

WORK PROGRAMME 2026-2028 WITH PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY PARTIES AT MOP9**Note of the Secretariat:**

This document has been prepared by the ACCOBAMS Secretariat based on Annex 6 of Resolution 9.5 (Work Programme and budget 2026-2028), with the objective of specifically identifying the activities to be carried out by the Scientific Committee and facilitating the monitoring and reporting of Work Programme implementation.

The section "*Objectives to be achieved before SC18*" is intended to be completed by the members of the Scientific Committee, who are invited to identify and formulate concrete activities to be implemented prior to the Eighteenth Meeting of the Scientific Committee in Autumn 2027. This section should reflect the actions to be undertaken, as well as the expected outputs to be delivered by the Committee during the 2026–2028 triennium.

MANAGEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT (MA)

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)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Propose remedy actions in cases of non-follow-up with ACCOBAMS Resolutions and infringements	Main	Follow up Committee Secretariat, Parties, Scientific Committee Partners, SRCUs, Non-Party Range States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convening a Follow up Committee meeting (<i>online</i>) • Applying Follow up Procedures 	<p>Resolution 9.6.A</p> <p>(Follow-up submission by OceanCare on the failure by Spain to update the conservation status of the sperm whale (<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>) and the fin whale (<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>) in the mediterranean from the current category of 'vulnerable' to 'endangered' according to the IUCN red list status of cetacean species and the ACCOBAMS resolution 8.12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrusts the ACCOBAMS Secretariat with the task of asking all the ACCOBAMS Parties to provide information about the procedure being followed for modifying the conservation status of cetacean species under national legislation and about the existence of a time-schedule for completing the procedure and to circulate such information to the Meeting of the Parties and to the Follow-up 	

				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee;• <i>Invites the Scientific Committee to consider this information in the relevant ACCOBAMS/IWC Conservation Management Plans;</i> <p>Resolution 9.6.B</p> <p>(Follow up of submission by OceanCare on the failure by some ACCOBAMS members to implement the ACCOBAMS conservation plan for Mediterranean common dolphins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>States that, under Resolution 8.8.E, the Meeting of the Parties invited the fifteen Parties that hadn't replied, namely Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Monaco, Montenegro, Slovenia, Syria and Tunisia, to provide information to the Follow-up Committee, through ACCOBAMS Secretariat, on specific measures taken for the implementation of the Conservation Plan for short-beaked common dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea, or any other measures considered relevant for their protection;</i>	
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MA1	Involvement of key stakeholders
MA1a	Strengthen involvement of all key stakeholders in ACCOBAMS's operations
Expected outcomes	

Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Enforce communication within the ACCOBAMS community and strengthen exchanges of information on national and regional projects / activities / initiatives	Medium	Parties	Using NETCCOBAMS platform as sharing/consultation tool - Exchange of information on national reports and regional projects / activities / initiatives	Resolution 9.8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests the Scientific Committee to review and update the Terms of Reference of the expert Working Group on NETCCOBAMS; • Asks the NETCCOBAMS Working Group to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop Guidelines on NETCCOBAMS use, including specifications on access to maps, data and information, according to different types of users, in order to guarantee the safe use of sensitive data; - Organise dedicated meetings (Terms of Reference to be prepared), as appropriate, to review maps, data and information present on the platform, and to agree on the best use of the platform's options; - Periodically meet, as appropriate, in order to determine which type of users can access the new material added into the platform (maps, 	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• data, and information); Asks the Secretariat to disseminate information on the value of the NETCCOBAMS online platform, including its contribution to achieved mitigation measures, among national and international fora, managers and stakeholders (such as the International Maritime Organisation, port authorities, shipping companies), to increase the visibility of the work done and encourage the use of NETCCOBAMS and the submission of data on this platform.	
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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 surveys

Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Promote the implementation of the Long-Term Monitoring Programme, taking into consideration monitoring and reporting obligations of countries (MSFD, Barcelona Convention, Bucharest Convention)	Main	Scientific Committee Secretariat Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funds for implementing ASI2, including investigating the existence of possible funding at national / regional levels • Continue with the development and implementation of a simulation framework to examine the performance of different future survey strategies (synoptic, regional/national) - contract • Undertake synoptic basin-wide surveys in the ACCOBAMS Area with a focus on abundance and trends in 2026/2027 (ASI-II) with the support of the ASI Steering Committee, the LTMP Contact Group (Res 8.10) and of the SC to review and update as necessary the field and analytical protocols • Promote synchronisation and standardisation of existing monitoring efforts to contribute to LTMP purpose (coordination meetings at the sub-regional level, Working Group on cetaceans monitoring...) • Collaborate with relevant 	<p>Resolution 9.11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mandates</i> the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Chair of the Scientific Committee and the support of the Bureau, to urgently contact the Parties to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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; • <i>Mandates</i> 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; 	

