



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)



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IDENTIFICATION OF ENTITIES INVOLVED IN CETACEAN STRANDINGS NETWORKS AND BUILDING A SEARCHABLE METADATA BASE ON CETACEANS STRANDINGS

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

**IDENTIFICATION OF ENTITIES INVOLVED IN CETACEAN STRANDINGS NETWORKS
AND
BUILDING A SEARCHABLE METADATA BASE ON CETACEANS STRANDINGS**

INTRODUCTION

During the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS (Monaco, 22-25 November 2016), Parties requested the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee to approach the ECS, IWC and ASCOBANS in order to develop a **common operational stranding¹ protocol** considering the proposed common definitions, the common data collection and the common necropsy protocol annexed to the Resolution 6.22. In addition, cetaceans are known to be affected by marine litter through ingestion and entanglement in fishing nets.²

Therefore, in line with action CA.4a of the 2017/2019 program of Work³, in order to have a clear view of the situation of the stranding networks, the ACCOBAMS Secretariat launched through the National Focal Points a questionnaire and a template “Stranding Network Organisation”.

The aim of this initiative, as a first step in the efficient use of stranding data, was to update relevant information already collected from some Countries in 2014 (but which was focused on life strandings) including:

- Description of national stranding networks in the ACCOBAMS Area
- Evaluation of the regional coverage and the obstacles to the creating of new networks;
- Analysis of data contained in each datasheet used in the field, to determine if they contain information regarding any evident sign of human interaction including regarding marine litters;

The analysis of the results, was brought to a scientific exchange on cetaceans stranding issues, covering also marine litters, organised, as a dedicated workshop, in the European Cetaceans Society Conference held on 6th April 2018 in La Spezia (Italy).

The recommendation of this workshop was considered by the 12th ACCOBAMS’ Scientific Committee.

¹ The term “stranded cetacean” is expanded to include animals, dead or alive found floating or swimming, respectively, in shallow waters, in the latter case, showing clear signs of physiological dysfunction.

² References

- ACCOBAMS Resolution 1.10 on cooperation between national networks of cetacean strandings and the creation of a database;
- ACCOBAMS Resolution 4.18 Guidelines on the granting of exceptions to Article II, paragraph 1, for the purpose of non-lethal in situ research in the Agreement area;
- ACCOBAMS Resolution 6.22 on Cetacean Live strandings (in particular annex 2 appendix III)

³ ACCOBAMS Resolution 6.5 program of work 2017-2019,

FIRST STEP: identification of actors of the national stranding networks by the National Focal Points

18 Countries (and 13 regional entities) answered to the questionnaire listing a total of 102 entities involved in the national stranding networks (tab1).

Unfortunately, none of the countries answered to the question “if you don’t have a stranding network, why? “ Some of the information were collected from previous reports as some National Focal Points didn’t answered or were in a process of restructuring their network.

The description of the involvement of each entity shows 25 which have a role in national coordination and give some precise information on the main others topics they are tackling, like biological analysis, reporting, necropsies, ... (Fig 1).

Most of the Countries have a well-documented “on the field” data collecting tool or a simple list of items to be observed.

Some other information could be collected on specific topics like necropsies, tissues banks, release and rehabilitation centre and the attention on marine debris during necropsies.

In some countries, the national coordinators implement a lot of missions but, in others, functions were dispatches in several specialised entities in a more “mature” networking system.

In the description of the “strong and weak topics” (tab. 2), as quoted by the countries, it is clear that several countries are willing to go further in the analyse of data collected in particular related to the cause of the death and better use of the sampling for further studies. This was also reflected in the assistance or support expected from the ACCOBAMS permanent Secretariat.

The uploading of data in MEDACES was quite the less documented point from the answers. No one comments with the use of MEDACES data.

