



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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TENTH MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Bergen, 20-25 November 2011
Agenda Item 16b

REVIEW OF ARTICLE IV AGREEMENTS ALREADY CONCLUDED

- I. The Secretariat is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species, the report provided by the Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), to accompany document UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.9.
2. The report is provided unedited in the format and language that it was submitted.

EXAMEN DES ACCORDS DE L'ARTICLE IV DEJA CONCLUS

1. Le Secrétariat diffuse ci-joint, pour l'information des participants à la dixième session de la Conférence des Parties à la Convention sur les espèces migratrices, le rapport développé fourni par le Secrétariat de l'Accord sur la Conservation des Cétacés de la Mer Noire, de la Méditerranée et de la zone Atlantique adjacente (ACCOBAMS), pour accompagner le document UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.9.
2. Le rapport est fourni sans avoir été mis au point, dans le format et la langue dans lesquels il a été soumis.

REVISIÓN DE ACUERDOS ARTÍCULO IV YA CONCLUIDOS

1. La Secretaría adjunta, para información de los participantes a la décimo Conferencia de las Partes de la Convención sobre Especies Migratorias, el informe completo presentado por la Secretaría del Acuerdo sobre la Conservación de Cetáceos del Mar Negro, el Mar Mediterráneo y la zona Atlántica contigua (ACCOBAMS), en complemento en el documento UNEP/CMS/Conf.10.9.
2. El informe se presenta sin modificaciones editoriales, bajo la forma y en el idioma original.



REPORT on ACCOBAMS activities (mid 2010- mid 2011)

Ratifications Status

As of July 1st 2010, following ratification of Egypt, the number of State Parties to the Agreement has risen to 23 (Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine).

Institutional Meetings

4th Meeting of the Parties

The 4th Meeting of the Parties was held in Monaco from the 9th to the 12th November, 2010. His Serene Highness Prince Albert II welcomed the participants to the Principality and stressing the importance of the “ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative” project, invited Countries and relevant International Organisations to join the initiative and provide it with scientific, technical and financial support.

The Meeting appointed Monaco (Chair), Slovenia, Ukraine, Portugal and Lebanon as Bureau Members for the new triennium (2011-2013). The Meeting also elected the new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee being respectively M. Alexei Birkun and M. Vincent Ridoux.

7th Meeting of the Scientific Committee

The 7th Meeting of the Scientific Committee was held in Monaco from the 21st to the 31st March, 2011. 4 Task Managers dealing with the following issues were appointed by the Meeting.

ACCOBAMS Partnerships

As of date, 33 Organisations are ACCOBAMS Partners. The Secretariat received applications from 4 organizations asking to be accepted as Partners. In accordance with the procedure adopted by the Parties for granting the status of ACCOBAMS Partner, the Secretariat submitted the received application to the Bureau.

Head Quarters Agreement

The Fourth Meeting of the Parties adopted without amendments Resolution 4.2 relevant to the Head Quarters Agreement signed by the Government of the Principality of Monaco and the ACCOBAMS Secretariat through the Head Quarters Agreement the Principality of Monaco renewed its financial support for the functioning of the Secretariat.

The Head Quarters Agreement was signed on November 11th, 2010 by Prince Albert II of Monaco, the State Minister and the Executive Secretary of ACCOBAMS.

Extension of the Agreement

A proposal of extension of the ACCOBAMS in the Atlantic EEZ of jointly Spain and Portugal was adopted by the 4th Meeting of the Parties. The Arab League expressed its interest on the possible extension of the Agreement to the Red Sea.

Main activities on Research and Conservation

Underwater noise issue:

Thanks to the collaboration of Ocean care and NRDC, a peer review on the impact of ocean noise pollution was submitted to the United Nation Division for ocean Affairs and the law of the Sea (DOALOS), pursuant to paragraph 107 of Resolution 61/222 (2009) inviting Members States and Intergovernmental Organisations to submit appropriate peer-review articles on the ocean noise issue for DOALOS website.

Following the adoption by the 4th Meeting of the Parties of the Resolution 4.17 on “Guidelines to address the impact of anthropogenic noise on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area”, a Working Group was established (see table 1) that will focus on the mitigation of the noise impact issues.

The entry into force of the Off Shore Protocol of the Barcelona Convention on 24th March 2011 provides for the mitigation of impacts of many human activities undertaken in the Mediterranean Sea area under the jurisdiction of countries. The issue of noise being of particular relevance to this new Protocol, the Working Group will liaise and collaborate with the Secretariat of the Protocol in Athens.

