necessary to identify whether Burkina Faso was indeed a range state for the species. Regarding small cetaceans, the resolutions had mentioned the coast of Africa from Morocco to South Africa, the Macaronesian archipelagos and the British territories in the mid-Atlantic (St Helena, Tristan da Cunha and Ascension Island). The UK government had however indicated that they did not wish to participate at this juncture, due to ecological differences between the mid-Atlantic and the western African cetacean fauna. As for the potential range states, the MoU should cover the entire region suggested by the recommendations, since no clear discontinuities in the distribution of small cetaceans could be identified.

Guinea was satisfied with the documentation. It was clear that mainland countries should be involved and the island countries would be welcome to join if they wished. Côte D'Ivoire wanted as wide a geographic coverage as possible, as there was little point protecting species in only part of their range. Mauritania wanted the three main sub-regions covered – Macaronesia, the Gulf of Guinea and Angola.

Turning to options under CMS, Robert Hepworth presented the three main possibilities for a CMS instrument. The first one was a partnership agreement, the second one a Memorandum of Understanding, and the third one a legally binding treaty. All included an Action Plan, but the first two options were not legally binding. Within the CMS, option two was the most widely used format for the region. The MoUs for African elephants, marine turtles (both in Africa) and the Pacific Island Cetaceans were all supported through partnerships. As an example for option three, Agreements such as ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS, AEWA and more recently ACAP were legally binding and therefore offered more security, but took longer to negotiate and were more costly. It had to be noted that CMS COP8 had made clear that the CMS Secretariat could no longer shoulder all the financial responsibility for MoUs as it had in the past, so sponsors needed to be found. It was also possible for an MoU to be concluded initially and for it to be upgraded to an Agreement later.

On the next day, the Chairman asked delegates which of the options they preferred, having had the opportunity to consider the choices overnight. Spain was the first country to take the floor and thought that an MoU with an Action Plan was the most flexible option. Senegal, Guinea, Mauritania, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cape Verde, Togo, Niger, the delegate from Namibia (stressing that the MoU could later be upgraded if necessary), Portugal, the participants from Gabon, Cameroon and South Africa, Nigeria, Burkina

Faso, Chad and Angola all in turn stated the same preference. Morocco found the MoU to be the most reasonable option after seeking clarification that it included a detailed Action Plan. Liberia showed interest in option one, but also agreed that an MoU was a good option. In view of this overwhelming and unanimous support, option 2 was clearly the way ahead.

Marco Barbieri then drew delegates' attention to the financial implications. The proposals for a partnership and a binding agreement could be ignored in view of the decision just taken in favour of an MoU. The options for an MoU, drawing on past experience of the staff input required, were based on three categories of expenditure, namely the secretariat staff, meetings of signatories and implementation activities. Indicative figures had been prepared for a secretariat either with UN or non-UN staff. The model used was one professional and one administrative staff member and three possible locations for the secretariat: a secretariat based at the CMS HQ in Bonn, Germany; in another European range state (Madrid had served as a model); and in an African range state (Senegal had served as a model). The costs of living, and therefore salaries, were lower in Africa than in Europe. It had been assumed that there would be two meetings of the signatories within any triennium. Without an Action Plan in place it had been difficult to assess how to cost activities.

There were numerous options for the income side of the budget. Other CMS Agreements had adopted variants of the UN scale. Some countries might prefer to make in kind rather than cash contributions, by supporting the implementation of activities. Non-range states might be persuaded to make voluntary donations or funding could be sought from other external sources. Following the decisions of COP8 it was however clear that the parent convention would not be able to bear the full cost of administering the agreement, so that expenses should be mainly covered by the countries participating in the instrument.

Guinea thought that the options were similar and did not agree that having the secretariat in Europe as opposed to Africa would create a big difference in terms of costs. The participant from Namibia suggested that finding synergies with existing bodies, such as the Benguela Current Commission and other regional fisheries organisations, could reduce costs. Mauritania requested more time to consider the financial aspects. Morocco said that it was a little premature to enter into discussions about costs. The principle in which the secretariat was based should be decided first, before any discussions about costs could begin, because this structure would help determine the means by which funds are accrued. Citing an example from the FAO, Morocco said that it had been left to the parties to fund sub-offices. It was possible that a country might come forward and volunteer to provide headquarters.

Chad thought that there was little point getting involved in theoretical discussions although it was useful to have indicative figures. Niger agreed and sought the Secretariat's advice on how the budget could be effected and whether it was likely that a benefactor could be found. Robert Hepworth was grateful for the feedback from the range states and agreed it was difficult to be precise in the absence of concrete proposals. The Secretariat had been building partnerships with other UN bodies and he thought a link-up with the Abidjan Convention should be considered. He also pointed out that a paper was to be tabled at the CMS Standing Committee in November proposing the establishment of some regional offices for CMS, which would include an African "node" to service the African agreements. He further pointed to the experience of the Turtle MoU, which had stagnated for a while until some funding had been found to reactivate it through a partnership. He felt confident that funds could be raised. CMS had successfully raised €1.5 million recently for specific projects. The CMS COP in 2008 might also decide that pump priming the African cetacean MoU should be a priority or a

donor might come forward. For the location, countries would be given the opportunity to make offers.

Moving to the format and structure of the instrument (agenda item 11.6), Marco Barbieri said that a single instrument could cover all the species, but that separate Action Plans would be needed for the cetaceans and the manatees. This approach was endorsed by a number of interventions from the floor including Togo, Mauritania, Niger, Guinea, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Morocco. Portugal wanted the text of the instrument to make clear that Portugal was not a range state for manatees. Senegal noted that some countries were not range states for the cetaceans and this point should be addressed.

12. Reports and Recommendations from Working Groups

After the Manatee Working Group had concluded its work, Isidore Ayissi (Cameroon) as rapporteur gave a presentation relating the main points of the discussion. Its aim had been to propose an action plan for the conservation and management of the West African manatee. The possibility of preparing a proposal to have the manatee listed on CMS Appendix I was also considered. The basis of discussions on the Action Plan was the work done by Wetlands International. The Action Plan was structured along four main points: policy and legislative aspects; research focused on the species; habitat conservation and restoration; and information, education and awareness raising (see Annex 4).

The conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding under CMS should act as a catalyst for the range states to review existing legislation, identify gaps, improve enforcement and liaise with other signatories. A priority was to strengthen legislation and coordinate policies with NGOs and MEAs at the regional and national levels. Legislation must be well known and implemented in all range states.

Targeted research was needed to improve baseline knowledge. A coordinated work protocol was needed in order to reduce the risk of duplication and assist the dissemination of results across the agreement area. Information needed to be centralised and passed down to site managers.

