

Medium Term Implementation Priorities from the Whale and Dolphin Action Plan 2013-2017 for the Pacific Cetaceans MOU

The Whale and Dolphin Action Plan (WDAP) is ambitious and comprehensive, and represents a solid regional foundation for moving forward.

The Second and Third Meetings of the Signatories (MOS) to the Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region (Pacific Cetaceans MOU) agreed that establishing medium-term implementation priorities would help prioritize work areas, assist partners identify where resources are most urgently needed and provide a tangible means of measuring collective progress. Signatories also wished to provide input relevant for the implementation of the CMS Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans and the CMS Scientific Council review of the Concerted and Cooperative Action Species.

The following version of the Whale and Dolphin Action Plan 2013-2017 represents the outcomes of the consultation process instigated by the Pacific Cetaceans MOU MOS2 and MOS3.

The coloured shaded areas of the table that contains the direct copy of the shared WDAP with SPREP. Additional and related elements from the last Pacific Cetaceans MOU meeting, the CMS Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans and the CMS Scientific Council review are included as sub-actions and are presented on a white background and a sub-actions under WDAP Actions.

WDAP Objectives and Indicators	WDAP Actions	WDAP Priority and Lead	Proposed timeline for implementation	Comments
Theme 1: INFORMATION, AWARENESS/EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION				
OBJECTIVE 1: Develop communication strategies, training programmes and protocols for key issues within the Whale and Dolphin Action Plan INDICATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and school education programmes implemented. • Regionally relevant factsheets to inform governments and industries on key issues are produced e.g. fisheries interaction, cultural practices, 	1.1: Identify key issues for each member and support development of appropriate education strategies and programmes (e.g. known threats; species ID; status).	High Members/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	Important and should take advantage of 1.9 in taking advantage of freely available education material
	1.2: Develop appropriate education and awareness tools incorporating scientific and traditional knowledge for different target audiences at a regional and national level.	High All	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	1.3: Integrate traditional knowledge, stories and customs into education and awareness tools and materials.	Medium Members/ Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	1.4: Capacity building of Government	Medium	medium-term	

<p>regulation, biology, natural history, species ID etc).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programmes carried out in country for key government agencies and identified local community stewards. 	agencies and community trainers to facilitate stewardship, and to develop and deliver outreach programmes.	Partners	(2017-2020)	
<p>OBJECTIVE 2: Increase awareness and understanding of whales and dolphins in the region</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations on whales and dolphins carried out in schools, village halls and annual festivities. • Whales and dolphins are profiled through documentaries, interviews and regular spots in local media. • ID guides, factsheets and guidelines / brochures are distributed to boaters, mariners, yacht clubs, through government agencies and NGOs. • Educational programmes implemented in schools, education centres and museums. • Informal/ traditional methods of education are employed at community level. • 2014 celebrated as the Year of the Whales. 	1.5: Implement educational and awareness tools in schools and/or communities using relevant networks and methods.	High Members/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	1.6: Provide materials and information to mass media in-country to inform public.	High All	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	1.7: Disseminate educational materials targeted at recreational /private boaters to ensure minimum impact.	Medium Members/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	1.8: Declare 2014 as the Pacific year of the whale and support the planning, development, and implementation of in-country and regional conservation campaigns (in support of international effort by SORP).	High SPREP/ Partners/ Members	SPREP	
	1.9: Take advantage of freely available educational materials from organizations such as the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and games for children (e.g.	Medium All	immediate-term (2013-2016)	

Theme 2. CAPACITY BUILDING

<p>OBJECTIVE 1: Increase in-country expertise and capacity</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p>	2.1: Identify and address training needs and support proposal writing to implement WDAP at country and regional level, using existing	High Members/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training needs identified and addressed. • Training packages prepared and made available. • Increase technical capacity to obtain information and assist in conservation of whales and dolphins in the region. • Improved capacity to develop and implement policies and legislation. • Whale/dolphin operator training and certification programs are implemented in SPREP nations. • Number of countries/territories providing information for the database. 	processes such as National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA).			
	2.2: Develop training packages on common priorities (e.g. stranding, data recording, legislation, communication, etc.) based on regional priorities and convene workshops based on identified needs.	High SPREP/ Partners	SPREP	
	2.3: Support internship training on whales and dolphins in existing research centres.	Medium SPREP/ Partners	SPREP	
	2.4: Build in-country capacity to prepare relevant regulation, legislation and policy.	High Partners/ SPREP	immediate-term (2013-2016)	Important to coordinate across the Pacific Islands Region
	2.5: Conduct national and / or (sub) regional training workshops on necropsy, including collection and storage of tissues, skeletal remains and analysis.	Medium Partners/ SPREP	long-term (up to 2023)	
	2.6: Conduct sub-regional training and verification of whale and dolphin sightings, reporting, abundance estimation techniques.	Medium Partners/ SPREP	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	2.7: Develop database complementary to that under the Marine Turtle Action Plan.	High SPREP/ Partners	SPREP	
	2.8: Develop surveillance and enforcement capacity for implementation of national protection measures including whale and dolphin watching tourism operations.	High Members/ Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	2.9: Conduct industry training and certification programmes for whale/dolphin watching operators and guides	Medium Partners	long-term (up to 2023)	
	2.10: Develop capacity to negotiate and advocate for regional policies and positions	Medium Partners/ SPREP	medium-term (2017-2020)	