			<p>organisations, such as the UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention System (EcAp/IMAP, QSR), the Bucharest Convention and the European Commission (MSFD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise advanced statistical methods and machine learning techniques to integrate and analyse data from various sources, ensuring robust and accurate abundance estimates and distribution models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	
Promote the use of ASI-I data by increasing the visibility of ASI-II (and future) datasets and related results and encourage further analyses	High	Scientific Committee Secretariat SRCUs Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a centralised data repository to facilitate data sharing and collaboration among different organisations and stakeholders. Use the NETCCOBAMS Activity on “ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative” to handle the sharing of ASI Data Promote ASI-II data and results in relevant fora Share ASI-II data following received requests in accordance with ASI Terms of use and archiving/monitoring of the requests Collect outputs of work and analysis conducted following ASI-I & II full dataset requests to be used by the SC to give best scientific advice Submit ASI-II results to the IWC SC 		
Promote data collection at sub-regional and national levels (in coherence with ACCOBAMS survey methodologies)	Main	Scientific Committee, Secretariat, Parties, Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue facilitating exchanges and coordination between Parties on sub-regional surveys Continue organising training activities on monitoring methods/protocols and data analysis for smaller-scale surveys (at local, national and sub-regional levels) Update handbooks on standardised monitoring methods (aerial surveys, 		

			<p>boat-based surveys, acoustic surveys...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with relevant organisations, such as UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention System (EcAp/IMAP, QSR), the Bucharest Convention and the European Commission (MSFD) 		
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..)	High	Scientific Committee Secretariat Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review results from 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 • Review collaboration with existing regional fisheries surveys (MEDITIS, MEDIAS) and relevant organisations such as GFCM and ICCAT • Review collaborations with relevant existing initiatives/projects/networks on platforms of opportunity • Organise meetings/workshops to discuss possible synergies and shared methodology and data analysis – ToR • Develop, update and standardise protocols for multidisciplinary surveys • Review & Update the "Guidelines for the Monitoring of the Range of Cetaceans, Abundance and Demographic Characteristics of Populations" in synergy with IMAP • Regularly review « Best Available Technologies » and assess potential contribution to LTMP 		

CA 1 b	Population Structure				
Expected outcomes	Improved knowledge on population structure in the ACCOBAMS Area and species conservation management plans completed Exchange of samples is facilitated for joint analysis Data exchange is facilitated for basin wide analysis				
Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Improve photo ID data collection and dissemination: - Update and harmonise protocols on data collection for photo ID - Share photo ID data	High	Scientific Committee Secretariat Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise experts meeting for best practices guide on how to collect data for comparison – ToR Organise regional experts' trainings on analysis on photo ID (including drone photo ID), including AI (Artificial Intelligence) – ToR Facilitate data sharing and the creation of large-scale photo-id catalogues for in-depth analysis (see CMP actions) – ToR 	Resolution 9.12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Encourages</i> Parties to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collect updated information regarding research results on population genetics and to include it in their National Report; register their scientific institutions following the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and/or the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Nagoya protocol) 	
Improve data collection on cetacean populations genetic in the ACCOBAMS Area Development of genetical identification of population structure (particularly for Mediterranean), including e.g., eDNA	High	Scientific Committee Secretariat Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the ACCOBAMS Best practices on data collection on cetacean populations genetic Facilitate analysis of existing tissue samples (including those from biopsies) to address questions on stock structure and genetic diversity Harmonise procedures for samples exchanges among CITES scientific and forensic institutions in the ACCOBAMS area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Urges</i> Parties to contact scientists and scientific institutions in the territory under their jurisdiction to facilitate greater understanding of 	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with relevant organisations (CITES, ABS Nagoya Protocol...) • Promote the use of new technics such as genomics and proteomics 	the scientific exchange provisions of Article VII, paragraph 6, of the CITES and /or the requirements of the Nagoya Protocol on the non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of scientific specimens;	
Other ecological markers	Medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise a workshop on the incorporation of ecological markers in the definition of population structure (Ecological Management Units) for cetaceans in the framework of international scientific events or meetings, in collaboration with ICES, IWC – ToR • Promote studies of age structure and population demography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Calls upon</i> Partners to conduct sample collection and research on population genetics, to apply the ACCOBAMS Best Practices on Cetacean Population Genetics in their work and to regularly provide the Secretariat with relevant information to update the online cetacean sample database, as well as the list of suitable genetics laboratories and new scientific publications; 	

