

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT



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Introduction

According to Article IV, paragraph 2, f), at each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties, the Agreement Secretariat shall provide a report on the work carried out by the Agreement Secretariat, the Sub-Regional Co-ordination Units, the Bureau, and the Scientific Committee

This document is a report on the activities carried out by the ACCOBAMS Secretariat, based on the Work Programme 2023-2025 adopted during the Seventh Meeting of the Parties (Malta, 29 November – 2 December 2022).

The report was prepared by the ACCOBAMS Secretariat in order to inform the Meeting on the status of each action planned under the 2023-2025 Work Program. It describes activities carried out in relation to administrative and scientific matters, as well as collaborations with other institutions, during the 2023–2025 triennium. The present report covers the period from December 2022 to October 2025.

The Secretariat attended in person and online meetings and workshops. Each time, it took the opportunity to present relevant activities, particularly those that contributed to enhance the Agreement's visibility, as well as to disseminate information material and to explore ways of strengthening relevant cooperation/collaboration for the implementation of ACCOBAMS. These meetings are non-exhaustively indicated in [Annex 1](#).

MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT (MA)

MA1	INVOLVEMENT OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS
MA1a	Strengthen involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations

Expected outcomes	
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Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium¹</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
<p>Ensure ACCOBAMS institutional functioning / governance / process</p> <p>Strengthen involvement of all riparian Countries to encourage accession to the Agreement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing ACCOBAMS Institutional Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting of the Parties - Scientific Committee Meetings - Bureau Meetings Inviting Observers, including riparian Countries Non-Parties, and relevant experts to ACCOBAMS Meetings Liaising with the Depositary to encourage accession to the Agreement of riparian states 	Completed	<p><u>Ensure ACCOBAMS institutional functioning / governance / process:</u></p> <p><u>Meeting of Parties:</u> The Ninth Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS (MOP9) is held on 18-21 November 2025 in Cyprus.</p> <p><u>Scientific Committee Meetings:</u> The Fifteenth Meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC15) of ACCOBAMS was convened at Ramada Hotel in Tunis, Tunisia, on 10-11 May 2023.</p> <p>The Sixteenth Meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC16) of ACCOBAMS was convened at Balmoral Hotel in Barcelona, Spain, on 2-5 December 2024.</p> <p><u>Bureau Meetings:</u> The Fifteenth Meeting of the Bureau (BU15) of ACCOBAMS was held in Monaco on 22-23 November 2023.</p> <p>The Sixteenth Meeting of the Bureau (BU16) of ACCOBAMS was held online on 18 June 2024, dedicated to the examination of progress of ASI 2 project.</p> <p>The Seventeenth Meeting of the Bureau (BU17) of ACCOBAMS was held in Monaco and online on 13-14 February 2025.</p> <p>The Sixth Meeting of the Extended Bureau (BUEXT6) of ACCOBAMS was held in Nice on 23-24 April 2025.</p>
<p>Establish/strengthen partnerships and collaborations with all relevant IGOs, NGOs, and international/national entities</p> <p>Establish synergies with the European Union policies (MSFD, HD), Barcelona Convention, Bucharest Convention and other relevant Agreements and Organizations strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing MoU with relevant IGOs, government bodies, scientific organizations, Universities, NGOs and relevant organizations. Participating in relevant Meetings, fora and WG Contributing to the development of relevant regional policies documents / reports Ensuring dialogue between regional Conventions to facilitate the reporting by Countries in the framework of other Conventions 	Completed	<p><u>Regarding cooperation with the Barcelona Convention:</u> The ACCOBAMS Secretariat has cooperated with the Barcelona Convention in the 2023 Quality Status Report of the Mediterranean Sea (2023 MED QSR), a report presenting the assessment findings related to the quality of the Mediterranean coastal and marine ecosystems as described by several indicators. This cooperation included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The production of the report's chapters dedicated to underwater noise. - Supporting the preparation of a methodology for monitoring floating marine litter through aerial surveys based on the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative. <p>The Secretariat participated in main UNEP/MAP meetings.</p> <p><u>Regarding cooperation with the Black Sea Commission:</u> ACCOBAMS and of the Black Sea Commission have jointly organized a meeting to take stock of common subjects in relation to the Black Sea 6-7 March 2024, in Istanbul, in the premises of the Black Sea Commission Permanent Secretariat.</p> <p><u>Regarding cooperation with the Convention of Migratory Species (CMS):</u> The Secretariat has participated in different CMS Family meetings: 14th CMS COP (February 2024), 10th ASCOBANS MOP (September 2024), and CMS SC (September 2024) to identify and address shared concerns.</p> <p><u>Regarding participation to relevant international events:</u> The Secretariat addressed the One Ocean Science Congress held in Nice on 3–6 June 2025, which took place in the framework of UNOC 3, with three technical presentations focused on regional efforts to advance marine conservation in the Mediterranean:</p>

¹ Possible status regarding the 2023-2025 PoW:
Ongoing - Partially completed – Completed - Not implemented

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Mitigating dolphin depredation in Mediterranean fisheries” – a session organised in collaboration with GFCM and SPA/RAC, presenting results and lessons learned to balance cetacean conservation and sustainable fisheries. - “Assessing anthropogenic underwater noise pollution in the Mediterranean Sea” – organised with OceanCare and the Tethys Research Institute, exploring the impact of noise on marine ecosystems and restoration efforts. - “Addressing underwater noise and vessel strikes in the North-Western Mediterranean PSSA” – based on the ACCOBAMS study developed in the framework of the 2023 Med QSR of the Barcelona Convention. <p>The ACCOBAMS Secretariat participated in BEFF in Monaco on 7-8 June 2025 in Monaco.</p> <p>The ACCOBAMS Secretariat participated to the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) held in Monaco and Nice on 9-13 June 2025, as ACCOBAMS was designated as an accredited IGO.</p>
Enforce communication within the ACCOBAMS community and strengthen exchanges of information on national and regional projects / activities / initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using NETCCOBAMS platform as sharing/consultation tool - Exchange of information on national reports and regional projects / activities / initiatives 	Completed	<p>NETCCOBAMS is regularly presented to relevant events.</p> <p>During SC15, Dimitar Popov was appointed as the coordinator of the Working Group established by Resolution 8.7.</p> <p>A consultant was contracted by the Secretariat to assist in the dissemination of NETCCOBAMS.</p> <p>ACCOBAMS has updated its social media editorial plan and regularly dedicates posts to inform about project activities, outputs, reports, meetings and other initiatives.</p>
Reinforce synergies with and between Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering new applications for ACCOBAMS Partnership • Organizing meetings of ACCOBAMS Partners in order to share expertise/ knowledge / information • Reviewing the ACCOBAMS Partners status 	Completed	<p>An overview of the Partner status was presented to the BU15 for advice on next steps.</p> <p>A subsequent proposal of amendments of Annex 1 and Annex 2 to Resolution 7.9 (ACCOBAMS Partners) made by the Secretariat was welcomed by the Bureau during BU17 (Doc08) and reviewed during BUEXT 6 held in Nice on 23-24 April 2025. A draft Resolution is presented to MOP9.</p>

MA2	ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING, IN PARTICULARLY FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES
MA2a	Mobilizing and diversifying funding sources

