

PROGRESS REPORT REGARDING NOISE MONITORING

Two main initiatives regarding noise monitoring are currently being implemented by ACCOBAMS: the QUIETSEAS project and the assessment of underwater noise pollution in the Mediterranean Sea as part of the 2023 Quality Status Report of the Barcelona Convention.

a- EU FUNDED PROJECT QUIETSEAS

- ACCOBAMS is participating as a partner in the QUIETSEAS project which started in February 2021, ending 31 May 2023. This project aims to support EU Member States and Competent Authorities providing methods and tools to facilitate Descriptor 11-Underwater noise management.

The activities carried out by ACCOBAMS under the scope of QUIETSEAS are the following:

- Reviewing of risk-based approaches and frameworks for D11C2
- Defining regional specificities of a risk-based approach for continuous sound assessment in the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea regions
- Maintaining and developing the NETCCOBAMS platform with regards to the management of data about impulsive and continuous noise
- Outlining guidelines on reporting underwater continuous noise data from countries
- Organizing a workshop with project partners + some members of the JNWG on thresholds setting for underwater noise in relationship with MSFD-D11
- Organizing a training for competent authorities on the use of tools for underwater noise data management and assessment
- Supporting the TG-Noise in the process of defining thresholds for underwater noise pollution under the scope of the MSFD-D11

All activities are already or almost completed as the project is in its final phase.

b- 2023 Quality Status Report of the Mediterranean Sea:

- ACCOBAMS is cooperating with the Barcelona Convention to produce the Chapters dedicated to underwater noise in the 2023 Quality Status Report of the Mediterranean Sea (2023 MED QSR) which is a report containing the assessment findings related to the quality of the Mediterranean coastal and marine ecosystems as described by several indicators. The MED-QSR is one of the products of the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean Sea, a process initiated and led by the Barcelona Convention.
- In the framework of a formal agreement signed between UNEP/MAP and ACCOBAMS, ACCOBAMS contributes to the preparation of 2023 MED QSR through the preparation of the initial assessments for:
 - IMAF Candidate Common Indicators 26 (cCI26): Proportion of days and geographical distribution where loud, low, and mid-frequency impulsive sounds exceed levels that are likely to entail significant impact on marine animal,
 - IMAF Candidate Common Indicator 27 (cCI27): Levels of continuous low frequency sounds with the use of models as appropriate.

- The activities related to this initiative are the following:
 - Listing the available data presenting suitable characteristics so to be included in the assessment
 - Implementing the assessment methodology following the new guidance document produced by TG-Noise and approved by EU-MSCG in November 2022.
 - Drafting the noise chapter of the 2023 MED QSR
 - Following the review, approval and adoption process by Barcelona Convention