Figures and tables

Table 1: some networks descriptors

	Total entities involved	Field datasheet	Debris o-bservation in necropsies	Number on entities involved in			Data transmission to Medaces
				Necropsies	Tissues Bank	Release and rehabilitation	
Albania							
Algeria	8	Y	N			1	Y
Bulgaria	6	N	N			2	Y
Croatia	11	Y	Y	1	1		N
Cyprus	3	N	N	2		2	
Egypt		Y					
France	2	Y	Y	1	1		Y
Georgia							
Greece							
Italy	5						
Lebanon	3	Y	N	2	2		N
Libya	3	Y	N	3			N
Malta							
Morocco	1	Y	Y		1	1	N
Monaco	3						
Montenegro							
Portugal	4				1	1	N
Romania	9	Y	Y	3		2	Y
Slovenia	4			1			Y
Spain	17	Y	Y	8	5	4	Y
Syria							
Tunisia	4	N	Y		3	1	N
Turkey	3	Y	Y	3	1	1	N
Ukraine	16	Y	Y	1	2	3	N

Entities involved in Cetaceans Stranding networks (April 2018)

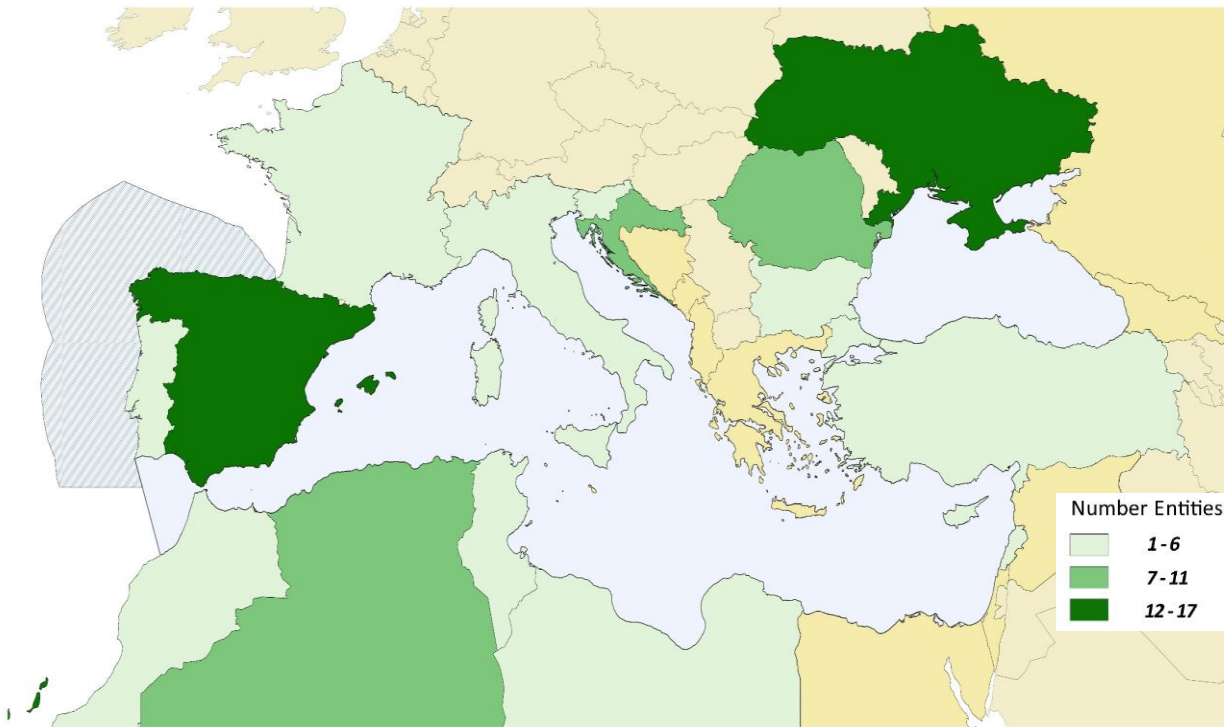
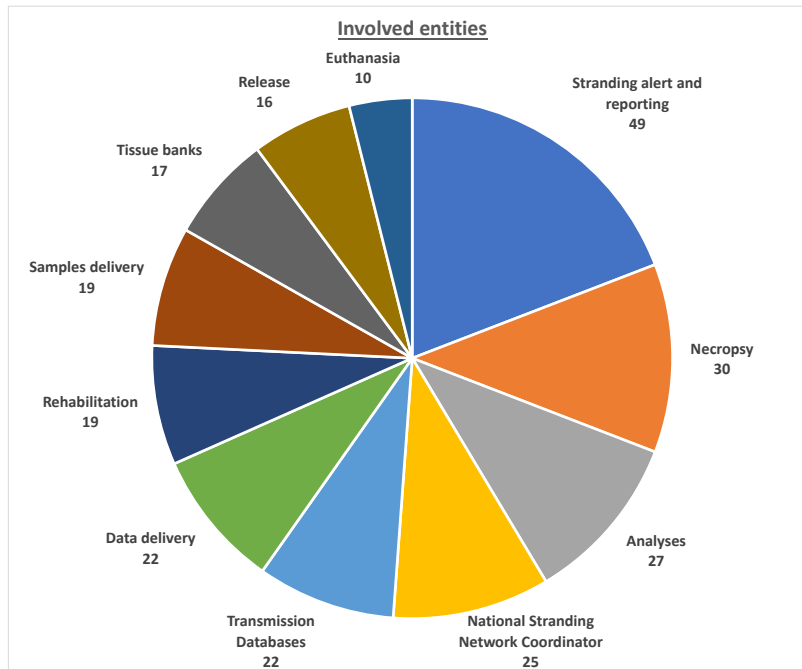