Range states, NGOs and CMS all had a role to play in conservation effort. Site based mechanisms had to be developed. Habitats had to be restored and/or protected and a restoration plan should be developed where needed. A regional network should be built up from nationally designated sites. A functional regional manatee network should be established to exchange ideas. This could be done through workshops and field visits. It was necessary to identify key areas and declare them sanctuaries by means of national and regional initiatives. Direct taking should be reduced or eliminated, bearing in mind that this might require the promotion of alternative activities (e.g. promoting aquaculture, bee-keeping). The reduction of pressures on manatee populations was a priority.

On education, the ecological and cultural value of the species would be stressed. Material would have to be produced for a wide range of audiences – children, decision makers and conservation workers. Seminars and workshops would help spread best practice among conservation workers and awareness raising campaigns were needed for the general public. Mass media, schools and universities should be included in the programme.

The Working Group decided that one coastal state (Togo) and one inland state (Niger) should collaborate on preparing a proposal to list the manatee on CMS Appendix I. The other range states in the sub-region were to provide valuable data to reinforce this Working Group. The deadline for the submission of the proposal was 3 July 2008.

A number of countries congratulated the Manatee Working Group for their work. Mauritania voiced concerns that the reference to hunting did not mention prohibition but rather reduction and felt that this was retrograde in view of the fact that many countries had banned direct taking. Regarding the awareness campaigns, Mauritania also suggested including notions about the biology of the manatee in school programmes. Senegal agreed with Mauritania that the terminology used in the Action Plan should be revised and be coherent with the policies of the countries where the hunting of manatees was already banned. The Secretariat reiterated the deadline for the proposal for the listing of the manatee in the CMS Appendix I and offered to provide the countries with all necessary information about the submission of proposals.

A draft Action Plan for the West African manatee, to be annexed to the MoU under development, would be prepared and circulated to the range states for comments before a follow-up meeting.

Cipriano Marin (UNESCO Centre Canary Islands) reported back on a Side Event for the Macaronesian region which had taken place in parallel to the WATCH meeting. Forty experts from across the region had participated and the meeting had been supported by UNESCO and the Juan Carlos I University. The meeting had adopted a declaration, available first only in Spanish but with translations into English, French and Portuguese under preparation. A copy of the text would be provided to the secretariat for inclusion in the meeting report (see Annex 5). The participants recognised the unique cultural and ecological character of the four archipelagos which offered in part pristine habitat to thirty of the thirty-eight cetacean species present in the Atlantic.

While increasing inter-island boat traffic was a problem and more work needed to be done to increase public awareness, progress had been made in establishing marine protected areas and Natura 2000 network and CMS's activities in the region were encouraging.

Robert Hepworth acknowledged the support provided by UNESCO without which the WATCH process would not have advanced so far and the Year of the Dolphin would not have an agreement as part of its legacy.

13. Decision on the Scope and Process for Developing a New CMS Instrument

Robert Hepworth announced that in the light of the decision to choose the option of a Memorandum of Understanding, an informal text would be circulated by the Secretariat as a Conference Room Document. He presented an unofficial draft text of the Memorandum of Understanding in English and French. Range States' comments would be taken into account when the first official draft was prepared and delegates were invited to make comments on the general shape of the instrument, which followed the model of existing CMS agreements. These would be taken into account when preparing a first formal draft text for circulation at a later date. He also announced that a second meeting would be organised to finalise the negotiation process officially.

The meeting discussed the paragraphs of the draft text in detail, making suggestions which were noted down by the Secretariat for inclusion in a revised text to be circulated to range states. This also included a request to change the title of the Memorandum to clearly include also landlocked states and Macaronesia.

It was agreed that the English and French versions of the final text would be equally valid, and that official translations would be made into Spanish, Portuguese and Arabic after consultation with the governments concerned.

The precise arrangements for the Secretariat were not yet clear and would have to be decided at the first meeting of signatories. Prime responsibility would rest with the CMS

Secretariat but a partnership with an appropriate organisation based in the agreement Area might prove to be the best option (e.g. with the Abidjan Convention). This had to be chosen by the signatories. Chad emphasised that an effort had to be made to find funds and carry out follow-up actions without letting process drag out, as it had happened before in the case of other MoUs.

Robert Hepworth undertook to report progress to the forthcoming CMS Standing Committee (8-9 November 2007). It might be possible to convene the final negotiation meeting in early 2008 but certainly before CMS COP9.

14. Discussion of draft Action Plan for the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the African Eastern Atlantic Basin

Marco Barbieri briefly introduced the next agenda item. The COP had given a sufficient mandate for an Action Plan to be concluded independently of any instrument. A draft Action Plan, whose format had been had been inspired by the one developed for the Pacific Cetaceans MoU, had been circulated to scientific advisors prior to the meeting, resulting in valuable feedback. It was partly based on a draft plan for West Africa prepared for the 10th Meeting of the Scientific Council in 2001 by Koen van Waerebeek and the WWF multilateral plan, which was about to be presented. He then invited WWF to make their presentation, after which delegates would be invited to comment line by line. The chairman announced that the meeting would at that point divide into parallel sessions dealing with cetaceans and manatees.

Mamadou Diallo of WWF explained that an Action Plan had been drafted in conjunction with the range states of West Africa, concentrating in the North-West from Mauritania to Guinea. A workshop had been organised and all countries, with exception of Guinea, had attended, building on all the WAF CET projects since 1995 and the Conakry workshop. The main aim was to agree a cetacean conservation plan and build a network and operational capacity and then move to an MoU. The first step had been to identify regional experts, to enhance information exchange and to establish baseline knowledge at national level. The Action Plan had four main objectives: to reduce the impact of human activities on cetaceans; the implementation of a research programme; education, communication and information; and coordination of activities. The means to achieve these objectives included regulations to prevent bycatch, the creation of marine protected areas, reduction of marine pollution, and research and monitoring. The development of national plans and the collaboration with NGOs and conservation institutes as well as sub-regional fisheries offices was essential for the success of the Action Plan,. Lessons could be learned from Senegalese efforts to involve communities, which they had done successfully for turtle conservation.

Mauritania asked when the draft action plan discussed at the PRCM would be circulated and what follow-up action was envisaged. Mr Diallo explained that the draft would be circulated as soon as possible and that the next main priority was implementation. Donors were being sought so that work might start in January 2008.

