

REPORT OF THE BLACK SEA SUB-REGIONAL COORDINATION UNIT INCLUDING ACTIVITIES FROM NON-PARTIES



Since 2002, in line with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Black Sea Commission and ACCOBAMS (revised in 2012), the Permanent Secretariat of the Black Sea Commission (BSC PS) exercises its role of the Black Sea Sub Regional Coordination Unit for ACCOBAMS regarding the conservation of the cetaceans of the Black Sea.

During the past triennium the following main activities were implemented:

- Participation in relevant BSC-ACCOBAMS meetings, regular inter-secretarial meetings, inter alia, in 12-14 ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee meetings and all relevant online meetings of the CENOBS Project;
- Cetacean conservation activities were included in all relevant regional strategic documents for the Black Sea (draft BSIMAP 2017-2022), draft BS SoE Report, revised annual reporting format etc.);
- The issue of “Specimens of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins in captivity” was introduced into the BSIMAP for 2017-2022, as well as list of fisheries indicators for annual reporting to the Black Sea Commission;
- With the support of ACCOBAMS, the BSC PS introduced the “Cetacean conservation” modules in the existing postgraduate programs and enrolled the English-speaking universities of the ACCOBAMS area (workshop for teachers and PhD students at Istanbul University was held in 2019);
- The elaboration of Chapter “Conservation of Cetaceans” of the State of Black Sea Environment Report (BS SoE Report) is being supported by ACCOBAMS Secretariat; new publications on cetaceans in Black Sea are published. In relevant resolution the BSC supported the efforts of ACCOBAMS Secretariat on underwater noise;
- ACCOBAMS Cetaceans’ Day was celebrated in the Black Sea area back-to-back with Black Sea Day on 31st October every year;
- BSC PS participated in Joint initiatives with GFCM (High-level meeting on Black Sea fisheries, BlackSea4Fish Project), CBD Convention (Joint RSCs & RFOs meetings, EBSA workshops etc.), EC (projects, ocean governance, MSFD directive, UNEP (SDG 14) etc.);
- With assistance of ACCOBAMS Secretariat, the draft Conservation Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans (2019-2022) was revised and aligned in line with BSC documents and was recommended for consideration at BSC Regular Meeting;
- Participated as partners in call of proposals lead by ACCOBAMS for implementation of MSFD for cetaceans;

- Supported efforts of the ACCOBAMS Permanent Secretariat in implementing the “ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative”, an unprecedented large-scale activity coordinated by ACCOBAMS and involving Black Sea countries to estimate cetacean populations abundance and distribution in the Black Sea in Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Georgia and Türkiye in summer 2019;
- Support to CeNoBS project and the EU-UNDP EMBLAS+ project to implement aerial cetacean survey, including supporting pilot monitoring activities in Romania, Bulgaria, Türkiye and Ukraine in the view of completing gaps on distribution, intensity and effects of bycatch pressure on cetaceans;
- Results of the ongoing data analysis presented and will be used by the Black Sea Commission and its partners, to initiate the definition of thresholds values for cetaceans related indicators and criteria on abundance and distribution in particular;
- Overall, BSC PS is sharing the same objective with ACCOBAMS on improving the availability and quality of data on the biological status of the Black Sea and improve the countries’ ability to perform marine environmental monitoring, in line with expected MSFD and Black Sea Strategic Action Plan needs.