



Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area, concluded under the auspices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Accord sur la Conservation des Cétacés de la Mer Noire, de la Méditerranée et de la zone Atlantique adjacente, conclu sous l'égide de la Convention sur la Conservation des Espèces Migratrices appartenant à la Faune Sauvage (CMS)



Seventh Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS

Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, 5 - 8 November 2019

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REPORT OF THE BUREAU

*Delegates are kindly invited to bring their own documents to the Meeting.
This document will be available only in electronic format during the Meeting.*

REPORT OF THE BUREAU

Three Meetings of the Bureau were held during the 2017-2019 triennium:

- The Eleventh Bureau Meeting (Monaco, 14-15 December 2017),
- The Twelfth Bureau Meeting (Monaco, 3-4 December 2018),
- The Fourth Meeting of the Extended Bureau (Monaco, 18-19 April 2019).

The composition of the Bureau was as follows:

- Chairperson: Mr. Xavier STICKER, replaced in March 2019 by Mr. Yann WEHRLING (France);
- Vice-Chairperson: Mrs. Rahima BERKAT (Algeria);
- Vice-Chairperson: Mrs. Klodiana MARIKA (Albania);
- Vice-Chairperson: Mr. Savvas MICHAELIDES (Cyprus);
- Vice-Chairperson: Mr. Volodymyr DOMASHLINETS (Ukraine).

All the Meetings of the Bureau were also attended by the Chair of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee (Mr. Simone PANIGADA) and by the members of ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat.

The Fourth Meeting of the Extended Bureau was also attended by:

- a representative of the State holding the next Meeting of the Parties: Mr. Irfan UYSAL (Turkey);
- a representative of the Host Country: Mrs. Isabelle ROSABRUNETTO;
- Two National representatives: Mrs. Céline IMPAGLIAZZO (Monaco) and Mrs. Nela MIAUTA (Romania);
- The three following experts nominated by the Bureau Members: Mr. Ali Cemal GÜCÜ, Mrs. Carmen MIFSUD and Mr. Patrick VAN KLAVEREN.

A report was prepared after each Meeting (ACCOBAMS-BU11/2017/Doc 15, ACCOBAMS-BU12/2018/Doc 15 and ACCOBAMS-BUEXT4/2019/Doc 11). These three reports are presented to the Seventh Meeting of the Parties as reference documents.

The purpose of this report is to present an overview of the main issues discussed during those three Bureau Meetings.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

1) Status of ratification of the Agreement and of the amendment on extension of the ACCOBAMS geographical scope

The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau about the status of ratification of the Agreement and of the amendment on the extension of the Agreement area.

During this triennium, the Republic of Turkey acceded to ACCOBAMS (on 1st February 2018).

2) Structure and Staff of the Permanent Secretariat

In accordance with Resolution 6.3, the Permanent Secretariat recruited in 2017 a specialized consultant to carry out a functional assessment of the personnel needs of the Secretariat and associated costs. The main findings and recommendations of the consultant's report were presented at BU11 Meeting.

BU11 Conclusion:

The Bureau members took note of the conclusions of the report and invited the Secretariat to develop, on the basis of these conclusions, and in consultation with the Host Country and the Bureau, a proposal on the structure of the Permanent Secretariat of ACCOBAMS (including different options, where possible) and a mechanism to implement the proposal to be submitted to the Seventh Meeting of the Parties, as requested by Resolution 6.3. The budgetary implications of each proposed option should be considered.

Resolution 6.3 also entrusted the Bureau to address the question of the recruitment procedures for the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Host Country. A draft procedure for the recruitment of the Executive Secretary, prepared by the Government of the Principality of Monaco and the Permanent Secretariat, was presented at BU 11 Meeting.

BU11 Conclusion:

Following the debate on this Agenda item, the Bureau asked that the proposed procedure be further elaborated taking into account in particular the views expressed during the meeting. A new version of the procedure document shall be proposed by the Principality of Monaco.