Theme 3. THREAT REDUCTION

<p>OBJECTIVE 1: Minimize the impacts of the major hazards listed below on whale and dolphin populations in the Pacific Islands region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Fisheries interactions (ii) Climate change (iii) Coastal development (iv) Pollution/pathogens (v) Direct take <p>INDICATORS:</p> <p>(i) Fisheries Interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved catch reporting systems. • System of collecting data from fishing operators on by-catch and depredation developed and used. • Properly tested depredation / mitigation techniques. • Increased adoption of mitigation techniques by fisheries. <p>(ii) Direct take</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved reporting and recording of direct take data/information. • Management system in place, e.g. management plans, policies, regulations etc that ensure sustainability of species stocks. • Adoption of international regulations/agreements applied to capture activities. <p>(iii) Climate Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document/presentation on climate change impacts to 	<p>(i) Fisheries Interactions</p> <p>3.1: Collaborate to improve data and share information on fisheries /cetaceans interactions, and successful and unsuccessful tactics for mitigation.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>All</p>	<p>immediate-term (2013-2016)</p>	<p>Critical to learn from others and share data</p>	
	<p>3.2: Foster industry / research institution / government partnership to develop and test mitigation techniques to reduce bycatch and depredation.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>All</p>	<p>immediate-term (2013-2016)</p>		
	<p>3.2B: Develop an active collaboration agreement with relevant RFMOs, including IATTC, CCSBT and WCPFC with the objective of measurably reducing cetacean bycatch (<i>CMS Resolution 10.15: Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans + CMS Resolution 10.14: Bycatch of CMS-Listed Species In Gillnet Fisheries</i>).</p>	<p>CMS Sec/AMWG</p>	<p>immediate-term (2013-2016)</p>		
	<p>3.2C: Provide support to the Pacific Cetaceans MOU, especially with assessing and developing mitigation measures for the region bycatch (<i>CMS Resolution 10.15: Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans + CMS Resolution 10.14: Bycatch of CMS-Listed Species In Gillnet Fisheries</i>).</p>	<p>AMWG/TAG</p>	<p>medium-term (2017-2020)</p>		
	<p>(ii) Direct take</p>				
	<p>3.3: Take actions to ensure a favourable conservation status of affected whale and dolphin species.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Members</p>	<p>immediate-term (2013-2016)</p>		
	<p>3.4: Ensure compliance with all</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>immediate-term</p>		

<p>whales and dolphins provided to Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to international fora addressing climate change established. <p>(iv) Pollution and Pathogens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better information on the impacts of plastics and other debris to whales and dolphins. Waste management guidelines promoted at all levels. Impacts of underwater noise pollution to whales and dolphins considered and reduced for any undertaking in the sea. <p>(v) Coastal Development and Tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of impacts on whales and dolphins incorporated into processes such as EIA, and potential impact information made available. Monitoring on identified localized populations. Strategies to reduce impacts from coastal development developed and implemented. 	relevant international regulations and conventions/agreements.	Partners	(2013-2016)		
	(iii) Climate Change				
	3.5: Facilitate the collation and dissemination of current knowledge of the impacts of climate change on cetaceans and their habitats.	Medium SPREP/ Partners	SPREP		
	3.5B: Identify those CMS Appendix I and II listed species, as well as other migratory species on the IUCN Red List, that are most susceptible to climate change, and subsequently consider whether these should be listed or uplisted on the CMS Appendices, as appropriate; and Prepare single species action plans for those species listed on Appendix I considered to be most vulnerable to climate change <i>(CMS Resolution 10.1:Migratory Species Conservation in the Light of Climate Change)</i>		immediate-term (2013-2016)		
	3.6: Build links into international fora addressing climate change.	Medium SPREP/ Partners	SPREP		
	3.7: Analyze information/impacts of climate change.	Medium Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)		
	(iv) Pollution and Pathogens				
	3.8: Encourage improved waste management at community and national levels (including fishing operations) to reduce plastics and other debris in the marine environment.	High All	immediate-term (2013-2016)	3.8 and 3.9 are strongly linked. It is becoming increasingly clear the increase in fishing and general rubbish particularly plastics in the Ocean is an issue that needs high attention not only for cetaceans but most marine organisms at all tropic levels.	
	3.9: Reduce amount of discarded fishing gear in the ocean.	High	immediate-term (2013-2016)		