Expected outcomes	
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Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	Status for the current triennium	Detailed developments
Fund projects under the Supplementary Conservation Fund (SCF) related to cetacean conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Launching a new ACCOBAMS call for proposals for projects related to cetacean conservation	Not implemented	During the Extended Bureau Meeting, Bureau decided that there will not be a new call for proposals in 2025, under the Supplementary Conservation Grants Fund, in view of the lack of voluntary contributions
Diversify funding sources to develop projects /actions in line with ACCOBAMS priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Launching call for voluntary contributionsExploring and examining international funding opportunities for cetacean conservation projects in the framework of partnership with donorsDeveloping proposal for a sponsorship programOrganizing encounters with relevant potential donorsLeveraging existing partnerships and collaborations with all IGOs, NGOs, and international/ national entitiesSecuring national funds to be used as cofundings to support project proposals developed by national organizations	Ongoing	<p>The Secretariat circulated a detailed list of activities for 2023-2025 subject to call for voluntary contributions.</p> <p><u>As part of the call for projects under the Pelagos initiative, ACCOBAMS is involved in 3 projects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Shiprint, to reduce the impact of maritime traffic on the marine environment, notably by decreasing noise pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the risk of collisions with endangered whales. This project aims to support the implementation of Associated Protective Measures (APMs) within the Northwestern Mediterranean Sea Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (NW Med PSSA). It includes tracking AIS-equipped vessels, organizing workshops, raising awareness, and developing guidelines for a whale-safe certificatePelagos Consortium, which aims at establishing a group of different stakeholders within the Pelagos Sanctuary to apply an ecosystem approach to the area; this will consist of four different pillars, with the ACCOBAMS Secretariat participating to different actions on research, outreach, stakeholders’ engagement.Climate change, aiming to enhance real-time monitoring, reduce ship strikes, and analyse phenological changes in whale behaviour. <p>ACCOBAMS is also part of the Together for the Med network which is currently finalising a project to submit to new supporters. The Secretariat participated as a member of the Steering Committee to the network's workshop held in Marsa, Tunis, Tunisia in March 2025.</p>
Strengthen national capacities in cetacean conservation project development and fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sharing information on funding opportunitiesOrganizing training workshop for FPs and relevant national stakeholders on project development and fundraising	Not implemented	No voluntary contribution nor external funds were identified to organize a training workshop on project development and fundraising.

MA3	IMPLEMENTATION OF AND COMPLIANCE WITH ACCOBAMS
MA3a	Improve the level of implementation of and compliance with ACCOBAMS Resolutions as well as the monitoring of its progress

Expected outcomes	
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Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	Status for the current triennium	Detailed developments
Revise the ACCOBAMS Strategy (2018-2025) and propose a new one after evaluating overall Agreement's effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluating the overall Agreement's effectivenessPreparing an ACCOBAMS Strategy (2026-2037) in collaboration with all ACCOBAMS bodies	Ongoing	No voluntary contribution nor external fundings were identified to revise the ACCOBAMS Strategy (2018-2025) and propose a new one after evaluating the overall Agreement's effectiveness. During their 15 th Meeting, Bureau members agreed that unless sufficient funds were received prior to February 2024, there would not be enough time to assess the 2018-2025 Strategy and to draft a new one. In such case, they proposed to extend the ongoing Strategy for another 3 years
Reinforce the involvement of National Focal Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Disseminating the guide on the role of the ACCOBAMS National Focal PointProviding regular update on the implementation of Resolutions by PartiesOrganising the Meeting of National Representatives with sub-regional meetings to develop the 2026-2028 Programme of Work by identifying actions related to cetacean conservation, according to national priorities	Completed	<u>Meeting of National Representatives:</u> The Sixth Meeting of ACCOBAMS National Representatives was held online on 24-25 June 2024 and included sub-regional meetings.
Propose remedy actions in cases of non-follow-up with ACCOBAMS Resolutions and infringements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Convening a Follow up Committee meetingApplying Follow up Procedures	Completed	The Fourth Meeting of the Follow up Committee took place in Nice on 2-3 September 2025 The Committee followed up on two previous submissions and considered a new submission presented by OceanCare regarding the conservation status of two cetaceans' species in the Mediterranean: the sperm whale (<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>) and the fin whale (<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>). Finally, the Committee provided guidance on the follow up of existing obligations and commitments since the 3rd Meeting of the Follow-up Committee held online, on 29-30 March 2022.

MA4	ACCOBAMS EXTENSION AREA
MA4a	Ensure implementation of the ACCOBAMS's cetacean conservation standards in the adjacent areas

Expected outcomes	
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Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	Status for the current triennium	Detailed developments
Promote the ratification of Amendment for geographical extension of the Agreement area to the Atlantic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liaising with the Depositary to encourage relevant national authorities to ratify the Amendment for geographical extension of the Agreement area to the Atlantic• Providing all Focal Points with explanatory note on the Amendment• Providing support to National Focal Points to solve problems regarding the ratification of the Amendment through the organisation of trilateral meetings between the National Focal Point, the Secretariat and an ACCOBAMS legal advisor	Completed	Greece has ratified the Amendment in January 2023 and Georgia in August 2023. At present, 12 Parties have ratified the Amendment for geographical extension of the Agreement area to the Atlantic.

CONSERVATION ACTIONS (CA)			
CA 1 a		Cetacean population estimates and distribution	
Expected outcomes		Improved knowledge of cetacean populations in the ACCOBAMS Area Global distribution and abundance of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea and Black Seas established, based on results of survey	
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	Status for the current triennium	Detailed developments
Promote the implementation of the Long-Term Monitoring Programme, taking into consideration monitoring and reporting obligations of countries (MSFD, Barcelona Convention, Bucharest Convention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Secure funds for implementing ASI2, including by investigating the existence of possible funding at national / regional levelsDevelopment and implementation of a simulation framework to examine the performance of different future survey strategies (synoptic, regional/national)Undertaking synoptic basin-wide surveys in the ACCOBAMS Area with a focus on abundance and trends in 2024/2025 (ASI2) with the support of an ASI Contact Group to define the implementation conditions/protocol related to logistics (research platform, human means, equipment, training...) and administration (survey restrictions, permits...), and of the SC to review and update as necessary the field and analytical protocolsPromoting synchronization and standardization of existing monitoring efforts to contribute to LTMP purpose (coordination meetings at the sub-regional level, Working Group on cetaceans monitoring...)Collaborating with relevant organizations, such as the Barcelona Convention (EcAp-Med III), the Bucharest Convention and the European Commission (MSFD),	Ongoing	<p><u>In relation with the next basin wide surveys:</u></p> <p>In accordance with MOP8 & Resolution 8.10, a project proposal developed by the Scientific Committee and the Secretariat was circulated to the Parties beginning of October 2023 (see document ACCOBAMS-BU15/2023/Inf04). During 1st half of 2024, Parties were invited to indicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the number of voluntary contributions and/or in-kind support for the implementation of ASI2.- their national contacts for the LTMP Contact Group. <p>The Long-Term Monitoring Program (LTPMP) Contact Group met online three times in 2024 and twice in 2025 in order to collect information on allocated contributions to support ASI2 project.</p> <p>A dedicated Bureau Meeting was organized on 18 June 2024.</p> <p>SC16 provided recommendation regarding the implementation of ASI2.</p> <p>ASI2 was officially launched during UNOC 2025 (June 2025, Monaco & Nice, France).</p> <p>A working document titled “State of Play of the ASI2 Project” will be presented during MOP9.</p> <p><u>In relation with MSFD and synchronization / standardization of existing monitoring efforts:</u></p> <p>Within the EU-funded ABIOMMED project, the Secretariat is coordinating the Work Package “<i>Streamlining Descriptor’s D1 selected criteria regarding mammal’s species groups (small, toothed cetaceans, deep diving toothed cetaceans and baleen whales) towards coordinated monitoring and assessment in the Mediterranean region</i>”. ACCOBAMS supports in particular the coordination of a working group composed by the researchers/managers appointed by the MSFD national competent authorities for cetaceans monitoring in each EU Mediterranean and Black Sea country.</p> <p>Several meetings were organized in 2023 with WG members to collect relevant information to support the preparation of ABIOMMED deliverable “Review on the national context of MSFD implementation in order. A face-to-face meeting of the Working group on cetacean monitoring under MSFD in the scope of the ABIOMMED project was organized in Rome, Italy, on 14-15 June 2023. The final Meeting of ABIOMMED project was held in December 2023.</p> <p><u>In relation with the Ecosystem Approach process of the Barcelona Convention:</u></p> <p><u>The Secretariat has participated in several Meetings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups on Monitoring (CORMON), Biodiversity and Fisheries held in Athens, Greece on 9-10 March 2023.- the Integrated Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups (CORMONs) held in Athens, Greece, on 27-28 June 2023. During this second meeting, the Parties to the Barcelona Convention acknowledged the importance and the richness of the ASI data and they emphasized the importance and urgency that ACCOBAMS finalise the necessary steps towards launching the next basin survey initiative and encouraged the Contracting Parties to provide the necessary contributions.- the Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON) Biodiversity and Fisheries held in Athens, Greece on 7-8 April 2025 and the 11th Meeting of the SAPBIO National Correspondents.