Morocco congratulated WWF on the presentation and commended them for the interest shown in West Africa. It was not clear whether Moroccan experts had participated, but the report would be useful scientific data to feed into decision-making processes. One particular interest was restructuring activities, such as the development of eco-tourism and the promotion of inshore/traditional fishing. Guinea lamented the lack of follow-up to the Conakry workshop and pointed out that action on the ground was needed to implement the Action Plan, but even with limited resources efforts were being made to improve expertise. Japan had indicated a willingness to fund some campaigns like a cetacean identification guide. While Dr. Koen van Waerebeek had advised on next steps,

little had emanated from CMS circles. Marco Barbieri responded that implementation needed field officers rather than government officials or secretariats. CMS's own resources were limited, both financially and in staff terms, but he was confident that funds would be raised to implement the Action Plan. The Conakry workshop had been the first step in the negotiation of the instrument now being discussed at WATCH. Mamadou Diallo (WWF) agreed that more fieldwork was needed and added that the Action Plan foresaw carrying out more research in the field in order to update available data, because it is not possible to preserve a species when there is not a sufficient amount of data collected. WWF also pointed out that the development of eco-tourism was very important.

Turning to the Small Cetacean Action Plan, Spain welcomed CMS's efforts in drafting the document but pointed out that it needed further work. The list of species covered needed to be completed. In other documents the number of cetacean species mentioned varied between 26 and 32. This anomaly had to be resolved while more diagnosis of the conservation status and the threats faced by cetaceans was needed.

For the Secretariat, Marco Barbieri invited comments on the structure and on the detail. Comments received would be incorporated in to a revised draft, which would be circulated later. A definitive list of the species to be covered was essential. He attributed the numeric discrepancy to uncertainty regarding the precise geographic range and further information received from Drs Perrin and van Waerebeek. He further explained that the model chosen for the Action Plan was the one adopted for the Pacific Islands Region MoU. This model included an introductory section aimed at giving a general overview of the Action Plan without entering into details, and an operational part in hierarchical form, which included a number of objectives, as well as targets for each objective. There were also columns in which lead actors and the degree of priority (e.g. "very high" needing work to start at once; "high" where work should start within three years and "medium" where work should start within five years) were identified. At this early stage of development completing these columns might be too ambitious and time consuming.

Marco Barbieri explained that the original language of the Small Cetacean Action Plan was English and that the final version would be retranslated into French. After exchanging general views on its structure, title and the terminology used, a thorough step-by-step examination of the draft Action Plan followed. The Secretariat took note of all agreed changes, including additions suggested and clarifications sought by participants. Delegates suggesting alternative wording were requested to hand their proposals to the secretariat.

15. Adoption of Conservation and Action Plan

Based on the comments on the draft Action Plan during the meeting and submitted in writing thereafter to the Secretariat, a revised document would be prepared and circulated at a later date.

16. Closing of the Meeting

In conclusion, the chairman and Mr Hepworth thanked all those who had made the meeting possible and such a success.



Annex 1
Annexe 1

WESTERN AFRICAN TALKS ON CETACEANS AND THEIR HABITATS

DISCUSSIONS D'AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE SUR LES CETACES ET LEURS HABITATS

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Annex 2

WESTERN AFRICAN TALKS ON CETACEANS AND THEIR HABITATS

DISCUSSIONS D'AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE SUR LES CETACES ET LEURS HABITATS

AGENDA

Negotiation of a CMS Instrument for the Conservation of the West African Manatee and Small Cetaceans of the Eastern Atlantic Basin

Chairman: John Mshelbwala



1. Opening Remarks
2. Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Conservation Measures for the Eastern Atlantic Populations of the Mediterranean Monk Seal
3. Weaving a Fabric of International Conservation: The Potential of CMS for Protecting and Conserving Cetacean Populations (guest speaker)
4. Adoption of the Meeting Agenda, Schedule and Objectives
5. Election of Officers
6. Establishment of Credentials Committee
7. Background to the CMS Initiative on Western African Aquatic Mammals
8. Synergies with the Abidjan Convention
9. Conservation Status of the West African Manatee and Action Plan
10. Conservation Status of Small Cetaceans of the Eastern Atlantic Basin
11. Options for an International Instrument under CMS
 - 11.1. Taxonomic Scope
 - 11.2. Geographic Coverage
 - 11.3. CMS Instruments under Article IV of the Convention
 - 11.4. Other Options for Cooperation under CMS
 - 11.5. Financial and Administrative Considerations
 - 11.6. Format of a future CMS Instrument, including Action Plans
12. Reports and Recommendations from Working Groups
13. Decision on the Scope and Process for Developing a New CMS Instrument
14. Discussion of draft Action Plan for the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the African Eastern Atlantic Basin
 - 14.1. International Cooperation
 - 14.2. Legislation and Policy
 - 14.3. Ecosystem/Habitat Protection
 - 14.4. Threat Reduction
 - 14.5. Research and Monitoring
 - 14.6. Capacity Building
 - 14.7. Education and Public Awareness
 - 14.8. Tourism Based on Small Cetaceans
15. Adoption of Conservation and Action Plan
16. Closing of the Meeting



Annex 3
English only

WESTERN AFRICAN TALKS ON CETACEANS AND THEIR HABITATS

DISCUSSIONS D'AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE SUR LES CETACES ET LEURS HABITATS

REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM
16-17 October 2007

Session 1: Cetacean Conservation in the Eastern Atlantic Basin (16 October 2007)

Chairman: Antonio Fernández Rodríguez

Rapporteur: Koen Van Waerebeek



The Small-Cetacean Fauna of the West Coast of Africa and Macaronesia: Diversity and Distribution

Bill Perrin / CMS Scientific Councillor for Marine Mammals (presenter) and K. Van Waerebeek

This review paper summarized the reported presence of small cetaceans (31 species) in range states in Atlantic Africa and Macaronesia. The authors did not verify authentication levels of individual records and reports, unless indications existed that these were obviously erroneous. Considerable variation was found in research effort between countries which partly translated in widely variable levels of species reports. For instance, there is good faunistic information in Senegal while no published records exist for some other countries (Nigeria, Togo, Sao Tomé and Príncipe). Many gaps exist in information about distribution, abundance, population divisions and catches (bycatch and direct).

Cetaceans in the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean: Diversity and Threats Faced in the Macaronesia Islands

Manuel Carillo / Canarias Conservation Society

In the North and South Atlantic respectively 38 and 48 cetacean species are recognized, of which 13 species are Atlantic Ocean endemics. Macaronesia has 31 cetacean species (81.7% of all North Atlantic species), of these 12 are cosmopolitan and 14 are warm temperate species. Exceptional in the Canary Islands is the fact that several beaked whales (ziphiids) can readily be observed. In the period 1991-2007, 556 stranded specimens were available for study, covering a period of high mortality in 1996-1998. Most strandings are of natural or indeterminate cause. Several threats were identified including high levels of ship strikes, ingested marine debris (such as plastic bags), even a beaked whale killed by shotgun. In 1999-2007, 51 cases of vessel collisions were registered (mostly in Tenerife), compared to eight cases in 1991-1998. Peaks occurred in April – July and 40.6% of cases were sperm whales.