	Partners/ Members		
3.10: Disseminate waste management guidelines to relevant Departments/Agencies for promotion.	High Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	
3.11: Consider and reduce impacts of underwater noise pollution from any source that could affect whales and dolphins.	High Members/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
3.11B: Prevent adverse effects on cetaceans and on other migratory marine species by restricting the emission of underwater noise, understood as keeping it to the lowest necessary level with particular priority given to situations where the impacts on cetaceans are known to be heavy; and where noise cannot be avoided; and Develop an appropriate regulatory framework or implement relevant measures to ensure a reduction or mitigation of man-made underwater noise <i>(CMS Resolution 10.24: Further Steps to Abate Underwater Noise Pollution for the Protection of Cetaceans and Other Migratory Species)</i>		medium-term (2017-2020)	
(v) Coastal Development and Tourism			
3.12: Implement appropriate recommendations resulting from assessments of the impacts of whale and dolphin watching and swim-with activities.	High Members/ Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	
3.13: Encourage consultation/consideration of impacts on whales and dolphins in	High Members/ Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	

	national legislative and environmental impact assessment (EIA) processes and ensure proponents consider impacts to cetaceans through EIA processes.			
	3.14: Identify particular localised areas and populations that are currently subject to negative impacts from coastal development and tourism activities, and develop appropriate monitoring and mitigation of any significant impacts.	High Partners/ Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	3.15: Develop management and mitigation strategies to reduce identified impacts/localized effects from coastal development and tourism activities on whales and dolphins.	High Members/ Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	

Theme 4. ECOSYSTEM AND HABITAT PROTECTION

OBJECTIVE 1: Support and encourage the designation (establishment) of national whale/marine sanctuaries, marine park, MPAs in SPREP member countries and territories INDICATORS • Additional SPREP members formally designate/establish national EEZ-wide sanctuaries and other marine protected areas that protect cetaceans.	4.1: Support effort to declare/establish EEZ wide / national whale /marine sanctuaries, large MPAs and marine parks with technical /policy advice.	High SPREP/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
OBJECTIVE 2: Support the management of whale / marine sanctuaries, MPAs and marine parks INDICATORS • Management Plans and strategies for all established	4.2: Support the development and implementation of management plans and strategies for sanctuaries/MPAs/ Marine Parks.	High SPREP/ Partners	SPREP	
	4.3: Harmonize local and national MPAs for the protection and management of cetaceans where possible.	Medium Members	long-term (up to 2023)	

<p>sanctuaries/MPAs/Marine Parks developed and implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local and national MPAs etc linked properly in terms of management and implementation. 				
<p>OBJECTIVE 3: Identify and protect critical habitat and migratory pathways</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical habitat and migratory pathways are identified, mapped and protected. 	<p>4.4: Identify (through research etc including the use of satellite tagging) and protect critical cetacean habitat and migratory pathways.</p>	<p>High Partners/ Members</p>	<p>immediate-term (2013-2016)</p>	<p>Abundance and threat identification and reduction are the largest issues for cetaceans worldwide.</p>
	<p>4.4B: Provide support identification of and where appropriate work on the protection of habitat (<i>CMS Resolution 10.15: Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans</i>).</p>	<p>AMWG/ TAG</p>	<p>immediate-term (2013-2016)</p>	
	<p>4.5: Link with and utilize existing large scale marine habitat programs regionally and nationally to share information.</p>	<p>Medium Members/ Partners</p>	<p>medium-term (2017-2020)</p>	

Theme 5. LEGISLATION, POLICY AND MANAGEMENT/RECOVERY PLANS

<p>OBJECTIVE 1: Develop country level legal, policy and institutional framework to support the effective implementation of the whales and dolphins action plan</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional legislative/management review completed and widely disseminated. Harmonisation of in country/territory policy and legal instruments. 	<p>5.1: Update legislative and policy review for SPREP member countries and territories and disseminate the final report. The review will include: identifying legislative inconsistencies and gaps; habitat and species protection measures including sanctuary declaration, MPAs, MPs and associated management plans; regulation of distant water and local fleets, including observer programme coverage to document commercial fishing impact and interaction with whales and dolphins.</p>	<p>High Members/ SPREP /Partners</p>	<p>immediate-term (2013-2016)</p>	
	<p>5.2: Based on review, strengthen or amend existing policies and</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>medium-term (2017-2020)</p>	