CA 1 c	Monitoring cetaceans status				
Expected outcomes	<p>Regional conservation plans (Med and BS) for cetacean are promoted at the national level</p> <p>Relevant conservation management plans are developed and implemented</p> <p>National Action Plans are developed and implemented in several Countries</p>				
Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Support in implementing Regional Conservation Plans for cetaceans (in Black Sea and in Mediterranean Sea)	Main	SRCS Parties Non-Party Range States Secretariat Scientific Committee, Partners,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the BSC in the revision of the Regional Conservation Plan for cetacean in Black Sea, taking into consideration the IWC/ACCOBAMS Conservation Management Plan framework Support the SPA/RAC in the implementation, assessment and update of the Mediterranean Action Plan for Cetaceans adopted by Parties to the Barcelona Convention 	Resolution 9.10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Invites</i> Black Sea Parties and experts to consider, <i>inter alia</i>, the areas, topics, activities and measures listed in the Annex to this Resolution during the work on the Conservation Management Plan for the Black Sea cetaceans and the Post-war Plan for the Black Sea; 	
Develop/ revise/ implement relevant Conservation Management Plans for cetacean species	Main	Scientific Committee Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise Experts Workshops to develop Conservation Management Plans for sperm whales and <i>Ziphius</i>, taking into account all national conservation plans – ToR Organise stakeholders Workshops to finalise Conservation Management Plans for fin whales, <i>Risso's</i>, bottlenose and common dolphins, taking into account all national conservation plans - ToR 		

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the implementation of relevant actions of the approved Conservation Management Plans for cetacean species, emphasising coordination actions Consider the development of killer whales CMP, taking into account the existing national conservation plans 		
Facilitate the Development/ revision/ implementation of National Action Plans for cetaceans	High	Parties Non-Party Range States, Secretariat, SRCUs Scientific Committee, Partners	<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 organisations (NGOs, associations, national partners...) Establishment of national Working Groups or Councils in the framework of National Actions Plan 		
Facilitate the Development/ revision/ implementation of National Action Plans for cetaceans	High	Parties Non-Party Range States, Secretariat, SRCUs Scientific Committee, Partners	<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 organisations (NGOs, associations, national partners...) Establishment of national Working Groups or Councils in the framework of National Actions Plan 		

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)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Set up /Reinforce official national stranding networks (with all national institutions concerned and relevant international agreements)	Main	Parties, Non-Party Range States, Scientific Committee, Secretariat, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate studies on legal/institutional status of National stranding networks in order to assist experts in the establishment of official national stranding network when relevant – Parties Provide assistance in the preparation of a legislative framework to settle the national coordination network- Parties Organise trainings on necropsies, response to live strandings and emergency situations, including mass strandings, in the ACCOBAMS Area, and on the use of relevant databases – ToR 	Resolution 9.13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Requests</i> the two co-chairs of the AETFS to update the terms of reference (ToR) for AETFS by taking into consideration other existing initiatives in terms of objectives and to establish a prioritisation system to provide support in case of capacity-building request and emergency response; <i>Requests</i> the Secretariat, in collaboration with the AETFS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to keep a continuously updated list of existing stranding experts and stranding networks contact points or coordinators, to be included in the ACCOBAMS website, to facilitate reporting and communication; to keep updated lists of tissue banks, responsible institutions designed by the Parties and laboratories registered as CITES scientific or forensic institutions, including the World Organisation for Animal 	
Encourage collaboration among national networks of Parties	Main	Scientific Committee Secretariat Parties, Non-Party Range States Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate the procedures on Best Practices on cetacean post-mortem investigation and tissue sampling resulted from the harmonisation process in ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS Update the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the ACCOBAMS Emergency Task Force for Stranding events (AETFS) by 		

