



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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THIRD MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS AND THEIR
HABITATS IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION
Noumea, New Caledonia, 8 September 2012
Agenda Item 3.3

UPDATE ON THE CURRENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE OF CETACEAN THREATS, DIVERSITY AND HABITATS IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION

Update on the Current State of Knowledge of Cetacean Threats, Diversity and Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region
CMS/PIC/MoS3/Inf.3.3



Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society

Partner Organisation to CMS since 2005

Update on the Current State of Knowledge of Cetacean Threats, Diversity and Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region
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In 2007, WDCS released the first draft of the 'Current State of Knowledge of Cetacean Threats, Diversity, and Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region' at the 1st MoS for the CMS Pacific Cetaceans MoU. The focus of this report was to collate regional information on cetacean species diversity, threats and status. The report provided national listings of cetacean species for each Pacific Island Country and Territory (PICT), information on regional threats for the marine environment in general as well as for cetaceans, as well as general information on habitat and status for each species recorded (or listed as potentially occurring) within the region. This report can be found at http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/regional/pacific_cet/pdf/Inf_05_Pacific_Cetaceans.pdf

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In 2009, WDCS provided an updated version of this report to the 2nd MoS for the CMS Pacific Cetaceans MoU. The report benefited from many helpful reviews and updates – and also included research and reports from 2007-2009
http://www.cms.int/species/pacific_cet/2nd_Mtg_July09/NewZealand/Docs/PIC2_Inf6_1_Cetacean_Threats_Diversity_Habitats.pdf

In 2011, the information in these two regional reports was used as the framework for the TAG report on Pacific cetacean species which was submitted to the CMS CoP 10 on behalf of the CMS Pacific Cetaceans MoU Signatories. The report for the CoP was restricted to CMS Pacific Cetaceans MoU Signatories, yet included some additional aspects of reporting in order to be in line with regular CMS reporting formats. Such additions included the clear documentation of whether any CMS Appendix I or II species had been recorded in a given Signatory's EEZ as well as notes on national activities. In the case of the Appendix I species further details on population size and trend were also given where available. Full listings of all cetacean species within a given PIR EEZ were also given. This submission is available at http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop10/docs_and_inf_docs/inf_18_09_pic.pdf.

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As a support to this ongoing work on documenting and collecting information on the diversity of cetacean species in the region, a freely available online tool for visualizing cetacean sightings is available via www.pacificcetaceans.org. Records that any Signatories would like to submit to this database (which will therefore then be available for mapping purposes) should contact Cara Miller. In addition, any records of sightings or information on threats that would serve as useful for the regional reports would also be welcomed.

At this stage it is anticipated that the 3rd update for the 'Current State of Knowledge of Cetacean Threats, Diversity, and Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region' will be submitted to the 24th SPREP Meeting scheduled for 2013. This timing is intended to allow ongoing work to be incorporated, include a more detailed section on both regional cetacean threats and species status, and also provide a useful reference for the TAG to use when assisting the Signatories in submitting a regional report into CMS COP 11 to be held in 2014.

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