	legislation, develop new ones where necessary, for the effective conservation management of whales and dolphins, including measures to mitigate threat and ensure habitat protection.	Members		
	5.3: Identify and respond to country / territory legal and policy needs.	Medium Partners/ SPREP	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	5.4: Utilise the processes and outcomes used for NCSA and other related biodiversity mechanism, to address legal and policy needs for whale and dolphin conservation needs.	Medium Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
<p>OBJECTIVE 2: Develop and support implementation of regional/national whale and dolphin species management and recovery plans</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Oceania Humpback Whale recovery Plan sufficiently supported/funded. • National whale and dolphin management/recovery plans developed and implemented. • Management plans for marine sanctuaries etc that include whales and dolphins developed. 	5.5: Actively seek resources to ensure the Oceania Humpback Whale Recovery Plan is sufficiently supported for successful implementation.	High Partners (SPWRC/ SPREP)/ Members	SPREP	
	5.6: Develop and implement national whale and dolphin action plans, including recovery plans, where necessary, based on the regional action plan, to promote and guide national whale and dolphin conservation programmes and initiatives.	High Members/ SPREP/ Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	Link with the many already well developed plans from other nations
	5.7: Ensure to develop management plans for established/declared marine sanctuaries, MPAs and other ecosystem-based protection mechanisms that include whales and dolphins.	High Members/ SPREP	medium-term (2017-2020)	

Theme 6: CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND VALUE

OBJECTIVE 1: Document the range of cultural practices, values and knowledge associated with whales	6.1: Undertake a review of customary practice and knowledge related to the conservation and management of	Medium Members/	medium-term (2017-2020)	
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<p>and dolphins and encourage a more cohesive approach in policies and legislation</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TK and other customary practices and values documented and incorporated where relevant. Review on gaps carried out and report published and disseminated. Artifacts and narratives (oral histories) documented and conserved in local museums. 	whales and dolphins.	Partners		
	6.2: Promote the adoption and integration of customary practices related to the conservation and management of whales and dolphins, where appropriate.	Medium Members	long-term (up to 2023)	
	6.3: Review and identify gaps and conflicts in relevant policies and legislation to support the protection and promotion of traditional resource management (TRM), traditional knowledge (TK), intellectual property rights (IPR), access and benefit sharing (ABS), and customary marine tenure (CMT).	High Members/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	6.4: Address gaps and conflicts found in the review where required, in consultation with local communities and relevant stakeholders.	Medium Members	long-term (up to 2023)	
	6.5: Support and promote the introduction of appropriate formal protection of IPR, TK and ABS at a national, regional and international level.	High Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	6.6: Support the documentation of traditional knowledge, practices, heritage and values, using existing networks.	Medium Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	
<p>OBJECTIVE 2: Preserve and protect the traditional knowledge and values associated with whales and dolphins</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each country has identified appropriate authority to house and promote cultural information. Ongoing promoting and support for TK, ABS in national, regional and international fora. 	6.7: Identify and empower appropriate in-country authorities to hold, maintain and promote traditional knowledge.	High Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	6.8: Establish documentation protocols and agreed partnerships with cultural groups / chiefly bodies and individual knowledge holders regarding appropriate use and dissemination of information.	Medium Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
OBJECTIVE 3: Ensure appropriate	6.9: Assess the sustainability of	High	medium-term	

<p>cultural knowledge, practices, and values inform and underpin management measures</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies supported on sustainability of cultural practices in countries interested in supporting sustainability assessments. Relevant whale and dolphin traditional knowledge and cultural values are used and acknowledged in scientific surveys design and execution and formulation of national management policies. 	<p>cultural practices involving whales and dolphins that may represent a threat to whales and dolphins (e.g. Solomon Islands dolphin drive).</p>	Partners/ Members	(2017-2020)	
	<p>6.10: Ensure traditional protocols and knowledge are respected in the design and implementation of biological surveys</p>	High Partners/ Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	<p>6.11: Ensure national and local policies and management respect and draw upon traditional knowledge.</p>	High Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	<p>6.12: Support development of community (based) management plans to include conservations of whales and dolphins.</p>	High Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	

Theme 7. RESEARCH AND MONITORING (This Action Plan promotes only non-lethal techniques for research)

