



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

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Progress Report on Relevant Activities Undertaken within the Framework of CMS, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS

to the 64th Meeting of the International Whaling Commission

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Convention on Migratory Species is a Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA), signed over 30 years ago and in force since 1983. It currently has 117 Parties. This treaty under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) aims to facilitate close cooperation on the conservation of migratory species among the countries through which these animals travel on their annual journeys. CMS is not only actively engaged in many global and regional species-specific activities, but also a large range of broader environmental ocean matters such as unsustainable fishing, including bycatch, vessel collisions, ocean noise and marine debris.
2. As a global environmental treaty, CMS organizes transboundary cooperation for species such as cetaceans that migrate across or outside national boundaries. It provides the legal framework for conservation measures throughout the migratory range and strives to maintain or restore a favourable conservation status of the species and their habitats in order to facilitate, where applicable, sustainable use. The Convention provides a platform to develop and tailor measures according to particular conservation needs. This is achieved through a variety of instruments.
3. CMS Appendix I contains migratory species that are endangered throughout all or a significant portion of their range. Parties that are Range States for Appendix I species endeavour to conserve and restore habitats; to prevent, remove, compensate for or minimize, as appropriate, the adverse effects of activities or obstacles, that prevent or impede migration; and to prevent, reduce or control factors that endanger the species. Taking of specimens of Appendix I species is generally prohibited and Parties allowing exceptions must inform the Secretariat. Appendix I currently lists 15 cetacean species.
4. CMS Appendix II contains species with an unfavourable conservation status that would significantly benefit from the international co-operation that could be achieved through international agreements for their conservation and management. Appendix II currently lists 43 cetacean species.
5. The CMS Appendices as amended at the 10th Meeting of the Conference of Parties in November 2011 can be accessed at <http://www.cms.int/documents/index.htm>.
6. Parties that are Range States of Appendix II species are encouraged to conclude global or regional Agreements for the conservation and management of those species or geographically separate populations of those species. In this respect, CMS acts as a framework Convention. The development of models tailored according to the conservation needs throughout the migratory range is a characteristic unique to CMS. CMS agreements (including both legally binding Agreements and the more informal Memoranda of Understanding) facilitate deeper regional cooperation to address issues of shared responsibility including threat reduction, habitat protection and the establishment of migratory corridors, research and monitoring and regional capacity building. They also provide a

regional focal point for coordination and cooperation with other regional and global conservation related instruments. Thus, they constitute an important regional implementation mechanism for the conservation of cetaceans.

7. Such mechanisms include two legally-binding cetacean Agreements **ASCOBANS** (Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas) and **ACCOBAMS** (Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Areas). In addition, two non-binding regional agreements have been concluded, the **Pacific Cetaceans MOU** (Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region) and the latest addition, the **Western African Aquatic Mammal MOU** (Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Conservation of the Manatee and Small Cetaceans of Western Africa and Macaronesia).

8. To achieve its goals, CMS also strives to cooperate closely with other relevant bodies such as the IWC, with which a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2000 with the objective of promoting and strengthening cooperation and institutional linkages between the two organizations in their respective areas of competence.

9. Below is a report of activities on cetacean conservation, undertaken by the Convention on Migratory Species, and its two cetacean-related Agreements, namely ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS since the 62nd Meeting of the IWC.

10. Details on the species listed on the CMS Appendices and the conservation mechanisms under the Convention can be found online at the following web address http://www.cms.int/reports/small_cetaceans/cetacean_conservation.htm.

PROGRESS REPORT

A. Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (UNEP/CMS)

11. CMS continues to build up its coverage and activities on cetaceans and especially small cetaceans. Thirty-two cetacean-related resolutions have been passed by the Parties since the 1st CMS Conference of the Parties in October 1985, addressing issues such as species status and the urgency of conservation action on bycatch, climate change, chemical and noise pollution.



I. 17th Meeting of the Scientific Council

12. The Scientific Council held its 17th Meeting in November 2011 in Norway. The report of the Meeting can be accessed here: http://www.cms.int/bodies/ScC/17th_scientific_council/ScC17_Mtg_Report/Mtg_Report_&_annexes.htm. The Council has three thematic working groups concerned with Climate Change, Wildlife Diseases and Bycatch, as well as five taxonomic working groups focusing on Marine Turtles, Fish, Birds, Aquatic Mammals and Terrestrial Mammals. Reports of the working groups are annexed to the meeting report.

