



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

EP



UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.146/3

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Meeting of Experts on the implementation of
the Action Plans for marine mammals (monk
seal and cetaceans) adopted within MAP

Arta, Greece, 29-31 October 1998

**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF CETACEANS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA**

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

1- LEGISLATION 1

2- STATUS OF SPECIES AND POPULATIONS 3

 2.1. Studies on populations

 2.2. Studies on standings

3- INTERACTION WITH HUMAN ACTIVITIES 5

 3.1. Interaction with fishing

 3.2. Whale Watching

 3.3. High Frequency Sonar

4- ACTIVITIES OF RAC/SPA 6

 4.1. Training

 4.2. Assistance to countries in the study of cetacean populations

 4.3. Directory of marine mammal specialists

 4.4. Database for photo-identification

 4.5. Meeting of the *ad hoc* group of experts

5- COORDINATION WITH ACCOBAMS 8

Annex 1: Synthesis of the Recommendations 11

Annex 2: Proceedings of the first meeting of the *ad hoc* group of experts 13

Report on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with their recommendations concerning the conservation of threatened species, in particular the provisions of the 1982 Genoa Declaration, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention⁽¹⁾ have adopted action plans to conserve certain species considered to be especially threatened. The most recent of these is the Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea. It was adopted at the seventh ordinary meeting of the Parties (Cairo, 8 - 11 October 1991), which also mandated the meeting of the National Focal Points for SPA to further elaborate it for implementation by the Contracting Parties. The second meeting of National Focal Points for SPA (Athens, 26-28 October 1992) adopted a series of additional points which have been annexed to the Action as an integral part of it.

This working document was prepared by the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected (RAC/SPA) to provide the meeting with information on the main achievements in the implementation of the Action Plan, the problems which have been faced and the gaps to be filled. In order to assist the meeting to identify further action for the implementation of the Action Plan, this document proposes a set of recommendations which are presented in underlined characters in the text body and synthesised in the annex 1 to this report.

The following main points will be discussed: legislation, status of species and populations and interaction with human activities. The document provides also information on the activities developed by RAC/SPA within the framework of the implementation of the Action Plan.

The information presented here is not expected to be exhaustive, it was compiled from the data available in RAC/SPA, any updating from the delegations will be appreciated.

1. LEGISLATION

Among the provisions recommended by the Action Plan to ensure improved protection of the cetacean populations in the Mediterranean are the adopting and implementing of legislative measures at national level.

Cetaceans are at present legally protected in some Mediterranean countries only. This protection is given either by texts relating to species conservation or by fishing regulations. It usually concerns a ban on intentional catches and takes. Measures relating to a regulating of fishing operations and gear in order to protect cetaceans are extremely rare in the Mediterranean.

Much therefore needs to be done in most countries in the area to offer these species legal protection. During the present meeting, the Parties' delegations will be invited to describe the

⁽¹⁾ Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution

legislative framework governing cetaceans in their respective countries and to give their opinions on priority actions in this field.

To help the concerned departments in the various Mediterranean countries, it would be useful to draw up guidelines for improving national legislations as regards conservation of cetaceans, and making these conform to the provisions of the relevant international agreements.

These guidelines would target both texts concerning conservation and texts concerning fishing, to introduce measures for regulating fishing gear and practice. To this end collaboration of specialised organizations such as GFCM (FAO) would be helpful.

As regards the effective enforcement of the legislative texts protecting cetaceans, although official data is not always available, there is reason to think that very few measures have been effectively pursued.

In any case, the Mediterranean countries' national laws can only have effect in waters that are under the jurisdiction of the States and/or on their nationals. Thus in waters that lie outside the limits of the Mediterranean states' jurisdictions, cetaceans remain legally unprotected against the dangers arising from boats belonging to foreign countries outside the Mediterranean.