<p>OBJECTIVE 1: Establish abundance/distribution of all cetaceans in the Pacific Islands region</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online regional sighting database established and operational. Up-to-date whale and dolphin species diversity lists for all PICTs. Abundance estimates manual completed and training workshops undertaken. Improved estimates of distribution, abundance and habitat for PIR whale and dolphin species. At least one remote sensing device deployed in the region for at least six months. 	<p>7.1: Develop and maintain a web-accessible whale and dolphin sighting database.</p>	High Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	<p>7.2: Improve understanding of species diversity in all PICTs.</p>	High Partners/ Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	<p>7.3: Establish distribution, range and habitat information of PIR cetacean species through the conduct of dedicated surveys.</p>	High Partners/ Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	<p>7.4: Develop a training manual that encompasses abundance survey methodologies using a variety of techniques including platforms of opportunity and methodologies commonly available and accessible in the Pacific Islands region.</p>	High Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	<p>7.5: Undertake training workshops to target delivery of training on abundance estimate techniques.</p>	High Partners/ SPREP	medium-term (2017-2020)	

	7.6: Disseminate species identification and related information resources to all PICTs (e.g. IFAW and SPC identification kit for observer programme).	High SPREP/ Partners	SPREP	
	7.7: Increase use of remote sensing device, especially acoustic.	Medium Partners	long-term (up to 2023)	
<p>OBJECTIVE 2: Estimate key demographic parameters to help diagnose trends. Prioritization to be given to those species or populations known to be subject to direct or indirect threats, and/or have a data deficient or unfavourable conservation status.</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key demographic parameters established for PIR cetacean populations and report on CMS listed species submitted to the AMWG 	7.8: Estimate the following parameters of PIR cetacean populations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) annual survival rate; (ii) annual growth rate; (iii) annual birth rate and birth interval; (iv) annual migration and immigration rates. 	Medium Partners/ Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	7.8B: Develop a report on the twelve cetacean species and populations listed on the CMS Appendices for the Pacific Islands Region (<i>CMS Resolution 10.15: Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Australian snubfin dolphin (<i>Orcaella heinsohni</i>) Appendix II (ii) Blue whale (<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>) Appendix I + Concerted/ Cooperative Action (iii) Bryde's whale (<i>Balaenoptera edeni</i>) Appendix II (iv) Dusky dolphin (<i>Lagenorhynchus obscurus</i>) Appendix II + Concerted/ Cooperative Action (v) Fin whale (<i>Balaenoptera</i> 	CMS Sec/ AMWG/ TAG	immediate-term (2013-2016)	Utilize the extension of knowledge and information already available to develop these

	<p><i>physalus</i>) Appendix I/II + Concerted/ Cooperative Action</p> <p>(vi) Humpback whale (<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>) Appendix I + Concerted/ Cooperative Action</p> <p>(vii) Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin (<i>Sousa chinensis</i>) Appendix II + Concerted/ Cooperative Action</p> <p>(viii) Killer whale / Orca (<i>Orcinus orca</i>) Appendix II (included for Concerted Action during CMS COP10)</p> <p>(ix) Omura's whale (<i>Balaenoptera omurai</i>) Appendix II</p> <p>(x) Pantropical spotted dolphin (<i>Stenella attenuata</i>) Appendix II + Concerted/ Cooperative Action</p> <p>(xi) Sei whale (<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>) Appendix I/II + Concerted/ Cooperative Action</p> <p>(xii) Sperm whale (<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>) Appendix I/II + Concerted/ Cooperative Action</p> <p>Including: an analysis of the extent and how their needs have been addressed by the Pacific Cetaceans MOU; a summary of the future conservation action needs of</p>			
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	each of these species; and their relative priority within the Pacific Cetaceans MOU (<i>Resolution 10.23: Concerted and Cooperative Actions</i>)			
<p>OBJECTIVE 3: Undertake research and monitoring to identify hazards and develop hazard mitigation strategies</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale of depredation and by-catch from fishing operations assessed. • Non-lethal research carried out on abundance of whales and dolphin species that are targeted in whaling, hunt and live capture. • Improved record keeping on cetacean take e.g. hunts, captivity etc. • Assessment of pollutants, pathogens, sea bed mining and climate change made. • Information on impacts of plastics and fishing gear compiled. • Impacts of tourism related activities assessed. 	7.9: Collate all available information on the scale of depredation, by-catch and fisheries interaction in order to better assess level of priority and possible mitigation actions.	High Partners/ SPREP/ Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	Use existing abundance, distribution, migration paths and threats knowledge, particularly by-catch and fisheries interactions. This is a crucial research need for cetaceans world wide
	7.10: Promote increased reporting of cetacean related information (sightings, fisheries entanglements or by-catch, depredation etc.) from all fishing vessels.	High Members/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	Use existing abundance, distribution, migration paths and threats knowledge, particularly by-catch and fisheries interactions. This is a crucial research need for cetaceans world wide
	7.11: Include assessments of impacts in researches on abundance, structure, distribution, trends of humpback, minke, fin and sperm whales	High Partners/ Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	7.12: Include assessments of harvest impacts in researches on abundance, structure, distribution, trends for whale and dolphin species targeted.	High Partners/ Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	7.13: Identify locations and circumstances in which pollution (including noise, fishing gear, plastics etc.) and pathogens may be introduced into the PIR marine environment.	Medium Partners/ Members	long-term (up to 2023)	
	7.14: Assess whether identified pollutants and pathogens (Action 7:13) sources might adversely affect cetaceans in the PIR.	Medium Partners	long-term (up to 2023)	
	7.15: Collect information on the potential impact of plastics and fishing gear on whales and dolphins, including from stranding networks.	High Partners/ Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	7.16: Review impacts of seabed mining on cetacean populations in the PIR.	Medium Partners	long-term (up to 2023)	
	7.17: Encourage reporting of ship-strikes.	Medium	medium-term (2017-2020)	