13. At the recommendation of the Council, a desk study on the impact of gillnet fisheries on migratory species was financed with the support of Australia and the United Kingdom. The project report can be accessed as a COP10 information document (http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop10/docs_and_inf_docs/inf_30_gillnet_bycatch_e.pdf).

14. The Aquatic Mammals Working Group also recommended that proposals for listing on CMS Appendix I be prepared for two species: the narwhal because of its vulnerability to the effects of reduced Arctic ice coverage caused by climate change on its physiology which was adapted specifically to classical ice coverage; and the North Pacific resident killer whale (un-named subspecies) because of its endangered status in a significant portion of its range (ScC17/Doc.9).

II. 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

15. The outcomes of the 10th Meeting of the Conference of Parties, which took place in November 2011 in Bergen, Norway, provide a good overview of the considerable contribution that this focussed treaty makes to the global protection of ocean biodiversity.

16. Besides decisions of an overarching nature on topics such as ecological networks (Resolution 10.3) or climate change (Resolution 10.19), four resolutions focus specifically on marine species. All COP10 Resolutions can be downloaded here: http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop10/resolutions_adopted/resolutions.htm.

17. Resolution 10.4, originally proposed by the Government of Australia, highlights the negative impacts of **marine debris** on migratory species, caused by ingestion, entanglement and habitat degradation. Besides a call for the identification of hotspots where marine debris accumulates and originates, Parties are encouraged to develop and implement their own national plans of action to address this problem, and to report available information on the amounts, impacts and sources of marine debris within their waters in their national reports.

18. Resolution 10.14 deals with **bycatch** of CMS-listed species in gillnet fisheries. This widely used fishing method has so far received relatively little international attention when it comes to its impacts on migratory species and the assessment of mitigation methods. Seeking to fill that gap, CMS Parties are calling for national assessments of the risk of bycatch arising from their gillnet fisheries, and urged the implementation of best practice mitigation measures tailored to each particular situation. Mitigation measures should be regularly reviewed in order to evaluate their effectiveness, also bearing in mind any effects on other taxa, and research to identify and improve them should be carried out.

19. Resolution 10.15 adopts a global **programme of work for cetaceans**. The mandate to develop this work programme had come from Res.8.22 on human-induced impacts on cetaceans, which had called for a review of the progress and intent of CMS and its agreements to date and how the CMS Family could be more effective through strong collaboration with other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). The resolution also required the review of specific threats, including entanglement and bycatch; climate change; ship strikes; pollution; habitat and feeding ground degradation and marine noise. These threats were broadly assessed at a regional level. From this a draft Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans had developed that appeared in *Inf.10.31- Towards a CMS Global Programme of Work for Cetaceans*, drawing upon CMS's own priorities followed by an assessment of what collaboration and synergies were possible with other MEAs. To support this programme of work, an expanded strategic role for the Scientific Council's Aquatic Mammals Working Group (AMWG) was proposed, to provide specific advice and reporting. It was noted that at present, the AMWG existed only during meetings of the Scientific Council; increased duties might require establishing it as a standing working group.

20. The resolution instructs the Aquatic Mammals Working Group (AMWG) of the CMS Scientific Council to work intersessionally on the actions requested in the work programme and to invite external experts to participate in these activities. The detailed work programme instructs the CMS Secretariat, the Scientific Council and in particular the AMWG to enhance collaboration with other relevant bodies to address jointly the threats identified for each region.

21. Resolution 10.24 on **underwater noise** pollution was submitted to the COP by the European Union following the initiative of the Government of Germany. Building on Res.9.19 on the same subject, Parties focused especially on the impact of new or increasing sources of underwater noise, such as those from offshore wind farms and associated shipping. Parties are strongly urged to keep the emission of underwater noise to the lowest necessary level in order to prevent adverse effects on cetaceans, and the application of Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) is recommended. The issue should also be integrated in the management plans of relevant marine protected areas.

