



# Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme



## Statement of CMS, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS to the 65<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the International Whaling Commission Portoroz, Slovenia, 15-18 September 2014

### CMS STATEMENT ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTION ON “HIGHLY MIGRATORY CETACEANS” SUBMITTED BY MONACO (IWC/65/11)

The UNEP/CMS Secretariat congratulates the Principality of Monaco on the submission of the draft resolution “Highly Migratory Cetaceans”, which addresses important aspects relating to the conservation of cetaceans both within and beyond areas of national jurisdiction. The Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) fully concurs with the sentiments that additional, concerted efforts are needed to protect migratory species such as cetaceans, and welcomes the call for enhanced collaboration.

This draft resolution directly relates to the work of CMS, which covers 49 cetacean species on its Appendices, with one more proposed for listing at the upcoming COP11. As outlined below, CMS and its specialized regional Agreements, ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS, work on a variety of factors with negative impacts on cetacean populations. In order to reflect the direct relevance of the core work of the CMS Family to the draft resolution, the UNEP/CMS Secretariat proposes the following additions to the text (new text underlined):

1. Add an additional preambular paragraph 6:

Recognizing the key role of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals in the international efforts to conserve highly migratory cetacean species;

2. Add to the first operational paragraph:

**Decides** to seek enhanced collaboration in the conservation of migratory cetaceans with other intergovernmental organizations, especially with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, whose co-operation is essential to secure the lasting protection of these species in the world ocean;

### BACKGROUND ON CMS AND ITS FAMILY OF AGREEMENTS

1. As an environmental treaty under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the **Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)** provides a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats. CMS brings together the States through which migratory animals pass, the Range States, and lays the legal foundation for internationally coordinated

conservation measures throughout a migratory range. It currently has 120 Parties.

2. As the only global convention specializing in the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and migration routes, CMS complements and co-operates with a number of other international organizations, NGOs and partners in the media as well as in the corporate sector. CMS 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. The Convention provides a platform to develop and tailor measures according to particular conservation needs, and is actively engaged in a large range of broader environmental oceanic matters such as unsustainable fishing, including bycatch, ship strikes, ocean noise and marine debris.

3. Migratory species threatened with extinction are listed on Appendix I of the Convention. CMS Parties strive towards strictly protecting these animals, conserving or restoring the places where they live, mitigating obstacles to migration and controlling other factors that might endanger them. Appendix I currently lists 15 cetacean species. Besides establishing obligations for each State joining the Convention, CMS promotes concerted action among the Range States of many of these species. Taking of specimens of Appendix I species is generally prohibited and Parties allowing exceptions must inform the Secretariat.

4. Appendix II, which currently lists 43 cetacean species, includes migratory species that need or would significantly benefit from international co-operation. For this reason, the Convention encourages the Range States to conclude global or regional agreements. In this respect, CMS acts as a framework Convention. The agreements may range from legally binding treaties (called Agreements) to less formal instruments, such as Memoranda of Understanding, and can be adapted to the requirements of particular regions. The development of models tailored according to the conservation needs throughout the migratory range is a unique capacity to CMS.

5. 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).

6. Below is a joint 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 64<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IWC.

## PROGRESS REPORT

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

7. 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 1<sup>st</sup> CMS Conference of the Parties in October 1985, addressing issues such as species status and the urgency of conservation action on bycatch, climate change and chemical and noise pollution.



## ***I. 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Scientific Council & 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties***

8. The Scientific Council held its 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting in July 2014 in Germany. The report of the Meeting will shortly be published here: <http://www.cms.int/en/document/report-18th-meeting-scientific-council-bonn-1-3-july-2014>. It contains as annexes also the reports of the Council's working groups, which include one on Aquatic Mammals and one on Bycatch.

9. Specific topics of interest to the IWC discussed at the 18<sup>th</sup> Scientific Council Meeting and going forward to the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Quito, Ecuador, 4-9 November 2014) include:

- a. **Live Captures of Cetaceans from the Wild for Commercial Purposes** (background document and draft resolution available as [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.2.3](#), related to this subject is also [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.36](#) and [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.37](#))
- b. **Conservation Implications of Cetacean Culture** (draft resolution available as [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.2.4](#), supporting workshop report as [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.18](#))
- c. **Programme of Work on Climate Change and Migratory Species** (draft resolution available as [UNEP/CMS/COP11/23.4.2](#))
- d. **Renewable Energy and Migratory Species** (draft resolution available as [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.4.3.1](#))
- e. **Sustainable Boat-based Wildlife Watching Tourism** (draft resolution available as [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.4.5](#))
- f. **Management of Marine Debris** (draft resolution and executive summaries of underlying reviews available as [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.23.4.6](#), three full reviews available as [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.27](#) "Migratory Species, Marine Debris and its Management", [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.28](#) "Marine Debris and Commercial Marine Vessel Best Practice" and [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.29](#) "Marine Debris Public Awareness and Education Campaigns")

10. A total of 19 proposals for addition of species to the Appendices of the Convention were received from Parties by the deadline of 150 days before the COP (see [UNEP/CMS/COP11Doc.24.1](#) for the complete list). Among these are many marine species, especially sharks and rays, and a proposal to list the **Mediterranean population of Cuvier's beaked whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*)** on Appendix I of CMS (full proposal available as [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.24.1.1](#)). This proposal was supported by the Scientific Council following its review, which also proposed to have the population included in the list of Concerted Action Species, requiring urgent attention for their protection.

## ***II. Regional Memoranda of Understanding for Cetacean Conservation***

11. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Signatories to the **Pacific Cetaceans MOU** took place in September 2012 in New Caledonia. The report of the meeting as well as documents prepared for its consideration are available at <http://www.cms.int/en/meeting/third-meeting-signatories-mos3>.

12. In the period covered by this report, no meetings of the **Western African Aquatic Mammal MoU** took place.

13. A progress report of these and all other MOUs concluded under CMS is included in [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.22.1](#).

## ***III. Small Grants Programme***

14. The CMS Small Grants Programme (SGP) was established in 1994 as a grassroots tool and has served as a catalyst for further action to conserve migratory species and their habitats, funding projects in more than 30 countries since its inception. The SGP has played an important role in strengthening the implementation of the Convention through supporting conservation

initiatives for a number of migratory taxa, with a strong focus on implementation in developing countries.

15. In the 2012-13 funding round, a total of 11 projects were supported, two of which focused on cetaceans:

- a. **Empowering local fishing communities to conserve coastal dolphins in Congo.** Some activities initiated include the establishment of inshore fisheries exclusion zones, developing a compensation scheme for fishermen that release dolphins alive and establishing a fisher-led reporting and 'reaction network' which will also ensure the fishermen's safety during rescue attempts. More information is available here: <http://www.cms.int/en/news/project-month-empowering-local-fishing-communities-conserve-coastal-dolphins-congo>.
- b. **Community-based monitoring of the Humpback Whale in Costa Rica.** Local communities are being engaged in activities such as identification of critical areas, behaviour, distribution, photo-identification and interactions with whale watching boats. More information is available here: <http://www.cms.int/en/news/project-month-participatory-community-monitoring-humpback-whales-costa-rica>.

16. The successful applicants of the 2013-14 funding round will be notified shortly and information be made available at <http://www.cms.int/en/page/cms-small-grants-programme-2013-2014>.

#### **IV. Publications**

17. A new leaflet entitled "Oceans Full of Plastic: Marine Debris – A global problem" was produced jointly with ASCOBANS. The leaflet is aimed at the general public, including children, and contains helpful tips on how everyone can be part of the solution. The leaflet is also available as PDF for download: <http://www.cms.int/en/publication/oceans-full-plastic>.

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



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

#### **I. Advisory Committee and Working Groups**

19. The 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (AC20) met from 27-29 August 2013 in Warsaw, Poland. The report of the meeting as well as relevant documents can be accessed at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/meeting/AC20>. 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/en/workinggroup/jastarnia-group>. The most recent Meeting of the Jastarnia Group (JG10) was held in April 2014.
- **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. Reports

of the annual meetings can be accessed at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/north-sea-group>. 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. Its progress reports are all accessible through <http://www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/bycatch-working-group>.

- **Noise Working Group**

This working group jointly serves the needs of the two cetacean Agreements ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS. The CMS Scientific Council also recently endorsed the proposal to join forces with the Agreements in addressing this threat. Established in 2009, the annual progress reports of the group can be accessed at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/underwater-noise-working-group>.

- **Marine Debris Working Group**

This correspondence group was established in 2012. It was asked to develop recommendations for standardizing 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. More information is available at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/marine-debris-working-group>.

