

RESOLUTION 9.11

ABUNDANCE AND DISTRIBUTION, INCLUDING ACCOBAMS SURVEY INITIATIVE II AND THE ACCOBAMS LONG-TERM MONITORING PROGRAMME (LTMP)

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

Recalling the commitment in principle shown by the Parties to ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative 2 (ASI-II) as part of the ACCOBAMS Long-Term Monitoring Programme (LTMP) expressed in Resolution 8.10,

Noting that, despite the exhortations of Resolution 8.10 and the efforts of the Secretariat, the Scientific Committee and some Parties, the necessary funds to implement the work required to start the LTMP programme and ASI-II were not fully obtained,

Convinced that new technologies do not, certainly at present time, provide a scientifically (or economically) viable alternative to the existing protocols for ASI-II,

Stressing the urgency that Parties meet their commitments to ASI-II as soon as possible,

Welcoming the continuous efforts made by the Secretariat and the Bureau to reactivate the LTMP contact group, to find solutions to appoint relevant experts, to increase the visibility of the project and to attract potential funders,

Fully recognising the formal launch of the Second ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI-II) at the dedicated side-event during the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) (Nice, 11th June 2025),

Commending the efforts of Parties who provided financial support for the implementation of ASI-II and expressing appreciation to other donors who have already committed funds,

Noting that a significant contribution of funds for ACCOBAMS Survey Initiatives may come from donors different from ACCOBAMS Parties,

Taking into consideration Recommendation 16.2 of the Scientific Committee on “Abundance and distribution”, as well as Recommendation 16.3 on “ASI-II and the ACCOBAMS LTMP”,

Acknowledging the work carried out by the ASI Steering Committee, composed by representatives of IUCN-Med, SPA/RAC, Black Sea Commission Permanent Secretariat, ISPRA and OFB,

Taking note of the outcome of the selection processes for a) the consultant appointed to provide advisory, technical, and administrative support for the development of ASI-II and b) for the Scientific Coordinator of ASI-II,

1. *Stresses* the fundamental importance of a synoptic ASI-II survey and the LTMP to the ability of ACCOBAMS to meet its stated objective;

2. *Confirms* that ASI-II needs to follow the approved survey design principles and methods adopted during ASI-I, modified in the light of (a) consideration of the geopolitical situation; (b) final evaluation of the density maps from ASI-I; (c) the available funding; and d) the activities by the Parties providing in-kind contributions;
3. *Requests* the ASI Steering Committee to continue its engagement by maintaining its role in guiding the strategic direction and implementation of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative;
4. *Decides* to implement ASI-II for the Mediterranean and the contiguous Atlantic area in 2026;
5. *Mandates* the Secretariat to report to the Bureau regarding the feasibility of extending the duration of the contracts of the consultant and the Scientific coordinator as appropriate and mandates the Bureau to decide on the respective extension;
6. *Mandates* the Bureau to assess the feasibility of the implementation of the ASI-II in the Black Sea in summer 2027;
7. *Stresses* that the first ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI-I) experience has shown that the scientific and logistical work involved in organising and coordinating such a large-scale, multi-national survey cannot be achieved in a timely fashion without a long-standing financial support;
8. *Urges* Parties to provide financial and/or in-kind contributions for the implementation of ASI-II;
9. *Mandates* the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Chair of the Scientific Committee and the support of the Bureau, to urgently contact the Parties to:
 - reiterate in a practical manner their commitment to Resolution 8.10;
 - secure the necessary financial contributions, or at least formal commitments, to allow the necessary planning time for a summer 2026 survey;
10. *Mandates* the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Chair of the Scientific Committee and the support of the Bureau, to further approach potential donors to consider contributing to the implementation of ASI-II;
11. *Requests* the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee, to review the relevant 2017 Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) factsheets and to present their updates to the Biodiversity CORMON (Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring) meeting in June 2026.