22. Resolution 10.23 recommends that Parties take cooperative action for two additional

cetacean species, *Monodon monoceros* and *Orcinus orca*, encouraging Parties and other organizations to take steps to improve the conservation status of listed species and to provide the in-kind and financial means required to support targeted conservation measures. The Scientific Council is asked, by the end of its 18th meeting, to nominate for each species and/or taxonomic group listed for concerted or cooperative action, a member of the Council or a designated alternative expert to be responsible for providing a concise written report to each meeting of the Council on progress in the implementation of actions for the species or taxonomic group concerned.

III. **Regional Memoranda of Understanding for Cetacean Conservation**

23. In the period covered by this report, no meetings of the **Pacific Cetaceans MOU** took place. The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for the MOU, which operates under the leadership of the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, prepared an implementation report for the MOU Signatories for the CMS COP10 (http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop10/docs_and_inf_docs/inf_18_09_pic.pdf).

24. The MoU's regional website, www.pacificcetaceans.org, has been completed and the available sightings data for the region are now online in a fully searchable database appropriate for slow line speeds and intermittent internet connections characteristic of the region. Where sightings coordinates (latitude and longitude or GPS) are available, these data are now also connected to online API mapping. These tools have been developed to provide direct support to Government officials for the implementation of the MoU.

25. The position of CMS Pacific Officer was created for an initial one-year period to contribute to the implementation of CMS and relevant instruments in the region, including the MOUs for the conservation of Pacific Islands Cetaceans, Dugongs, Sharks and their related Action Plans. This Officer is based in the SPREP Office in Samoa and started work in early 2012. The CMS Secretariat continues to explore options for a continuation of this post.

26. In the period covered by this report, no meetings of the **Western African Aquatic Mammal MoU** took place. CMS has been able to support a project on small cetacean bycatch in Cameroon and the occurrence of the Atlantic humpback dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*) through the Convention's Small Grants Programme (http://www.cms.int/bodies/ScC/17th_scientific_council/Inf_10_Rpt_Cameroon_cetaceans_exploratory_survey_Eonly.pdf).

IV. **Publications**

27. A print version of *Odontocetes: the toothed whales: Distribution, Behaviour, Migration and Threats* (online at http://www.cms.int/reports/small_cetaceans/index.htm) has been published as CMS Technical Series No. 24 and can be purchased from Earthprint (<http://www.earthprint.com/productfocus.php?id=3957&q=odontocetes>). This hardcopy edition has been co-sponsored by CMS, ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS, Greenpeace, IFAW, Loro Parque Foundation and WWF. The publication includes recent scientific findings on the distribution, migration, behaviour and threats to this group of cetaceans, as well as recommendations which additional species or populations should be considered for listing on the CMS Appendices.

28. The Secretariat is also in the final stages of preparing proceedings of the Scientific Symposium of the Western African Talks on Cetaceans and Their Habitats, held in October 2007. The proceedings volume contains updated and peer-reviewed articles on the subjects covered during the meeting (further information is available on-line at the following website: http://www.cms.int/species/waam/watch1_docs/Programme_Open_Symposium_WATCH_E.pdf).

B. Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (UNEP/ASCOBANS)

29. The ASCOBANS Agreement is one of the regional instruments concluded under CMS. The UNEP/CMS Secretariat provides secretariat services for it.



I. Status of Ratifications / Agreement Area Extension

30. An extension of the ASCOBANS Agreement area south-westwards entered into force in 2008. The official title of the Agreement thereby, for those countries that accepted the amendment, changed from Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas to **Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas**. The acronym stays unchanged. Seven of the ten Parties to ASCOBANS have so far ratified the Amendment, and others are in advanced stages of the ratification process.