<p>Promote the use of ASI data by increasing the visibility of ASI (and future) datasets and related results and encourage further analyses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing NETCCOBAMS functionalities to create a repository system for ASI data • Promoting ASI data and results in relevant fora, also through the Special Issue in Frontiers of Marine Science • Sharing ASI data following received requests in accordance with ASI Terms of use and archiving/monitoring of the requests • Collecting outputs of work and analysis conducted following ASI full dataset requests to be used by the SC to give best scientific advice 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>ASI data are in NETCCOBAMS.</p> <p>The ASI data and results have been used for the preparation of the 2023 MED Quality Status Report, in particular for the assessment of CI3 “Species distributional range”, CI4 “Population abundance of selected species”, CI5 “Population demographic characteristics”, as well as for CI 23 “Trends in the amount of litter in the water column including microplastics and on the seafloor”.</p> <p>Several scientific publications based on the ASI datasets were published in the ASI Special Issue in Frontiers of Marine Science.</p> <p>ASI data is regularly shared in response to requests received and in accordance with ASI Terms of use.</p> <p>The Secretariat organized 2 specific events in 2024 to increase the visibility of ASI results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACCOBAMS side-event “Why do we care about whales and dolphins” during the Monaco Ocean Week on 20 March 2024, - Joint ACCOBAMS/We Are Méditerranée event at the Monaco Yacht Club, on 27 March 2024. <p>Specific side events have been proposed during Barcelona Convention and CMS COP</p> <p>The Executive Secretary met different stakeholders to promote ASI during the triennium</p>
<p>Promote data collection at sub-regional and national levels (in coherence with ACCOBAMS survey methodologies)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating exchanges and coordination between Parties on sub-regional surveys • Organizing training activities on monitoring methods/protocols and data analysis for smaller-scale surveys (at local, national and sub-regional levels) • Develop handbooks on standardized monitoring methods (aerial surveys, boat-based surveys, acoustic surveys...) • Collaborating with relevant organizations, such as Barcelona Convention (EcAp-Med III), the Bucharest Convention and the European Commission (MSFD) 	<p>Completed</p>	<p>The ACCOBAMS Secretariat organized a workshop “Advances in Marine Mammal Telemetry: Technologies, Analyses, Best Practices, and Future Perspectives Advances in Marine Mammal Telemetry: Technologies, Analyses, Best Practices, and Perspectives” during the 36th Annual Conference of the European Cetacean Society held in Ponta Delgada, Azores on 12-16 May 2025.</p>
<p>Promote data collection from multidisciplinary surveys (such as fisheries / acoustic surveys), innovative technologies (UAV, satellite) and of platforms of opportunity (ferries, whale watching vessels, navy vessels, etc..)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking activities in pilot areas to collect data using multidisciplinary surveys (such as fisheries / acoustic surveys), innovative technologies (UAV, satellite) and platforms of opportunity (ferries, whale watching vessels, navy vessels, etc..) based on recommendations of previous studies • Initiating collaboration with existing regional fisheries surveys (MEDITS, MEDIAS) and relevant organizations such as GFCM and ICCAT • Collaborate with relevant existing networks (FLT) and initiatives/projects (ex. CONCEPTU MARIS Life project) • Organizing meetings/workshops to discuss possible synergies and shared methodology and data analysis • Developing protocols on standardized monitoring methods for multidisciplinary surveys/ Ferries 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Preliminary discussions were held with the experts responsible for the studies carried out during the 2019-2022 triennium, concerning the use of multidisciplinary surveys and platform of opportunities such as ferries.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update the "Guidelines for the Monitoring of the Range of Cetaceans, Abundance and Demographic Characteristics of Populations"• Regularly review « Best Available Technologies » and assess potential contribution to LTMP		
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CA 1 b	Population Structure
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Expected outcomes	<p>Improved knowledge on population structure in the ACCOBAMS Area and species conservation management plans completed</p> <p>Exchange of samples is facilitated for joint analysis</p> <p>Data exchange is facilitated for basin wide analysis</p>
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Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	Status for the current triennium	Detailed developments
<p>Improve photo ID data collection and dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update and harmonize protocols on data collection for photo ID - Share photo ID data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing experts meeting for best practices guide on how to collect data for comparison • Organizing regional experts' trainings on analysis on photo ID including AI (Artificial Intelligence)– draft ToR to facilitate exchanges or a harmonized relevant database • Facilitating data sharing and the creation of large-scale photo-id catalogues for in-depth analysis 	Not implemented	No voluntary contribution nor external funding were identified to improve photo ID data collection and dissemination.
<p>Improve data collection on cetacean populations genetic in the ACCOBAMS Area</p> <p>Development of genetical identification of population structure (particularly for Mediterranean), including e.g. eDNA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and promoting a common protocol on data collection on cetacean populations genetic • Facilitating the creation of a general data-base/archive/inventory on existing samples/tissues in ACCOBAMS Area • Disseminating databases and guidelines to stakeholders • Facilitating analysis of existing tissue samples (including those from biopsies) to address questions on stock structure and genetic diversity • Organizing workshop about genetic population structure (including e-DNA) for marine mammals in the framework of international scientific events or meetings • Collaborating with relevant organizations (CITES, ABS Nagoya Protocol...) 	Ongoing	<p>ACCOBAMS Best Practices on cetacean population genetics were translated into French.</p> <p>A webinar on the collection and analysis of data on cetacean population genetics was held via Zoom on 8 November 2023.</p> <p>A poster was presented during the ECS Conference in 2024.</p>

