

RESOLUTION 9.4 SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

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

Recalling Article VII of the Agreement on the composition and functions of the Scientific Committee,

Considering that it is appropriate to amend the Annex to Resolution 8.3 (Rules of the Scientific Committee), in particular to align the Scientific Committee Rules of Procedures to international standards,

Commending the participation in the Scientific Committee of experts from CIESM, IUCN, the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the Scientific Council of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the European Cetacean Society (ECS), of experts from the different regions, as well as of experts designated by the Parties on a voluntary basis,

Appreciating the offer by Italy to provide for the triennium 2023-2025, and on an experimental basis, a voluntary contribution to cover the expenses of participation to the Scientific Committee meetings of up to 8 experts from eligible Countries from the different regions,

Taking into account the Work Programme 2026-2028, as adopted by Resolution 9.5,

Stressing the need for establishing a closer link between the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS and the rest of the scientific community working on cetaceans in the Agreement Area,

Stressing the need for strengthening the representation of the Scientific Committee of ACCOBAMS, by increasing the number of experts from the different regions,

Stressing the need to ensure the diversity of experiences and competences and the equitable geographical distribution and gender balance of membership within the Scientific Committee,

Taking into consideration the recommendation by the Sixth Meeting of the ACCOBAMS Extended Bureau,

1. *Appoints*, as members of the Scientific Committee, the experts proposed by CIESM and IUCN for the period 2026-2028, as follows:

CIESM:	IUCN:
- Loriane MENDEZ	- Rimmel BEN MESSAOUD
- Ayaka Amaha OZTÜRK	- Léa DAVID
- Simone PANIGADA	- Cristina FOSSI

2. *Appoints*, as members of the Scientific Committee, the experts proposed by the Scientific Council of the CMS, the Scientific Committee of the IWC and the ECS for the period 2026-2028, as follows:
 - Mark SIMMONDS, proposed by the Scientific Council of the CMS,
 - Greg DONOVAN, proposed by the Scientific Committee of the IWC;
 - Tilen GENOV, proposed by ECS;
3. *Asks* the Scientific Committee to appoint, at its first Meeting of the triennium, a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson, as well as “Task Managers”;
4. *Recommends* that the new Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Scientific Committee are not experts nominated by the same organisation and that gender and geographical balance are also considered;
5. *Invites* the outgoing Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson to assist the Secretariat in the preparation of the 17th Meeting of the Scientific Committee;
6. *Takes note* of the assessment, by the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, of *curricula vitae* of experts from the different regions;
7. *Appoints*, as members of the Scientific Committee and taking into consideration the available financial resources, two experts from the different regions, as follows:
 - Souad LAMOUTI and Vincent RIDOUX, for the Western Mediterranean and contiguous Atlantic area,
 - Martina ĐURAS and Giancarlo LAURIANO, for the Central Mediterranean,
 - Anastasia KOMNENOU and Céline MAHFOUZ, for the Eastern Mediterranean,
 - Pavel GOL'DIN and Natia KOPALIANI, for the Black Sea;
8. *Thanks* CIESM, IUCN, IWC, the Secretariat of CMS and ECS for bearing the financial responsibility for their experts' participation for the triennium 2026-2028;
9. *Decides* to amend the Rules of procedure of the Scientific Committee, as [annexed](#) to this Resolution;
10. *Agrees* that the present Resolution replaces Resolution 8.3.

ANNEX

Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee¹

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

Article 1

1. The Scientific Committee, established in accordance with Article VII of the Agreement, provides scientific advice and information to the Meeting of the Parties or to the Parties through the Secretariat.
2. The functions of the Scientific Committee are defined in Article VII, paragraph 3, of the Agreement.

COMPOSITION

Article 2

1. The Scientific Committee shall consist of the following members:
 - three experts proposed by **the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean (CIESM)**;
 - three experts proposed by **the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**;
 - **one expert proposed by the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC)**;
 - **one expert proposed by the Scientific Council of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)**;
 - **one expert proposed by the European Cetacean Society (ECS)**;
 - up to three experts from each region, as defined in the [Appendix](#), appointed by the Meeting of the Parties;
2. The above **five** organisations may propose to support **additional experts to the Scientific Committee. The *curricula vitae* of any additional expert shall be provided to the current Chairperson of the Scientific Committee for relevant record-keeping.**
3. The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson of the Scientific Committee **shall be** elected by **and among** the members of the Scientific Committee **appointed under paragraph 1 of this Article** at the first Meeting of the triennium.
4. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Scientific Committee shall not be **experts nominated by** the same organisation. Gender, geographical balance, and alternation in all roles of the Scientific Committee should be considered.
5. **Any Party may designate, on a voluntary basis, one additional expert to the Scientific Committee. The cost of his/her participation to the meetings of the Scientific Committee shall not be covered by the Agreement's funds. The *curricula vitae* of any additional expert shall be provided to the current Chairperson of the Scientific Committee for relevant record-keeping.**
6. **Members of the Scientific Committee shall exercise their functions in their personal capacity and shall not represent any ACCOBAMS Party, group of ACCOBAMS Parties or organisation. This applies to all members, including any expert that a Party designates on a voluntary basis under paragraph 5 above.**