The draft structure and personnel of the Permanent Secretariat, as well as the revised draft procedure for the recruitment of the Executive Secretary were then presented at BU12 Meeting.

BU12 Conclusion:

The Bureau members invited the Secretariat to:

- Amend the draft procedure for the recruitment of the Executive Secretary proposed in Document ACCOBAMS-BU12/Inf04 by indicating that the appointment process shall be conducted by the Bureau with the assistance of the Secretariat and that the Bureau and a representative of the host country shall act as the recruitment committee and shall use for its deliberations its Rules of Procedure as set in Resolution 5.7 and amended by Resolution 6.4.
- Compile the views and opinions received from the National Focal Point (NFPs) to elaborate a new version of the structure of the Secretariat and the related budget implications and submit it to the NFPs for a second round of consultation. The results of the consultation shall be used by the Secretariat to elaborate the draft Resolution on the Structure and Personnel of the Permanent Secretariat and the draft Resolution on Programme and Budget to be submitted to the next Meeting of the Extended Bureau.

3) Format of National Reports

In accordance with Resolution 6.9, the Permanent Secretariat prepared, in collaboration with the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee, an amended format for the National reports and a proposed template for the ACCOBAMS regional representatives' report that were both presented during BU11 Meeting.

BU11 Conclusion:

The Bureau members welcomed the two amended formats and requested the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat to go ahead with their implementation in the NETCCOBAMS website.

4) Mid-term evaluation of the ACCOBAMS Strategy

In accordance with Resolution 5.1 and as provided by the 2017-2019 Programme of Work, a Mid-term evaluation of the effectiveness of the ACCOBAMS Strategy was carried out in 2018/2019. The Terms of Reference of the mission were presented during BU11 Meeting.

BU 11 Conclusion:

The Bureau members approved the proposed ToRs and invited the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat to launch the call for expertise early 2018. Conclusions and outcomes of the evaluation should be taken into consideration in order to propose amendments to the Strategy, when appropriate.

A summary of the consultant's work was then presented during BU12 Meeting.

BU12 Conclusion:

The Bureau members congratulated the consultant for his work. They requested the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat to provide all Focal Points with a document on the mid-term evaluation of the effectiveness of the ACCOBAMS Strategy in January 2019.

5) Funding Strategy

In accordance with Resolution 5.1 and as provided by the 2017-2019 Programme of Work, the Permanent Secretariat elaborated a funding strategy. A preliminary draft was presented during BU11 Meeting.

BU11 Conclusion:

After discussion, the Bureau thanked the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat, welcomed this preliminary draft and invited the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat to continue the development of the funding strategy, and initiate a process of a wide consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

6) Budgetary matters

The Permanent Secretariat regularly informed the Bureau about the Trust Fund and the Supplementary Conservation Grant Fund. In accordance with Resolution 6.6, reports on incomes and expenditures were presented for 2016, 2017 and 2018.

BU11, BU12 and BUEXT4 Conclusions:

The Bureau Members congratulated the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat for the presentation and the management of the Contributions.

The Bureau members highlighted and commended the important support of the Principality of Monaco, through its significant voluntary contribution for the organization of MOP6 in 2016, its voluntary contributions and the contribution through the Headquarters Agreement.

The Bureau noted with satisfaction the importance of the voluntary contributions received, especially from Italy, to support the implementation of the activities of the 2017-2019 Programme of Work, in particular for the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative. They also highlighted the importance of co-funding especially through joint projects.

The Bureau requested the Permanent Secretariat to invite Parties with unpaid pledges to settle their balance as soon as possible, in order to allow the implementation, by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat, of activities relevant to the Agreement before the MOP7.

In accordance with the Bureau's decision, a new call for proposals for projects to be funded under the Supplementary Conservation Grants Fund was launched in 2018 by the Permanent Secretariat.