CA 1 c	Monitoring cetacean status		
Expected outcomes	Regional conservation plans (Med and BS) for cetacean are promoted at the national level		
	Relevant conservation management plans are developed and implemented		
	National Action Plans are developed and implemented in several Countries		
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
Support in implementing Regional Conservation Plans for cetaceans (in Black Sea and in Mediterranean Sea)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the BSC in the revision of the Regional Conservation Plan for cetacean in Black Sea, taking into consideration the IWC Conservation Management Plan. Supporting the SPA/RAC in the implementation of the Mediterranean Action Plan for Cetaceans adopted by Parties to the Barcelona Convention 	Ongoing	<p>The Secretariat works in close collaboration with the 2 sub-regional coordination units (BSC and SPA/RAC)</p> <p>Black Sea experts will revise the Black Sea Conservation Plan based on CeNoBS results and will consider drafting a multi-species CMP to be presented to the next Scientific Committee Meeting.</p>
Develop/ revise/ implement relevant Conservation Management Plans for cetacean species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing Experts Workshop(s) to develop/ revise/ Conservation Management Plans for cetacean species, taking into account all national conservation plans Initiating focus on Black Sea with preliminary document Supporting the implementation of relevant actions of the approved Conservation Management Plans for cetacean species with emphasize of coordination actions and organization of stakeholders' workshop Starting the development of CMP for other Mediterranean species such as Cuvier's beaked whales and sperm whales Derived CMP actions are cross-cutting and considered in the framework of other specific activities 	Ongoing	<p>To date, four CMPs are under development on: fin whales, Risso's dolphins, common dolphins and bottlenose dolphins.</p> <p>During SC16 next steps towards Ziphius and Sperm Whale CMPs were presented.</p>
Facilitate the Development/ revision/ implementation of National Action Plans for cetaceans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the revision / development of National Action Plans for cetaceans in collaboration with SRCUs and national authorities, through participatory process involving all relevant organizations (NGOs, associations, national partners...) Establishment of national Working Groups or Councils in the framework of National Actions Plan 	Ongoing	Exchanges have been initiated with SPA/RAC to support the development of National Action Plans (NAP).

CA 1 d	Functional stranding networks and responses to emergency situations		
Expected outcomes	Official National Stranding networks are established and operating		
	Information on stranding events is regularly exchanged among national networks		
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
Set up /Reinforce official national stranding networks (with all national institutions concerned and relevant international agreements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminating study on legal/institutional status of National stranding networks in order to assist experts in the establishment of official national stranding network when relevant Assistance in the preparation of a legislative framework to settle the national coordination network Organizing trainings on necropsies, response to live strandings and emergency situation in the ACCOBAMS Area, and on the use of relevant databases 	Ongoing	<p>The Secretariat supported the participation of 5 experts from Morocco, Tunisia and Montenegro at the 16th marine mammal necropsy workshop, organized by the Department of Veterinary Pathology, University of Liege (Belgium). The workshop was held on 11-13 July 2023.</p> <p>The Secretariat supported the participation of 4 experts from France, Morocco and Türkiye, at the 17th marine mammal necropsy workshop, organized by the Department of Veterinary Pathology, University of Liege (Belgium). The workshop was held on 9-11 July 2024.</p> <p>The second day of the CSMC6 held in Monastir, Tunisia on 11-15 November 2023 was focused on strandings.</p>
<p>Encourage collaboration among national networks of Parties</p> <p>Perpetuate mutualization of stranding protocols between Parties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminating the procedures on Best Practices on cetacean postmortem investigation and tissue sampling resulted from the harmonization process in ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS Creating Regional Task Force for stranding events (exchange photos/ advice / scientific explanations even in the field) including strandings of non-common species taking into account national legislations in order to support national network to deal with non-common events Developing tele-necropsy in the ACCOBAMS Area (workshops and trainings) Entering relevant national data into relevant regional databases, such as MEDACES Supporting and financing of MEDACES Creating a network to exchange information on sampling through NETCCOBAMS Platform 	Ongoing	<p>The main goal of the 16th and 17th marine mammal necropsy workshops, organized by the Department of Veterinary Pathology, University of Liege (Belgium) in 2023 and 2024 was to train expert biologists and veterinarians from different ACCOBAMS countries on “Best Practice Document on cetaceans’ postmortem investigations and tissue sampling, in order to gain information on possible threats for cetacean conservation”</p> <p>The ACCOBAMS emergency task force for stranding events (AETFS) has been formally launched early 2023. The AETFS is jointly chaired by Sandro Mazzariol, from Padova University, and Thierry Jauniaux, from Liege University.</p> <p>Since the note on the feasibility of tele-necropsy systems was approved by the Parties during MOP8 held in Malta from 29 November to 2 December 2022, the initiative has started in Morocco early 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 online workshops were held on 3 and 11 April 2023 A joint ACCOBAMS/ INRH training on standardization of stranding intervention methods was held in Tanger on 18-19 September 2023 and on 12-14 February 2024. <p>The third day of the CSMC6 held in Monastir, Tunisia on 13-15 November 2023, was dedicated to a training workshop regarding the implementation of a scientific photography protocol adapted to cetacean strandings for developing telenecropsy. A specific stand during the 2024 ECS Conference in April 2024 was dedicated to the ACCOBAMS initiative on telenecropsy.</p>
Communicate simply and efficiently on uncommon situations in the ACCOBAMS Area (Example of killer whales in 2019/2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a task force for the management of uncommon situations, including monitoring of uncommon species in the ACCOBAMS Area, taking into account national legislations 		<p>The ACCOBAMS emergency task force for stranding events (AETFS) has been formally launched early 2023. The AETFS is jointly chaired by Sandro Mazzariol, from Padova University, and Thierry Jauniaux, from Liege University.</p> <p>The AETFS will be able to assist Parties for the management of uncommon situations</p>