¹ Amendments in bold

SELECTION OF THE MEMBERS AND TERMS OF OFFICE

Article 3

1. The selection of the Scientific Committee members **shall** take into consideration the following criteria, finalised by the Extended Bureau in accordance with the Work Programme proposed to the Parties:
 - a) To be experts in one or more fields relevant to cetacean conservation science;
 - b) To possess an appropriate level of quality, relevance, productivity and originality in activities related to cetacean conservation and research, as demonstrated through scientific publications and technical reports, communications to conferences, participation in working groups or committees at national or international levels;
 - c) To be available to participate in the work of the Scientific Committee, attend its meetings and contribute to the working groups, with the required continuity;
 - d) To be proficient in one of the Agreement's two working languages (English and French) and, **preferably**, have a sufficient knowledge of the other.
2. CIESM, IUCN, **the Scientific Committee of IWC, the Scientific Council of CMS and ECS shall propose qualified experts** in close consultation with the Bureau, which then reports the outcome of these consultations to the Meeting of the Parties.
3. **In the case of experts from regions, the** criteria above **shall** be ascertained through **an** evaluation of **the relevant curricula vitae, which shall be carried out** by the Scientific Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. **This evaluation** shall be submitted to the Meeting of the Parties.
4. The priorities set up in the Work Programme for each triennium, as well as the need to ensure a balanced geographical representation, shall be taken into account in selecting the members of the Scientific Committee by the Meeting of the Parties.
5. At its first Meeting, four "Task Managers" are designated by the Scientific Committee among its members. As far as necessary, these appointments can be modified during the triennium upon decision of the Chairperson of the Scientific Committee in consultation with the Vice-Chairperson and the Bureau.

Article 4

1. The terms of office of the members shall expire at the closure of the ordinary Meeting of the Parties following the one at which they were appointed.
2. Starting from 2026, all leading roles (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Task Managers) shall have a maximum of two consecutive terms.

MEETINGS

Article 5

1. The Chairperson shall preside over the meetings of the Scientific Committee, prepare the provisional agenda in consultation with the Secretariat, and liaise with members between meetings of the Committee. The Chairperson may represent the Committee as required and carry out other functions as may be delegated to him/her by the Committee, within the limits of the Committee functions.

2. The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson. He/she shall preside at meetings of the Scientific Committee in the absence of, or in the event of the Chairperson being unable to act. He/she shall on those occasions exercise the powers and duties prescribed for the Chairperson.
3. At its first meeting after the Meeting of Parties, the Scientific Committee shall assign specific topics for each Task Manager taking into account the priorities set up in the Work Programme for the triennium. Each Task Manager, in addition to his/her role as member of the Scientific Committee, shall coordinate the works of the Scientific Committee concerning the topics that he/she has been assigned by the Scientific Committee. Each Task Manager shall provide a report to the meetings of the Scientific Committee on the topics he/she is in charge of.
4. **The experts from regions** shall work together to provide a report to the meetings of the Scientific Committee on the conservation status of cetaceans and relevant activities in **their respective region**.
5. **As a rule, the meetings of the Scientific Committee shall be held in person. Hybrid meetings may be held if the Chairperson of the Scientific Committee, in agreement with the Secretariat, deems it appropriate.**

Article 6

1. The Scientific Committee may establish ad hoc working groups as needed to deal with specific tasks. It shall define the terms of reference and composition of each working group.
2. The meetings of the working groups shall be held, where possible, in conjunction with other events or intersessionally via remote tools.
3. The Scientific Committee may consider reports from other relevant meetings and working groups established under the Agreement, when necessary.
4. These Rules shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to the meetings of working groups.

Article 7

1. The Chair may decide to invite other experts, including experts in legal and socio-economic matters, to attend meetings (in person or remotely) as observers, with no additional cost for the Trust Fund, as deemed necessary. If their participation requires funding from ACCOBAMS, the Bureau will decide on their attendance, in consultation with the Secretariat.
2. ACCOBAMS Partners may participate as observers to the Meeting of the Scientific Committee.