At the international level, two new elements have emerged for the Mediterranean since the Action Plan was adopted:

- The first of these concerns the adoption at Barcelona in June 1995 of the new Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean, in the context of a review of the MAP's legal instruments. This Protocol is expected to make an appreciable difference to cetacean conservation, especially for those species that prefer the high seas, since its geographical coverage extends over the entire Mediterranean.

Also, according to the terms of this Protocol, Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMI) may be established even on the high seas, thus offering new possibilities for protecting cetaceans' habitats. Moreover, this Protocol established a list of endangered or threatened species for which specific protection measures are advocated. The following cetacean species appear on this list: *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*, *Balaenoptera borealis*, *Balaenoptera physalus*, *Delphinus delphis*, *Eubalaena glacialis*, *Globicephala melas*, *Grampus griseus*, *Kogia simus*, *Megaptera novaeangliae*, *Mesoplodon densirostris*, *Orcinus orca*, *Phocoena phocoena*, *Physeter macrocephalus*, *Pseudorca crassidens*, *Stenella coeruleoalba*, *Steno bredanensis*, *Trusiops truncatus*, *Ziphius cavirostris*.

- The other new element is the Agreement on the conservation of cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area, reached at Monaco in November 1996 under the aegis of the CMS⁽²⁾. Most of the provisions of the Barcelona Convention's Action Plan on Cetaceans are also included in the ACCOBAMS; this latter, being an international agreement, gave these provisions a legally binding character. At present 16 countries (including 11 Mediterranean) and The European Community have signed the

⁽²⁾ Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

agreement; for it to come into effect at least 5 Mediterranean riparian countries, and 2 Black Sea riparian countries, must ratify it.

These two new instruments, whose adoption is seen as being extremely beneficial for the conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean, have not yet come into effect. For the results expected from these treaties to be achieved, it is important that the Mediterranean countries go on to ratify them with all possible speed.

2. STATUS OF SPECIES AND POPULATIONS:

Cetaceans are some of the least studied marine species in the Mediterranean, especially as regards their populations' dynamics and movements.

This working document is not intended to provide detailed information about distribution, biology and ecology of the species; the secretariat prepared for that purpose an information document (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.146/Inf.3) on the status of knowledge in these fields.

2.1 Studies on populations:

Data on the populations is lacking or incomplete for all these species. Some are better studied than others, but the data is still sketchy. A relatively large amount of study has been done on the Fin Whale, for instance, but data is only available for the West Mediterranean, and particularly for the summer period. Certain species are only studied on stranded specimens, and almost nothing is known about them out at sea (the *Ziphius*, for example). Geographically, there is also a very marked contrast between the northern part of the West Mediterranean and the rest of the Mediterranean.

This lack of data is due to several factors, in particular the absence of programmes that are co-ordinated and planned for the long term. Most of the work done on cetacean populations in the Mediterranean are in fact the result of individual initiative and thus restricted by the availability of means. Additionally, many studies have been carried out in the context of a thesis or other student work, and frequently stops when the author departs.

There is not always any guaranteed dovetailing between these initiatives because of the lack of (i) co-ordination (so several pieces of work are done on the same subject and/or the same area while other subjects or areas are neglected), and (ii) standardization: it is not always possible to make a comparison of results because different study techniques have been used.

To conclude, work on follow up of Mediterranean populations is noticeable for its disparate and uncoordinated nature. A comprehensive programme should urgently be started; it should be planned in time and space (geographical) in such a way as to reach a comprehensive view of the status of cetaceans in the Mediterranean.

2.2 Studies on strandings

For this meeting, the RAC/SPA has prepared a study on cetacean strandings in the Mediterranean (UNEP(OC) MED WG. 146/Inf.5). This document describes, on the basis of the available information, the various Mediterranean initiatives taken in this field, presenting a summary of their main results.

What this study shows is that follow up of cetacean strandings is only undertaken in certain countries in the area, and rarely done in the context of organised networks in a way that will allow the best advantage to be made of all the cases of observed strandings. The study of strandings of cetacean specimens could significantly help improve our knowledge on the cetacean populations in the Mediterranean, on these species' biology and ecology, and on the main causes of death. A better knowledge of cetaceans is certainly one of the best ways of protecting them.