Fig. 1: Typology of the 102 involved entities**Table 2:** Weak points of the national networks' organisations

(nb : some of these topics are interrelated)

Logistic on the spot	75%
Tissues samples and tissues bank	62%
National organization / operative protocol	58%
Establishment of roles and duties for each person in the network	53%
Data transmission to MEDACES	50%
Post-mortem examination	40%
Public awareness / information	50%
Alert system	45%
Data collection / sampling	21%
Data transmission to National Databank	28%

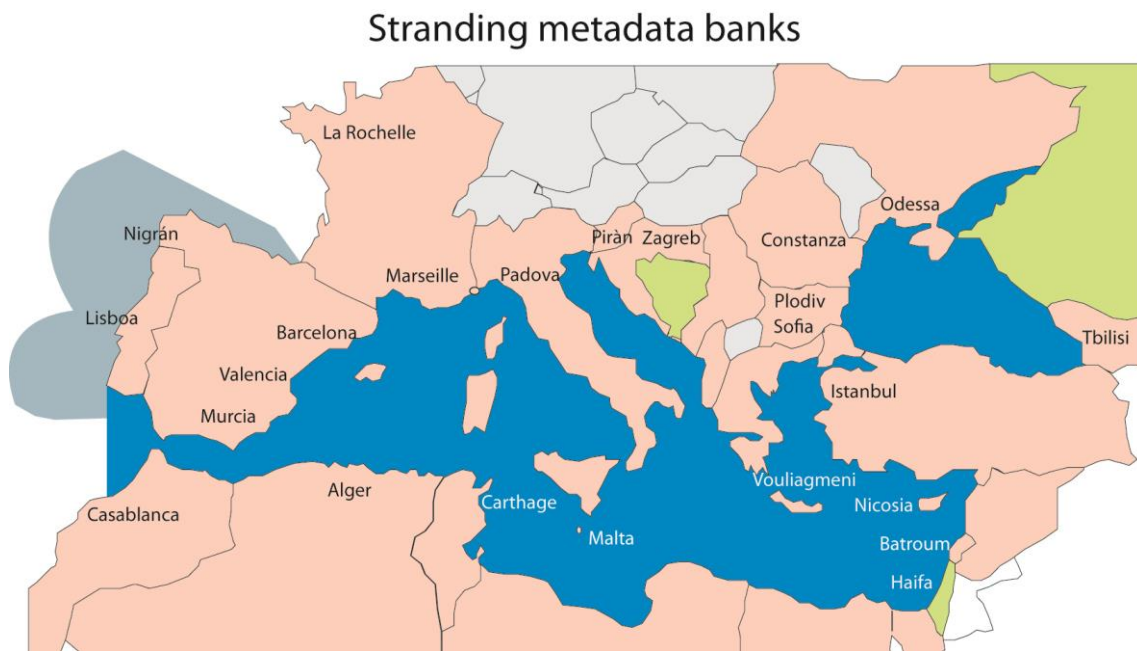
SECOND STEP: databanks inventory on the NETCCOBAMS website in line with the ACCOBAMS' program of work⁴ and the recommendation of the Scientific Committee.