CA 2 a	Interactions with fisheries / aquaculture		
Expected outcomes	Impacts of cetaceans' bycatch and depredation are assessed and reduced		
	Ecotourism activities (whale watching and pescatourism) are proposed as an alternative income source to fishermen impacted by depredation		
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
Support countries in monitoring and mitigating depredation and bycatch situations, with urgent focus on harbour porpoise bycatch in the Black Sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving data collection on interactions with fisheries (implementation of on-board observers programs and port questionnaires...) and testing mitigation measures Sharing experience and results, including from past projects on interactions with fisheries (workshops, field visits...) Investigating the use of stranding data to assess bycatch mortality (using drifting models) Collaborating with relevant entities, in particular with GFCM, EC (DG MARE and DG Environment), Barcelona Convention (EcAp-Med III project) and IWC BMI Establishing an Emergency Task Force with EC, GFCM and BSC to address the porpoise bycatch critical issue in the Black Sea 	Ongoing	<p>A workshop of the ACCOBAMS-ASCOBANS Joint Bycatch Working Group (JBWG) was organized at the ECS annual conference in O Grove, Spain on 17 April 2023 entitled “<i>Current bycatch issues in European waters</i>” and was open to all conference participants.</p> <p>The second Meeting of the JBWG of ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS was held online on 5-6 February 2025.</p> <p>To support the continuation of partner activities under MAVA MedBycatch and Depredation projects on bycatch and depredation monitoring and mitigation, ACCOBAMS Secretariat contributed to the development of 4 project proposals in September 2023 to different calls:</p> <p>ACCOBAMS participated as a Partner in three proposals submitted in the framework of FAO/GFCM requests for proposals. All the following three projects were successfully completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring activities and mitigation measures for the reduction of dolphin depredation in small-scale fisheries led by MareCamp in Italy, Reduction and mitigation of the catch of elasmobranchs, sea turtles, and any other vulnerable species (e.g. marine mammals), incidentally captured by trawlers along Turkish coast (GSA 24 –Northern Levant Sea)” led by Çukurova University in Türkiye, Task 1) Monitoring activities, and mitigation measures for the reduction of the elasmobranchs incidentally captured by trawlers; and Task 2) monitoring activities, and mitigation measures for the reduction of dolphin depredation in purse seiners in the Mediterranean side of Morocco led by INRH in Morocco. <p>In these 3 proposals, the ACCOBAMS Secretariat facilitated the overall coordination and the mobilization of the relevant expertise in relation with depredation.</p> <p>With the National Institute of Fisheries Research of Tanger (INRH) it is monitoring and mitigating dolphin depredation in purse seiners in the Southern Alboran Sea (GSA 3). With the Marecamp Association it is implementing devices that disturb dolphin echolocation on longlines, visual deterrents on trammel net, structural changes and an Acoustic Alert System on single-wall nets used by the small-scale fishing fleet in the Western Ionian Sea (GSA 19). Data collection and analysis are based on shared standardized research protocols, questionnaires, logbook entries, onboard observations on research vessels and fishing vessels, and acoustic monitoring using hydrophones and F-PODs.</p> <p>Finally, in this context, a Joint Workshop on Fisheries Interaction with Vulnerable Species has been held online on 28 January 2025, involving over 80 participants.</p> <p>Regarding Resolution 8.9 on drift nets, the Secretariat has been in contact with GFCM and DG MARE to draw their attention to this issue. In particular, the Secretariat participated in the Sixteenth meeting of the GFCM Compliance Committee held in Rhodes, Cyprus on 5 May 2023, which agreed "to address the issue of drift nets in close coordination with ACCOBAMS and ICCAT".</p> <p>During the Joint ACCOBAMS / Black Sea meeting on 6 -7 March 2024 (Istanbul), a proposed Network for harbour porpoise bycatch in the black sea between the European Commission (DG Mare), GFCM, ACCOBAMS and the Black Sea Commission was agreed.</p>
Provide support to Parties to promote the development of ecotourism activities as an alternative income to fishers (pescatourism and whale watching)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the development of sustainable ecotourism activities in pilot sites Considering socio-economic aspects of alternative solutions 	Not implemented	No voluntary contribution or opportunity for external funding were identified yet to support these activities.

CA 2 b	Anthropogenic underwater noise		
Expected outcomes	Main anthropogenic activities generating underwater noise are monitored in the ACCOBAMS Area		
	Use of mitigation measures for anthropogenic activities generating underwater noise		
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
Encourage the monitoring of anthropogenic activities generating underwater noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness amongst countries by organizing an awareness & consultation workshop at national level with different stakeholders, especially at ministerial level, • Involving different national stakeholders (coordination by National Focal Points) and identify an entity that can centralize information at the national level, • Inviting Port authorities to develop incentive programmes to encourage the monitoring of and reduction in underwater noise emissions, and to report regularly all activities generating noise to improve the mapping for Noise Hotspots Report, • Organizing trainings for national entities on noise monitoring (CB), including analyses of PAM collected data in some identified priority areas, • Taking into consideration work achieved and advices provided by the JNWG, • Managing the regional noise register, • Feeding data on impulsive noise generating sources from the entire ACCOBAMS Area into the existing International Noise Registry managed by ACCOBAMS, • Providing necessary data to update risk maps and generate maps for the Black Sea by considering relevant target species, • Reviewing the Noise Hotspots Report II, • Revising and updating the ACCOBAMS Guidelines on underwater noise taking into account outcomes from recent projects, • Producing a study on the effects of underwater noise generated by the foreseeable increase of wind farms in the ACCOBAMS Area, • Developing cooperation on underwater noise issue with other international Organizations, such as Barcelona Convention (ECAP) and EU (MSFD) and collaboration with other regional projects on noise issues 		<p>Two main initiatives regarding noise monitoring have been implemented by ACCOBAMS in 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 assessment of underwater noise pollution in the Mediterranean Sea as part of the 2023 Quality Status Report of the Barcelona Convention. <p>The ACCOBAMS Secretariat is also partner in the SEASOUNDS project which has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie. This project is designed to bridge existing knowledge gaps concerning the understanding, characterization and modelling of the entire underwater noise propagation chain, from the noise sources to the marine animal.</p> <p>The Secretariat has participated in the 1st SEASOUNDS Workshop held in Hyères, France on 9-14 February 2025 on "Underwater noise pollution, bridging the gaps between wave physics and life science" and gave a presentation titled "Management of underwater noise issue by ACCOBAMS at regional level (Mediterranean and Black Seas)". It has also participated in the second Workshop in Venice, Italy on 15-20 September 2025.</p> <p>NETCCOBAMS is currently being developed to assess anthropogenic noise emissions in the Agreement area. It is important for the assessment work in line with the MSFD threshold values and the EcAp process.</p> <p>The Secretariat participated to different meetings of the EU - Technical Group on Underwater Noise (TG-Noise): 19 June 2023, 16-17 October 2023, 29 May 2024, 5 November 2024 and 29 May 2025.</p> <p>The Secretariat has also participated to the SERENADE Conference organized in Toulon, France in June 2024 to present the work done jointly with UNEP/MAP.</p> <p>The Secretariat has participated to the 12th Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group on 15 September 2025 in Athens Greece and presented the updated Guidance Factsheets on underwater noise.</p>
Encourage the use of mitigation measures for anthropogenic activities generating underwater noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving enhanced training of regulators on the appropriate application of the CMS Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and ACCOBAMS Noise Guidelines • Producing common minimum requirements for appropriate national legislation and other regulations regarding underwater noise impacts on cetacean 		The Secretariat promoted MMO/PAM Certificate Courses organized by accredited Partners

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting the ACCOBAMS Highly qualified MMO/PAM operators’ certificate• Supporting the development and update of the ACCOBAMS HQMMO/PAM training tools• Granting the status of ACCOBAMS HQMMO Partners to entities for the implementation of the Highly qualified MMO/PAM operators’ certificate• Revising and updating the ACCOBAMS “Guide for Parties to use mitigation measures “• Developing joint project/initiatives for simulating mitigation measures such as speed reduction and related benefits• Developing cooperation on underwater noise issues with other International Organizations		
Exchange of relevant information with competent authorities before military activities / exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular information letter from the Secretariat to NATO and to national Navy forces to raise attention of impacts on noise on cetaceans and to propose mitigation measures• Workshop/meeting with national Navy forces and NATO members	Ongoing	A joint CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS workshop with National Navies was organized on 26-27 November 2024, in Toulon, France, thanks to a voluntary contribution from Monaco.

