



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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JOINT COOPERATION STRATEGY ON SPATIAL-BASED PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR MARINE BIODIVERSITY AMONG THE SECRETARIATS OF ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-MED AND UNEP/MAP

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

**JOINT COOPERATION STRATEGY ON
SPATIAL-BASED PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR MARINE BIODIVERSITY AMONG THE
SECRETARIATS OF ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-MED AND UNEP/MAP
(THE DRAFT JOINT STRATEGY)**

Note of the Secretariat

At MOP6, ACCOBAMS Parties adopted Resolution 6.11 **“Strategical Alliance concerning management and conservation measures for the Mediterranean environment between the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, UNEP/MAP through RAC/SPA and IUCN-Med in collaboration with MedPAN”** welcoming the Joint Cooperation Strategy on the basis of document ACCOBAMS-MOP6/2016/Inf17.

During the MAP Focal Points Meeting (Athens, Greece, 10-13 September 2019), the Coordinator introduced this strategical Alliance, as an annex VII to the Draft Decision 2 on Governance, with a revised title : “draft joint cooperation strategy on spatial-based protection and management measures for marine biodiversity among the secretariats of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, IUCN-Med and UNEP/MAP”.

Amendments to the text were proposed, and elements of it on which there was not yet consensus, such as the fourth preambular paragraph making reference to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, were left in square brackets for consideration by the Contracting Parties at their 21st Meeting early December.

Generally, the amended text remains fully in line with the original Joint Strategy.

More specifically:

- Reference to “in collaboration with MedPAN” in the title of the Strategy has been deleted but section 6 opens the door to cooperation with other International or Regional Organizations;
- Under section 3, the participation of Observers from Parties is a new approach and since this Strategy is intended to be an efficient cooperation among Secretariats of partner Organizations who were given the mandate to implement the Programme of Work, then working meetings with the participation of partner Organizations only, should be kept as a possibility.

Comments by partner Organizations mentioned in the draft strategy will be submitted for consideration by the 21st Meeting of the UNEP/MAP Contracting Parties.

Joint Cooperation Strategy
on
Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity Among the
Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med and UNEP/MAP
(the draft Joint Strategy)

Considering the need of facilitating effective conservation and sustainable use of the Mediterranean marine biodiversity, as required by their respective mandates and with special emphasis on areas beyond national jurisdiction;

Recognising that the challenges facing marine ecosystems in the Mediterranean including its areas beyond national jurisdiction, require effective monitoring and development of spatial-based protection and management measures;

Recalling the common vision, the Mediterranean Ecological Objectives and the Good Environmental Status descriptions and targets, as defined in the Decisions of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention on the Ecosystems Approach (Decisions IG.17/6, IG.20/4, IG.21/3 and IG.22/7);

Reaffirming that the [general principles of the Law of the Sea and the] UNCLOS [where applicable] set[s] out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out;

Considering the on-going negotiations in the Intergovernmental Conference on an International Legally Binding Instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction, following United Nations General Assembly resolution 72/249;

Considering the importance of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which is being prepared pursuant to CBD Decision CBD/COP/DEC/14/34, and its subsequent implementation;

Building on, where available, the bilateral Memoranda of Understanding signed by the Partners, and in particular their topics addressing spatial-based management and conservation measures;¹

The Secretariats of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the International Union for Conservation of Nature Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med), and the United Nations Environment Programme Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), herein after referred to as “the Partners”, agree on the following Joint Cooperation Strategy:

¹ 1 MOU between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) acting as Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), acting on behalf of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) (14th May 2012); MOU between the Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement on Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the contiguous Atlantic area and the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas of the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan concerning the Sub-regional Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Sea (1st January 2017, renewed every 3 years since 2005); MOU between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) acting as Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) (3rd December 2013); Mémorandum Cadre de Collaboration entre Le Centre d'Activités Régionales pour les Aires Spécialement Protégées et Le Réseau des Gestionnaires d'Aires Marines Protégées en Méditerranée (10th September 2014).

