RAC/SPA and ACCOBAMS... 20 years of collaboration

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Organised by: ACCOBAMS

Agreement for the Conservation of Cetacean of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area

Adopted in 1996 and entered into force in 2001

Established under the aegis of the UNEP/CMS Convention on Migratory Species

Its purpose is to reduce threats to cetaceans, in particular by improving our knowledge of these animals.
Context – RAC/SPA

SPA/BD Protocol

1995  Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean

1996  Annexes to the new SPA Protocol

① Common criteria for the choice of protected marine and coastal areas that could be included in the SPAMI List

② List of endangered or threatened species

③ List of species whose exploitation is regulated

1999  Entry into force of the SPA/BD Protocol

2016  Ratified by 18 States
Implementation of the SPA/BD Protocol under the auspices of the Barcelona Convention

A MAP Component

In charge of marine & coastal biodiversity

Created: 1985

Host country: Tunisia

21 Contracting Parties + EC

The National Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas serve, for their respective countries, as liaison with the RAC/SPA on the technical and scientific aspects of the implementation of the Protocol
Context — Articulation between both Organizations

RAC/SPA is the ACCOBAMS sub-regional Coordination Unit for the Mediterranean

- to facilitate implementation in the Mediterranean of the activities provided in the ACCOBAMS Conservation Plan;

- to collect, evaluate and disseminate relevant information;

- to contribute in relevant ACCOBAMS meetings and to prepare reports of activities;

- to facilitate the preparation of a series of international reviews or publications, to be updated regularly.
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Context — Articulation between both Organizations

Memorandum of Understanding (2014)

To define the modalities of collaboration between the ACCOBAMS and RAC/SPA Secretariats

To define a joint Working Program taking into account the priorities of the ACCOBAMS for the triennium 2014-2016 as well as the activities to be carried out by RAC/SPA within the framework of the Barcelona Convention’s Action Plan

Revision of the Appendix to the Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean: adopted during COP 19 of the Barcelona Convention- 2016)
Improvement of knowledge about state of cetaceans

The ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative: A regional initiative for cetaceans monitoring

Providing a deeper understanding of the abundance and distribution of the species at the Mediterranean Sea regional level, based on undisputed data

Strengthening international cooperation and synergies between the countries of the region to optimize and increase the efficiency of their efforts to establish a transnational approach

Providing support to Countries to meet their international and regional requirements (EcAp Process of UNEP/MAP, EU Directives: MSFD & Habitats, ...)

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[Logos of MedPAN, UNEP, RAC/SPA]
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Improvement of knowledge about state of cetaceans

Information on stranded cetaceans = better knowledge of cetaceans and their eventual protection and conservation

RAC/SPA is the depositary for the database since 2001.

RAC/SPA, in collaboration with the secretariat of ACCOBAMS, is supporting financially the update of the Mediterranean database on cetaceans stranding
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Elaboration of Guidelines

- Guidelines for Commercial Cetacean-Watching Activities in the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area

- Guidelines for the Development of National Networks of Cetacean Strandings Monitoring

- Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of Marine Protected Areas for Cetaceans

- Cetacean manual for MPA managers
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Reduction of human pressures on cetaceans

**ACCOBAMS-GFCM Project** on mitigating interactions between endangered marine species and fishing activities, with the collaboration of RAC/SPA (2015-2017)

- Reducing **negative interactions** between endangered marine species and fishing activities considering at the same time **bycatch** and **depredation** issues

- Reducing **pressure on marine species** through the diversification of the artisanal fishermen activities by promoting the development of **ecotourism activities**
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Reduction of human pressures on cetaceans

- Basin-wide strategy for underwater noise monitoring in the Mediterranean -

**Objective**: developing and establishing methodological basis for a future implementation of a basin-wide monitoring programme on underwater noise

**Context**: EcAp Initiative of the Barcelona Convention: EO 11 based on Descriptor 11 of the MSFD

- Monitoring impulsive noise: Indicator 11.1.1
  - Space & time distribution of noise sources
  - Register of noise sources to be monitored

- Monitoring ambient noise: Indicator 11.1.2
  - Levels of low-frequency continuous noise
  - In-situ measure; models & mapping
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Reduction of human pressures on cetaceans

- Developing tools to ensure high quality MMOs in the ACCOBAMS area -

ECS workshop - 13th March 2016
Madeira, Portugal
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Improvement of capacity on national organizations and experts

1st International Workshop “Conservation and research networking on short beaked common dolphin (Delphinus delphis) in the Mediterranean Sea”
Ischia Island, Italy 13-14-15 April 2016
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Improvement of capacity on national organizations and experts

- Photo Identification trainings -

Biennial Conference on Cetacean Conservation in South Mediterranean Countries

- Field training - sea trip on the CNRS Lebanon Research Boat CANA
- Introduction to the use of the Intercet Database
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Improvement of capacity on national organizations and experts

- Photo Identification trainings -

ECS Workshop
21st March 2015 - Malta

Training to the use of Intercet, a Web-GIS platform designed to support collection and integrated analysis of geo-referred and photographic data
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Improvement of capacity on national organizations and experts

- Stranding networks trainings -

Biennial Conference on Cetacean Conservation in South Mediterranean Countries

Workshop on the development of cetacean stranding networks
El Jadida (Morocco), 14th October 2011
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Improvement of capacity on national organizations and experts

- Teaching Module for the Conservation of cetacean -
Main Challenges of cetacean conservation in the Mediterranean Sea

Enhancing of effective conservation on cetacean critical habitats

Joint RAC/SPA, GFCM and ACCOBAMS Meeting on protection of marine areas in the Mediterranean and Black Sea
(Tunis, Tunisia, 9-12 June 2015)

First IMMA Regional Workshop
(Chania, Greece, 24-28 October 2016)
Perspectives /Recommendations

➤ Strengthening collaboration with other relevant Organizations

Joint cooperation strategy among Secretariats ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC, in collaboration with the Secretariat of MedPAN

- Strengthening collaboration with other relevant Organizations
  - Optimizing efforts and strengthening synergies between these five Organizations in line with their respective mandates
  - Facilitating effective conservation and sustainable use of the Mediterranean marine biodiversity

➤ Assisting Parties to implement relevant legislative measures

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THE 2016 FORUM of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean
Thank you - Merci

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