Article 8

1. Notices of meetings, including date and venue, shall be sent to all Parties, to the members of the Scientific Committee and to ACCOBAMS Partners, by the Secretariat at least 45 days in advance and, in the case of extraordinary meetings, at least 14 days in advance.
2. The Secretariat of the Agreement, with the support of the Sub-Regional Coordination Units, shall undertake secretarial tasks during the meetings of the Scientific Committee and of its working groups and shall provide administrative and logistical support.

3. A report of each Meeting shall be prepared by the Secretariat as soon as possible and shall be communicated to all members and observers of the Scientific Committee, to all Parties and ACCOBAMS Partners.
4. The report shall be posted on the ACCOBAMS website.

Article 9

1. Recommendations by the Scientific Committee shall be adopted by consensus.
2. If consensus cannot be reached regarding an issue, **recommendations by the Scientific Committee shall be adopted by majority of members of the Scientific Committee appointed under Article 2, paragraph 1, present and voting. All** positions expressed about **this issue** during the meeting shall be included in the meeting report.

Article 10

1. The Meeting of the Scientific Committee shall be convened once a year during the first two years of the triennium by the Secretariat of the Agreement in consultation with the Chairperson.
2. Extraordinary meetings may be convened if the Bureau so agrees.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE

Article 11

1. In application of Article II, paragraph 2, of the Agreement, when a Party asks for advice on exceptions to the prohibition on deliberate taking of cetaceans, the Secretariat shall immediately communicate the request to the Chairperson and to the members of the Scientific Committee for advice.
2. Within 30 days, the Chairperson takes a decision on the request also on the basis of the advice received from the other members of the Scientific Committee and communicates it to the Secretariat for immediate communication to the requesting Party.

Article 12

1. Between sessions, any member of the Scientific Committee or the Sub-Regional Coordination Units, through the Secretariat, or the Secretariat directly, may submit a written proposal to the Chairperson for a decision within the limits of the functions of the Scientific Committee.
2. The Chairperson shall forward the proposal to the Scientific Committee members. Comments shall be submitted within 30 days from the date of that communication to all members of the Scientific Committee and to the Secretariat.
3. If no comments nor objections on a proposal are received from a member of the Scientific Committee, the proposal shall be considered as adopted. Its adoption shall be notified to those who have made the proposal. If any member of the Scientific Committee objects to a proposal within the deadline, the proposal shall be referred to the next meeting of the Scientific Committee.

Article 13

1. When, in the opinion of the Scientific Committee, an emergency arises, requiring the adoption of immediate measures to avoid deterioration of the conservation status of one or more cetacean species, the Chair may ask the Secretariat to contact the relevant Parties urgently.

WORKING LANGUAGES

Article 14

1. The working languages of the Scientific Committee shall be English and French.
2. Simultaneous translation in English and French may be provided for the plenary sessions of the meetings of the Scientific Committee if funding is available.
3. Working documents shall be made available in English or in French and may be translated if funding is available.

REPORT

Article 15

The Chairperson of the Scientific Committee shall submit to each ordinary Meeting of the Parties and to each meeting of the Bureau a written report on the Scientific Committee's work since the previous ordinary Meeting of the Parties.

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 16

These Rules shall apply immediately upon their adoption by the Parties.

Article 17

These Rules may be amended as required by a decision of the Meeting of the Parties.

Appendix

Article 1

In order to ensure balanced geographical representation in the Scientific Committee, the geographical scope of the Agreement is divided into four regions.

Article 2

For the purpose of facilitating **the designation of members for the** Scientific Committee, **the Parties are subdivided into the following four regions:**

Region	Parties
Western Mediterranean and contiguous Atlantic area	Algeria, France, (Italy), Monaco, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, (Tunisia)
Central Mediterranean	Albania, Croatia, (Greece), (Italy), Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Slovenia, (Tunisia)
Eastern Mediterranean	Cyprus, Egypt, (Greece), Lebanon, Syria, (Türkiye)
Black Sea	Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, (Türkiye), Ukraine

Article 3

At the moment of the nomination of experts from the regions, because of their geographical situation, Greece, Italy, Tunisia and Türkiye shall select their attachment to a single region:

- 'Western Mediterranean' or 'Central Mediterranean' for Italy and Tunisia;
- 'Central Mediterranean' or 'Eastern Mediterranean' for Greece;
- 'Black Sea' or 'Eastern Mediterranean' for Türkiye.