- **Extension Area Working Group**

First established in 2011, this correspondence group is now producing joint reports with the Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans (see below). Its reports and information on its tasks related to the western extension of the Agreement Area, which came into force in 2008 can be accessed at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/extension-area-working-group>. This working group also considers the issue of ship strikes.

- **Informal Working Group on Large Cetaceans**

This group reports in conjunction with the Extension Area Working Group mentioned above. Since ASCOBANS only covers small cetaceans, the group aims to identify major issues likely to be having a negative effect upon large cetacean populations in the Agreement Area, assesses the extent to which they can be addressed alongside small cetaceans, and makes informal recommendations of appropriate mitigation measures. Related information can be accessed at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/informal-working-group-large-cetaceans>.

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

This group was established in 2011 and is being co-chaired to cover the unique situation in the ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS Areas while allowing for synergies. Its first report and more information on its terms of reference are available at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/marine-strategy-framework-directive-working-group>.

- **Pollution Working Group**

This working group is formed ad-hoc at each Advisory Committee Meeting, producing a compilation of recently published articles related to chemical pollution to be annexed to the meeting report as a resource for the Parties. More information can be accessed at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/workinggroup/pollution-working-group>.

- **Working Group for the Further Development of Management Procedures for Defining the Threshold of 'Unacceptable Interactions'**

This short-term correspondence group was established to seek to develop interim advice to assist in the further development of thresholds for 'unacceptable interactions',

prepare an input from ASCOBANS to the work on indicators undertaken by OSPAR COBAM and facilitate further discussion and interpretation of ASCOBANS conservation objectives (see for example [AC20/Doc.3.1.2](#)). More information can be accessed at [http://www.ascobans.org/en/working\\_group/unacceptable\\_interactions](http://www.ascobans.org/en/working_group/unacceptable_interactions).

20. The **21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee** (AC21) will meet from 29 September to 1 October 2014 in Gothenburg, Sweden. All relevant information and meeting and information documents can be accessed at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/meeting/AC21>.

## **II. Meeting of the Parties**

21. The 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties was held in Brighton, United Kingdom, from 22-24 October 2012. Among other things, a new Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the Western Baltic, Belt Seas and Kattegat was adopted. The report of the meeting and all related documents are available at <http://www.ascobans.org/en/meeting/MOP7>. The following conservation-related resolutions were passed:

- a. UNEP/ASCOBANS/Resolution 7.1 [Conservation of Harbour Porpoises and Adoption of a Conservation Plan for the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and Kattegat](#)
- b. UNEP/ASCOBANS/Resolution 7.2 [Activities of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee and Work Plan](#)
- c. UNEP/ASCOBANS/Resolution 7.3 [Research and Conservation Actions in the Extension of the Agreement Area](#)
- d. UNEP/ASCOBANS/Resolution 7.4 [Impacts of Chemical Pollution on Small Cetaceans](#)

## **III. Implementation of the ASCOBANS Work Programme**

22. At each meeting of the Advisory Committee, the Secretariat produces an overview of progress made in the implementation of the **Work Plan** adopted by the MOP, which focuses on tasks for the Advisory Committee, its Working Groups and the Secretariat. The AC Meetings also make recommendations on actions to be taken by Parties. The most recent progress report is available as [AC21/Doc.1.3](#).

23. ASCOBANS continues to place great emphasis on **outreach- and education-**related activities. Recent achievements include the launch of a new website, developed in conjunction with other members of the CMS Family (CMS, AEWa and EUROBATs), as well as an additional website specifically aimed at children, [www.kids.ascobans.org](http://www.kids.ascobans.org). More details can be found in the most recent report of the Secretariat on outreach and education activities, published as [AC21/Doc.5.2](#).

24. ASCOBANS continues to run a regular small-scale funding scheme for **research and conservation projects**. Four projects have been finalized since 2012 and their final reports published at AC20 and AC21:

- Understanding harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) and fisheries interactions in the north-west Iberian Peninsula ([AC20/Doc.6.1.b](#))
- 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 (basis for [Resolution 7.1](#), adopted in 2012)
- Distribution and relative abundance of harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) over Dogger Bank and surrounding waters, Southern North Sea ([AC20/Doc.6.1.c](#))
- Enhanced detection of harbour porpoises prior to ramming, seismic blast and ammunition clearance: design and construction of a PAL-porpoise detector (PPD) ([AC21/Inf.6.1.a](#))

Four other projects are ongoing, two of which have submitted an interim report to AC21. Further details can be accessed in [AC21/Doc.6.1](#).

