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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ACCOBAMS CERTIFICATION FOR HIGHLY QUALIFIED MMOs/PAM

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By Léa DAVID, chair of the MMO Working Group

The main objective is that the ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified Marine Mammals Observers/PAM (HQMMO/PAM) certification will be implemented. This happens in 2018 and is ongoing.

Background:

The Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS has recommended to the Parties the creation of an ACCOBAMS HQMMO/PAM certification.

The Resolution 6.18 “Implementation of an ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified Marine Mammals Observers” was adopted by Parties in November 2016. It will guarantee throughout the Agreement area a high-quality standardized training of MMOs/PAM by:

- ensuring the recognition of the ACCOBAMS Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators at the international level,
- Improving the effectiveness of conservation measures to limit the impact of noise on cetaceans.

Process and Objective of the ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified MMO/PAM:

The Resolution 6.18 explains the process, actors and their role. The idea was to propose a certification for the whole ACCOBAMS area (Mediterranean and Black Sea), and a standard training.

During the Eleventh Meeting of the Scientific Committee (Monaco, 7-9 February 2017):

- A new name of entity called “ACCOBAMS School” in the ACCOBAMS Resolution 6.18 was proposed and approved: the **ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM Courses Committee (ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM CC)**;
- Terms of reference for the designation of the experts of the “ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM Courses Committee” were approved.

The ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM CC composed by relevant experts identified by the ACCOBAMS MMO WG, will provide with standard supports. Relevant trainer organizations are accredited by the Permanent Secretariat based on requirements set up by the ACCOBAMS MMO WG. The accredited trainer organizations will then train and certificate relevant candidates to become “Highly Qualified MMO/PAM operators”.

The objective is to encourage ACCOBAMS Parties to give, in priority, permits for activities in their national area, to industrial companies employing Highly Qualified MMOs/PAM operators or at least other internationally agreed certifications.

Ongoing work since adoption of the Resolution 6.18:

ACCOBAMS Working Group updated

The role of the MMO Working group is to ensure that the whole process is implemented smoothly, within a clear framework and in a transparent and fair manner for everyone and every organization.

The composition of the MMOWG has been updated through proposition of new names and a vote.

The final list includes:

Name	Institution	Email address
Léa DAVID (Leader)	EcoOcéan Institut	lea.david2@wanadoo.fr
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Nicolas ENTRUP	Ocean Care/JN WG*	n.entrup@shiftingvalues.com
Claudio FOSSATI	CIBRA	claudio.fossati@unipv.it
Patrick Lyne	DMAD	patricklyne1@gmail.com
Caterina LANFREDI	Tethys Research Institute	caterina.lanfredi@polimi.it
Alessio MAGLIO	SINAY/JN WG	alessio.maglio@sinay.fr
Barbara MUSSI	Oceanomare Delphis Onlus	barbara@oceanomaredelphis.org
Gianni PAVAN	CIBRA / JN WG*	gianni.pavan@unipv.it
Yanis SOUAMI	SINAY / JN WG*	contact@sinay.fr

* JN WG : CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Joint noise working group

MMO Working Group provided, early July 2017, the Scientific Committee with titles of the training modules to allow it to review the scope of the training envisioned and to comment if any contents were considered missing.

Tools (courses, forms, report template, measurements convertors...)

The final structure of courses is the following:

Presentation of the High Quality MMO/PAM certificate of ACCOBAMS

- 1.1 ACCOBAMS: a tool for the conservation of biodiversity in the Mediterranean and Black Sea
- 1.2 Process and Objective of the ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified MMO/PAM

Introduction to under water acoustics

- 2.1 What is sound?
- 2.2 Seismic waves
- 2.3 The sonar equation
- 2.4 Octaves and one third octave

Introduction to marine mammals and acoustics

- 3.1 Marine mammal in the ACCOBAMS area
- 3.2 Cetacean biology and distribution in the ACCOBAMS area
- 3.3 Marine mammal distribution and critical habitats
- 3.4 Cetacean vocalizations and hearing