The secretariat's recommendations here are:

- Encouraging the setting up in all the Mediterranean countries of structures enabling detection and study of the largest possible number of cetacean strandings that can happen along their coasts. Since this recommendation has been made several times in the past, it would seem urgent to focus on it particularly. It is therefore recommended that (i) the Mediterranean countries so far without similar structures be invited to work to set them up as quickly as possible (before the end of 1999) and (ii) the concerned international organisations be asked to provide them with the necessary technical and financial assistance. To give this recommendation a better chance of being put into effect, the RAC/SPA, the CIESM and the Secretariat of ACCOBAMS should set up a common programme to help countries do this.
- Assist countries which so request to train and/or perfect their technicians and specialists. Here it would be useful to organise a Mediterranean workshop on methods and techniques related to the follow up of cetacean strandings. This workshop would be organised in conjunction with a Mediterranean laboratory provided with carcasses, tissue samples and skeletons and the necessary equipment for offering this type of training.
- Establish regional co-ordination system to facilitate comparison of results and their integration into comprehensive analyses for the entire Mediterranean.

As regards practical ways of implementing these recommendations, the meeting of experts will be preceded by a one day workshop on the study of cetacean strandings in the Mediterranean being organised by RAC/SPA, jointly with the CIESM and the interim secretariat of ACCOBAMS. One of the major objectives of this workshop is looking into practical ways of developing this kind of study in the context of Mediterranean co-ordination. The recommendations resulting from this workshop will be presented at the meeting of experts.

3. INTERACTION WITH HUMAN ACTIVITIES:

The cetacean populations in the Mediterranean are harmed by certain human activities which subject them to unfortunately ever greater threats. The main such type of interaction is undoubtedly interaction with fishing; other forms of interaction are known, such as pollution, high frequency sonar use by the military, high speed sea traffic, and Whale Watching.

3.1 Interaction with fishing

A study on interaction between fishing and cetacean populations in the Mediterranean was prepared by the RAC/SPA for this meeting; it is treated in the information document UNEP(OCA)MED WG.146/Inf.4).

As this study shows, several types of fishing gear cause harm to cetaceans. But the problem is not well documented, for data on this topic is very rare.

In several countries fishermen massacre dolphins and oppose any protection measure. The size and persistence of this problem lead us to the conclusion that unlike what people believe it is difficult to deal with the problem by awareness programmes only. These have shown their limits in this field. Thus, other tools are needed.

3.2 Whale Watching

Whale Watching is done from boats which offer sea cruises for the observing of cetaceans especially the larger ones in their natural environment. This activity, which is becoming increasingly widespread in the north of the West Mediterranean, may indeed help influence public opinion and create a lobby for the protection of these species, but on the other hand, if it continues to develop without control and with no respect for certain rules, it will give rise to harassment and disturbance and thus present a risk to cetaceans.

Thus it is useful to elaborate a code of conduct for whale watching in the Mediterranean, to be included in the conditions to be respected by every boat that practises whale watching for either commercial or non commercial ends.

3.3 High frequency sonar

The harmful effects of high frequency sonar used by army ships during certain tests and manoeuvres have often been noted. Since this kind of test and manoeuvre is practised in the Mediterranean, certain areas, known as being especially frequented by cetaceans, should be spared.

4. THE ACTIVITIES OF RAC/SPA

Co-ordinating implementation of the Action Plan is the responsibility of the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas. Co-ordination functions, as defined in the Action Plan, are:

- collect and evaluate data relating to the conservation status of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea Area;
- disseminate and exchange information;
- assist and/or organise expert meetings on specific topics regarding cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea Area;
- contribute to the identification, selection and establishment of marine protected areas for cetaceans;
- prepare recommendations for the Contracting Parties aimed at the protection and Conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea Area as well as a timetable and financial proposals for their implementation;
- organize training courses in this field.

