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# **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP ON WHALE WATCHING**

## DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP ON WHALE WATCHING

### **Background**

A Working Group for the assessment, monitoring and data collection of cetacean watching activities in the ACCOBAMS area was established in 2014 during the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific Committee.

Considering the Programme of Work for the triennium 2020-2022 adopted by the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS (Resolution 7.6), in particular the activities planned regarding cetaceans watching, the Whale Watching Working Group needs to be reactivated.

These draft Terms of Reference were prepared by the Chair of the Working Group, with the support of the Permanent Secretariat. They will be presented for review to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Scientific Committee in February 2020.

### **Mandate**

With a view of assessing cetacean watching activities in the Agreement area and their potential adverse impacts on cetacean individuals and populations, the Whale Watching Working Group (WWWG) in cooperation with other experts and partners will:

- Support the update of the inventory of operators currently conducting these activities in the ACCOBAMS area and identify experts within the ACCOBAMS Parties or active in the Agreement area who could provide valuable information on cetacean watching activities in the Area;
- Support the work of the expert that will be tasked to prepare a regional study on the hotspots of WW activities in the ACCOBAMS Area (advising on the methodology to be applied, gathering information on cetacean watching activities, identifying potential issues and formulating recommendations) – the report of the study will be presented at SC14;
- Coordinate the test of the proposed common procedure (data collection system developed in 2015) for whale watching vessels in pilot areas and a variety of operation types (e.g. the Liguro-Provençal Basin, Gibraltar Strait, and south Portugal) and report back to SC14 in 2021;
- Revise the Guidelines for commercial cetacean-watching in the ACCOBAMS Area, in view of their presentation at SC14 in 2021.

### **Composition (to be updated during SC13)**

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