Collisions issue:

A joint IWC/ACCOBAMS workshop on reducing collisions between vessels and marine cetaceans was held in September 2010 in Beaulieu (France). During the workshop the focus was brought upon (1) the exchange, the evaluation and the analysis data on temporal and geographical distribution of cetaceans, shipping and reported collision incidents, and the identification of ways to improve data collection and assignment of cause of death; (2) the examination and evaluation of existing mitigation approaches/regulations. The workshop report established a list of recommendations on research, conservation and reporting, with a focus on the ACCOBAMS area and finished with a two-year work-plan that was adopted by the ACCOBAMS 4th Meeting of the Parties. The 7th Meeting of the Scientific Committee strongly recommended to pursue and strengthen the collaboration with the IWC and ASCOBANS.

This Meeting also supported the REPCET Project, aimed at mitigating the collision impacts of cetaceans with vessels (<http://www.repcet.com/>). The Permanent Secretariat is planning to organise, in collaboration with the Government of Monaco, a workshop to promote the REPCET system among maritime companies early February 2012 in Monaco.

ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative :

During the 7th Meeting of the Scientific Committee, a revised version of the “ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative” Project was presented and it was decided, in the light of the recent successful aerial surveys in part of the region, to include a greater aerial survey component. The French Agency for Marine Protected Areas offered to appoint, in collaboration with IUCN, a project manager to notably help in identifying sources of funding for the survey project. In this context an agreement were signed with the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas, ACCOBAMS, IUCN and RAC/SPA (May 2011)

Cetacean Population Structure :

The 7th Meeting of the Scientific Committee suggested that, a joint workshop ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS on the population structure be organised at the occasion of the next Meeting of the ECS (2012).

Marine Protected Areas:

Among the objectives of the Agreement, the creation of MPAs, on this purpose the map, presenting the existing and potential areas of importance for cetaceans, was updated by the MOP4. (http://www.accobams.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1094&Itemid=76) In the frame of the collaboration with the RAC/SPA, the Secretariat participated to the “International seminar on legal aspects of MPAs in the High Sea” as member of the Steering Committee on the project “identification of SPAMIs in the Mediterranean areas beyond national jurisdiction” developed by the RAC/SPA thanks to the support of EU.

Also the guidelines on MPAs were printed in collaboration with the RAC/SPA to be notably distributed to the CBD conference in Nagoya (Japan, 2010).

Interactions with Fisheries:

In accordance with the Recommendations of the Contracting Parties, the Secretariat endeavoured to strengthen coordination and collaboration with the Secretariat of the GFCM. As results of this collaboration, the GFCM identified by catch in cetaceans as one of the main issues to be addressed to mitigate the impact of fishing activities on endangered species.

The 4th Meeting of the Parties decided to provide information on cetacean bycatch by:

- establishing regular, representative onboard monitoring programmes related to the ByCBAMS project (Project for assessing and mitigating the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS area) ,
- reporting on the methods used,
- reporting on bycatch for different types of fisheries and ghost nets in order to provide the GFCM Task 1.

Commercial whale watching activities in the Agreement area:

The acting collaboration between ACCOBAMS and PELAGOS Sanctuary, permitted to prepare a document for the proposition of a Label on whale watching activities: “Guidelines for implementing a Pelagos / ACCOBAMS label for commercial whale-watching activities”.

The Pelagos/ ACCOBAMS Label was adopted by the 4th Meeting of the Parties.

An overview of whale watching activities in the ACCOBAMS area was prepared to be presented to the ACCOBAMS 4th Meeting of the Parties.

Thanks to a voluntary contribution granted by the French “Ministère de l’Ecologie et du Développement durable” the Secretariat organized a workshop to prepare feasibility study on the establishment of Whale watching activities in Morocco and Tunisia.

Cetacean sighting database:

Considering the substantial human and financial resource requirement of the scheme, an alternative path was investigated to allow the fruition of sighting data, which involved the channelling of sighting information directly from the data owners into the Ocean Biogeographic Information System Spatial Ecological Analysis of Mega Vertebrate Populations (OBIS-SEAMAP) global online database for marine mammals, sea birds and turtles (<http://seamap.env.duke.edu/>).

National Action Plans

Collaboration with the RAC/SPA was developed for the development of National Action Plans for the conservation of cetacean populations in Lebanon and Syria.

