

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE***Note of the Secretariat***

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the election the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee have been adopted during the 15th Meeting of the Scientific Committee (Tunis, May 2023).

The present ToR have been updated according to Resolution 9.4 adopted during the Ninth Meeting of Parties to ACCOBAMS (MOP9, Cyprus, November 2025).

Background

During MOP9, Parties adopted Resolution 9.4 which amended the Rules of Procedure of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee (SC).

The amendments agreed by MOP9 aim at ensuring a wider participation of ACCOBAMS Parties in the Scientific Committee, as a subsidiary key body to the ACCOBAMS work. The enhancement of its institutional role was envisaged, as well as its alignment with fundamental principles and universal values - transparency, geographic and gender representation, cooperation, inclusion – while mindful of the necessary balance between contrasting factors like the quality of the scientific and technical advice *vs.* the comprehension of institutional work, and the preservation of the institutional memory of the organisation *vs.* the need for generational change.

Based on these objectives, the MOP9 changed the rules on the composition of the SC, the designation of their members and the election procedures, as follows:

- a) up to 3 experts from each region as defined in the Appendix of the RoP of the SC.
- b) the MOP designates all the members of the Scientific Committee, although some of them still continue to be proposed by CIESM, IUCN, CMS, IWC & ECS.
- c) The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson of the SC 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.
- d) The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the SC shall not be experts nominated by the same organisation. Gender, geographical balance, and alternation in all roles of the SC should be considered.
- e) Starting from 2026, all leading roles (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Task Managers) shall have a maximum of two consecutive terms.
- f) Members of the SC 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.

The role and responsibilities of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee are summarised in [Appendix 1](#) to these Terms of Reference.

Election procedure

Pursuant to Resolution 9.4, the Scientific Committee needs to appoint, at its first Meeting of the triennium, a Chair and a Vice-Chair among the experts designated as members to the Scientific Committee by CIESM, IUCN, CMS, IWC and ECS and experts from regions.

1. At the first SC Meeting of each triennium, a list of all experts designated as members of the Scientific Committee is provided in [Appendix 2](#) to these Terms of Reference.
2. The ACCOBAMS Executive Secretary, together with another staff member of the ACCOBAMS Secretariat, will facilitate the election procedure of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
3. At the beginning of the election procedure, SC members will be invited to inform the meeting in case they do not wish to be considered as candidates to serve as Chair or/and as Vice-Chair.
4. Then the Secretariat provides to each SC member present in the room a secret ballot containing the list of experts who may be considered to serve as Chair of the Scientific Committee, and requests each SC member to circle the name of the expert they wish to elect for this position.
5. In case there are SC members who cannot attend in person and are participating online, they may delegate their vote to another SC member present in the room and should inform the Secretariat in writing of that decision, well in advance of the meeting. In such case, the SC member with the delegated vote will be given a supplementary secret ballot.
6. Once the voting procedure is concluded and after collecting all secret ballots in the room, the Secretariat immediately counts the votes, in the presence of all SC Members, and announces the results of the voting procedure.
7. Once the voting procedure for the election of the SC Chair is successfully concluded, a second voting procedure is carried out to elect the SC Vice-chair, taking into account that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee shall not be experts nominated by the same Organization, and that gender and geographical balance, as well as alternation in all roles of the Scientific Committee, is to be considered.
8. Each member of the Scientific Committee will be given one vote for the SC Chair and one vote for the SC Vice-Chair.
9. In case any voting procedure fails to obtain a majority in the first ballot, a second ballot on the two most voted candidates shall be taken, until the voting procedure is concluded.

Appendix 1 - Summary of the role and responsibilities of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee

Coordination and representation of the SC

The Chair and Vice-Chair:

1. in addition to their role as members of the Scientific Committee, will coordinate the work of the Scientific Committee concerning the topics that have been assigned to them by the Scientific Committee.
2. 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.
3. together with other members of the Scientific Committee, the Secretariat and the Bureau, the Sub-Regional Coordinating Units, ACCOBAMS Partners and international and national non-governmental Organizations, will contribute to promote and facilitate the implementation of the ACCOBAMS Work Program, bearing in mind the Resolutions adopted by the Meeting of the Parties.
4. may be requested to attend meetings on behalf of the ACCOBAMS Secretariat, in relation to their field of expertise.

Collaboration

The SC Chair and SC Vice-Chair:

1. together with other Scientific Committee members, will further contribute to promote cooperation with scientific Institutions in the ACCOBAMS area.
2. will conduct their work in close collaboration with the Secretariat, the Bureau and, when actions are interconnected, with relevant ACCOBAMS working groups, as appropriate.
3. will mainly work through exchange of email.