1. Objectives

The overall aim of the Joint Cooperation Strategy is to contribute to the achievement in the Mediterranean of SDG 14, in particular Targets 14.2, 14.5, 14.7 and the CBD Aichi Target 11; and that the application of the precautionary principle and of the Ecosystem Approach is strengthened in a coordinated manner and a coordinated application of spatial-based protection.

In particular, the objectives of the Joint Cooperation Strategy are that:

- (1) The conservation and the sustainable use of the marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean including its areas beyond national jurisdiction are ensured through the application of the Ecosystem Approach, the use of the best available knowledge and technologies and the application of the precautionary principle;
- (2) The activities undertaken by the concerned Partners, following the respective mandates by their Parties, in relation to the spatial-based management and conservation in the Mediterranean, including its areas beyond national jurisdiction, are harmonised and complement each other, while respecting the role and jurisdiction of [relevant coastal States] and allowing for consultation of other States concerned in line with UNCLOS.

2. Areas of Cooperation

The Partners, in line with the individual mandates, strategies and Programmes of Work of their respective Organizations will cooperate to:

- (1) Collect and exchange information and identify and fulfil existing gaps in information, to identify potential priority areas that could be protected or managed, in close collaboration with the [relevant coastal States];
- (2) Initiate the process of consultation of the [relevant coastal States] on the identified potential priority areas;
- (3) Assist interested countries in a coordinated manner in declaring intent/interest of protecting a specific area and on the process to do so, in consultation with relevant coastal States;
- (4) Assist interested countries, to:
 - (i) elaborate the designation files;
 - (ii) undertake national consultation processes in case need be;
 - (iii) finalize the designation files including the agreed area-based conservation and management measures;
 - (iv) undertake the official designation of SPAMI and/or FRA or other area-based conservation and/or management measures;
- (5) Address follow up actions, in consultation with [relevant coastal States], in a coordinated manner.

3. Modalities of Cooperation

Regular meetings will be convened for the implementation of this Joint Cooperation Strategy, with the cost shared between all Partners, and with the participation of a representative of each Partner, and observers from the [interested coastal States]. These meetings will:

- (i) Steer the process and identify options for the Areas of Cooperation, as described in point 2 above;
- (ii) Propose to the Contracting Parties of the relevant Conventions a roadmap for implementing actions described under point 2 above, and propose role-sharing among the Partners, in line with their mandates and comparative advantages;

- (iii) Foster and promote coordinated outreach, public awareness and scientific research and observation, and liaise with other appropriate organisations (such as IMO);
- (iv) Facilitate the information among Partners on new areas registered, as well as on any change regarding the [limits border] or status of an area previously registered;
- (v) Advise the established regular evaluation processes of the status of the areas;
- (vi) Undertake, upon consultation with Contracting Parties, other tasks as may be deemed appropriate in line with the individual mandates, strategies and Programmes of Work of their respective Organizations;
- (vii) Publish the outcomes of the meetings and the information on the activities in the respective web sites of the Partners.

4. Implementation Aspects

The practical arrangements for the implementation of this Cooperation Strategy and the related activities, including defining financing of the modalities of the cooperation and the Areas of Cooperation will be identified and discussed in the first meeting, in line with the Partners' mandates and financial rules and Programmes of Work. If necessary, upon the request of the respective governing bodies of the respective organizations, joint efforts will be undertaken to mobilize resources for activities foreseen under point 2 in a transparent manner, without additional financial burden to the respective Organizations of the Partners, nor to the Contracting Parties.

5. Reporting

Each Partner will inform its respective governing body on the implementation of this Joint Cooperation Strategy.

6. Participation

This Joint Cooperation Strategy is open for the participation of any other relevant and interested International or Regional Organization, provided its participation is approved by all the Partners and their Contracting Parties, in line with the rules of their respective governing bodies.