Following the recommendations of the ACCOBAMS' 12th Scientific Committee (Oct 2018)⁵, the ACCOBAMS' Permanent Secretariat invited the identified managers⁶ of the stranding databanks to participate to a collective effort, by filling questionnaires (in [Annex](#)) sent on 6th August 2018⁷. To facilitate their task, the ACCOBAMS Permanent open a prefilled questionnaire on the NETCCOBAMS website:

http://www.netccobams.com/Stranding/Default.aspx?Clef_PAGES3=1455

In September 2019, the Permanent Secretariat contact some the owners by phone to further assist them in finalizing the online questionnaires.

With this new step, the Secretariat was able to refresh the information previously collected and build a searchable cetaceans' stranding metadata bank currently covering 22 entities in 19 riparian countries.



The data cover the administration of each databank, the species, the geographical coverage, the management system and presentation (GIS, ...), the potential and the conditions for exchanging data. Each of these topics open to research in the bank.

⁵ The Scientific Committee ... (5) Recognizes the benefits of a well-documented, searchable database on entities involved in stranding networks, databanks and tissues banks (NETCCOBAMS) and calls upon the Scientific Committee and other scientists involved in stranding networks to provide the ACCOBAMS secretariat with relevant information using the templates available on NETCCOBAMS.

⁶ As this databank was devoted for scientific uses, the Permanent Secretariat went further than the managers identified by the National Focal Points by cross crossing several scientific sources of information.

⁷ In the same time, a second questionnaire related to the tissues banks was sent (see MOP7 inf 44)

NETCCOBAMS searchable Stranding metadata banks information

Home > **Stranding**

Stranding

Search Data bank Search Tissue Bank

Organization name :

Select a country

- Select a country
- ALGERIA
- BULGARIA
- CROATIA
- CYPRUS
- FRANCE
- GREECE
- ISRAEL
- MOROCCO
- ROMANIA

Select a species

- Select a species
- Balaenoptera acutorostrata
- Balaenoptera physalus
- Delphinus delphis
- Globicephala melas
- Grampus griseus
- Kogia simus
- Marine turtles
- Megaptera novaeangliae
- Mesoplodon densirostris

Select a area

- Select a area
- Adjacent Atlantic Area
- Adriatic Sea
- Aegean Sea
- Alboran Sea
- Balearic Sea
- Ionian Sea
- North East of the Basin
- North of the Black Sea
- North West of the Basin

ANNEX

Questionnaire to the Cetaceans' Stranding data banks managers

Dear data bank manager,

Your data were provided to the ACCOBAMS⁸ Permanent Secretariat through a survey on the national cetaceans stranding networks⁹.

We are now working towards building a more efficient networking by a better understanding of the potential offers by the various entities identified.

Should you wish to participate to this collective effort, could you please complete the following questionnaire¹⁰ before **Monday 24th September 2018**.

1/ At first, could you confirm that **you are managing a marine mammal stranding data bank?**

2/ Your organization / Institution

- a) Complete name of the organization / institution:
- b) Full address:
- c) Name of the manager:
- d) Name of the contact person:
- e) Phone of the contact person (00 [country code] Tel number):
- f) Email of the contact person:
- g) Website
 - General:
 - Specific pages regarding stranding data bank:

3/ Your data bank

⁸ The Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS) is a **legal conservation tool** based on cooperation. Its purpose is to **reduce threats to cetaceans** notably by **improving current knowledge** on these animals.

The ACCOBAMS Agreement text and, more precisely, in the Conservation Plan which ask to:

- develop "systematic research programs on dead, stranded, wounded or sick animals, to determine the main interactions with human activities and to identify present and potential threats";
- "develop the systems for collecting data on observations, by-catches, strandings, epizootics and other phenomena related to cetaceans";
- "establish, as appropriate, a sub-regional or regional data bank for the storage of information collected".