CA 2 c	Ship strikes		
Expected outcomes		Reduction of ship strikes in high risk areas	
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
Monitor / assess high-risk areas for ship strikes (CCH) in the Mediterranean Sea and adjacent Atlantic Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging the entry of ship strikes data in relevant databases such as the IWC central database on ship strikes Improving protocols for the identification of ship strikes via necropsies in collaboration with the Pelagos Agreement Identifying high risk areas for ship strikes (CCH) by encouraging studies that improve understanding of temporal and spatial distribution of shipping and of cetaceans (IMMAs), and supporting interactive map of areas with high risk of ship strikes for crews of relevant ships Developing cooperation on ships strike issue with other International Organizations, such IWC, EMSA (EU) / REMPEC / IMO/ Pelagos Agreement and contributing in any other relevant initiatives, projects and workshops in the ACCOBAMS Area Follow and assist Parties in the PSSA project process in collaboration with the Permanent Secretariat of the Pelagos Agreement 	Ongoing	<p>A project proposal named “SHIPRINT” was approved in the framework of the “Pelagos Initiative” call. The SHIPRINT project aims to support the 4 ACCOBAMS countries (Spain, France, Italy and Monaco) which have submitted a PSSA proposal to IMO (accepted in July 2023) by offering them technical and awareness-raising solutions around 4 components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a new module in the NETCCOBAMS platform that will enable the 4 ACCOBAMS countries to track all AIS-equipped vessels in the area. This will enable countries to intervene quickly, but also to compare trends from one month to the next. A series of four in-person workshops, preceded by online training courses, is being organized targeting different vessel categories. Two workshops have been already organized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first Workshop «Safeguarding whales in the northwestern Mediterranean Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs)” focused on the shipping sector was held in Marseille on 14 March 2025. The second workshop “Collaborative Knowledge Sharing for Cetaceans’ protection in the NW PSSA” dedicated to the Passenger and Cruise shipping sector was held in Genoa on 2 October 2025. A photo exhibition titled ‘<i>Méditerranée sauvage: cétacés en images, protection en action</i>’ — aimed at raising public awareness about cetacean conservation, marine biodiversity in the Pelagos Sanctuary, and the importance of conservation efforts was organized in collaboration with the Association We Are Méditerranée and the Fédération des Groupements Français de Monaco. It was held from 2 to 13 June 2025, back-to-back with UNOC3 Conference at La Maison de France in Monaco. Guidelines with advice for "Whale Safe" certification.
Promote the use of mitigation measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening cooperation between countries that share marine areas with high risk of collision for cetaceans in order to develop a joint and coherent management for these areas Fostering the development of incentive systems to shipping companies adopting suggested mitigation measures Supporting national or regional projects in order to reduce the risk of collision (FLT network / REPCET system...) Evaluation the efficiency of implemented or proposed new mitigation measures 		<p>The Secretariat organized several events regarding the issue of ship strikes: including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the organization of a workshop during the 2023 Monaco Ocean Week, -awareness of stakeholders in the Monaco Yacht Club in October 2023 -an ACCOBAMS side event during the COP23 of the UNEP/MAP on 5 December 2023 - an ACCOBAMS side event “Speed up to slow down” during the Monaco Ocean Week on 21st March 2024. <p>Furthermore, Secretariat approached shipping companies, especially through a participation at the World Shipping Council Conference on 7 November 2023 and at a round table “Noise, collisions & solutions” in July 2024).</p> <p>There is an ongoing collaboration between NETCCOBAMS and UNEP-MAP KMaP (INFO/RAC), showcasing tools and functionalities for data sharing and visualization, including an experiment displaying mean boat speed during the summer 2023 over the new PSSA area. The objective is to improve the current experiment by identifying zones where speed limits are frequently exceeded and enhancing technical/scientific cooperation to create a comprehensive database of boat speed data and meaningful risk maps</p> <p>The 2nd Coordination Meeting “The NW Mediterranean PSSA and its associated protective measures” has been held at the Italian Coast Guard Headquarters, Rome, on 9 September 2024 and ACCOBAMS was invited to present the NETCCOBAMS Platform</p> <p>The Secretariat is also involved in the EU-Life funded project SeaDetect “Marine automated DETECTION and anti-collision system with cetaceans “.</p>

CA 2 d	Cetacean watching		
Expected outcomes	Cetacean watching activities are properly conducted in the ACCOBAMS Area		
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
Monitoring status of whale watching activities in the ACCOBAMS Area and their potential adverse impacts on individual cetaceans and on populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revising the Guidelines for commercial cetacean-watching in the ACCOBAMS Area Analysis of existing national legislations related to whale watching regulation Implementing a pilot study to define the whale watching ‘carrying capacity’ in a targeted geographical area where commercial whale watching is intensively practiced Collaborating with relevant organizations, such as IWC and Pelagos Agreement 	Ongoing	<p>A meeting of the Whale Watching Working Group of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee was facilitated by the Secretariat in February 2023 to discuss the activities of the 2023-2025 Program of Work.</p> <p>ACCOBAMS launched a survey for ACCOBAMS National Focal Points to collect information on the regulatory framework for Whale-Watching activities in the ACCOBAMS Area.</p> <p>A workshop “Enhancing Whale-Watching Practices for Cetacean Conservation: an ACCOBAMS Workshop” was held during the 36th ECS Conference.</p>
Promote the use of whale watching vessels as platforms of opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing and updating the data collection form for commercial whale watching vessels and test the revised common procedure for whale watching activity in identified pilot areas (e.g. the Ligurian-Provençal Basin, including the Pelagos Sanctuary, Gibraltar Strait, and south Portugal) Organizing photo-ID and data collection training for whale watching operators, with the final goal of sharing the collected data 	Ongoing	<p>The Whale Watching Working Group of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee has agreed to continue testing the common procedure and to assess what has been done so far and the lessons learnt from the different areas where the protocol is being tested before starting reviewing and updating the data collection protocol.</p> <p>The ACCOBAMS Secretariat participated in the workshop “<i>Setting up an international network to reinforce the collaboration with Marine Mammal Tourism companies and enhance their sustainability</i>” organized by CIMA Research Foundation, Museu da baleia and Miraceti on 17 April 2023 during the 2023 ECS conference.</p>
Support the implementation of the HQWW certificate in the ACCOBAMS Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting the implementation of the HQWW certificate by Parties and in areas -based management measures in collaboration with relevant projects/ organizations Organizing Trainings on HQWW (CB Parties) Liaising with relevant tourism Organizations 	Ongoing	<p>In 2023 and 2024 the ACCOBAMS Secretariat provided MIRACETI with financial support for the animation of the HQWW label in France and particularly for the training sessions for operators held in March 2023 and May 2024.</p> <p>The ACCOBAMS Secretariat renewed the trademark HQWW® registration for Monaco and the European Union in May 2024. The renewal is valid for a period of ten years.</p> <p>ACCOBAMS participated in the celebratory event marking the 10th anniversary of the High Quality Whale Watching (HQWW®) label, organized by MIRACETI on 15 November 2025 in Sainte-Maxime, France. ACCOBAMS also supported the creation of a video recap of the event, aimed at contributing to the sustainable development of whale-watching activities, as well as enhancing knowledge and conservation of cetaceans on a broader scale through an integrated and coordinated approach.</p>