Since the adoption of the Action Plan by the focal points' meeting, the RAC/SPA within the framework of its co-ordination role has carried out the following main activities:

4.1. Training

Since 1994, the RAC/SPA has been giving support to help countries improve their national skills, by allowing participants from various Mediterranean countries to take part in training initiatives in the field of the study and conservation of cetaceans. These initiatives are:

- Mediterranean cetology courses organised by the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Pratiques (Montpellier, France)
- International cetology course organised by the University of Valence
- Various training cruises on a research boat.

4.2. Assistance to countries in the study of cetacean populations.

Given the amount of its the annual budget, RAC/SPA is not able to financially support large programmes for the study of cetacean populations. However, few surveys took place thanks to contributions from RAC/SPA and in conjunction with, or as follow up of, initiatives of training.

4.3. Directory of marine mammal specialists

To encourage contact and exchange between Mediterranean specialists working in the fields of the study and conservation of cetaceans, the RAC/SPA, jointly with the Tethys Research Institute, issued a Directory of marine mammal specialists. This directory was made up by sending out a registration form, by mail, and on the occasion of certain international meetings. In its first version, published in 1996, this Directory included 167 specialists among whose interests were the study and/or conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean or the Black

Sea. The extension of the Directory to the Black Sea was decided on because the idea for it had been proposed several times at meetings held in the CIESM context, which bring together people who are specialists in the two Seas.

As well as the usual details for the specialists on the list, the information contained in the Directory concerns their field of interest (physiology, diet, etc.) and working languages. The Directory contains indexes according to speciality and country.

A second version of the Directory has recently been published; it has been composed from a base of newly received registrations, plus notifications of updatings of details for the specialists already listed in the first version.

This "persons" Directory deserves to be rounded off by an "organisations" Directory of NGOs, laboratories etc. active in this field.

4.4. Database for photo-identification

Photo-identification is one of the techniques used by researchers to study certain cetacean populations. In the Mediterranean, for several years now certain laboratories have been using this method for the fin whale population in the north western part of the Mediterranean. These laboratories have developed photographic databases which included photos for several hundred individuals from this species. A joint RAC/SPA Tethys Research Institute project was launched, after a request made by the latter, in 1994 to set up a computerized database for photo identification of cetaceans. In its first stage, the project was restricted to the fin whale. In the context of this project photos for some 150 specimens (from the Tethys database) were scanned and archived and a software programme for exploiting this photographic database was developed. The whole thing was put on CD ROM. The database will soon be enlarged with photographic data from another laboratory (Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Montpellier – France). Last June, a co-ordination meeting took place in Tunis to look into how to develop this tripartite project. The project is open to other Mediterranean laboratories concerned to participate. It is envisaged that it will be extended to cover other species.

4.5 Meeting of the ad hoc group of experts

The Action Plan stipulates that, whenever necessary, the RAC/SPA should convene an *ad hoc* group of experts from the Mediterranean countries to be attended as well by representatives of the concerned organizations.

The role of the Group of Experts would be to provide specific scientific advice to RAC/SPA with a view to efficient implementation of the Action Plan.

For budgetary reasons, only one meeting of *ad hoc* group of experts was convened, it took place in 1994 at Montpellier (France) on the occasion of the Annual Conference of the European Cetacean Society (ECS); the report of that meeting appears in the annex 2 to this working document. The organisers of the ECS's conference provided logistical support for the meeting, their contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

When the ACCOBAMS Agreement will be into force, coordination should be established to avoid duplication with the Scientific Committee of that Agreement.

5. COORDINATION WITH ACCOBAMS

During the negotiation meetings of the ACCOBAMS agreement, it was frequently stressed that this agreement should be implemented by using the structures that already existed within the concerned international organisations. It should be noted here that during all the drafting and negotiating phases of this Agreement, close coordination was maintained with the RAC/SPA in the name of the Mediterranean Action Plan. The Final Act of the Negotiation Meeting to adopt ACCOBAMS stipulates that :

"The meeting examined favourably the proposal of the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea to offer its group of experts on marine mammals to perform the functions of the Scientific Committee provided for under Article VII of the Agreement and requested the interim secretariat to take the necessary steps to elaborate this offer, subject to formal adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its first session.