II. Advisory Committee and Working Groups

31. The 19th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (AC19) met from 20-22 March 2012 in Galway, Ireland. The report of the meeting as well as relevant documents can be accessed at <http://www.ascobans.org/ac19.html>. The meeting agreed the establishment or continuation of the following working groups:

- **Jastarnia Group**
This group was established in 2003 to carry forward the Agreement's Recovery Plan for Baltic Harbour Porpoises (Jastarnia Plan). Reports of the annual meetings, which contain recommendations to the Advisory Committee of the Agreement, can be accessed at http://www.ascobans.org/other_documents_publications.html. The most recent Meeting of the Jastarnia Group 8 was held on three days in January/February 2012.
- **North Sea Group**
This group was formed to facilitate the implementation of the ASCOBANS Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea and started operating in late 2010. It submitted progress reports to the Advisory Committee Meetings in 2011 and 2012 and met back-to-back with these meetings. Reports can be accessed at http://www.ascobans.org/other_documents_publications.html. Since July 2011, the Group has been supported through a part-time consultant employed to promote the Conservation Plan with stakeholders and support Parties in its implementation (Report contained in AC19/Doc.4-05).
- **Bycatch Working Group**
Created in 2010, this group has been set specific tasks by each AC meeting and reported back to the following one. The most recent progress report can be accessed as AC19/Doc.4-06. Tasks agreed for the current intersessional period are outlined in Annex 6 of the AC19 Report and include further exploring management procedures relating to bycatch, including those proposed under the SCANS II and CODA projects; reporting on, and assisting in, projects related to bycatch in which fishermen, gear technologists and cetacean scientists cooperate; assessing the best approaches to address the bycatch problem within fisheries fora; reporting on national initiatives concerning bycatch mitigation, alternative gear experiments, improvement of bycatch monitoring, etc., as well as on results of scientific studies on bycatch; summarizing the results of initiatives at, or meetings of other fora such as OSPAR, EC, ICES and HELCOM; and preparing an overview of problem areas (geographical and fishery type) and the status of knowledge of the problem, monitoring and mitigation in place to identify gaps.
- **Noise Working Group**
The Terms of Reference for this group remained unchanged (Annex 8 of AC18 Report).

Besides an informative role, reporting on relevant activities and developments to the AC, the Group will also draft summaries of the ASCOBANS/ACCOBAMS noise guidelines for specific stakeholders in consultation with these stakeholders to ensure practical measures can be identified and implemented. The most recent progress report delivered to the AC can be accessed as AC19/Doc.4-08. In addition, AC19 endorsed a proposal to join the noise working groups of ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS into one.

- **Marine Debris Working Group**

This correspondence group was established at AC19 in 2012 (Annex 8 of AC19 Report) and was asked to report back to AC20 on recommendations for standardization of data collection and collation, initiatives of other bodies, including of the IWC SC, as well as relevant literature, and to provide advice for a standardized necropsy protocol.

- **Extension Area Working Group**

First established in 2011, this group reported to AC19 in Doc.5-09. Following further consultations during the meeting, the group highlighted the importance of collaboration between ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS, and recommended that priority be given to the following joint actions: planning for a third SCANS survey; particular attention to *Tursiops* and *Delphinus* populations in the Extension Area, including obtaining a better understanding of stock structure; focus upon ship strikes and the need for the introduction of mitigation measures; and the development of risk profiles – identifying indicators that would contribute to the EU's Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

- **Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans**

This group reported in conjunction with the Extension Area Working Group mentioned above. It is mandated to summarize information on abundance, distribution and status of large cetacean species occurring within the ASCOBANS Agreement Area and to make informal recommendations of appropriate mitigation measures. It identified as the main concerns bycatch of minke and humpback whales and ship strikes.

- **Joint ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Working Group on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)**

Terms of Reference for the group, whose establishment was decided in 2011, were agreed by AC19 (Annex 9 of AC19 Report).

III. Meeting of the Parties

32. The 7th Meeting of the Parties will be held in Brighton, United Kingdom, from 22-24 October 2012. Among other things, it will consider the adoption of a new Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the Western Baltic, Belt Seas and Kattegat, an area so far not covered by the other ASCOBANS action plans for the species. There are strong indications that the population in this area is under pressure and a more focused conservation approach is seen as necessary. All documents relevant for this meeting will be uploaded on <http://www.ascobans.org/mop7.html>.