			<p>considering other existing initiatives, prioritising support for capacity building requests and emergency responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and Update List of existing stranding experts and stranding networks contact points/coordinators • Update ACCOBAMS Documents related to strandings management and investigations (best practices, guidelines, and protocols) through regular meetings/workshops among experts. • Promote Technologies for remote assistance during investigations • Implement Capacity Building through training modules targeting veterinarians and biologists involved in post-mortem investigations using new technologies (e.g., virtual/augmented reality, metaverse, 3D printing) and tele-necropsy • Create an Emergency Fund through voluntary contributions by Parties, international organisations, and public and private donors 	<p>Health (WOAH) collaboration centers, for facilitating transboundary exchange of samples and investigations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to update existing ACCOBAMS documents related to strandings management and investigations (best practices, guidelines and protocols), when needed, through regular meetings among experts to include novel findings and analyses, and to promote harmonisation in interpreting post mortem findings; - to implement capacity building through training modules targeting veterinarians and biologists involved in post mortem investigations, using novel technologies (i.e., virtual and augmented reality, metaverse, 3D printing) and including principles of forensic photographs and tele-necropsy; • <i>Invites the AETFS and the ACCOBAMS Secretariat to develop the procedures for requests of funding, and asks the Secretariat to submit them to the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and to the ACCOBAMS Bureau for approval.</i> 	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enter relevant national data into relevant regional databases, such as MEDACES• Support and finance of MEDACES• Reinforce a network to exchange information on sampling though NETCCOBAMS Platform		
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CA 2 a	Interactions with fisheries / aquaculture
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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
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Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Support countries in monitoring and mitigating depredation and bycatch situations	Main	Secretariat, Parties, Scientific Committee (JBWG), Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and support the work of the ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Joint Bycatch Working Group Organise workshops to share experience and results, including from past projects on interactions with fisheries – ToR Improve data collection on interactions with fisheries (implementation of on-board observers' programs whenever it is possible and port questionnaires...) and testing mitigation measures Use of stranding data to assess bycatch mortality (using drifting models and/or necropsy findings) Collaborate with relevant entities, in particular with GFCM, EC (DG MARE and DG Environment), UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention System (EcAp/IMAP, QSR) and IWC BMI, ICCAT, ICES Support the network with EC, 	<p>Resolution 9.14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests the Scientific Committee to approach FAO-GFCM/SAC to assess the feasibility for the revision of the 2019 FAO-GFCM Guidelines for bycatch monitoring, noting that while the 0.5% coverage for onboard observation is a recommended minimum, it may not be sufficient to fully understand the extent of cetacean bycatch, and that regional differences and legal frameworks should be taken into account Requests the ACCOBAMS Secretariat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to strengthen the collaboration with GFCM in addressing the impacts of several fisheries on cetaceans, their prey, and habitats; to strengthen the collaboration with GFCM and ICCAT to address illegal driftnets' continued use in some parts of the ACCOBAMS Area. 	

			<p>GFCM and BSC to address the critical issue of harbor porpoise bycatch in the Black Sea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement active awareness-raising programs among fishermen to encourage reporting of bycatch events, improving data collection and assessing the extent of this threat more precisely• Conduct training programs for local and regional stakeholders on advanced monitoring techniques, data analysis, and the use of new technologies• Promote the importance of cetacean conservation in relevant international fora and policy discussions• Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies and make necessary adjustments• Regularly review and update guidelines and protocols related to bycatch monitoring and mitigation measures, as well as to safe release of bycaught animals, to incorporate the best available advice and practices		
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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)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)
Encourage the monitoring of anthropogenic activities generating underwater noise	Main	Scientific Committee including through the JNWG Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise an in-person meeting of the CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS JNWG Raise awareness amongst countries by organising an awareness & consultation workshop at national level with different stakeholders, especially at ministerial level Invite 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 Organise trainings for national entities on noise monitoring, including analyses of PAM collected data in some identified priority areas – ToR Keep managing the regional noise register 	<p>Resolution 9.15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Requests the ACCOBAMS Secretariat and the Joint CMS/ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS Noise Working Group (JNWG), to continue supporting the UNEP/MAP in the development of the IMAP EO11 on energy including underwater noise and its related common indicators 26 and 27 as well as in the preparation of the related chapter within the next MED QSR;</i> <i>Requests the ACCOBAMS Parties, the Scientific Committee, and the Secretariat to contribute to the development and implementation of the Post-War Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans Resolution 9.10, with particular focus given to the removal of all types of underwater explosives, both floating and sunk, including mines;</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep feeding data on impulsive noise generating sources from the entire ACCOBAMS Area into the regional noise register managed by ACCOBAMS • Promote the use of NETCCOBAMS to gather data • Provide necessary data to update risk maps and generate maps for the Black Sea by considering relevant target species • Complete the Noise Hotspots Report II • Revise and updating the ACCOBAMS Guidelines on underwater noise taking into account outcomes from recent projects • Prepare a study on the effects of underwater noise generated by the projected increase of wind farms in the ACCOBAMS Area – ToR • Continue developing the concept of “quiet zones,” updating noise models in NETCCOBAMS, comparing noise modelling results with <i>in situ</i> recordings, monitoring anthropogenic noise activities, and developing new mitigation measures • Continue cooperation on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Encourages</i> the JNWG to continue its work, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the further development of the concept of “quiet zones”, as outlined in Recommendation 10.5 of the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee; - the updating of the noise models available in NETCCOBAMS, securing their compliance with evolving guidance from the European Union Technical Group on Underwater Noise under the European Union Marine Strategy Framework Directive; - the comparison of the results of noise modelling with appropriate <i>in situ</i> anthropogenic noise recordings made throughout the Agreement Area, taking account of the diverse sensitivities of the different cetacean species; - the continued efforts to monitor anthropogenic activities generating underwater noise; - the further encouragement of the use of mitigation measures for anthropogenic activities generating underwater noise; - the further efforts to develop and assess the effectiveness of new mitigation measures; and - the improved exchange, among the competent authorities, of relevant information related to military activities and exercises,
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			<p>underwater noise issue with other international Organisations, such as CMS, ASCOBANS, IWC, UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention System (EcAp/IMAP, QSR), IMO, REMPEC and EU (MSFD) and collaboration with other regional projects on noise issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support investigation of impacts of underwater noise on health status and prey 	<p>from planning to assessment of impacts.</p>	
Encourage the use of mitigation measures for anthropogenic activities generating underwater noise	Main	Scientific Committee including through the JNWG Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve enhanced training of regulators on the appropriate application of the CMS Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and ACCOBAMS Noise Guidelines Promote the ACCOBAMS Highly qualified MMO/PAM operators' certificate Support the development and update of the ACCOBAMS HQMMO/PAM training tools Revise and update the ACCOBAMS "Guide for Parties to use mitigation measures " Continue developing joint project/initiatives for simulating mitigation measures such as speed reduction and related benefits, as well as considering results Develop cooperation on underwater noise issues with other International Organisations 		
Exchange of relevant information with competent authorities related to military activities / exercises	High	Scientific Committee including through the	<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 		

