

RESOLUTION 8.21
CITIZEN SCIENCE

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

Taking into consideration Recommendation 14.11 “Citizen Science” of the 14th meeting of the Scientific Committee,

Aware that citizen science allows people with diverse motivation and abilities to participate in research and conservation initiatives (such as Cetacean Stranding Networks or observation and data collection at sea), where scientific effort is limited due to, *inter alia*, low budget allocation, reduced staff, limited resources, large area to be covered, and that it is a valid tool to facilitate public awareness on cetaceans and habitat conservation,

Recognizing that the concept of citizen science and specific citizen science projects can complement the collection of scientific data on cetacean sightings and strandings,

Highlighting the increasing value of existing and improving digital technology (websites, mobile apps and social media platforms),

1. *Requests* the Secretariat, the Scientific Committee and the Sub-Regional Coordination Units to pursue efforts to promote awareness and the widespread use of existing digital technology to collect data on cetaceans (websites, mobile apps and social media platforms);
2. *Asks* the Scientific Committee to propose a standardization of protocols and methodology used for data collection through citizen science, considering the adequate animal welfare and human safety precautions;
3. *Requests* the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee, to consider how to incorporate citizen science information within the ACCOBAMS Communication Strategy.