Introduction to human activities generating impulsive noise

- 4.1 Overview of oil and gas industry use of sound-active exploration
- 4.2 Other activities generating impulsive noise of major concern for marine wildlife conservation
- 4.3 Further anthropogenic noise sources
- 4.4 Spatial extent of noise producing human activities in the Mediterranean Sea
- 4.5 Impact of noise on marine mammals

Introduction to existing regulations and ACCOBAMS Guidelines

- 5.1 Introduction to international and European environmental law

- 5.2 International Treaties dealing with marine mammal conservation and/or noise mitigation
- 5.3 European regulations dealing with marine mammal conservation and/or noise mitigation
- 5.4 Regional TREATIES dealing with marine mammal conservation and/or noise mitigation
- 5.5 National legislations
- 5.6 ACCOBAMS Guidelines
- 5.7 Presentation of existing guidelines in the world
- 5.8 Operational points of the different guidelines

Introduction to the role of MMO/PAM

- 6.1 Pre-survey phase
- 6.2 Survey phase
- 6.3 Practical aspects about the equipment for cetacean detection
- 6.4 Detection of cetaceans/other species
- 6.5 Communication with crew
- 6.6 Data entry
- 6.7 Practical aspects of PAM on fixed stations and seismic vessels
- 6.8 Post- survey phase

Introduction to the “life style” onboard

- 7.1 Offshore survival and safety
- 7.2 MMO medical condition requirements
- 7.3 Life style and organisation onboard
- 7.4 Data confidentiality

A call for becoming experts of the « ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM CC » was launch by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat in July 2017. The tasks requested were the following:

- Provide the support for the standard MMO/PAMs training to all accredited “trainer” organizations under the directives and/or validation of the MMO/PAM Working Group;
- Provide the support for the updates to be integrated in the training, following MMO/PAM Working Group directives.

The ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat has received 11 applications and 7 experts were selected to be members of the ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM CC. Five were requested to write the chapters of the standard MMO/PAMs training, and two were requested to review the chapters.

The leader of the WG creates the operational tools as reports templates, measurements convertors, Excel for the data, etc with the help of experts MMO.

Trainers

A call for call for expertise to become an “ACCOBAMS highly qualified MMOs/PAM operator” trainer organization was launch by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat in spring 2018. By date, five applications have been received. Five organisation fulfil the requirements and have been accredited:

- Blue world (Croatie)
- Oceanomare Delphis Onlus (Italy)
- DMAD (Turkey)
- Menkab, Il respiro del mar (Italy)
- EcoOcéan Institut (France)

Trainings

A pilot workshop training was organized on 13th November 2017 in Oran, Algeria, with the support of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Principality of Monaco, in order to present the role and objective of trained MMO/PAM.

30 participants from South Mediterranean Countries were trained on MMO/PAM issues.

Four Recommendations were issued from this session:

- 1) Encourage the implementation of the ACCOBAMS Certification for Highly Qualified Marine Mammals Observers.
- 2) Identify relevant trainers in the ACCOBAMS area, taking into account information from Annex 2 of the ACCOBAMS Resolution 6.18.
- 3) Disseminate and sensitize all relevant stakeholders about this certification.
- 4) Create a working space on NETCCOBAMS concerning MMO /PAM issues.

In September 2018, the first ACCOBAMS training for HIGH QUALITY MMO/PAM Operator has been realised by ACCOBAMS in Constanta, Romania, from 12 to 16 September 2018. Twelve trainees from 5 countries from the Black Sea (Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Georgia) have followed the training done by four relevant experts and professional MMO/PAM operator.

Courses and material were finalized in January 2018 with updates after the first training made in Romania in September 2018. They are available in Netccobams for the accredited trainers.