		JNWG Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<p>cetaceans and to propose mitigation measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue organising regular joint ACCOBAMS/ASCOBANS workshops with national Navy forces and NATO members – ToR• Support research backing demining activities in the Black Sea: development and implementation of the “Post-War Plan for Black Sea Cetaceans” with a focus on the removal of all types of underwater explosives, including mines, with the minimal impact on cetaceans and marine ecosystem.		
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CA 2 c	Vessel strikes				
Expected outcomes	Reduction of ship strikes in high risk areas				
Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Monitor / assess high-risk areas for vessel strikes (CCH) in the Mediterranean Sea and adjacent Atlantic Area	High	Scientific Committee Secretariat, Parties, Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a joint Ship Strikes Working Group with the Pelagos Agreement • Continue the entry of vessel strikes data in relevant databases, such as the IWC central database on vessel strikes • Identify high risk areas for vessel strikes by encouraging studies that improve understanding of temporal and spatial distribution of shipping and of cetaceans (IMMAs), and support interactive maps of areas with high risk of strikes for crews of relevant ships • Enhance efforts to quantify ship strike occurrences through necropsies and photo-identification studies • Promote the use of the IWC ship strikes database and of NETCCOBAMS • Support efforts to improve access to the temporal and spatial distribution of shipping, particularly vessels that do not 	<p>Resolution 9.16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks the Chair of the Scientific Committee to cooperate with the Scientific and Technical Committee of the Pelagos Agreement to create a joint Ship Strikes Working Group with agreed Terms of Reference, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) liaison with riparian States, the IWC and other stakeholders to continue and improve the collection of information on cetaceans and vessel traffic, to enable better identification of actual or potential high-risk areas for cetaceans, especially fin and sperm whales, by incorporating information on whale and vessel distribution into risk models; b) incorporating the results of the IWC-IUCN-ACCOBAMS workshop (Messinia, 2019) and work on Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs); c) investigation of ways to support the integration and updating of cetacean risk 	

			<p>transmit AIS information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue cooperation on ships strike issue with other International Organisations, such CMS, IHO, IWC, EMSA (EU) / REMPEC / IMO and Pelagos Agreement and contributing in any other relevant initiatives, projects and workshops in the ACCOBAMS Area 	<p>information (e.g., IMMAs) into Electronic Charts Systems used for maritime navigation;</p> <p>d) improving efforts and approaches to quantifying ship strike occurrence;</p> <p>e) promotion and use of the IWC ship strikes database and appropriate modules within NETCCOBAMS;</p> <p>f) elaboration of improved methods to evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation measures and especially of recent or new PSSAs and associated protective measures;</p> <p>g) review of the results of relevant studies being undertaken in the region;</p> <p>h) review of the results of existing efforts and encouragement of the development of new real time cetacean localization projects, which are designed to be complementary tools in avoiding ship strikes;</p> <p>i) review of the progress on the development of a reward for "best practitioners" (Whale safe certificate) given to identified vessels who follow ACCOBAMS' best practices to be initially tested in the North-Western Mediterranean Particularly Sensitive Sea Area.</p> <p>• Requests Parties and the Secretariat to:</p> <p>a) promote communication with</p>	
Promote the use of mitigation measures	High	Secretariat, Scientific Committee Parties, Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the results of existing efforts and encouragement of the development of new real time cetacean localisation projects, which are designed to be complementary tools in avoiding ship strikes; and review of the progress on the development of a whale-safe certificate Strengthen 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 Foster the development of 		