Functions and Effects of Sound for Cetaceans and the Initiative "Roas"

Natacha Aguilar de Soto / La Laguna University

This paper explored the question of noise pollution in the region and briefly explained the concept of sound levels in different media. Sperm whale clicks and military sonar can reach 235 +dB while air gun arrays can reach even higher, up to 250 +dB. Different cetacean species exhibit different sensitivities which cannot be represented by a single number. Low frequencies are hardly absorbed by sea water and may travel over 100km in deep water. Cetaceans use sound for navigation, finding food and avoiding predators. For deep divers echolocation is the only way to find prey in the dark. Signal to noise ration is a measure that quantifies the effect of how noise masks signals and may interfere with important biological functions. In the Canaries, an increase of underwater noise of 3 dB per decade was detected since 1950. At 700m depth a 'fog of sound' may be created. Other negative effects apart from masking include: changes in acoustic sensitivity, spatial avoidance, stress response, interruption of foraging, and changes of vocal behaviour. Several mass strandings in the Canaries have been correlated to naval exercises. Off El Hierro, a strong bathymetric profile exists with year-round beaked whale presence. Therefore the author proposes a protected area designation for El Hierro. Recent research includes the tagging of both *Z. cavirostris* and *M. densirostris* with satellite receivers.

GloBAL – Global Bycatch Assessment of Long-lived Species

Jeffrey Moore / Duke University

Mr Moore informed about their global project that tries to assess levels of bycatch of cetaceans, pinnipeds, seabirds, turtles and sharks, through analytical case studies, rapid bycatch assessments and regional assessments, taken into account finite resources. Bycatch is ubiquitous but poorly understood. Synthetic analyses and novel approaches to estimate population impacts are scheduled. A case study of the harbour porpoise in the Gulf of Maine is explained. Several life history parameters are estimated, e.g. natural survivorship, natural mortality rate, mortality rate due to bycatch and calf mortality. Rapid bycatch assessments have been made for Sierra Leone, Cameroon and Nigeria, assessing gear types and species caught. Finally a meta-analysis is meant to lead to regional/global bycatch estimates.

In a brief discussion, Mr Perrin cautioned that interview data with fishermen are often not reflected by direct observations. Mr Moore replied that they seek to know a relative order of magnitude of catches and that a minimum set of data is still useful. Ms Deimer also called for caution and cited the example of the Baltic Sea where deliberate sinking of bycaught specimens is typical in order to erase evidence. Mr Moore believed that variation in protection legislation translates into differences in honesty of fishermen. Senegal's delegate announced a new project on the bycatch of sea turtles where fishermen will be asked also to declare catches of small cetaceans.

The Role of the Government of the Canary Islands in the Conservation of Cetaceans

Juan Rodriguez Luengo / Government of Canary Islands

Due to their particular geographical characteristics, the Canary Islands have a large diversity of cetacean species. The Government of the Canary Islands helps maintain these species by regulating whale-watching activities and promoting research and public outreach. All species of cetaceans present in the Canary Islands, as well as large marine areas where they live, are protected by EU legislation. In the Canary Islands there is a very specific regulation for whale-watching activities, which is one of the most complete worldwide. Every vessel used for this purpose must be authorised and obey a code of conduct. The Government of the Canary Islands also carries out studies on stranded cetaceans since this is a very important source of information for scientists and conservationists. As a consequence of a mass beaching in 2002 coinciding with military manoeuvres, an agreement was signed with the Ministry of Defence in order to minimise acoustic impacts or to stop military activities in areas populated by cetaceans. Besides, the Government of the Canary Islands supports a number of projects to collect useful data with the aim of minimising mortality caused by collisions and interactions with aquaculture.

SECAC's Research Programme on Cetacean Populations of the Canary Islands

Vidal Martín / Society for the Study of Cetaceans in the Canary Archipelago

Initial studies by SECAC occurred in the 80s and 90s on short-finned pilot whales. 29 species of cetaceans have been registered in the Canary Islands. Recent additions include harbour porpoise and Sowerby's beaked whale. SECAC is a scientific NGO focussing on research, conservation and education activities. Main topics of interest have included strandings, natural history and distribution of cetaceans in the Canaries. Special projects have studied the diving behaviour of short-finned pilot whale, which revealed that they occasionally predate on the giant squid *Architeuthis dux*, as well as examined mass strandings of ziphiids. Special areas of conservation SACs have been proposed. The Canary Island Cetacean museum holds 147 specimens of 22 species, and has attracted 50,000

visitors over two year's time. The Museum's 'Cetotaxon' project is accessible on the web (<http://www.emecetus.com/index.php>).

Cetacean Research in Mauritania and Perspectives

Azza Ahmed Cheikh Ould Jedou / Institut Mauritanien de Recherches Océanographiques et des Pêches (IMROP)

Main activities related to marine mammals have included an inventory of species and skeletal specimens available in Mauritania. At least two national parks, the Parc National du Banc d'Arguin (PNBA) and the Réserve satellite du Cap Blanc contain very important habitat for several marine mammal species (e.g. harbour porpoise, Atlantic humpback dolphin, common bottlenose dolphin, monk seal). Ms Jedou informed about a remarkable list of national legislation and regulations that somehow protect Mauritanian marine mammals and their habitat. Also several international conventions have been signed which cover the conservation of these species. Recent work by the Institut Mauritanien de Recherche Océanographique et de Pêches (IMROP) has addressed seasonal mass strandings of dolphins in Mauritania, the development of a national marine mammal database and the set-up of a dedicated office for marine mammal issues. Ms Jedou discussed the almost annual strandings of large numbers of small cetaceans and suggested as known or potential causes, bycatch, viral diseases or toxic algal blooms. Pelagic trawlers off Mauritania are known to incidentally take large numbers of dolphins. IMROP participates in annual cetacean surveys organised at regional level. The preparation of a French-language marine mammal guidebook for use by non-specialists is highly desirable. IMROP is also involved in studies of the Cap Blanc monk seal population.

Inventory and Status of Cetaceans in Guinea

Idrissa Lamine Bamy / Centre National des Sciences Halieutiques de Boussoira (presenter), B. Kaba, S. Konate, N. Keita, M. Dia, H. Tall and K. Van Waerebeek

Cetaceans in Guinea are fully protected by Guinea's Fisheries code. Stranding, bycatch and sighting records were reviewed. We identified low levels of small cetacean captures in Guinea's waters. Twelve cetacean species have been registered till date, including three baleen whales: Bryde's whale, minke whale and humpback whale, as well as nine species of odontocetes: pygmy sperm whale, common bottlenose dolphin, Atlantic humpback dolphin, Atlantic spotted dolphin, pantropical spotted dolphin, common dolphin, rough-toothed dolphin, short-finned pilot whale and sperm whale. This checklist is believed to offer an incomplete view of the cetacean biodiversity and continued research should further establish the spatial and temporal distribution of cetaceans along the Guinean coast.