- Examine habitat exclusion and long-term effect of pingers ([AC21/Inf.6.1.b](#))
- Preparations for SCANS-III ([AC21/Inf.6.1.c](#))
- Pollutant exposure in coastal top predators: assessing current levels of exposure and toxic effects
- Approaches to an Impact Indicator in the Light of Descriptor 11 (MSFD)

25. For the 2014 funding round, ten proposals were received (see [AC21/Doc.6.2.a](#)), which have received priority rating in an intersessional process in advance of the 21<sup>st</sup> Advisory Committee Meeting, where a decision on the number of projects to be funded will be made.

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



### I. Management of the Agreement

#### a. Administrative matters

26. As of August 2014, there are **23 State Parties** to the Agreement.

27. A **proposal for the extension of the ACCOBAMS** to cover the Atlantic EEZ of Spain and Portugal was adopted by the MOP4. On July 2014, Bulgaria, Monaco, Spain and Ukraine deposited their instrument of acceptance with the Depositary.

28. **The 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS** was held in Tangier (Morocco) from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The Meeting appointed Morocco (Chair), Croatia, France, Georgia and Monaco as Bureau Members for the triennium 2014-2016.

29. **The 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee** was held from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> April 2014, in Monaco. Simone Panigada was nominated as the Chair of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee for the period 2014-2016 and Renaud de Stephanis as the Vice Chair.

#### b. Regular communication

30. An **ACCOBAMS Interactive platform** was created in 2013. 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.

31. **The 1<sup>st</sup> workshop for ACCOBAMS Partners** was organized on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2014. To date 32 organizations are ACCOBAMS Partners.

32. **The 3<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Conference on Cetacean Conservation in South Mediterranean Countries** will be held in Jounieh (Lebanon) from 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2014. The objective is to assess the knowledge gained on cetaceans, to identify potential gaps and to stimulate the development of conservation actions in order to promote the implementation of the ACCOBAMS Agreement.

### II. Conservation Actions

#### a. Improve knowledge about the state of cetaceans

33. **Cetacean population estimates and distribution:** In the framework of an agreement signed with ACCOBAMS, IUCN, the French Agency for MPA and RAC/SPA, an expert in project development and fundraising was hired by the ACCOBAMS Secretariat for finalizing the project document and mobilizing necessary funds to carry out the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative.

34. **Cetacean Population Structure:** A relevant study of Professor Scovazzi was presented during the last ACCOBAMS MOP in November 2013 "[Taking of cetaceans and dolphinaria: a legal analysis within the framework of ACCOBAMS](#)". A [draft Recommendation](#) has been prepared by the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee on the establishment of individual identification system(s) of cetaceans kept in captivity that should be presented by one (or more) ACCOBAMS Party to the next CITES COP in 2015.

**b. Reduce human pressures on cetaceans**

35. **Interaction with fisheries:** A project coordinated by the ACCOBAMS Secretariat and the GFCM Secretariat on cetacean bycatch and depredation reduction in the Agreement's area is under review by the MAVA Foundation. It intends to mitigate negative interactions between threatened species and fishery activities and also to decrease the pressure on species through the diversification of small-scale fishermen activities by promoting ecotourism.

36. **Anthropogenic noise:** [Three relevant documents](#) were taken into consideration during the Fifth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Parties through the [Resolution 5.15](#) (Addressing the impact of anthropogenic noise).

37. Collaboration with **CBD** was established, especially through the participation to the *CBD Expert Workshop on Underwater Noise and its Impacts on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity* (February 2014) and to CBD-SBSTTA 18 (June 2014) where a side event on noise was organized.

38. The joint ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Noise Working Group (JNWG) is currently considering the input of ACCOBAMS in the **ECAP process of the Barcelona Convention**, relating to the Ecological Objective (EO) 11 on Energy including underwater noise. The Integrated Correspondence Groups of GES and Targets Meeting (COR GEST) have requested that ACCOBAMS, through the JNWG, provide specific recommendations for the discussions of the CORMON groups and specifically draft 'monitoring guidance on marine noise'.

39. A project of mapping anthropogenic noise hot spots in the ACCOBAMS area is currently circulating through the JNWG for comments. Once these are received, the ACCOBAMS Secretariat will finalize the approach to the potential contributors.