		<p>incentive systems to shipping companies adopting suggested mitigation measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support national or regional projects in order to reduce the risk of collision • Evaluate the effectiveness of implemented or proposed new mitigation measures (such as the APMs in the North-Western Mediterranean PSSA) • Support development of standards and accelerate the process for nautical charts to be updated and reflect the areas crucial for the protection of marine life 	<p>stakeholders (e.g., navies, port authorities, shipping companies, whale-watching organisations, etc.) on the issue of vessel strikes, including mitigation approaches and reporting to the IWC ship strikes database;</p> <p>b) encourage and support regional data collection and mitigation initiatives and foster the development of incentive systems to shipping companies that adopt appropriate mitigation methods;</p> <p>c) continue to work within IMO and its Marine Environment Protection Committee on relevant initiatives that include mitigation approaches, such as shipping lanes;</p> <p>d) foster and improve collaborative efforts with the Barcelona Convention Secretariat and other bodies working on this issue;</p> <p>e) support efforts to improve access to the temporal and spatial distribution of shipping, particularly merchant vessels steaming at high speed, and vessels that do not transmit Automatic Information System (AIS) data;</p> <p>f) support, when appropriate, activities within the framework of ongoing projects in particular for the definition of criteria for the identification of high-risk areas;</p> <p>g) offer support to the Greek</p>	
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				Authorities for reducing the risk of ship strikes in the Hellenic Trench, including strengthening collaboration with the International Hydrographic organisation (IHO) and the Hellenic Hydrographic Office to develop standards and accelerate the process for the updating of nautical charts to locate the area crucial for the protection of marine life;	
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CA 2 d	Cetacean watching				
Expected outcomes	Cetacean watching activities are properly conducted in the ACCOBAMS Area				
Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Monitoring status of whale watching activities in the ACCOBAMS Area and their potential adverse impacts on individual cetaceans and on populations	High	Scientific Committee through the WWWG, Parties, Secretariat Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a pilot study to define the whale watching “carrying capacity” in a targeted geographical area where commercial whale watching is intensively practiced Conduct an analysis of existing national legislations related to cetacean watching to support the work of experts and coordinate with the Pelagos WG Collaborate with relevant organisations, such as CMS, IWC and Pelagos Agreement Update the list of WW operations 	Resolution 9.17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Requests</i> the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee and Sub-Regional Coordination Units, to carry out the analysis of existing national legislation related to whale watching, which should be done in coordination with the Pelagos Working Group “Lois”; <i>Encourages</i> the Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to further collaborate with relevant organisations on issues related to whale watching activities; 	
Promote the use of whale watching vessels as platforms of opportunity	Medium	Scientific Committee through the WWWG, Parties, Secretariat Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue testing and updating the IlogWhales App that incorporates the common procedure for data collection by whale watching operators, making sure that there is compatibility with other similar programmes running on collaborative platforms (eg.: OBSenMER) Organise photo-ID and data collection training for whale 		

			watching operators, with the final goal of sharing the collected data		
Support the implementation of the HQWW certificate in the ACCOBAMS Area	High	Secretariat, Partners Parties Non-Party Range States, Scientific Committee SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the implementation of the HQWW certificate by Parties and in areas -based management measures in collaboration with relevant projects/organisations Organise Trainings on HQWW Revise the regulations governing the use of the collective certification mark "High Quality Whale Watching®" (HQWW) with the objective of simplifying the implementation at the national level and facilitate replication in other geographical areas" Liaise with relevant tourism organisations 		