CA 2 e	Marine litter
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Expected outcomes	Improved monitoring of marine litter in relation with cetaceans.
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Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	Status for the current triennium	Detailed developments
Monitor the impacts of marine litter (ingested marine litter / microplastics / entanglements in ghost nets) on cetaceans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supporting pilot actions to implement the best practice guidelines for cetacean <i>post-mortem</i> investigation, including the assessment of ingested marine litter and entanglement in ghost netsPromoting/ supporting/ liaising with projects, research activities in order to develop standardized methods to detect the occurrence and effects of marine litter, including micro-plastics, in cetacean speciesIdentifying hot-spot areas for marine litter accumulation and identifying threats to cetacean species occurring in those areasDeveloping a proposal to use cetacean species as indicators of marine litter in the ACCOBAMS AreaCollaborating with relevant Organizations (ASCOBANS, IWC, MEDPOL, IMO, FAO) including through joint activitiesPromoting campaigns on the ban of single-use plastics	Ongoing	<p>The report “Study on the hotspots of interactions between cetaceans and marine litter in the ACCOBAMS area” presented as draft at MOP8 was finalized after SC15.</p> <p>The Secretariats of ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS jointly organized a workshop on Marine Debris - New and Emerging Aspects, on 15 April 2023 in O Grove, Galicia, Spain. The overarching aim of the workshop was to achieve a better understanding of the effects of marine debris on cetaceans, including the relationship between ingested marine litter and associated toxic chemicals, pathogens and pharmaceuticals.</p> <p>The ACCOBAMS Secretariat has organized, in collaboration with Padova University, 2 workshops in 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Second Workshop on ingested marine litter monitoring & entanglement evidences in the Adriatic Sea, in hybrid format, in Padova, Italy, on 21-22 February 2024- A Workshop on ingested marine litter monitoring & entanglement evidences in the ACCOBAMS Area, on 6-7 April 2024, in Catania, Italy <p>Conclusions were presented and endorsed by the IWC SC in May 2024.</p>

CA 2 f	Chemical & biological pollution
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Expected outcomes	Improved monitoring of chemical & biological pollution on cetaceans.
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Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	Status for the current triennium	Detailed developments
Monitor the impact of chemical & biological pollution (such as pathogens, invasive species) on cetaceans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing an inventory of institutions or laboratories within the ACCOBAMS Area able to analyze samples for legacy and emerging pollutants Establishing a common database on diseases and chemical burdens Assessing cumulative effects and multiple stressors, including chemicals, marine litter, climate change, and emerging pathogens, on cetaceans in ACCOBAMS Area Disseminating the best practices to assess the impact of chemical pollution on cetaceans with a focus on emerging contaminants Organize training on the best practices to assess the impact of chemical pollution Collaborating with relevant Organizations, initiatives and projects Encouraging Parties to follow existing protocols to minimize the introduction of pollutants in the marine environment 	Ongoing	<p>The reports “Bibliographic review on the impact of chemical pollution on cetaceans, including the identification of ad hoc research projects aimed at assessing chemical pollution on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS Area” and “Guidelines on the best practices to assess the impact of chemical pollution on cetaceans / to measure the chemical contamination on cetaceans” presented as draft at MOP8 were finalized after SC15.</p> <p>The Secretariats of ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS jointly organized a workshop on Marine Debris - New and Emerging Aspects, on 15 April 2023 in O Grove, Galicia, Spain. The overarching aim of the workshop was to achieve a better understanding of the effects of marine debris on cetaceans, including the relationship between ingested marine litter and associated toxic chemicals, pathogens and pharmaceuticals.</p>

CA 2 g	Climate change
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Expected outcomes	ACCOBAMS cooperates with regional initiatives on climate change, taking into account cetacean conservation
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Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Status for the current triennium	Detailed developments
Contribute to regional initiatives on climate change	Medium	Scientific Committee Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaising with relevant CMS Working Group Participating in Meetings and side events 	Not implemented	No voluntary contribution nor external fundings were identified to contribute to regional initiatives on climate change.

CA 2 i	Captivity related issues		
Expected outcomes		All specimens held in captivity in the ACCOBAMS Area are listed Advisory Committee on captivity issues and semi-enclosed facilities is operational	
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
Identify specimens held in captivity in the ACCOBAMS Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing an ACCOBAMS Advisory Committee on semi-enclosed facilities that should provide guidance, based on best scientific evidence, to interested Parties on all the questions related to semi-enclosed facilities for cetaceans on the basis of the conclusion of the Follow-up Committee related to “interactions between humans and dolphins by resolution 3.13 (dolphin interaction programme Updating the overview of specimens held in captivity in the ACCOBAMS Area in collaboration with international organizations (such as CITES) Reinforcing collaboration with NFP / NGO/ ACCOBAMS Partners / CITES authorities in each country Developing a template of genetic passport for different cetacean species kept in captivity, in collaboration with the ACCOBAMS Advisory Committee on Captivity related issues 	Ongoing	<p>During SC15, the Scientific Committee endorsed the amended Terms of Reference of the ACCOBAMS Advisory Committee on semi-enclosed facilities and approved its composition.</p> <p>Experts have been recruited to develop draft guidelines for best practices during the installation and management of semi-enclosed facilities for cetacean species in the ACCOBAMS area and to develop a draft template for a genetic passport for cetacean species that are kept in captivity, in the ACCOBAMS area, in collaboration with the ACCOBAMS Advisory Committee on semi-enclosed facilities.</p> <p>SC16 adopted the Recommendation 16.13 “Semi-captivity (passport & guidelines)”.</p>
CA 3 a	Area-based measures for cetacean conservation		
Expected outcomes		Cetacean Critical Habitats are updated IMMAs are updated and new ones are identified Implementation of relevant measures are initiated in some pilot Cetacean Critical Habitats	
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
Regularly update Cetacean Critical Habitats (CCH) and Important Marine mammal Areas (IMMAs), as appropriate, including by identifying priority areas for action to mitigate the known threats (bycatch...) / area-based management measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gathering data, in particular through the organization of regional workshops to update CCH, taking into account IMMAs and EBSAs process) Gathering data on human activities and cetaceans, in particular through the organization of regional workshops with relevant regional organization (GFCM, maritime organization...), taking into account the IMMAs and EBSAs process and upcoming regional study from Duke Marine Lab. Launching a working group in order to review the best metrics to use considering the CCH aim 	Ongoing	<p>The Secretariat has assisted the Task Manager in the organization of 2 workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hybrid workshop on redefinition of the CCH process in Monaco on 18 March 2024 Workshop back-to-back with the 2024 ECS Conference on human activity data and mapping for the ACCOBAMS CCH process in Catania, Italy on 8 April 2024 <p>Relevant information was put in NETCCOBAMS</p>
Support implementation of relevant measures for adequate management in CCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and promoting relevant management measures in pilot CCH, in collaboration with all stakeholders, including network of MPAs managers Raising Parties’ awareness on CCHs, on their added value during online workshops, on the use of existing IMMAs to identify and to declare new MPAs or MPAs network Collaborating with other Organizations, such as UNEP-MAP/ SPA-RAC, BSC, IMO, IWC, and GFCM, and in particular through the Strategical alliance 		<p>The Secretariat was involved in some MSP projects and participated in some workshops (MSP4BIO workshop, 24 October 2024, Marseille, France).</p> <p>Informal discussions were carried out between UNEP/MAP, SPA/RAC, GFCM, IUCN Med, and ACCOBAMS on the 30 x 30 target and BBNJ treaty.</p>