Survey for the Conservation of Dolphins in Ghanaian Coastal Waters

Patrick Ofori-Danson / University of Ghana (presenter), J. Debrah and K. Van Waerebeek

Surveys of artisanal ports were undertaken to identify dolphin species and other small cetaceans landed by local fishers in coastal Ghana between 1998 and 2000. Identifications were based on direct examination by the authors or from photographic evidence. Altogether, 14 out of 18 small cetaceans reported from the West African sub-region were identified. Catches were predominated by Clymene dolphin (35%), followed by pantropical spotted dolphin (17%), common bottlenose dolphin (16%) and the Risso's dolphin (7%). Although some coastal communities traditionally revere dolphins, pressure from rapid population growth and declining fish catches have currently made them an immediate food need and their meat is consumed fresh or smoked. The main threats are unregulated accidental or directed takes by drift gillnets or purse-seines and the use of dolphin meat as bait for catching shark whose fins are exported to Asian markets. The increasing pressures from these artisanal fisheries call for the enforcement of existing national conservation legislation

(Wildlife Conservation Regulation, 1971 or Legislative Instrument 685) and the adoption of new measures to address small cetacean conservation. In support of this effort, some short-term and long-term interventions are discussed needed to protect small cetaceans and substantially increase research. Dolphin-watching is considered a potential source of ecotourism as the number of international visitors to Ghana is projected to increase.

An Overview of Cetacean Research and Conservation Issues along the Namibian Coast

Jean-Paul Roux / Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources

Namibia's 1500km coast is influenced by the cold Benguela current. Since 1990 cetaceans are protected in its 200nm EEZ. Directed and incidental catches have been recorded for dusky and Heaviside's dolphins. Entanglements have affected *Mesoplodon* sp., southern right whale and humpback whales. Known and potential threats include mariculture, harbour development, an increase in shipping, marine mining (sands) and unregulated whale watching. So far, 8 baleen whales and 23 odontocetes have been identified for Namibia. Since 1996 the southern right whale has been found calving in Namibian waters. From that moment, photo identification and aerial censuses have been undertaken. The Namibian 'population' seems to be separated by 4° latitude from the South African 'population'. Minke whales also occur in coastal waters. A MPA is proposed in southern Namibia in order to protect Heaviside's dolphins, the humpback whale migration corridor and breeding southern right whales.

Techniques for Studying Cetaceans: A Review of Benign Research Methods

Vassili Papastavrou / International Fund for Animal Welfare

The use of a sailing boat (*Song of the Whale*) in whale research has the great advantage of reducing noise. The International Fund of Animal Welfare (IFAW)'s current lines of field research on cetaceans include passive acoustics, density evaluation, directional finding (mostly of sperm whales), deployment of acoustic monitoring buoys, and photo-identification of individual sperm whales as well as other species. Other projects address video-range tracking, visual surveys and photogrammetry. Photogrammetry can be used for one-time body length measurements of whales at sea but also to estimate growth in the case of re-sampling. IFAW has developed "Logger" software for data entry while conducting visual surveys of cetaceans. The software is freely available on IFAW's website.

How Pathology Can Help Us without High Technology and Big Science

Antonio Fernández Rodríguez / University of Las Palmas

The Canaries have changed dramatically in the last 50 years, including a dramatic change in their approach to cetaceans, basically from considering cetaceans a potential food item to highly developed tourism and specialized research. Mr Fernandez's laboratory focuses on studies of the causes that make cetaceans strand. Of 29 species of cetaceans identified around the Canary Islands, 26 species have stranded. Mortality is in 35% of cases from confirmed anthropogenic causes and 65% from natural or unknown causes. The former include death from contamination, ingested plastic bags, dolphin-watching, bycatch and naval exercises. In recognition of the threat of mass mortality, a (military) sonar-free area of 50nm was established around the islands. Key factors in successful research have included broad national and international collaborations, proper communication and human resources mobility.

Sub-Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in West Africa

Mamadou Diallo / WWF WAMER (presenter) and W. Elliot

Globally the issues that WWF has addressed include: (1) reduction of lethal bycatch; gear and solutions database (how make an unsustainable take sustainable); (2) pollution; (3) fresh water cetaceans; (4) raising awareness; (5) emerging threat: climate change. Further, the WWF subregional action plan includes the definition of Marine and Freshwater 'ecoregions'. The WWF WAMER programme covers Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea and Cabo Verde. Past main issues and campaigns concerned overfishing, unsustainable fisheries agreements, poor governance of marine and coastal resources, and raising public awareness. The goals of WAMER include policy formulation, regulatory and protective measures, improvement of scientific knowledge; improvement of law and its application and the enhancement of public awareness. Recently the development of a PRCM/CCLME partnership is progressing.

Session 2: Cetaceans and Sustainable Development (17 October 2007)

Chairman: Michael Iwand

Rapporteur: Koen Van Waerebeek



Blue and Gray Whales in Baja California and the Sea of Cortez: Lessons for Sustainable Development

Stanley Johnson / CMS Ambassador

A burning issue often raised is whether whale-watching enterprises really can be developed and maintained as long-term sustainable enterprises, without negative impacts on the whale populations they target. With this question in mind Mr Johnson visited Baja California to see for himself what the potential impact could be both on grey and blue whales, as well as on the local fishers communities. With a wealth of images of magnificent Bahia San Ignacio and its remarkably rich fauna, Mr Johnson suggests that grey whales, far from being disturbed by humans in small inflatable boats, in some cases, apparently driven by curiosity, rather seem to enjoy the attention. Skippers and guides, many former fishers, are locals and heavily rely on this employment. Interestingly, after a visit by the then Mexican president Fox and spouse, both enjoying the whales, the giant salt plant project proposed by the Mitsubishi Corporation was cancelled. The negative impact on the whales by a large salt plant would have been potentially disastrous. Good groups of blue whales were sighted, ambassadors for whale conservation in their own right.