CA 2 e	Marine litter				
Expected outcomes	Improved monitoring of marine litter in relation with cetaceans.				
Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Monitor the impacts of marine litter (ingested marine litter / microplastics / entanglements in ghost nets) on cetaceans	High	Scientific Committee Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 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 nets Promote/support/liaise with projects and research activities to develop standardised methods to detect the occurrence and effects of marine litter, including microplastics, in cetacean species Standardise diagnostic methods to evaluate the presence of marine litter in marine mammals' gastrointestinal tracts, categorise and quantify identified marine litter, detect plastic additives and absorbed contaminants, and develop risk, impact, and mortality index Facilitate regional collaboration between tissue banks to exchange tissue samples for joint analyses and retrospective studies 	<p>Resolution 9.18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Requests</i> the Secretariat and the Scientific Committee to liaise with relevant technical groups on the subject matter and consider sharing data with relevant platforms, such as The Global Plastics Hub of the UNEP Global Partnership on Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter (GPML) and others; <i>Encourages</i> the Scientific Committee to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> strengthen coordinated effort to better understand the toxicological effect on cetaceans of macro- and micro-litter ingestion, considering chemical, ecotoxicological, and physical effects; prepare a harmonised diagnostic methodology that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evaluation of the presence of marine litter in marine mammals' gastro-intestinal tract; 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify hot-spot areas for marine litter accumulation and identify threat to cetacean species occurring in those areas • Develop a proposal to use cetacean species as indicators of marine litter in the ACCOBAMS Area • Collaborate with relevant organisations (ASCOBANS, IWC, MEDPOL, IMO, FAO) including through joint activities • Promote cetacean species as indicators for microplastics and macro-litter pollution at the ACCOBAMS scale and encourage their inclusion as indicator species within the IMAP candidate indicator 24 and MSFD descriptor 10 • Promote campaigns on the ban of single-use plastics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - categorization and quantification of identified marine litter through the determination of polymers by spectroscopy technique; detection of plastic additives and absorbed contaminants to plastics in organism tissues; - development of risk, impact, and mortality indexes; <p>c) continue encouraging joint efforts in the Adriatic Sea to merge data on bottlenose dolphin-human interactions (including set net interactions and marine debris ingestion) and mitigation efforts, as well as the creation of a multi-level and multi-disciplinary model to identify hotspot risks;</p> <p>d) propose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the definition and development of new methods to evaluate the exposure to plastics and plastic additives in free-ranging organisms, including new approaches that could reveal the exposure to a plethora of stressors (micro-plastics, emerging chemicals, legacy chemicals, etc.) and drive the identification of new end-points; - the investigation on multiple stressors and the development of new diagnostic techniques to understand the effects of cumulative stressors on cetaceans, on both: 	
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				<p>i)stranded organisms, investigating the potential ecotoxicological effects caused by the ingestion of marine litter, and emerging and legacy chemicals, through biomarker identification and analysis of tissues;</p> <p>ii)in vitro experiments, assessing the effects of micro- and nano-plastics (combined with emerging and legacy chemicals) through new technologies applied on cetacean cell lines, organoids and 'organ-on-chip' technology;</p>	
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CA 2 f	Chemical & biological pollution				
Expected outcomes	Improved monitoring of chemical & biological pollution on cetaceans.				
Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Monitor the impact of chemical & biological pollution (such as pathogens, invasive species) on cetaceans	Medium	Scientific Committee Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an inventory of institutions or laboratories within the ACCOBAMS Area able to analyse samples for legacy and emerging pollutants Establish a common database on diseases and chemical burdens Assess cumulative effects and multiple stressors, including chemicals, marine litter, climate change, and emerging pathogens, on cetaceans in ACCOBAMS Area – Ideally through a dedicated workshop – ToR Disseminate the best practices to assess the impact of chemical pollution on cetaceans with a focus on emerging contaminants Organise trainings on the best practices to assess the impact of chemical pollution – ToR Collaborate with relevant organisations, initiatives and projects to better understand the toxicological effects of macro and micro-litter ingestion in cetaceans, considering chemical, 		

		<p>ecotoxicological, and physical effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define and develop new methods to evaluate exposure to plastics and plastic additives in free-ranging organisms, using approaches like - omics to reveal exposure to various stressors and identify new endpoints• Develop new diagnostic techniques to understand the effects of cumulative stressors on cetaceans, both through the examination of stranded animals and in vitro experiments using new technologies		
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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	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Contribute to regional initiatives on climate change	Medium	Scientific Committee Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive and consider the report from CMS workshop Assess the carbon footprint of bottom trawl fisheries in the Mediterranean Sea in terms of their contribution to climate change, including both direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions 		

CA 2 i	Captivity related issues
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Expected outcomes	All specimens held in captivity in the ACCOBAMS Area are listed Advisory Committee on captivity issues and semi-enclosed facilities is operational
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Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Identify specimens held in captivity in the ACCOBAMS Area	High	Scientific Committee Parties Non-Party Range States, Secretariat Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the work of the ACCOBAMS Advisory Committee on semi-enclosed facilities Continue updating the overview of specimens held in captivity in the ACCOBAMS Area in collaboration with international organisations (such as CITES) Reinforce collaboration with 	Resolution 9.19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts the process towards cetacean genetic passport as presented in ACCOBAMS-MOP9/2025/Inf34, especially by mandating the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee, to: 	