In 2019, 3 trainings have been realized: 2 in July 2019 (one by DMAD in Turkey, and one by Menkab in Italy), 1 in September (ODO in Italy). A fourth one is planned in November 2019 (DMAD, in Montenegro).

MMO/PAM

Up to date, almost 50 people from at least 14 nationalities have attended a training (Turkey, Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Ukraine, Netherlands, France, United-Kingdom, Australia, Algeria, Montenegro, Spain, Portugal), pass the evaluation and become certified ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM. They all signed a commitment letter to ACCOBAMS to fulfil their role at sea and also give feedback and report to the ACCOBAMS Secretariat and receive a diploma.

Network, web site and communication

In October 2018, The Netccobams workspace has been made effective.

- With the newly accredited MMO/PAM operator being members of the workspace,
- A list of the accredited trainers
- A list of MMO/PAM Operator certified with their email address,
- The courses
- The forms and guide
- Event with next trainings
- ...

On the ACCOBAMS website, a page dedicated to the HQMMO/PAM has been created were appears and is regularly updated the list of accredited trainers and a downloadable list of certified MMO/PAM (also in the annexes of this document). (<http://www.accobams.org/main-activites/mmo-certificate-school/>)

Communication

The HQMMO/PAM can find its real place only if specific communication toward focus target is realized. A communication plan has been launched in 2019 toward scientists, stakeholders, industrials, professional of the sea, ... (see annex). Oral communication, posters or flyer (see annex) have been the support to propagate the existence of the certification.

Implementation: at least 6 certified ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM already get a job with their ACCOBAMS certificates, which was request, on industrial seismic vessels in 2019.

Perspectives

The call to become trainer is still ongoing and it is expected that other organisations from other countries within ACCOBAMS area apply.

A “feedback” workshop is planned in 2020 (depending on budget) for trainers and the MMO/PAM working group in order to exchange about their experience in implementing the course and suggest improvements.

More communication and the link with other recognised certification, such as the JNCC, is planned.

ANNEXES

HQ MMO/PAM flyer

Find official documents, resolutions and information on www.accobams.org (initiatives certification for highly qualified MMO/PAM operators):

- A list of the accredited trainer organizations
- A list of MMO/PAM Operator certified with their email address

For more information : secretariat@accobams.net

If you are working in the **Mediterranean Sea or Black Sea** in the **energy industry, research, building, construction, dredging, mining, seismic exploration, etc** you must **mitigate noise impacts**



Support the drive for higher standards with ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM operators on board



Crédits photos : Oceanomare delphini, EcoOcéan Institut et ACCOBAMS.



MMO / PAM
A new area-specific **certificate** valid for the **Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea**

ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM operators



Based on the "ACCOBAMS Guidelines to address the impact of anthropogenic noise on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area"

© N. Di-Méglio / EcoOcéan In

These guidelines and course are the equivalent of JNCC (UK), BOEM (GoM) and DoC (NZ) which are applicable in their respective regions*



The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat concerning the legal status of any State, Territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of their frontiers or boundaries.

■ Agreement area ▨ Extension
■ Parties to ACCOBAMS ■ Pelagos Sanctuary

Framed by a MMO/PAM working group of experts and the Scientific Committee of the Agreement

The process and contributors include the joint CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS working group on Noise and the Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement.

Adopted by all countries

Countries Parties to ACCOBAMS (Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area) adopted a Resolution implementing the "ACCOBAMS highly qualified MMO/PAM certificate" (Res. 6.18) in November 2016.

Standard and highly qualified common training throughout the whole area

Led by the ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM working group, composed of independent experts, the ACCOBAMS training material and toolbox (courses, forms, guide, distance calculation spreadsheets,...) will guarantee throughout the Agreement area :

- the quality of MMO/PAM training;
- the standardization of training content, regardless of the country;
- the standardization and quality of data collected which can be made available to scientists.