The Secretariat organized in September 2010 a workshop with Moroccan Authorities and relevant Institutions to start the preparation of the National Action Plan in Morocco.

The elaboration of a National Action Plan is underway also in Algeria.

Table 1. List of the Working Groups currently active in ACCOBAMS

ITEM	COMPOSITION
Composition of the Scientific Committee	Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara Dan Kerem Vincent Ridoux Alexei Birkun Greg Donovan
Contribution to the Marine Strategy Framework	Vincent Ridoux ASCOBANS Pelagos
ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative	Ana Cañadas Caterina Fortuna Alexei Birkun Greg Donovan
Population Structure	Stefania Gaspari Ada Natoli ASCOBANS Pelagos
Mediterranean short-beaked common dolphin	Giovanni Bearzi Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara Ana Cañadas Alexandros Frantzis Adriana Vella Peter Evans Joan Gonzalvo Greg Donovan GFCM Representative
Mediterranean bottlenose dolphin	Regional coordinators
Anthropogenic Noise	<p>Experts: Yanis Souami Natacha Aguilar Michel Andre Martine Bigan Marta Garcia Perez Draško Holcer Elie Jarmache Gianni Pavan Ana Tejedor Peter Tyack</p> <p>Organisations: ASCOBANS (Heidrun FRISCH and Karsten BRENSING as coordinator of ASCOBANS Working group on Noise) IFAW (Tim LEWIS) NRDC (Jasny MICHAEL) Ocean Care (Sigrid LÜBER)</p>

	OSPAR Convention (David JOHNSON) Pelagos (Patrick VAN KLAVEREN) WDCS (Karsten BRENSING and Mark SIMMONDS)
Climate Change	Drasko Holcer Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara Mark Simmonds Delphine Gambaiani Pelagos
ACCOBAMS Strategy	Ana Štrbenac Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara Members of the ACCOBAMS Bureau Alexei Birkun (Chair of the Scientific Committee) Representatives of Subregional Coordination Units, Representatives of ACCOBAMS Focal Points Representatives of ACCOBAMS Partners

Communication, awareness and capacity building

- The “ACCOBAMS Training Kit”, aimed at being a useful supportive tool for high level training, was primarily designed for scientists officially involved in Cetacean Conservation and particularly in ACCOBAMS implementation. Its aim is to compile and synthesized the most important and most useful information regarding the Mediterranean and Black Seas cetaceans, in order to make it easily accessible and usable for the newcomers in this field. During the triennium the “ACCOBAMS Training Kit” has been distributed to several ACCOBAMS Parties.
- ACCOBAMS supported the CMS project concerning the “Toothed Whale Review” and contributed to the publication of a poster. The original scope of the review was extended to the sperm whale and thus all toothed whales.
http://www.cms.int/reports/small_cetaceans/img/Odontocete_poster.pdf
- Awareness material such as leaflets, CDs, banner and posters was also renewed and updated. A folder containing laminated sheets presenting cetacean species occurring in the Mediterranean and Black Seas as well as activities developed by the Agreement was published to help in ACCOBAMS objectives presentation.
- In collaboration with the Black Sea Council for Marine Mammals (BSCMM), a training on Photo-identification for experts from Bulgaria and Romania was organised. This training was devoted to:
 - design photo-id project/programme for their countries;
 - do cetacean photo-id themselves (take correct photographs and process them up to the national catalogue); and
 - teach other people to do photo-id.
- “*Train the Trainers*” Programme: In 2008, the Italian Ministry of Environment donated a voluntary contribution to establish the “Train the Trainers” project, which is designed to tutor the educators and scientists on the best way to disseminate their knowledge. The programme took place in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in 2009 and was extended to Albania and Montenegro in 2010.
- ACCOBAMS developed the “Study on the presence of cetaceans in Lebanon, identification, abundance and areas of distribution”. This project aimed at determining the cetacean species present in

the Lebanese waters as well as their abundance and their areas of distribution in order to implement proper conservation measures.

- The Second Biennial Conference for cetacean conservation in South Countries will take place in El Jedida (Morocco), from 12th to 14th October 2011. The main topics addressed will deal with the interactions between cetaceans and human activities, monitoring of populations, pollution and other nuisance. This event is organised in collaboration with the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA -MAP-UNEP) and the Ministry of Agriculture, and Maritime Fisheries of Morocco / Department of Maritime Fisheries.