		<p>NFP/NGO/ACCOBAMS Partners/CITES authorities in each country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the cetacean genetic passport process, including genetic and biological data for cetaceans in aquaria and dolphinaria • Disseminate Guidelines for Best Practices during the Installation and Management of Semi-enclosed Facilities for Cetacean Species in the ACCOBAMS area, as well as the Procedural Steps for Requesting Advice from the ACCOBAMS Advisory Committee on Semi-Enclosed Facilities when considering initiatives related to semi-enclosed facilities, by organising one workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify reference laboratories within the ACCOBAMS Agreement area capable of analysing the proposed genetic markers; - collaborate with the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) to exchange and harmonise procedures, protocols, and information on existing captive cetacean populations; - establish a genetic reference library using tissue samples already preserved in existing tissue banks, in order to define a baseline set of genetically characterised individuals for comparison in future analyses; - create a centralised database with limited access to store genetic information on characterised animals, enabling comparison and validation of future genetic passports; 	
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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)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Regularly update Cetacean Co-occurrence & Human activities (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	Main	Scientific Committee Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen links through meetings and workshops with Duke Marine Lab., MSP group or authorities, other relevant scientific groups working on SDM, human mapping and overlapping maps – ToR Organise workshops within the SC to review and revise existing maps of SDM modelling exercises or human pressure maps Organise workshop considering some trials in pilot areas of the overlapping process to identify CCH Participate/collaborate to the upcoming IMMA workshop Reinforce collaboration with the "Strategical Alliance among the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN" and the Pelagos Agreement for spatial-based protection and management 	Resolution 9.20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Requests</i> the Scientific Committee to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to identify CCH taking into account the recommendations of the relevant workshops, as well as existing mechanisms and tools related to area-based cetacean conservation presented in the Annex to the relevant workshop's report; further explore with relevant experts the appropriate consideration and mapping of uncertainty and the integration of data on cetacean and human activities; <i>Strongly encourages</i> the IUCN Joint SSC/WCPA Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force, in collaboration with the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee, to undertake a re-assessment of the Mediterranean region for the 	

			<p>measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with INFO/RAC and PAP/RAC, and their mapping platform KMAP and explore the facilities of the NETCCOBAMS network 	<p>identification of Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) which is a priority action for the 2026-2028 triennium;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Encourages</i> integration of national marine habitat mapping efforts, and the development of conservation measures for Natura 2000 sites, where relevant, into a broader regional framework for marine spatial planning; 	
Support implementation of relevant measures for adequate management in CCH	Main	Scientific Committee Secretariat, Parties Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and promote relevant management measures in pilot CCH, in collaboration with all stakeholders, including network of MPAs managers Collaborate with other Organisations, such as UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention System (EcAp/IMAP, QSR), SPA/RAC (AGEM), BSC, IMO, IWC, GFCM, IUCN and the Pelagos Agreement Define threat based Ranking protocol of CCH 		

CA 4 a	Information /Communication / Awareness about cetaceans				
Expected outcomes	<p>All ACCOBAMS Bodies, national focal/contact points, Partners and other relevant national institutions, Organisations and experts are familiar with activities implemented by or relevant for ACCOBAMS and share accurately information</p> <p>General public and other relevant stakeholders are aware about cetaceans and need for their conservation through activities supported by or linked to ACCOBAMS</p>				
Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
<p>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</p>	Main	<p>Secretariat Parties Scientific Committee Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parties & Sec: Implement the ACCOBAMS Communication Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> upgrading communication products improving presence on social networks assessing the effectiveness of the Communication Strategy Development of NETCCOBAMS Platform (see MA1a) Promote the use of ACCOBAMS certificates and all ACCOBAMS Best Practices Update ACCOBAMS Guidelines and promote them - ToR Link conservation with human culture activities (UNESCO/Ocean decade) by initiating joint natural history exhibitions and offering expertise and knowledge eg identify heritage sites Promote knowledge about importance of museum collections SC: Provide advice to the 		

			Secretariat on scientific aspects of the Communication strategy		
Promote citizen sciences uses	Medium	Secretariat Parties Scientific Committee Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide and overview of initiatives and tools already in place/in order to mutualise efforts in particular at the level of young people Organise a Workshop on how to collect data and data exchanges through citizen science - ToR 		
Introduce in a new Country / Disseminate the ACCOBAMS Teaching Module courses	Medium	Secretariat Parties Scientific Committee Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote updated ACCOBAMS teaching module in universities dealing with cetacean conservation - ToR Translation of the Teaching Module to national languages of ACCOBAMS Parties 		
Promote and disseminate public awareness tools	High	Secretariat Parties Scientific Committee Non-Party Range States, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a Conference on cetacean conservation in South Mediterranean Countries - CSMC – ToR Disseminate public awareness tools in national languages Support publications by national experts in international journals 		

CA 5 a	Cetacean culture				
Expected outcomes	The potential importance of social learning and culture for cetacean conservation in the ACCOBAMS region is considered				
Proposed Action(s)	Priority	Action led by and in cooperation with	Means of implementation	Action requested in MOP9 Resolution(s)	Objectives to be achieved before SC18
Promote Cetacean culture	Medium	Secretariat Parties Scientific Committee Non-Party Range States, CMS & ASCOBANS, Partners, SRCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and discuss the report of the ACCOBAMS working group on Culture and Social learning • Create a joint ASCOBANS/ACCOBAMS Working Group on Culture and Social learning 		