

**RESOLUTION 8.15**  
**CETACEAN STRANDING NETWORKS**

*The Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area:*

*Recalling* Resolutions 1.10 “Cooperation between National Networks of Cetacean Strandings and the Creation of a Database”, 2.10 “Facilitation of Exchange of Tissue Samples”, 3.25 “Cetacean Live Stranding”, 4.16 “Guidelines for a Coordinated Cetacean Stranding Response”, 6.22 “Cetacean Live Strandings” and 7.14 “Best Practices in Monitoring and Management of Cetacean Stranding”,

*Recalling* the document on “Best Practices on Cetacean *post-mortem* Investigation and Tissue Sampling” resulting from the harmonization process in ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS (ACCOBAMS-MOP7/2019/Doc33),

*Taking into consideration* Recommendation 14.14 “Cetacean Stranding Networks (CSNs)” from the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Scientific Committee,

*Recognizing* that:

- Cetacean Stranding Networks (CSNs) are an important source for complementing data on cetacean mortality, including bycatch occurrences,
- CSNs widely vary, depending on scientific requirements, political drivers, resources, infrastructure and personnel experience,
- a tiered approach to carcass triage allows investigations to be conducted at different levels, depending on the resources, facilities or experience of the stranding network, and offers a framework for data collection and interpretation appropriate and optimized to the resources available,
- in a large number of cases examined by the existing CSNs, the cause of death could not be identified, which indicates that there is still room for expertise improvement,

*Acknowledging* the significant efforts done by the Secretariat and both coordinators (University of Liege, Belgium, and University of Padua, Italy) to organise, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, online and in-presence trainings to forty ACCOBAMS experts on necropsy, following best practices on the investigation of causes of death, including incidental catches during fishing operations (bycatch) and marine litter ingestion, entanglement, noise, ship strikes and infectious diseases (“Best Practices on Cetacean *post-mortem* Investigation and Tissue Sampling” resulting from the harmonization process in ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS),

*Recalling* the Action Plan for the Conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea (IG25/13),

1. *Encourages:*

- Parties to establish and /or to ensure the continuous functioning of stranding networks,
- the Secretariat to continue supporting the establishment of such networks in collaboration with the Sub Regional Coordination Units;