BU12 and BUEXT4 Conclusions:

The Bureau agreed to support, through the Supplementary Conservation Fund, which was replenished thanks to the voluntary contributions from Italy and Monaco, the following projects:

- 1/ "Establishing the bank of cetacean tissue samples in Ukraine" coordinated by the I.I. Schmalhausen Institute of Zoology (IZ) of National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
- 2/ "Monitoring and mitigation of cetacean bycatch in Bulgarian waters" coordinated by Green Balkans NGO (Bulgaria)
- 3/ "Mise en place d'un nouveau réseau opérationnel pour le suivi des échouages de cétacés sur le littoral algérien" coordinated by the Centre National de Recherche et de Développement de la Pêche et de l'Aquaculture (CNRDPA).

The Bureau also mandated the Permanent Secretariat to review the procedure of the ACCOBAMS Call for proposals to cover some gaps and weaknesses in the procedure that appeared after this round of the call for proposals.

7) Preparation of the MOP7

The Secretariat regularly informed the Bureau Members on the progress made in the preparation of the Seventh Meeting of the Parties (MOP7).

BU12 and BUEXT4 Conclusions:

The Bureau welcomed the invitation of Turkey to host MOP7 from 5th to 8th November 2019, in Istanbul. A special event to present the ASI will be held in the morning of the 4th of November 2019

The ACCOBAMS Secretariat was requested to specify in the MOP7 letter of invitation, the mandatory presence of national representatives during the meeting of the Head of delegation.

The Bureau asked the Permanent Secretariat to contact the Focal Points from Libya and Syria requesting them to provide the Secretariat with a formal letter explaining the "exceptional circumstances" that led to the delay in the payment of their contributions. This document will be then examined at the opening of MOP7 in order to decide if these Parties will be exceptionally granted the right to vote during MOP7.

8) ACCOBAMS Partners

At each Meeting of the Bureau, the Permanent Secretariat presented the requests for ACCOBAMS partnership received.

BU11, BU12 and BUEXT4 Conclusions:

During the triennium 2017-2019, the Bureau granted the status of ACCOBAMS Partners to 8 organizations:

- Marine Mammals Research Institute (Turkey);
- Centre National de Recherche et de Développement de la Pêche et de l'Aquaculture (Algeria);
- Association Ecologique Marine BARBAROUS (Algeria);
- Association Protection des Cétacés et de l'Environnement Marin (Algeria) ;
- Cybelle Planète (France);
- Menkab, il respiro del mare (Italy);
- Marecamp Onlus (Italy);
- Capo Carbonara MPA (Italy).

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT: TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ISSUES

At each Meeting of the Bureau, the Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee provided the Bureau with an overview of the recent developments and activities of the 2017-2019 Programme of Work. In particular, progresses were made on the following topics:

- Improve capacities of national organisations and experts
- Improve knowledge about state of cetaceans
- Species conservation plans
- Interactions with fisheries
- Underwater noise
- Ship strikes
- Cetaceans stranding
- Cetacean watching
- Interactions with marine litter
- Protected areas for cetaceans.

BU11, BU12 and BUEXT4 Conclusions:

The Bureau commended all the activities implemented and congratulated the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee for their work.

The Bureau commended the progresses of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative and congratulated the ACCOBAMS Secretariat and all ASI stakeholders for the impressive work achieved leading to a successful implementation of the survey in the Mediterranean Sea. The Bureau stressed the importance of conducting a similar survey in the Black Sea.

The Bureau encouraged the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to continue and strengthen cooperation with all relevant Organizations in order to capitalize on ongoing efforts undertaken for the conservation of cetacean, especially in the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

At the 11th and 12th Meetings of the Bureau, the Permanent Secretariat presented a list of proposed activities (respectively for 2018 and 2019), in accordance with the Work Programme adopted by Parties and taking into consideration priority implementation levels and relevant budgetary implications.

BU11 and BU12 Conclusions:

The Bureau Members approved the provisional list of activities for 2018 and 2019 and the related budget allocations noting that some of them are pending budget availability.

In this context, they highlighted and commended the important support of voluntary contributions, especially from Italy.