		Partners/ Members		
	7.18: Document the number of animals, species, location and date of any take (hunting, captivity purposes, research etc.).	High Members/ Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	7.19: Assess the impacts of climate change on PIR cetacean species.	Medium Partners/ Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	7.20: Develop a threat assessment for each PIR cetacean species (with reference to populations if necessary).	High Partners/ SPREP/ Members	long-term (up to 2023)	
	7.21: Identify potential for significant impact / localized effects from tourism activities on whales and dolphins.	Medium Partners/ Members	long-term (up to 2023)	
	7.22: Assess the potential impacts of whale and dolphin watching and swim with activities on the animals.	High Partners	long-term (up to 2023)	
<p>OBJECTIVE 4: Improve data collection and database management systems</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional databases operational and current. National networks include all relevant stakeholders and contain opportunistic and anecdotal reports as well as directed survey information. All stranding events are well documented. Species identification and responses to stranding events improved. 	7.23: Maintain regional species inventory database including directed research and monitoring as well as anecdotal and opportunistic records.	High WDCS	WDCS	
	7.24: Promote the reporting of as much information as possible from any anecdotal or opportunistic sightings including ship strikes and fisheries interactions, as well as sighting reports from the community, boating/dive community records, ferries etc.	High Members/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016) [see also 7.10]	
	7.25: Promote the development of national sighting and stranding networks, inclusive of all relevant stakeholders.	High SPREP/ Partners/ Members	SPREP	
	7.26: Facilitate the process by which sighting and stranding records are reported to the national network. In	High All	medium-term (2017-2020)	

	addition, provide effective feedback and updates to the network – and from the network to regional databases.			
	7.27: Undertake training sessions and workshops on species identification for relevant stakeholders	Medium Partners/ Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	7.28: Produce a regional booklet / stranding manual with species identification, forms & instructions in English, Pidgin & French	High SPREP/ Partners	SPREP	
OBJECTIVE 5: Undertake comprehensive habitat mapping <i>Prioritization should be given to those species or populations known to be subject to direct or indirect threats, and/or have a data deficient or unfavourable conservation status.</i> INDICATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased understanding of habitat preferences and use by PIR cetacean species. Maps of cetacean species distribution in the PIR based on habitat and environmental characteristics. 	7.29: Collate a listing of key habitat characteristics for as many PIR cetacean species as possible.	High Partners/ Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	7.30: Undertake habitat mapping of relevant environmental variables on species identified in Action 7.29.	High Partners/ Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	7.31: Ground truth proposed distribution of cetacean species as per habitat maps through research surveys.	High Partners/ Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
OBJECTIVE 6: Improve information received on stranding events in the Pacific Island Region INDICATOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stranding Database and network established and operational. Stranding manual produced in three languages and distributed. Tissue archive and protocols for deposition and access established. 	7.32: Encourage as much information as possible to be collected at a stranding event. If possible, full necropsies should be undertaken, including examination for plastic ingestion.	High Members/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	Utilize the extension of knowledge and information already available to develop this. In particular information from USA and international bodies like IWC that could help facilitate this objective.
	7.33: Develop a website to improve the documentation of whale and dolphin strandings in the Pacific Islands region (referred to as 'A Pattern of Strandings').	High SPREP/ SPWRC	SPREP	
	7.34: Collect community records and knowledge on whales and dolphins and incorporate into the regional	Medium Members/	medium-term (2017-2020)	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kits for genetic sampling distributed and used. 	stranding database.	Partners		
	7.35: Produce a regional booklet / stranding manual with species identification, forms and instructions in English, Pidgin and French.	High SPREP/ Partners	SPREP	
	7.36: Encourage an MOU between the University of Auckland and SPREP for processing and storage of tissue samples for genetic work.	High SPREP	SPREP	
	7.37: Provide basic stranding kits (including for genetic samples) to members.	High SPREP/ Partners	SPREP	
	7.38: Assist in funding for experts to attend national workshops in the region.	Medium SPREP/ Partners/ Members	SPREP	