Towards the establishment of a Marine Protected Area for Cetaceans in Macaronesian Waters

Javier Almunia / Loro Parque Fundación

Loro Parque Fundación (LPF) is an NGO linked to Loro Parque Zoo, which enjoys a research budget of ca. 700,000 Euro. Cetaceans are used as flag species. The idea of the establishment of a Marine Mammal Sanctuary in the Macaronesia region has a long history, and was initially promoted by IFAW and GSM. Currently, LPF has assumed it as one of its own goals. Over the past twenty years major progress has been made in the scientific knowledge of cetaceans of Macaronesia and the concept of MPAs has evolved to respond to new conservation challenges in marine ecosystems. In the light of this new knowledge, a simple extension of the Madeira Sanctuary of Marine Mammals may not be enough. LPF promotes the idea of a Macaronesian Sanctuary for cetaceans as part of a major strategy for the conservation of eastern Atlantic cetacean populations. Further it is recommended that a holistic perspective is maintained towards an ecosystem-oriented management. LPF suggests that the initial idea must be revised in order to find the best way to protect cetacean populations in the area. YoD and WATCH are identified as major opportunities to gather some of the most renowned experts on MPAs and ask them to work together towards a Macaronesian Cetacean Marine Protected Area. LPF promoted the celebration of a side event that will discuss all these aspects and will come up with a recommendation on the most effective tools to protect the cetaceans in Macaronesia and the eastern Atlantic. If the creation of a MPA is identified as a necessary tool, the conclusions of the side event will identify the priorities for scientific research.

The Year of the Dolphin in Kenya – Report on a Highly Successful Campaign

Abdulaziz Abdulrahim / Pollmans Tours & Safaris Ltd.

The project has multiple aims including: to encourage local community sustainable livelihood; to establish a long-term educational conservation programme; to involve policy makers and the mobilization of tourism stakeholders; provide incentives for local communities, and

ensure the continuity of the Year of the Dolphin (YoD) because of its great success. Four Kenyan coastal towns have been involved (Shimoni, Mombasa, Watamu, and Malindi) all of these fishing communities. Good collaboration was established with a number of national institutions, perhaps most notably the Kenya Wildlife Service and the Forest and Fisheries Department. Mr Abdulrahim illustrated the grassroot involvement of locals, especially women, children and elders as well as fishermen. Women are natural role models for children.

A Code of conduct on how to approach dolphins was established and ceremoniously handed over to the authorities. Social involvement included a variety of activities with a local school. The importance of providing incentives to reward conservation action was repeatedly mentioned. Examples include a guided visit to a Marine Park, a snorkelling and dolphin watch, and a free luncheon. One scheme ensured that 1 dollar for every tourist booked on a dolphin watch excursion was dedicated to development of social activities. Interestingly, beach and forest clean-ups were also linked to the YoD activities. One result consisted of villagers cutting fishing lines of an illegal longliner. 15 operators stopped encouraging swimming with dolphins and generally the Code of conduct was implemented.

CMS – Wildlife Watching and Tourism

Heidrun Frisch / CMS Secretariat

A CMS-produced brochure on the subject illustrates 12 case studies that show how best to promote environmentally, economically and socially sound wildlife watching. Based on these and other examples, it contains concrete recommendations for implementation of the concept of sustainable use and wildlife watching. Ms Frisch expanded on four case studies that related to the marine environment: (1) sea turtles and tourism in Brazil, with community involvement in turtle protection and research; (2) whale sharks and shark-watching in the Seychelles; (3) whale-watching of southern right whales in Peninsula Valdés, Argentina; (4) development of whale-watching guidelines in the ACCOBAMS area.

Four areas need to be addressed to improve the sustainability of wildlife watching tourism and generate real and long lasting returns:

1. Improve understanding of the biology of watched species and monitoring of the effects of tourism on them.
2. Improve guide training and interpretation.
3. Evaluate conditions required for wildlife watching tourism to be a viable option particularly for generating net revenues for conservation and benefits for local communities.
4. Improve planning and management of tourism in protected areas and wildlife viewing sites.

The brochure can be downloaded from the CMS website or ordered through Earthprint.com.

Building the Ground for Whale Watching Management – Lessons from a "Best Practice" Perspective

Fabian Ritter / M.E.E.R. e.V.

So far 21 species have been identified off La Gomera, which is the highest species density in Europe. Since 1997 we utilize dolphin-watching boats as research platforms. Activities include clean-up ocean trips (flotsam is collected), practical courses, development of a research and education centre. M.E.E.R. has multiple partners and cooperates with the tourism industry. Its research consists of collecting sighting data (> 5,000 entries), behavioural observations (in relation to dolphin-watching boats), photo-identification, land-based observations, tourist surveys and socio-economic impact studies. Primary study species are short-finned pilot whale, common bottlenose dolphin, Atlantic spotted dolphin and common dolphin (seasonal). Pilot whales rarely interact with boats, while Atlantic spotted dolphins often bowride. M.E.E.R. believes that cooperation with NGOs and tourism industry is beneficial. A research report is available on request.

Whale Watching in Spain: Working Towards a National Regulation to Prevent Disturbance

Borja Heredia / Ministry of Environment

Spanish waters contain up to 27 cetacean species. A well-known example is the fin whale population in the Mediterranean. Spanish whaling in the Bay of Biscay (last take in 1890) almost exterminated the Northeast Atlantic right whale. In recent years, the Canaries have been a pioneer in dolphin watching. Globally, growth in whale-watching has been exponential, e.g. in Andalusia 400,000 watchers generate 5M euros in ticket sales only. After long deliberations, a Royal Decree for cetacean protection in Spanish waters is foreseen for November 2007. An interesting concept is the 'mobile protected area' around a moving group of cetaceans. It has a 500m radius (buffer zone), is 60m deep (exclusion zone) and 500m high airspace buffer zone. All physical contact with cetaceans is prohibited. Fines can run up to 300,000 euros. Finally, Mr Heredia briefly discusses the issue of killer whales depredating on tuna in the Straits of Gibraltar.

The Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society: Our Role in Sustainable Whale-Watching

Nicola Hodgins / WDCS

The benefits of whale watching include: it is an alternative to captivity and hunting and it can generate significant economic benefits for local communities. Further, it can be a platform for changing attitudes and for research. It is environmentally sustainable if properly conducted, and has a clear conservation and educational function. Admittedly, this does not apply to all whale-watching enterprises. WDCS actively promotes land-based whale-watching because of no interaction with and a lack of impact. Ms Hodgins then summarizes WDCS activities with the Firth of Forth (northeast Scotland) population of common bottlenose dolphins. It consists of some 130 specimens and is the only substantial and resident population in the North Sea, and it is also the most northern one. It has some of the biggest bottlenose dolphins around. Since the fishing industry in the area has been in a steady decline, the tourism generates a welcome income for locals. Ms Hodgins further explained the WDCS Dolphin Space Programme.



