



ACCOBAMS

– Cetaceans Monitoring –

“ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative”

***A basin-wide monitoring project for enhancing cetaceans
conservation in the Mediterranean and Black Seas***

44th Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee

Bonn, Germany, 14-15 October 2015

ACCOBAMS Agreement area



 Agreement area

 **23** Contracting Parties

 Extension: EEZ of Portugal and Spain

Article I, 1.a)

*... **all the maritime waters** of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean and their gulfs and seas, and the **internal waters** connected to or interconnecting these maritime waters, and of the Atlantic area contiguous to the Mediterranean Sea west of the Straits of Gibraltar*

The Conservation Plan

ACCOBAMS requires its Member States to implement a detailed **Conservation Plan** to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for Cetaceans. That includes:

- *Adoption and enforcement of national legislation*
- *Assessment and management of human-cetacean interactions*
- *Habitat protection*
- *Research and monitoring*
- *Capacity building, collection and dissemination of information, training and education*
- *Responses to emergency situations*



The Conservation Plan

Research and monitoring

Parties shall undertake co-coordinated, concerted research on cetaceans and facilitate the development of new techniques to enhance their conservation. Parties shall, in particular:

- a) **Monitor the status and trends of species**, in order **to facilitate** the elaboration of **conservation measures**;
- b) **Co-operate to determine the migration routes and the breeding and feeding areas of the species** in order to define areas **where human activities may need to be regulated** as a consequence;
- c) ...



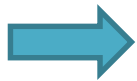
Rationale



The absence of a wide regional vision for conserving these species



A failure to capitalize on and optimize current measures to protect these species and their habitats



Insufficient level of knowledge on cetaceans in some regions



A lack of understanding of socioeconomic activities and habits



Need of a basin-wide survey to estimate cetaceans populations abundance and distribution (ASI)



ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

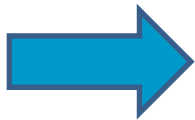
Overall Objective

To ensure that public and private stakeholders in the Mediterranean region have **a coherent monitoring system** for the species concerned in the Mediterranean ecoregion, **based on objective, robust and comparable data, with a view to improving the conservation status of these species and their habitats through appropriate management for the good status of the marine and coastal environments** in the area of the study.



ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

The ASI will provide:



Essential supports to the countries to meet their international and regional commitments

- **CMS**
- **EU Directives (Habitats and MSFD)**
- **Actions plans of the Barcelona Convention for the conservation of cetaceans, sea turtles and birds in the Mediterranean**
- **UNEP/MAP EcAp process**
- **ACCOBAMS (Resolution 5.9)**
- **CBD Aichi targets, Bern Convention, Sustainable Development goal 14 ...**



The project will contribute to:



Providing a deeper understanding of the abundance and distribution of the species at the Mediterranean Sea regional level, based on undisputed data



Strengthening international cooperation and synergies between the countries of the region to optimize and increase the efficiency of their efforts to establish a transnational approach to conserving the species concerned



Characterizing the Good Environmental Status of the study zone in an EcAp spirit



Maintaining and/or restoring this good status as well as the critical and preferred habitats of the species in question



Progressing research/development in this field completed with permanent Capacity building



Providing guidance on the measures to adapt to climate change



ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

COMPONENT 1 – BETTER UNDERSTAND AND MONITOR THE CONSERVATION STATUS AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS OF CETACEANS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA MACROREGION

Expected results:

- a **detailed review** (1) of the survey and monitoring work; (2) an assessment of their compatibility and complementarity; and (3) a characterisation of current gaps;
- a **standardised operational method** to survey and to monitor the species;
- a **baseline** which will enable regular monitoring;
- an **information management system** for data on the species;
- **preliminary identification** and **description** of the principal **habitats** and types of critical and preferred habitats of the species in question.



ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

COMPONENT 2 – OPTIMISE EFFORTS TO MANAGE AND CONSERVE THE SPECIES AND THEIR MARINE AND COASTAL HABITATS

Expected results:

- an **improved understanding** of the impacts of the main human;
- an **assessment of the effectiveness of protection measures**;
- **technical recommendations** to improve (1) the conservation of the species concerned and their critical and preferred habitats, (2) the management of national and transnational protected areas.



ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

COMPONENT 3 – REINFORCE LOCAL CAPACITIES TO CONSERVE CETACEANS AND ENSURE THE GOOD STATUS OF MARINE AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENTS

Expected results:

- a **reinforcement of the network** of experts;
- the **development of the human and technical capacities**;
- the **feasibility of a long-term funding mechanism** for regular monitoring of the species concerned;
- an **increased awareness**;
- an **assessment of the results** establishing concrete recommendations to secure and optimise the monitoring system .

ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

HOW ?

- ➔ Regional harmonization and standardization of the methods and protocols to be used for monitoring cetaceans
- ➔ Determination of a regional state of reference on the abundance and distribution of cetaceans



Multi-species approach (cetaceans, sea turtles, seabirds, ...)



Data collection (visual and acoustic line transect survey)



Dedicated ships or aerial surveys (included in the *Draft Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Guidance* – UNEP/MAP- EcAp process)

ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

Where do we stand ?

- ❖ Development of the project supported by an international expert working under the supervision of a **Steering Committee** (ACCOBAMS Secretariat, French MPA Agency, IUCN-Med, RAC/SPA)
- ❖ Confirm the **countries' contribution** to the project (in-kind and/or in-cash)
- ❖ Consult **other partners organizations** (UNEP/MAP, GFCM, MedPAN, **MAVA**, FFEM, ...)
- ❖ Generate funding synergies by **ensuring a regionally harmonized methodological approach** for cetacean monitoring (EcAp, MFSD)
- ❖ Secure funding and **finalize the project document**

 **Project planned for 2016-2019**



ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

Contribution to CMS Family's Strategies implementation

Capacity building, knowledge gap reduction, bycatch, others priority species (seabirds, marine turtles), ...



ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

- Standardized operational monitoring methodologies
- Capacity building
- Reliable and comparable data on abundance and distribution of cetaceans population in the Mediterranean Sea
- link with ASCOBANS' SCAN project



ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative

Acting at the crossroads between the shores of three continents, one of the fundamental goals of ACCOBAMS is to contribute to the balance in knowledge and efficient conservation measures between North, South and East South regions.

As ACCOBAMS have done several times in the SCAN projects, it is time to ACCOBAMS to launch its wide basin survey initiative.

The CMS Standing Committee could:

- acknowledge the project contribution with regard to the achievement of CMS objectives for marine species of the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions;
- be of significant assistance in recommending the European and Mediterranean Countries and EU to support it.



I thank You

ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat

Jardin de l'UNESCO, Terrasses de Fontvieille

MC 98000 MONACO

Tel: (+377) 98 98 80 10 / 20 78

Fax: (+377) 98 98 42 08

www.accobams.org