40. **Ship strikes:** ACCOBAMS participated to the annual training course for professional and student ship crews at the French National Superior School of Shipping of Marseille (March 2014). In the frame of the support of the REPCET programme, the Secretariat co-organized with Pelagos Secretariat, a conference on "ship strikes and presentation of REPCET system" in the framework of the 2013 Monaco Yacht Show (September 2013).

41. **Cetacean watching:** Pursuant to the [Resolution 5.10](#) encouraging Parties to adopt national rules in order to implement at national level the "High quality whale watching" certificate in relevant bodies, the ACCOBAMS Bureau was in favour of the implementation of a private certificate as an alternative process to a public label, thus giving the choice to the Parties facing juridical difficulties. The first framework Convention "Partner Whale Watching High Quality" with a private organization was signed in July 2014. Thus, the NGO "souffleurs d'Ecume" is now authorized to use the certificate in the French Mediterranean, upon conditions of compliance with the terms contained in a Convention. The ACCOBAMS Secretariat, owner of the logo "High Quality Whale Watching", registered it at the WOPI and will manage its use through the regulations governing the use of the collective certification mark.

42. **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 was organized in Monaco on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The workshop recognized climate change as a profound threat to the cetaceans of the region and made recommendations. Conclusions of the workshop were considered in the draft Resolution of the UNEP/CMS/ScC18/Doc.10.1 "Programme of Work on Climate Change and Migratory Species" to be presented to the CMS COP11 in 2014. ACCOBAMS is also a member of the CMS working group on climate change since July 2014.

43.



44. **Species conservation plans:**

- At the request of the last CMS Conference of Parties (Bergen, Norway 2011), the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee prepared [a proposal to include the Mediterranean Cuvier's beaked whale \(\*Ziphius cavirostris\*\)](#) in Appendix 1 of CMS (granting to this species the endangered status) to be presented to the CMS COP 11 in 2014. The Aquatic Mammal Working Group approved the proposal and suggested considering concerted actions for this species in the Mediterranean region. ACCOBAMS offered to lead the concerted actions.
- The coordinator of the **Mediterranean Bottlenose Dolphin** Conservation Plan, together with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat and ACCOBAMS experts, will process and propose a boat-based, shelf-limited data collection protocol by the end of the year.
- ACCOBAMS, in collaboration with the Black Sea Commission Permanent Secretariat, undertook the revision of the existing Conservation Plan for **Black Sea Cetaceans**. The updated version will be considered and possibly adopted by the Black Sea Commission during its 30<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting (19-20 November 2014).

**c. Improve Communication, Awareness and Capacity Building**

45. **Functional stranding networks and responses to emergencies:** The ACCOBAMS Secretariat will organize on 29-30 October 2014, in collaboration with the Pelagos Secretariat, a workshop on cetacean live stranding. Its objective is to define an administrative transboundary procedure in order to facilitate responses to emergencies where a transboundary incident occurs in the Pelagos Sanctuary (pilot area of ACCOBAMS). The administrative transboundary procedure agreed during the workshop will be presented to all ACCOBAMS Parties as a framework document for other areas where a transboundary emergency arises.

46. **Capacity to use cetaceans photo ID and undertake aerial surveys:** A training on photo-identification techniques for cetaceans will be held during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Conference on Cetacean Conservation in South Mediterranean Countries organized by ACCOBAMS on 21-23 October 2014 (Lebanon).

47. **Cetacean conservation and postgraduate programmes:** The ACCOBAMS teaching module is designed to enrich students' knowledge of cetacean conservation through a multidisciplinary approach. In 2012/2013, more than 200 students from French-speaking countries of the Agreement received teaching from the ACCOBAMS module. Courses contents are now translated in [English](#) in order to allow the implementation in English speaking Universities by early 2015.

**d. Enhance effective conservation of cetaceans critical habitats**

48. **Protected areas for cetaceans:** Despite the identification of **22 areas of special interest for cetaceans** in the ACCOBAMS area, in some areas of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, there are no data available at all. This issue will be addressed during the **workshop on “the effectiveness of protected areas containing critical habitats for cetaceans”** to be held in June 2015, in collaboration with MedPAN, RAC/SPA and other relevant organizations.

49. The ACCOBAMS Secretariat actively contributed to drawing up proposals for Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (**EBSAs**), especially by participating in the Mediterranean Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of EBSAs, which was held in Malaga from 7-10 April. During the 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, the ACCOBAMS Secretariat co-organized with MedPAN and the RAC/SPA, a **side event regarding the “Roadmap to achieve an effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected system of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean by 2020”**.