Annex 4

WESTERN AFRICAN TALKS ON CETACEANS AND THEIR HABITATS

DISCUSSIONS D'AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE SUR LES CETACES ET LEURS HABITATS

DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR THE WEST AFRICAN MANATEE

Objectives, Themes & Actions	Lead	Priority
Strategic Objective: Improve the conservation status of the West African manatee across its range		
Theme 1: Policies & legislation		
Specific Objective 1: Improve policies and legislation for manatee protection, and strengthen their implementation		
Expected Outcome 1.1: Effective policies are established for manatee conservation at regional and national levels, and mechanisms are in place for their implementation in all range states		
Recommended actions		
Conduct a critical review of existing regional and national policies related to manatee conservation.	CMS / States	High
Incorporate specific manatee conservation measures into relevant existing regional and national policies.	CMS / States	High
Establish strong regional policies for manatee conservation, and, where necessary, provide strategic support for strengthening of national policies.	CMS / States	High
Establish practical mechanisms that facilitate implementation of policies at the regional and national level.	CMS / States	High
Expected Outcome 1.2: Effective legislative frameworks are established for manatee conservation in all range states		
Recommended actions		
Conduct a critical review of existing legislative instruments at national and local levels (e.g. codes of conduct).	States	High
Revise existing legislation and, where necessary, develop new specific legislative measures for manatee protection (e.g. incentives and sanctions).	States	High
Incorporate specific manatee conservation measures into relevant legislative instruments at the national and local level in cooperation with relevant stakeholders.	States	High
Expected Outcome 1.3: Policies and legislation relating to manatee conservation are widely adopted and well known to stakeholders		
Recommended actions		
Sensitise decision makers, local authorities and local communities, about political and regulatory provisions for manatee conservation, and encourage their implementation.	States	High
Develop capacity of agencies responsible for enforcing legislation related to manatee conservation.	States	High
Build wide awareness of policies and legislation relevant to manatee conservation within all stakeholder groups.	States	Medium

Objectives, Themes & Actions	Lead	Priority
Develop appropriate information and awareness tools to promote manatee conservation, especially for local use.	NGOs	Medium
<i>Expected Outcome 1.4: Wide enforcement of legislation relating to manatee conservation</i>		
Recommended actions		
Promote application of legislation relating to manatee conservation at a regional level through implementation of international conventions and trans-border regulations.	CMS	High
Enforce legislation relating to manatee conservation at a national level, especially at unprotected sites.	States	High
Promote enforcement of legislation as widely as possible, especially in relation to manatee hunting and trade.	States/ CITES/CMS	High
Theme 2: Applied research		
Specific Objective 2: Improve understanding of the West African manatee and use information for its conservation management		
<i>Expected Outcome 2.1: Improved knowledge of the West African manatee achieved through national and regional research initiatives</i>		
Recommended actions		
Develop and harmonise methodologies and protocols for research and monitoring of the West African manatee.	SSG	High
Conduct applied research programmes on the West African manatee focusing on identified knowledge gaps, especially for enabling successful species conservation and management.	States & partners	High
Carry out regular monitoring of manatee populations, especially at key sites.	Site managers	High
Determine important areas for manatees, especially relating to movements, feeding and mating, and develop mechanisms to reduce manatee pressures in these areas.	States & partners	High
Establish a scientific and socio-economic database on the West African manatee.	WI & partners	High
<i>Expected Outcome 2.2: Successful management and conservation mechanisms are established for the West African manatee</i>		
Recommended actions		
Establish site-based applied research and management programmes for the demonstration of appropriate conservation mechanisms.	States / NGOs	High
Evaluate and improve manatee conservation and management mechanisms at different levels (i.e. regional, catchment and community levels).	CMS/ sub-regional orgs/ NGOs	High
Identify key sites for manatee conservation, and develop proposals for their designation and management.	States / NGOs	High

Objectives, Themes & Actions	Lead	Priority
Identify key habitat requirements for manatees in different areas, and establish mechanisms for preventing the destruction and degradation of these habitats.	States	High
Design and avail practical tools, such as monitoring manuals and standardised forms, for strengthening regional capacity in the monitoring and management of West African manatee populations.	SSG /NGOs	High
Expected Outcome 2.3: Establishment of a functioning regional manatee network strengthened through capacity development and exchange initiatives		
Recommended actions		
Establish a regional manatee network with active engagement of appropriate institutions and resource persons for information sharing and exchange at national, regional and international levels.	CMS	High
Develop and run training and capacity building programmes for actors involved in the management and monitoring of the West African manatee.	States & partners	High
Identify and resource a regional centre for provision of expert advice on the West African manatee, capacity development and information exchange, with a regularly updated website, database and other facilities.	WI & partners	Medium
Organise regional exchange workshops on research outcomes.	WI & partners	Medium
Develop and organise inter-state and community exchange visits.	WI & partners	Medium
Theme 3: Restoration & safeguarding of manatee habitats		
Specific Objective 3: Reduce pressures on the West African manatee through the restoration and safeguarding of its habitats		
Expected Outcome 3.1: Designation of sites providing key manatee habitats as sanctuaries and through national and regional initiatives		
Recommended actions		
Create networks of sanctuaries that provide excellent habitat and refuge areas for the West African manatee (e.g. community based sanctuaries, Marine Protected Areas), both at the coast and in each river basin.	Regional institutions (e.g. NBA)	High
Develop and implement conservation plans for the West African manatee at an ecoregional level (e.g. PRCM, Niger Basin), national level and at specific key sites (e.g. protected areas).	States / regional institutions	V. high
Expected Outcome 3.2: Rehabilitation of West African manatee habitats		
Recommended actions		
Develop and implement habitat restoration plans at degraded sites in important manatee zones, in collaboration with local stakeholders.	States & partners	High

Objectives, Themes & Actions	Lead	Priority
Where feasible, rehabilitate obstructed waterways that currently prevent the free movement of manatees.	States	Medium
Promote management options at hydraulic works that enable the passage of manatees, at least seasonally.	River basin agencies / authorities	Medium
Ensure that key sites for manatees are protected from pollution.	States	High
Promote restoration of forests in basin headwaters in order to alleviate siltation of rivers and sand deposition.	River basin authorities	Medium
Develop long-term strategies to protect manatee habitats in relation to climatic changes.	CMS / CCC	Medium
<i>Expected Outcome 3.3: Reduced exploitation and capture of the West African manatee</i>		
Recommended actions		
Reinforcement of control measures of hunting.	States	High
In cooperation with local communities at sites where manatees are hunted, develop alternative income generation activities (such as ecotourism, livestock breeding, aquaculture and bee-keeping) and train hunters in such disciplines, to encourage a reduction in manatee hunting.	States / NGOs	High
Provide community-based incentive packages for communities that elect to refrain from manatee hunting.	Partners (NGOs)	High
Encourage the use of manatee-friendly fishing techniques in order to reduce the incidental capture of manatees in fishing nets.	Site managers & basin authorities	High
In collaboration with local communities at key sites for manatees, establish no-fishing zones in particularly important areas, in order to reduce the incidental capture of manatees in fishing nets.	Site managers	High
Theme 4: Awareness & Education / Information, Education & Communication		
Specific Objective 4: Instil a wide appreciation of the West African manatee and its ecological and cultural values through targeted communication, education and public awareness		
<i>Expected Outcome 4.1: Education and awareness materials relating to manatees, especially their values and threats, are developed and used widely</i>		
Recommended actions		
Integrate manatee conservation into training programmes of schools, universities and training centres.	NGOs / States	High
Develop training tools relating to manatees and wetlands for schools, universities and training centres.	NGOs	High
Provide community based organizations with resources and practical training and animation tools for communicating the threats to and values of manatees.	NGOs	Medium