The meeting recommended that the interim secretariat approach relevant intergovernmental organisations in Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea with a view to facilitating identification of the sub-regional Co-ordination Units envisaged under Article V of the Agreement."

Following the contacts undertaken by the interim secretariat of ACCOBAMS with the MAP Co-ordinating Unit to assess possibilities for making the RAC/SPA responsible for the function of sub-regional Coordinating Unit, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, at their 10th Ordinary Meeting (Tunis, 18-21 November 1997) asked the RAC/SPA to define, in consultation with the ACCOBAMS interim secretariat, the practical modalities allowing it to provide this function.

The duties of the sub-regional Co-ordinating units as defined by Article V of the Agreement are:

- a) to facilitate implementation in the respective subregions of the activities provided for in Annex 2 to the Agreement, in accordance with instructions of the Meeting of the Parties;
- b) to collect and evaluate information that will further the objectives and implementation of the Agreement and provide appropriate dissemination of such information; and
- c) to service meetings of the Scientific Committee and to prepare a report for communication to the Meeting of the Parties, through the Agreement secretariat.

The designation of the Co-ordination Units, and their functions shall be reviewed, as appropriate, at each session of the Meeting of the Parties.

The Article V also stipulates that each Co-ordinating Unit, in consultation with the Scientific Committee and the Agreement secretariat, shall facilitate the preparation of a series of international reviews or publications, to be regularly updated, including:

- a) reports on the state and trends of populations, as well as gaps in scientific knowledge;
- b) a subregional directory of important areas for cetaceans; and
- c) a subregional directory of national authorities, research and rescue centres, scientists and non-governmental organizations concerned with cetaceans.

At operational level, the RAC/SPA will have no difficulty carrying out these functions, which are mostly part of its coordinating role for implementing the Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea.

However, considering the very limited budget it has every year within the framework of the Mediterranean Trust Fund, the RAC/SPA will be unable to fully discharge the said functions if no additional resources are made available. Making the RAC/SPA responsible for the role of the Mediterranean Subregional Co-ordination unit would thus prevent duplication of work; but the RAC/SPA will only be able to fully carry out these duties if additional funds are mobilised.

ANNEX 1: SYNTHESIS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To elaborate guidelines for improving national legislations and making them conform to the provisions of the relevant international Agreements in the field of cetacean conservation.
2. To invite the Mediterranean countries to ratify, if they have not done so, the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean and the Agreement on the conservation of cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area.
3. To Elaborate and implement a global co-ordinated surveying programme. The programme should be planned in time and space (geographical) in such a way so as to reach a comprehensive view of the status of cetaceans in the Mediterranean. Concerned organisations and researchers should be invited to adhere.
4. To promote the setting up in all the Mediterranean countries of structures to detect and study the largest possible number of cetacean strandings that can happen along their coasts, and to establish a co-ordination system enabling comparison of results and their integration into comprehensive analyses for the entire Mediterranean.
5. To organise a Mediterranean workshop on methods and techniques related to the monitoring of cetacean strandings.
6. To elaborate a code of conduct for whale watching in the Mediterranean, to be included in the conditions to be respected by every boat that practises whale watching for either commercial or non commercial ends.
7. The use of high frequency sonars should be avoided in the areas known as being highly frequented by cetaceans.
8. Elaborate a Directory of organisations (NGOs, Laboratories etc.) active in the field of study and conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean.

⁽¹⁾These recommendations are derived from the analyses set out in the different sections of this working document. The meeting will be invited to consider these recommendations, to comment on, and to improve them. Their implementation should take into account the existing initiatives in the relevant fields.