⁹ <http://www.accobams.org/conservations-action/strandings/>

¹⁰ Although covering as much as possible all the national structures of stranding networks, this scientifically based directory is intended to be more exhaustive and the presence of any entity (members of informal networks, NGOs, etc.) within it cannot be considered as political recognition by ACCOBAMS.

a. What is the content of your data bank

SPECIES		Please quote (X)
PHOCOENIDAE		
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	Harbour porpoise	
DELPHINIDAE		
<i>Steno bredanensis</i>	Rough-toothed dolphin	
<i>Grampus griseus</i>	Risso's dophin	
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	Bottlenose dolphin	
<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	Striped dolphin	
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	Short-beaked common dolphin	
<i>Pseudorca crassidens</i>	False killer whale	
<i>Orcinus orca</i>	Killer whale	
<i>Globicephala melas</i>	Long-finned pilot whale	
ZIPHIIDAE		
<i>Mesoplodon densirostris</i>	Blainville's beaked whale	
<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>	Cuvier's beaked whale	
PHYSETERIDAE		
<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>	Sperm whale	
KOGIIDAE		
<i>Kogia simus</i>	Dwarf sperm whale	
BALAENIDAE		
<i>Eubalaena glacialis</i>	Northern right whale	
BALAENOPTERIDAE		
<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	Minke whale	
<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>	Sei whale	

<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	Fin whale	
<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Humpback whale	
<i>Others marine vertebrates</i>		
<i>Marine turtles</i>		
<i>Sea birds</i>		
<i>Others</i>		

b. Period covered

From:

Until:

c. Are the data available in line?

Please provide the link:

d. What is the geographical coverage of your data?

Please refer to the layer "Study areas" in Netccobams:

http://www.netccobams.com/PortailCartographique/Default.aspx?Clef_PAGES3=1182

Please quote (X)	
Adjacent Atlantic Area	
<u><i>Med - Western Basin</i></u>	
Alboran Sea	
Balearic Sea	
North West of the Basin	
Strait of Gibraltar	
Thyrrhenian Sea	
<u><i>Med - Eastern Basin</i></u>	
Adriatic Sea	
Aegean Sea	
Ionian Sea	

North East of the Basin	
South East of the Basin	
South West of the Basin	
<i>Black Sea</i>	
North of the Black Sea	
South of the Black Sea	
Sea of Azov	
Sea of Marmara	

e. Are you willing to, and at what conditions (deontological code, free/costs, ...)?

i. Receive data?

	(Y/N)
Deontological code	
Free of charge	
Other conditions	

ii. Provide data to a general data bank covering the ACCOBAMS' (or wider) area?

	(Y/N)
Deontological code	
Free of charge	
Other conditions	

4/ Data management, what kind?

Please quote (X)	
Dynamic mapping	
Necropsies	
Death origin	
Just spotted specimens	
Marine debris in necropsies	
Others (please specify below)	

5/ Are you publishing reports?

If Yes, could you provide us with the link?

6/ Do you participate in active networks link with marine vertebrates?

If Yes, could you provide us with the link?

7/ Do you know others data bankscontaining stranding Cetaceans information?

If Yes, could you provide us with the link?

8/ Are you lined with some tissues bank?

If Yes, could you provide us with related information?

9/ Could you provide us with others specificities of your bank or suggestions for an efficient building of the ACCOBAMS cetaceans stranding network?

This questionnaire could be filed in line at: <http://www.netccobams.com/>

or sent to the ACCOBAMS permanent Secretariat To Maylis Salivas: msalivas@accobams.net

References

- [ACCOBAMS Resolution 1.10 on cooperation between national networks of cetacean strandings and the creation of a database;](#)
- [ACCOBAMS Resolution 4.18 Guidelines on the granting of exceptions to Article II, paragraph 1, for the purpose of non-lethal in situ research in the Agreement area;](#)
- [ACCOBAMS Resolution 2.10 on the facilitation of exchanges of tissue samples;](#)
- [ACCOBAMS Resolution 6.22 on Cetacean Live strandings \(in particular annex 2 appendix III, V\)](#)