Objectives, Themes & Actions	Lead	Priority
Develop communication media (including web-based resources) relating to manatees and wetlands, especially for use by national and local press.	NGOs & States	High
Encourage wide availability of all media and materials in appropriate local languages, and disseminate them in all range states.	NGOs	Medium
<i>Expected Outcome 4.2: Attitudes and actions favourable to manatee conservation are encouraged through awareness campaigns</i>		
Recommended actions		
Collaborate with radio and television stations to broadcast information about manatees and wetlands.	NGOs & national institutions	Medium
Produce reports and documentaries about community efforts to conserve manatees.	NGOs/ site managers	Medium
Organise special campaigns (such as 'Save the manatee' days and manatee clubs) to build awareness about issues important for manatee conservation.	NGOs	Medium
Collaborate with the press to foster public awareness of the values and threats to manatees.	NGOs	Medium
Organise seminars and other events to make decision makers aware about manatees and their conservation needs.	NGOs & States	High
Promote traditional values and cultures favourable to manatee conservation.	NGOs	Medium
<i>Expected Outcome 4.3: Manatee conservation is integrated into existing communication, education and awareness programmes</i>		
Recommended actions		
Build manatee communication, education and awareness components into management plans for sites and catchments where the West African manatee occurs.	Site managers & river basin authorities	High
Integrate the challenges facing the manatee and related conservation solutions into existing environmental awareness programmes at the national and catchment / basin level (e.g. the Niger Basin Authority).	Site managers & river basin authorities	High
Develop mechanisms to integrate the manatee into national environmental education programmes.	NGOs	Medium



Annex 5

MACARONESIA INITIATIVE DECLARATION

The participants in the MACARONESIA encounter, meeting in Adeje, Tenerife, on the 18th and 19th of October 2007, in the framework of the WATCH talks (*Western African Talks on Cetaceans and their Habitat*),

Recognising that the island territories made up of the archipelagos of the Azores (Portugal), Cape Verde (Cape Verde), the Canary Islands (Spain) and Madeira (Portugal) are home to a set of ecological specificities and common cultural roots that define the regional reality;

Recognising the bio-geographic singularity of Macaronesia, its characteristic oceanographic peculiarities, the existence of pristine areas and, in particular, its high cetacean diversity represented by 31 species of the whales and dolphins reported in the North Atlantic;

Bearing in mind that the current state of research has made it possible to identify ecological processes and habitats, together with common populations of dolphins and whales dependent on them, including areas that are situated beyond the jurisdiction of the States;

Recognising that there are global threats like those arising from climate change, or ones specific to the Macaronesia region like interaction with fishing, acoustic pollution, waste pollution, shipping traffic of people and goods and the impact of nautical and tourist activities, including whale watching,

Convinced of the need to provide incentives for society as a whole to participate in meeting the common challenges of managing the species and marine areas of Macaronesia both scientifically and technically, as well as legally;

Aware of the objective established in the Implementation Plan of the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg (South Africa) and the CBD for the

conservation of marine resources and, in particular, for creating a world-wide network of marine protected areas by 2012.

Considering that the Natura 2000 Network, whose methodology is applied also to Cape Verde, is in fact providing a means of co-operation between the archipelagos that make up Macaronesia, opening the door for the development of common measures to conserve marine bio-diversity.

Recognising the importance of a Specially Sensitive Marine Area (SSMA), together with other initiatives like the West Africa Network of Marine Protected Areas (WANMPA), the MaB Programme Biosphere Reserves declared by UNESCO and the ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS areas of reference.

Considering that the Convention for Migratory Species represents the most appropriate common framework for strengthening co-operation bonds for the conservation of cetaceans.

Bearing in mind the potential offered by the framework of the WATCH Memorandum (*Western African Talks on Cetaceans and their Habitat*),

We invite the governments of Cape Verde, Spain and Portugal to consider establishing specific agreements in the bio-geographic region of Macaronesia, within the framework of the different international conventions and programmes that promote the conservation of cetaceans, highlighting, among others, the framework offered by article IV of the Bonn Convention.

ANNEX: ELEMENTS FOR ACTION

- To create a research network in the region of Macaronesia, including all the research groups and centres of the different archipelagos.
- To develop co-operation programmes and create forums for the exchange of scientific and technical information and mobility and life-long training programmes for researchers and support personnel.
- To create an up to the minute and common data base for the whole region of Macaronesia.
- To identify essential habitats and critical areas of special biological interest for these species, including areas beyond the jurisdiction of the States.
- To develop integral research programmes with an eco-systemic and adaptive approach for the different species identified in Macaronesia.
- To foster projects of research, development and innovation that encompass the creation of the necessary know-how to enhance the identification of threats and their mitigation, with a view contributing to the conservation of these species in the different areas of the Macaronesia Region.
- To favour an effective transfer of scientific and technological knowledge for the conservation of cetaceans in the Macaronesia Region.
- To identify common laboratories and facilities to provide support for cetacean research in the Macaronesia Region.
- To generate specific public policies and instruments for an appropriate management of knowledge related to cetaceans and their habitats in the different areas of the Macaronesia Region.
- To develop networks of marine protected areas and conservation plans for the species present in Macaronesia.
- To develop a programme of co-operation for monitoring the distribution of the target species and for assessing the management measures used.
- To foster the participation and the co-operation of public and private agencies in the conservation of these species through research.
- Programmes to enhance the dissemination of scientific knowledge in society and foster environmental education centred on the cetaceans of the Macaronesia Region.

- To foster the participation of all parties in the decision making processes pertaining to actions aimed at the conservation of cetaceans in the Macaronesia Region.

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Declaration adopted by the participants to the WATCH - MACARONESIA meeting on October 19th, 2007, and presented to the Third Session of the WATCH (Western African Talks on Cetaceans and their Habitat) on October 20th, 2007.

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