Theme 8. WHALE AND DOLPHIN BASED TOURISM

<p>OBJECTIVE 1: Ensure the development of whale and dolphin tourism is sustainable throughout the Pacific Islands Region.</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regional database is established to assess growth of the industry. Industries, governments and stakeholders (NGOs, SPREP) meet in-country as required to discuss issues and actions. Baseline research on target populations is conducted as a basis for recommendations regarding the carrying capacity of populations to sustain numbers of tourism interactions. 	8.1: Document and share lessons learnt from countries/territories with established whale and dolphin watching industries.	High Partners/ Members	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	8.2: Maintain a regional database to document the growth and economics of whale and dolphin tourism.	High Partners/ SPREP	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	8.3: Assess carrying capacity of target population of whales and dolphins to manage size of the industry.	High Partners	medium-term (2017-2020)	
	8.4: Encourage diversification from a single species (e.g. humpback whales) industry, where available, to minimize impacts.	Medium Members/ Partners	long-term (up to 2023)	
	OBJECTIVE 2: Ensure best practice	8.5: Review and distribute Pacific	High	medium-term

<p>management of whales and dolphins tourism in the PIR</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders meetings conducted and reports developed. Guidelines reviewed and distributed. Licenses limited for management of the industry. National guidelines developed based on the regional guidelines and made into national regulations. Workshop conducted for national compliance and enforcement of guidelines/regulations. 	<p>Islands Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching (PIRGWDW) as necessary.</p>	<p>Partners/ SPREP</p>	<p>(2017-2020)</p>	<p>currently developing a handbook and guidelines on this topic which will be very helpful</p>
	<p>8.6: Encourage annual stakeholder meetings (Govt, industry, scientists, NGOs) to assess management of the whale watch industry and use as a basis for industry review and reporting.</p>	<p>High Members/ Partners</p>	<p>immediate-term (2013-2016)</p>	
	<p>8.7: Encourage licensing and limiting of licenses or permits as a tool for management.</p>	<p>High Members/ Partners</p>	<p>medium-term (2017-2020)</p>	
	<p>8.8: Encourage/support countries to review/develop national guidelines/regulations in line with the SPREP endorsed PIGWDW.</p>	<p>High SPREP/ Partners</p>	<p>medium-term (2017-2020)</p>	
	<p>8.9: Develop and conduct a regional programme for national compliance and enforcement training workshops.</p>	<p>High Partners/ SPREP</p>	<p>medium-term (2017-2020)</p>	
	<p>8.10: Support countries to legislate cetacean watching guidelines into law.</p>	<p>High Partners/ SPREP</p>	<p>medium-term (2017-2020)</p>	
<p>OBJECTIVE 3: Whale and dolphin based tourism watching is conducted responsibly with minimum impact and maximum education and economic values.</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional programme to conduct national whale watching training for operators and guides/stakeholders established. Programme for whale watching operators to collect useful data developed and implemented. Educational kit available on board whale watching boats. 	<p>8.11: Develop a regional programme to conduct national whale watching training for operators and guides/stakeholders.</p>	<p>High Partners</p>	<p>long-term (up to 2023)</p>	
	<p>8.12: Develop measures to reduce contact time with pregnant females and cow-calf pairs including closed areas.</p>	<p>High Members/ Partners</p>	<p>medium-term (2017-2020)</p>	
	<p>8.13: Develop whale watching operator reporting programme to collect useful data (tourists and animal numbers).</p>	<p>High Members/ Partners</p>	<p>long-term (up to 2023)</p>	
	<p>8.14: Support countries to develop an education kit for on board operations.</p>	<p>Medium Partners</p>	<p>medium-term (2017-2020)</p>	
	<p>8.15: Ensure socio-economic benefits of whale and dolphin watching</p>	<p>High Members/</p>	<p>immediate-term (2013-2016)</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased share of communities on from whale and dolphin watching. Whale and dolphin watching feasibility studies undertaken in additional members. 		Partners		
	8.16: Assist whale and dolphin watching feasibility studies to explore potential for whale watching tourism in countries.	High Partners	long-term (up to 2023)	