Selection of trainers and trainees

Relevant trainer organizations will be accredited by the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat based on requirements set up by the ACCOBAMS MMO Working Group and will have access to the training material. Candidates to become MMO/PAM should fulfill some criteria of previous experience.

A trainer approval and unifying body storing the data, reports and all information

The ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat will act as approval body for accreditation of trainers and store all data and reports.

A dedicated collaborative network on the internet

For accredited trainers and certified MMO/PAM, the MMO/PAM group workspace has been launched in NETCCOBAMS (www.netccobams.com). Professionals can exchange information through a forum, upload the standard courses and toolbox (forms, guide, reports...) and keep up to date. The Events page lists upcoming trainings led by accredited trainers.

* Joint Nature Conservation Committee (United Kingdom); Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (Gulf of Mexico); Department of Conservation (New Zealand)



Communication plan on The ACCOBAMS HQ MMO/PAM certificate

Update : 14/10/2019

Target	Means, supports	Planned timing	who	Status
ALL	Flyer	Begin 2019 summer	Leader of the MMO/PAM group + ACCOBAMS Secretariat	Completed
ALL	ACCOBAMS webpage english and french	2018 January 2019	ACCOBAMS Secretariat	Completed
ALL	Netccobams : 1) creation of the group and the folder 2) animation of the group, updates	End 2018 2019	Leader of the MMO/PAM group + ACCOBAMS Secretariat	Completed (the group and folder) In progress (animation, updates)
ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee	Official document and PPT	7th of November 2018, Monaco	Leader of the MMO/PAM working group / member of the SC	Completed
ACCOBAMS focal points	Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Parties	Nov 2019	Leader of the MMO/PAM group	Completed
Scientists	Marmam list, Poster at ECS conference	Dec 2019 (WMMSC, Barcelona)	Secretariat of ACCOBAMS, MMO/PAM WG, trainers (DMAD, ODO, Menkab)	Poster WMMSC accepted, several emails on marmam list calling for participants to ACCOBAMS MMO/PAM trainings during 2019
Italian scientists	PPT presentation	50th Congress of the Italian	Barbara Mussi (ODO)	Completed

		Society of Marine Biology		
ALL professionals	flyer	During the conference on “The Effects of Noise on Aquatic Life”, July 7 to 12 2019	Secretariat of ACCOBAMS + Thomas Folegot (QuietOcéan)	Completed
Professional of the sea (building, data collector, technologies of exploration...)	Flyer, discussion	Conference OCEAN2019, Marseille (17-20 juin)	Alessio Maglio (SINAY)	Completed
ALL professionals	article in IMarEST	1rst trimester 2019	Secretariat of ACCOBAMS + Patrick Lyne	In progress
ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Joint Noise Working Group	presentation or poster, flyer		Alessio Maglio + Yanis Souami + Secretariat of ACCOBAMS	Ongoing
French national authorities : - AFB, - ministry of environment, - foreign affairs...	Email, direct discussion	2019	Alessio Maglio + Yanis Souami	Ongoing
Cost guards, Maritime district authorities	Brief description of the certificate, who to contact to have the certified lists of MMO/PAM, direct discussion	during 2019	Aurélie Moulins	In progress
JNCC	Email, direct discussion	Nov-dec 2018 Begin 2019 Begin 2020	Leader and member of the MMO/PAM working group + ACCOBAMS Secretariat	In progress
Marine Mammal Association	Article, (Email, direct discussion)	Nov-dec 2018 February 2019	Leader and member of the MMO/PAM working group + ACCOBAMS Secretariat	In progress