CA 4 a	Information /Communication / Awareness about cetaceans		
Expected outcomes	All ACCOBAMS Bodies, national focal/contact points, Partners and other relevant national institutions, Organizations and experts are familiar with activities implemented by or relevant for ACCOBAMS and share accurately information General public and other relevant stakeholders are aware about cetaceans and need for their conservation through activities supported by or linked to ACCOBAMS		
Proposed Action(s)	Means of implementation	<i>Status for the current triennium</i>	<i>Detailed developments</i>
Maintain regular information/ communication about ongoing activities, cooperation and funding possibilities, cetacean conservation scientists and experts operating in the region and other relevant information; facilitate communication among cetacean conservation actors of the ACCOBAMS Area, in particular in Southern Mediterranean countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing the ACCOBAMS Communication Strategy, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - defining ACCOBAMS as brand - upgrading communication products - improving presence on social networks - <i>assessing</i> the effectiveness of the Communication Strategy Development of NETCCOBAMS Platform (MA1a) Promoting the use of the HQWW label (CA2d) Linking conservation with culture (UNESCO/ Ocean decade) by initiating joint natural history exhibitions and offering expertise and knowledge 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A guidance manual to manage social media, notably interactions with digital communities, and the process of content production and & publication has been created; An ACCOBAMS LinkedIn page was created; Prepared content is posted twice a week on existing ACCOBAMS accounts on social media platforms: Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter; ACCOBAMS visual identity in social media posts has been implemented. Quarterly assessment of implementation was delivered. News on HQWW label, certification and certified operators at the end of the season Updated templates reflecting ACCOBAMS' visual identity have been prepared for use in letterheads and other official documents. A process is underway to register DOI codes for each official ACCOBAMS report in order to enhance their traceability and accessibility. <p>ACCOBAMS Secretariat attended several events to share information about its activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colloque of the “Academie de la Mer” in Monaco (July 2024) - Exhibit of photographer Greg Lecoeur titled “Sanctuaire Pelagos” - Annual Meetings of Pelagos Agreement and National committee - Meetings of the “Cercle des Partenaires” of Monaco Explorations - opening of the “Mostra Mediterranea” Expo, (February 2025). <p>The ACCOBAMS Secretariat organized a workshop titled “Cetacean Culture: Navigating Change in the ACCOBAMS Region and Beyond – Joint workshop with CMS during the 36th Annual Conference of the European Cetacean Society held in Ponta Delgada, Azores, on 12-16, May 2025.</p>
Promote citizen sciences uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of initiatives and tools already in place / in order to mutualize efforts in particular at the level of young people Workshop on how to collect data and data exchanges through citizen apps (standardization of the protocols and methodology for data collection) in the context of proposed analytical techniques 	Not implemented	No voluntary contribution nor external fundings were identified to promote citizen sciences uses.
Introduce in a new Country / Disseminate the ACCOBAMS Teaching Module courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing new teaching module in universities dealing with cetacean conservation Translation of the Teaching Module on national languages of ACCOBAMS Parties 	Ongoing	An update of the 2012 teaching module courses is ongoing.
Promote and disseminate project results and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing a Conference on cetacean conservation in South Mediterranean Countries - CSMC Disseminating projects tools such as “whale risk” Special ACCOBAMS issue in a scientific review Encouraging publications of national experts in international journal with handbooks with simple and standardized methods and specific trainings and workshops 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSMC6 organised in Monastir, Tunisia, on 13-14 November 2023. ACCOBAMS supported 6 Articles for publication at Frontiers Special Issue on ASI.

ANNEX 1**Main Meetings attended by the Secretariat in 2023-2025 (up to November 2025)**

Dates	Name of the Meeting	Location	Organized by
2023			
9-10 March	Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups on Monitoring (CORMON), Biodiversity and Fisheries	Athens, Greece	UNEP/MAP
16 - 20 April	34th ECS Annual Conference	Galicia, Spain	ECS
5 May	Sixteenth meeting of the GFCM Compliance Committee	Rhodes, Cyprus	GCFM
22 May	Final Meeting of QUIETSEAS	Brussels, Belgium	QUIETSEAS
22-24 May	Sixteenth Meeting of SPA/BD Focal Points	Malta	SPA/RAC
14-15 June	Working group on cetacean monitoring under MSFD	Rome, Italy	ABIOMMED
19 June	EU - Technical Group on Underwater Noise (TG-Noise)	Online	European Commission (DG ENV)
27-28 June	Integrated Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups (CORMONs)	Athens, Greece	UNEP/MAP
12-13 September	Workshop 'Together for the Med'	Malaga, Spain	Together for the Med'
10 October	National French Committee – Pelagos Sanctuary	Bastia, France	Pelagos France
7 November	World Shipping Council Conference	Brussels, Belgium	World Shipping Council
20-22 November	Pelagos Agreement 9 th Meeting of the Parties	Nice	Pelagos Agreement
12 December	ABIOMMED Final Scientific Conference	Athens, Greece	ABIOMMED
2024			
12-17 February	14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP14)	Samarkand, Uzbekistan	CMS
8-12 April	35th ECS Annual Conference,	Catania, Sicily, Italy	ECS
16-18 April	6th edition of the IETA-led European Climate Summit	Firenze, Italy	IETA
9 July	Round table: Noise, collisions & solutions	Geneva, Switzerland	IFAW
12-13 July	Colloque Pêche ou Surpêche	Monaco	Académie de la Mer
10-12 September	10th Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS)	Odense, Denmark/ online	ASCOBANS
17-20 September	7th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council	Bonn, Germany	CMS
16 October	National French Committee – Pelagos Sanctuary	Menton, France	Pelagos France

2025			
9-14 February	First SEASOUNDS Workshop Underwater noise pollution, bridging the gaps between wave physics and life science	Hyères, France	SEASOUNDS
March	Workshop Together for the Med Network	Tunis, Tunisia	Blue Seeds
7-8 April	Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON) Biodiversity and Fisheries held on 7 and 8 April 2025	Athens, Greece	UNEP/MAP
9-10 April	11th Meeting of the SAPBIO National Correspondents	Athens, Greece	UNEP/MAP
12-16 May	36th ECS Annual Conference	Azores, Portugal	ECS
20- 22 May	Seventeenth Meeting of SPA/BD Focal Points	Istanbul, Türkiye	SPA/RAC
29 May	EU - Technical Group on Underwater Noise (TG-Noise)	Online	European Commission (DG ENV)
3-6 June	One Ocean Science Congress	Nice, France	UN
7-8 June	Blue Economic Finance Forum	Monaco	
9-13 June	Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3)	Nice, France	UN
July	Academie de la Mer	Monaco	Academie de la Mer
15 September	12th Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group	Athens, Greece	UNEP/MAP
16-19 September	Meeting of the MAP Focal Points	Athens, Greece	UNEP/MAP