Theme 9: NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION

<p>OBJECTIVE 1: Promote and enhance national, regional and international coordination, collaboration and partnership for whale and dolphin conservation in the Pacific Islands Region</p> <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of national, regional and international organisations, processes and frameworks incorporating PIR whale and dolphin conservation needs. Number of national, regional and international partnerships created to support WDAP implementation. Number of NBSAPs or equivalent strategies integrating WDAP action. Capacity strengthened to draft, manage and enforce legislation and policy in country /territory. 	9.1: Promote understanding by facilitating effective information sharing mechanisms (e.g. networks) to assist in addressing cross sectoral issues and migratory species conservation.	High SPREP/ Members	SPREP	
	9.2: Encourage and support PICTs in removing internal cross sectoral barriers in order to effectively implement the WDAP at the local and national Government levels.	High SPREP/ Members/ Partners	SPREP	
	9.3: Facilitate PICTs involvement and participation in relevant international and regional meetings and initiatives for whales and dolphins conservation, noting that members are responsible for selecting appropriate representatives to these meetings.	Medium SPREP/ Partners/ Members	SPREP	
	9.3B: Develop comprehensive reports on regional progress on mitigation measures for the regional bycatch and the identification and protection of habitat for CMS CoP11 and CMS CoP12 (<i>CMS Resolution 10.15: Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans</i>)	CMS Sec/ AMWG/ TAG	AMWG/ TAG	
	9.3C: Collect and collate Pacific Signatory technical input and to provide that	SPREP	SPREP	

	input to the CMS strategic review on ecological networks, and report back to Signatories at Pacific Cetaceans MOU MOS4.			
	9.4: Promote cooperation and highlight achievements and lessons learned in whale and dolphin conservation at national regional and international fora.	High All	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	9.5: Develop linkages and relationships with relevant regional organisations and processes, such as RFMOs (e.g. MOUs, information exchange and cross-sectoral integration).	Medium SPREP/ Partners/ Members	SPREP	
	9.6: Develop partnerships/ relationships, e.g. through MOUs, with relevant private sector organisations to reduce threats to whales and dolphins such as by-catch, depredation and marine debris (such as fishing and tourism industries, NGOs).	Medium Members/ SPREP/ Partners	long-term (up to 2023)	
	9.7: Ensure integration of whale and dolphin conservation into national, regional and international initiatives including: NBSAPs; National Sustainable Development Strategies; Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Policy; Action Strategy for Nature Conservation, CROP Marine Sector Working Group; RFMOs; NBSAP Working Group),CTI, Micronesian challenge, Oceanscape, Funding opportunities e.g. GEF	High Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	9.7B: Confirm the current status of migratory species in respective country NBSAPs or other relevant national plan / policy and integrate relevant priority actions from the WDAP, into	Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	

	national plans (e.g.: NBSAPs etc.)			
	9.7C: Coordinate between CBD, UNFCCC and CMS National Focal Points to integrate ecological networks into national environmental planning, including plans currently being developed under the CBD NBSAPs and UNFCCC NAPs, and to report on experiences and progress to Pacific Cetaceans MOU MOS4.	Members	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	9.8: Coordinate and facilitate the compilation of PICTs position for relevant international processes and MEAs on whales and dolphin.	High SPREP/ Members/ Partners	SPREP	
	9.9: Assess members capacity to implement the WDAP, CMS Cetacean MOU, CITES and CBD where relevant, using, e.g. the NCSA process already in place in countries.	High Members/ SPREP/ Partners	immediate-term (2013-2016)	
	9.9B: Secure base funding to hold annual meetings, to develop documentation, to support PICT attendance and to coordinate the work of the MOU.		immediate-term (2013-2016)	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Key background documents

Pacific Cetaceans MOU Meeting 3 Report: http://www.cms.int/species/pacific_cet/3rd_mtg_noumea_2012/report.pdf

Whale and Dolphin Action Plan: http://www.sprep.org/attachments/Publications/Marine_Species_Programme_2013-2017.pdf

CMS Resolutions: http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop10/resolutions_adopted/resolutions.htm

Acronyms

AMWG	Aquatic Mammals Working Group (of the CMS Scientific Council)	MPAs	marine protected areas
ABS	access and benefit sharing	NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessments
CCSBT	Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna	NGO	non-governmental organisation
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species	PICTs	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
ScC	CMS Scientific Council	PIGWDW	Pacific Islands Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching
CMT	customary marine tenure	PIR	Pacific Islands Region
CROP	Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific	RFMOs	regional fishiness management organisations
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone	SORP	Southern Ocean Research Partnership
EIA	environmental impact assessment	SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
GEF	Global Environment Fund	SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
IATTC	Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission	SPWRC	South Pacific Whale Research Consortium
ID	identification	TAG	Technical Advisory Group (of the Pacific Cetaceans MOU)
IFAW	International Fund for Animal Welfare	TK	traditional knowledge
IPR	intellectual property rights	TRM	traditional resource management
MOU	memorandum of understanding	WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
MP	marine parks	WDAP	whale and dolphin action plan
		WDCS	Whale and Dolphin Conservation (Society)