ANNEX 2

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST MEETING
OF THE AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS
CONVENED BY RAC/SPA IN ACCORDANCE WITH
THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA**

(Montpellier, France, March 5 1994)

During the seventh ordinary meeting held in Cairo in October 1991, the contracting parties to the Barcelona Convention adopted the Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea, and mandated the meeting of National Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas (NFP) to further elaborate the text of the Action Plan for its implementation by the Contracting Parties. In October 1992, the NFP meeting, adopted an Annex to the Action Plan. This Annex recommends, among other things, setting up an *ad hoc* group of experts whose main function is to help the RAC/SPA by providing technical advises on specific subjects. The European Cetacean Society (ECS) and the organisers of its eighth annual conference responded favourably to the RAC/SPA's request to organise, on the fringe of their eighth annual conference, a first meeting of the *ad hoc* group of experts; this was held on Saturday 5 March 1994 in Montpellier, France. A list of the experts and organisations invited is appended to the present document of proceedings. It should be said that for budgetary reasons, the experts invited were chosen from among those registered to participate at the 8th ECS conference.

The main aims of this first meeting of the *ad hoc* group of experts formed by the RAC/SPA in accordance with the recommendations of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea are:

- Identifying actions to be seen as having priority in the implementation of the Action Plan for 1994 and 1995;
- making recommendations for the next meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to obtain effective implementation of the Action Plan.

The meeting was held on Saturday March 5 1994, at 10 a.m. in the Rondelet room in the 'Corum' of the town of Montpellier, France; it was chaired by Mr. Notarbartolo di Chiara, the chairman of the European Cetacean Society. The following Experts attended the meeting:

-Mrs. E. ANDROUKAKI	Greece
-Mr. A. AGUILAR	Spain
-Mr. P. BEAUBRUN	France
-Mr. BEAU-DOUEZY	Europe Conservation
-Mr. J.M. BOMPAR	France
-Mr. Z. BOUTIBA	Algeria
-Mrs. Founoune CHAKROUN	Tunisia
-Mrs. Maguelonne DEJEANT PONS	Bern Convention

-Mr. Johanatan GORDON	IFAW
-Mrs. Marie Christine GRILLO	Monaco
-Mrs. LOCKYER	CMS
-Mr. Giuseppe NOTARBARTOLO DI CHIARA	Italy
-Mr. Chedly RAIS	RAC/SPA(MAP/UNEP)
-Mr. Giulio RELINI	Italy
-Mr. Patrick VAN KLAVEREN	Monaco
-Mr. Maurizio WURTZ	RAMOGE Agreement

As the meeting opened, Mr. Chedly RAIS, the RAC/SPA expert, briefly recalled the main stages which had led to the adoption of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. Then he set forth the main elements in the RAC/SPA's programme for 1994 and 1995 as regards implementing the Action Plan. This mainly meant sponsoring the participation of researchers from the countries of the South and East Mediterranean in campaigns of studying cetaceans in the North western Mediterranean; as well as promoting actions that aim at improving the state of knowledge about cetacean populations in the Mediterranean, particularly in areas at present little studied. He said that the choice of areas for priority study could be made on the basis of the Atlas now being prepared in the context of the CIESM.

The participants were then invited to give their opinion on the programme and make suggestions about practical ways of implementing it. Here follows a summary of the discussions:

1. Training:

The participants confirmed the importance of having researchers from the South and East Mediterranean participate in the campaigns carried out by their colleagues in the North-western Mediterranean. Stress was laid on the need to pay great attention to the choice of candidates, to avoid similar actions helping to fund pleasure cruises for people not in a position to help their countries benefit from the practical experience acquired.

The need to start up in the Mediterranean a course on cetaceans was also emphasized. Similar courses exist elsewhere, in places such as in Latin America or South Africa. Here the RAC/SPA was recommended to entrust the drafting of the course's programme to a committee of experts. This course can only be envisaged if sufficient financial resources are available, since this is beyond the possibilities of the RAC/SPA's budget. The RAC/SPA must therefore look for the necessary funds.