Scientific Committee Meetings

1. The Chair and Vice-Chair elected for the previous 3-years period will assist the Secretariat in the preparation of the first Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the following 3-years period.
2. During the Scientific Committee meeting, the Chair and Vice-Chair will assist the Secretariat by providing conclusions on each agenda item, which will be reflected in the Meeting report.
3. The Chair shall preside over the meetings of the Scientific Committee, support the Secretariat in the preparation of the provisional agenda, and liaise with SC members between meetings of the Committee. The Chair may represent the Committee as required and carry out other any other functions delegated to him/her by the Committee, within the limits of the SC scope of work.

4. The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair. In the absence or incapability of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will preside over the Scientific Committee meetings and exercise the powers and duties prescribed for the Chair.

Assistance on the composition of the Scientific Committee

1. The Chair and Vice-Chair will assist the Extended Bureau in the selection of Scientific Committee members by providing an evaluation of the background and *Curricula* of the candidates, which will also be submitted to the Meeting of the Parties.

Consultative role & consultation procedure

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 consult the Chair and other Scientific Committee members to get their advice on such request.
2. Within 30 days, the Chair takes a decision on the request, also considering the advice received from the other Scientific Committee members, and conveys such decision to the Secretariat for immediate communication to the requesting Party.
3. 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 Chair for a decision within the limits of the functions of the Scientific Committee.
4. The Chair shall forward the proposal to the Scientific Committee members. Their comments shall be submitted within 30 days from the date of that communication to all members of the Scientific Committee and to the Secretariat.
5. 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 urgently contact the relevant Parties.

Appendix 2 – List of all experts designated as Members to the Scientific Committee

	<p>Loriane MENDEZ Mediterranean Science Commission Research Assistant 16 boulevard de Suisse 98000 Monaco Tel: +33629414208 lmendez@ciesm.org</p>
Members nominated by CIESM	<p>Ayaka Amaha OZTÜRK Turkish Marine Research Foundation Advisor Fistikli Yali Sok. N°34/5 Beykoz, 81650 Istanbul – TURKEY Tel: +90 216 3239050 ayakamaha@hotmail.co.jp</p>
	<p>Simone PANIGADA Tethys Research Institute Viale G.B. Gadio 2 20 121 Milan – Italy Tel: (+39) 02 7200 1947 – (+39) 02 6694 114 panigada69@gmail.com</p>
Members nominated by IUCN	<p>Rimel BENMESSAOUD Assistante d'enseignement Supérieur- Département de Génie Halieutique et environnement Institut National Agronomique de Tunisie (INAT) 43 Avenue Charles Nicolles, Tunis, 1082 Tunisie Tel : +216 29 08 36 31 benmessaoud_rimel@yahoo.fr</p>
	<p>Léa DAVID EcoOcéan Institut Dr écologie marine cétoologie/ornithologie 18 Rue des Hospices - 34090 Montpellier FRANCE Tel : +33 4 67 84 28 87 - Mob : +33 6 09 49 68 39 lea.david2@wanadoo.fr</p>
	<p>Maria Cristina FOSSI Dipartimento di Scienze Fisiche, della Terra e dell'Ambiente Università di Siena Via P.A. Mattioli, 4 53100 Siena - Italy fossi@unisi.it</p>
Representative for CMS	<p>Mark Peter SIMMONDS CoP-Appointed Councillor C/o OceanCare Gerbestrasse 6 CH-8820 Waedenswil – Switzerland Tel: +44 7809 6430 00 mark.simmonds@sciencegyre.co.uk</p>

Representative for ECS	Tilen GENOV Chair Place du Vingt-Août 7 4000 Liège, Belgium Tel: +38631771077 tilen.genov@gmail.com
Representative for IWC	Greg DONOVAN Beannacht, 4 High Street Haddenham, Cambs CB63XA, UK Tel: +44 759 326 0638 corkblue1o@gmail.com

EXPERTS FROM REGIONS	
Region	Member
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Central region	Martina DURAS Full Professor Department of Anatomy, Histology, Embryology Faculty of Veterinary Medicine University of Zagreb Ulica Dragutina Albrechta 4 Zagreb, 10000, Croatia martina.duras@vef.unizg.hr martina.duras4@gmail.com
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Eastern region	<p>Anastasia KOMNENOU University Hospital, Department of Clinical Sciences, School of Veterinary Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, AUTH, 11 St. Voutyra str, 54627, Thessaloniki Greece Tel: +30 2310 994443 -mob. +30 6945 531850 natakomn@vet.auth.gr natakomn@gmail.com</p>
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Black Sea region	<p>Pavel GOL'DIN Schmalhausen Institute of Zoology National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine & Ukrainian Center of Ecology of the Sea vul. Bogdana Khmelnytskogo 15 01030, Kyiv - Ukraine Tel: +380673900118 pavelgoldin412@gmail.com</p>
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