IV. Implementation of the Secretariat Work Programme 2011-12

33. ASCOBANS celebrates the **20th Anniversary of the Signing of the Agreement** in 2012. The Secretary General acts as Depositary for the Agreement. This occasion is being commemorated by a series of outreach events featuring life-sized cetacean models in various locations of the Agreement Area. In addition, a special publication is under preparation, which will include the most comprehensive information to date on small cetacean species, their status, threats and conservation challenges in the region, as well as providing a unique insight into the work and functioning of an international Conservation Agreement during the past 20 years. It is aimed at a wide public, written in language easily understandable to the general reader but without losing its scientific rigor, and will contain many pictures.

34. As in previous years, savings made on the ASCOBANS Trust Fund were redirected to the support of **research and conservation projects**. Four projects were finalized in the reporting period:

- Inventories of harbour porpoise *Phocaena phocaena phocaena* presence in Russian territorial waters of the Baltic Sea (http://www.ascobans.org/pdf/ac19/AC19_6-03_ProjectReport_RussianPorpoises.pdf)
- Effects of contaminants on reproduction, Phase II (http://www.ascobans.org/pdf/ac19/AC19_6-04_EffectsContaminantsReproduction.pdf)
- Feasibility study on the creation of a web-accessed strandings database covering Agreement Party and Range States within the ASCOBANS region (http://www.ascobans.org/pdf/ac19/AC19_6-05_ProjectReport_DatabaseZSL.pdf)
- Preparation of a Draft Paper containing background information and proposed objectives and measures for the porpoise population residing in the “gap area” currently not covered by the Jastarnia Plan (currently under further development by a working group)

Four other projects are ongoing. Details can be accessed in http://www.ascobans.org/pdf/ac19/AC19_6-01_rev1_ProgressProjects.pdf. Two additional projects were recommended for funding during 2012.

35. ASCOBANS has also co-sponsored the print version of *Odontocetes: the toothed whales: Distribution, Behaviour, Migration and Threats* (online at http://www.cms.int/reports/small_cetaceans/index.htm), which is under preparation and will become available shortly. For details please refer to paragraph 27 above.

C. Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS)

I. Status of Ratifications / Agreement Area Extension



36. As of June 2012, there are **23 State Parties** to the Agreement.

37. A **proposal for the extension of the ACCOBAMS** to cover the Atlantic EEZ of Spain and Portugal was adopted by the MOP4. By May 2012 Monaco and Bulgaria deposited their instrument of acceptance to the Depository. Spain informed the Secretariat that the ratification process was ongoing.

II. Institutional Issues

38. The 7th Meeting of the **ACCOBAMS Bureau** was held in Monaco from 13th to 14th December 2011.

39. Five **Regional workshops** are planned for June 2012 in order to assess the implementation of the Agreement and define priorities for the next triennium.

40. **ACCOBAMS Partnerships**: at present 35 organizations are ACCOBAMS Partners.

III. Main Activities on Research and Conservation

41. **ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative** : An agreement was signed with ACCOBAMS, IUCN, the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas and RAC/SPA to appoint a project manager to help in developing the survey project and fund raising. The process is underway.

42. **Collisions issue**: In the framework of the support of the REPCET programme, the Secretariat undertook the translation of a study on “the evaluation of technical alternatives and management measures internationally implemented to reduce the impact of shipping on cetaceans”

that will be distributed to the scientific community and made available on the web site. The extension of REPCET in the ACCOBAMS area is pending to the awareness of the maritime companies. Funds should be raised to approach such company and present the programme.

43. **Cetacean Population Structure:** A joint workshop ECS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS, whose objective is to provide an overview of the existing studies and gap analysis concerning population structure in the ACCOBAMS area, is planned to be held during the 2013 Meeting of the ECS.

44. **Underwater noise issue:** A joint WG was created on the occasion of the 19th ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (19-23 March 2012). A questionnaire for industries is in preparation. It aims to collect information on possible ways to mitigate the impact of noise.

The ACCOBAMS Secretariat attended the 16th Meeting of CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical And Technological Advice (30 April – 5 May 2012, Montreal, Canada) and participated in the Side Event on the impacts of underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity.