List of MMO/PAM certified people

ACCOBAMS official list of certified MMO/PAM				List up to date the 16th October 2019	
First name	Last name	Country	email	date of certification	Trainer
Tayfun	AKGUL	Turkey	tayfunakgul@itu.edu.tr	July 2019	DMAD
Aylin	AKKAYA	Turkey	akkayaaylinn@gmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Nilüfer	ARAC GUNKAR	Turkey	NArac@wwf.org.tr	July 2019	DMAD
Tim	AWBERY	United Kingdom	tim.awbery91@gmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Oriana	BARONCELLI	Italy	orianabarocelli@libero.it	July 2019	Menkab
Ersin	BAS	Turkey	ersinbas07@gmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Amber	BEERMAN	Netherlands	amberbeerman@hotmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Türkmen	BELEN YILDIRIM	Turkey	<a href="mailto:<tbelenyildirim@gmail.com>"><tbelenyildirim@gmail.com>	July 2019	DMAD
Mohamed An	BOUHADJA	Algeria	bouhadja.amine@gmail.com	September 2019	ODO
Giulia	CALOGERO	Italy	jules.kalos87@gmail.com	July 2019	Menkab
Valentina	CASERTA	Italy	valentina.caserta1990@gmail.com	September 2019	ODO
Emma	DE POLI	Italy	emma.depoli17@gmail.com	September 2019	ODO
Davit	DEKANOIDZE	Georgia	davit.dekanoidze@iliauni.edu.ge	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
Valentina	Di Miccoli	Italy	valentina.dimiccoli@gmail.com	September 2019	ODO
Timuçin	DINCER	Turkey	tdincer@wwf.org.tr	July 2019	DMAD
Giorgia	FARNE	Italy	giorgina_bibi@hotmail.it	July 2019	DMAD
Dinis	GERALDES	Portugal	scubanix@gmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Olena	GLADILINA	Ukraine	el.gladilina@gmail.com	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
Enorha	GUIMARD	France	enorha_guimard@yahoo.fr	July 2019	DMAD
Beril	GÜL	Turkey	bberilgul@gmail.com	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
Zeynep	GULENC	Turkey	zeynepgulenc@hotmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Cansu	ILKILINC	Turkey	ilkilincansu@gmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Yağmur	KESKIN	Turkey	yagmur.keskn@gmail.com	July 2019	Menkab
Merve	KURT	Turkey	mrvkrt3@gmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Souad	LAMOUTI	Algeria	souad.lamouti@gmail.com	September 2019	ODO
Kamel	LARBI DOUKARA	Algeria	artimaquakamel@yahoo.fr	September 2019	ODO
Davide	LELONG	Italy	davidlelong.blackfish@gmail.com	September 2019	ODO
Galina	MESHOVA	Bulgaria	gallinulla@gmail.com	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
Diana	MINZALA	Romania	dianaminzala@yahoo.com	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
Mihaela	MIREA CANDEA	Romania	mihaela_candea@marenostrom.ro	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
Levan	NINUA	Georgia	levan.ninua@iliauni.edu.ge	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
João	NUNO GONCALVES	Portugal	joaocorvina@hotmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Marian	PAIU	Romania	marian_paiu@marenostrom.ro	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
Miriam	PARABOSCHI	Italy	mimipara@hotmail.it	July 2019	Menkab
Dimitar	POPOV	Bulgaria	dpopov@greenbalkans.org	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
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Alessandra	SUARDI	Italy	alessandrasuardi7@gmail.com	July 2019	Menkab
Costin	TIMOFTE	Romania	costin_timofte@marenostrom.ro	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
Taylan	TOLGA KOKEN	Turkey	ttkoken@gmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Emine	ULUSOY	Turkey	emineulusoy@outlook.com.tr	July 2019	DMAD
Liam	VAN WALSUM	Australia	liamvanwalsum@gmail.com	July 2019	DMAD
Biagio	VIOLI	Italy	violi.biagio@gmail.com	July 2019	Menkab
Ana	VUJOVIĆ	Montenegro	hermanna85@gmail.com	July 2019	Menkab
Karina	VYSHNIAKOVA	Ukraine	karinavishnyakova@gmail.com	September 2018	ACCOBAMS
Benjamin	WAMBERGUE	France	Bwambergue@hotmail.co.uk	July 2019	Menkab