



7. DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACCOBAMS LONG-TERM MONITORING PROGRAM

Draft ACCOBAMS long term monitoring programme for estimating trends in abundance and distribution of cetaceans (LTMP).

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Why a monitoring programme under ACCOBAMS?

The ACCOBAMS Agreement has as main objective to **achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for cetaceans** in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area

The development of **monitoring** is clearly designated by the Agreement among the **most recommended ways to enhance the knowledge** about the biology, ecology, and population dynamics of cetaceans in order to identify and implement **conservation measures**.



The ACCOBAMS long term monitoring programme (LTMP**) will build on the achievements of the **first synoptic survey in the Mediterranean** and the **CeNoBS Project in the Black Sea****



LTMP Objectives

The primary motivation of the ACCOBAMS LTMP is to collect **reliable data** allowing to elaborate **accurate estimates of abundance and distribution** of cetacean species in the ACCOBAMS Area.

It should also collect information on the possible **anthropogenic threats** (maritime traffic, leisure boating, fishing, floating marine litter, etc.).



LTMP Objectives

The collected data will be used to:

- Identify hotspot zones of interaction between cetaceans and human activities
- Elaborate and the regularly adjust **conservation and management measures**
- Allow **Parties to fulfil their obligations** under ACCOBAMS as well as their commitments towards other relevant Multilateral Agreements (CBD, CMS, Barcelona Convention, EU regulations, etc.).



Geographical scope of the LTMP

- the maritime **waters under the jurisdiction** of the Parties,
- the maritime **waters of the non-Party** States
- the maritime waters located **beyond national jurisdictions**.

It may cover also other maritime zones that could be included in the future in the Agreement area



Geographical scope of the LTMP

Under certain circumstances it will not be possible to conduct monitoring surveys covering areas where administrative (permit-related) or political constraints do not allow monitoring teams to operate normally and safely.



Monitoring approach of the LTMP

- The ACCOBAMS LTMP will be mainly based on **periodic synoptic surveys** covering the **entire Agreement area**.
- Each survey shall be a **collaborative initiative** involving all the ACCOBAMS Parties
- Surveys will be coordinated by the Secretariat of ACCOBAMS and **implemented by national teams**



Monitoring protocols and platforms of the LTMP

- Multispecies monitoring protocols developed and used for the surveys carried out within the framework of the ASI Project
- The synoptic surveys of the ACCOBAMS LTMP will be **mainly based on aerial surveys** however, shipboard surveys shall be used for species requiring passive acoustic monitoring techniques and/or in areas where flying permits cannot be obtained.

Monitoring protocols and platforms of the LTMP

- The periodic surveys of the ACCOBAMS LTMP shall be implemented **during the same season** to ensure **data comparability between surveys** from different years.
- Other monitoring programmes undertaken at **different temporal planning and smaller spatial scales** or using opportunistic platforms (ferries, fishing boats, etc.) may inform on the **seasonal variations**.



Monitoring protocols and platforms of the LTMP

The ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee will ensure a **technology watch** in relation to cetacean monitoring techniques in order to propose **adaptations and/or improvements** to the monitoring protocols under the ACCOBAMS LTMP.



Other elements of the ACCOBAMS LTMP

- The monitoring targets
- Data management and use
- Skills availability/Capacity building
- Funding
- Links with relevant initiatives



THANK YOU!

5th Meeting of ACCOBAMS National Representatives 12-15 July 2021, online