45. **Interactions with Fisheries:** An international workshop on by-catch was organized, (7-9 December 2011, Antalya, Turkey) in collaboration with the GFCM. A project proposal, developed jointly by ACCOBAMS and GFCM, on cetacean bycatch and depredation reduction in the Agreement's area, was prepared by an expert (Jacques Sacchi). On the occasion of the 36th GFCM Commission an MoU was signed between the GFCM and ACCOBAMS Secretariats.

46. **Commercial whale watching activities** in the Agreement area: A feasibility study for developing pilot projects of whale watching in Morocco and Tunisia was carried out. A training on the Label for French and Monegasque operators was organized by Pelagos France during spring 2012 (2-6 April 2012) in collaboration with ACCOBAMS.

47. **Climate Change:** A workshop to address the climate change issues and their impacts on the marine biodiversity, in particular on the cetaceans, in the Black and the Mediterranean Seas will be organized in collaboration with other regional instruments.

48. **National Action Plans:** National Action Plans for cetacean conservation for Algeria and Morocco are in preparation.

IV. Communication, Awareness and Capacity Building

49. **Cetacean sighting database:** An expert (Tilen Genov) continues his work on the ACCOBAMS initiative to contribute representative cetacean datasets from the Mediterranean and Black Seas region to OBIS-SEAMAP.

The ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat is implementing an interactive database. The aim of the project is to collect the main and most important information of the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat and transpose them to multiple GIS layers.

50. **“Train the Trainers” Programme:** In April 2011, the “Train the Trainers” programme was extended to Montenegro and Albania and was organized by the Blue World Institute of Marine Research and Conservation with the aim of providing knowledge on cetacean research through training on data collection and analysis, including practical fieldwork.

51. **Second Biennial Conference on Cetacean Conservation in South Mediterranean Countries** (CSMC 2, 12-14 October 2011, El Jadida, Morocco): The Second Conference was organized in collaboration with the Department of Maritime Fisheries of Morocco, the University Chouaib Doukkali (UCD) and the "Réseau National des Sciences et Techniques de la Mer" (REMER). This Conference benefited from the financial support of the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (UNEP/MAP/RAC/SPA) and the Principality of Monaco.

52. **Public awareness and communication material:**

- The ACCOBAMS leaflet (in French and in English) was updated and His Serene Highness, Prince Albert II of Monaco has agreed to provide a new statement.
- CDs, posters, roll-up panels presenting the Agreement and its activities on the occasion of various international meetings have also been produced.

- The Permanent Secretariat was contacted by the Principality of Monaco regarding the “2012 Yeosu Expo” which takes place from 12th May until 12th August 2012 in Yeosu, South Korea, under the theme “*The Living Ocean and Coast :diversity of resources and sustainable activities*”.

V. **Projects**

53. Call for project proposals under the **Supplementary Conservation Grants Fund**: two projects on photo identification in Black Sea are ongoing.

54. **Module on cetacean conservation**: The education of future decision makers and professionals to issues related to the marine environment is the primary objective of the project, organized with the support of the Italian Ministry of Environment. Scientific Masters pertinent for this project have been identified in French-speaking countries of the Agreement (Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia) and nine Universities have been approached. Most of them agree to incorporate the ACCOBAMS cetology module in their Environmental Master Programme in their 2012/2013 curriculum.

55. Projects submitted by the ACCOBAMS Secretariat in response to the calls of proposals under the **European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument**: the Secretariat applied to two different calls for proposals under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI - financing instrument of the European Neighbourhood Policy). The first project proposal was prepared in partnership with the Lebanese National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), the Tunisian National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies (INSTM) and the French NGOs MedPAN and Corsica Mare Osservazione. It aims to build capacity for monitoring the main threats to cetaceans and their impacts (by-catch, ship strikes, noise) and to promote the development of human activities with reduced negative interactions with cetaceans. The second project proposal was prepared in partnership with the MAP-RAC/SPA, the National Institute of Agronomy of Tunisia (INAT), the Italian MPA “Isola Pelagie” and the Tunisian NGO ANDCCVS (Association nationale du Développement durable et de la Conservation de la Vie sauvage). Its aims to promote the conservation of the cetacean populations found in the Sicilian-Tunisian Channel through data collection and awareness raising activities.