It is understood that this course is not a substitute for the participation of researchers from the South and East Mediterranean.

2. Scientific research:

The participants agree on the difficulty of defining research priorities in a field where there is still a considerable lack of information. Several speakers have stressed the need to co-ordinate research programmes to avoid things being done twice over. The necessity of undertaking programmes to improve our knowledge about the state of cetacean populations in the South and East Mediterranean was also emphasised. Mr. BEAUBRUN, under whom the Atlas is being compiled in the context of the CIESM, did indeed confirm that the data gathered for the requirements of the Atlas contains practically no data on the

South and the East Mediterranean. At the end of the discussion, it was decided to consult the meeting of the CIESM's 'Marine Mammals' group, planned for the afternoon of that same day, about this. After that meeting, a little group synthesized the following actions as actions identified as deserving priority encouragement in the South and East Mediterranean:

- ◆ setting up national networks for signalling cetacean strandings,
- ◆ establishing mechanisms for observing cetaceans at sea,
- ◆ starting photo-identification programmes in areas where there are resident dolphin populations (especially *Tursiops* and *Delphinus*),
- ◆ studying and examining of conflictual interaction between fishermen and cetaceans where this exists,
- ◆ organising pilot campaigns in the South and East Mediterranean to both collect data on sightings of cetaceans and to train local participants. It is strongly recommended that at the end of each campaign a workshop should be organised on the use and interpretation of data collected at sea.

3. Legislation

A good part of the meeting was devoted to discussions about the lack of effectiveness of the laws protecting cetaceans in the Mediterranean. Here it was recalled that the Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea recommends that the Mediterranean countries assess their national strategies for cetacean protection. It emerges from the discussions that it is usually the texts enabling implementation which are lacking, since most Mediterranean countries have ratified the main relevant international treaties, but only a few of them have promulgated national texts enabling the said treaties to be implemented at national level. The experts present at this meeting recommended the RAC/SPA to provide assistance to those countries which wish to prepare such a text. Mrs. DEGEANT PONS, representing the secretariat of the Bern Convention at this meeting, offered to make a synthesis of laws relating to cetacean protection in the countries party to this convention. This synthesis could serve as an example for other countries to help them improve their laws on the subject. The meeting decided to formulate a recommendation to the contracting parties to the Barcelona Convention, inviting them to back up their legislation with texts guaranteeing the implementing at national level of the international treaties to which they had adhered.

The other point raised as regards legislation is the ineffectiveness of the present systems outside territorial waters. The new texts drafted by the FAO concerning monitoring of fisheries outside national waters are likely to improve this situation.

CONCLUSION:

A certain number of ideas and recommendations emerged from the discussions which took place at this meeting; they may be categorized as recommendations to guide the

RAC/SPA in its actions and programmes for implementing the action plan, and as recommendations to be proposed to the contracting parties:

Recommendations for the RAC/SPA programme:

- ◆ drawing up a list to compile a register of the various interveners as regards the study and conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean. This list, which must concern researchers, organisations and programmes, will certainly do a great deal for exchange of information,
- ◆ strengthening coordination with the other conventions and bodies concerned with the problems of cetaceans in the Mediterranean. Here a meeting of the *ad hoc* group formed by the RAC/SPA jointly with the CIESM's marine mammals group and the ECS's Mediterranean group was suggested,
- ◆ starting up a Mediterranean course on cetaceans,
- ◆ looking for additional financial resources to encourage both training activity aiming at improving the Mediterranean countries' national skills, and programmes for studying cetacean populations, especially in the South and East Mediterranean.

Recommendations for the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention:

- ◆ to ensure improved protection for cetaceans, the Mediterranean countries are asked to back up their laws by texts which guarantee implementation at national level of the relevant international treaties to which they adhere,
- ◆ inviting the Contracting Parties to promote programmes which aim in particular (without restricting themselves to this alone) at studying the geographical distribution of cetaceans in the Mediterranean, especially the South and East parts of this sea,
- ◆ urgently implementing the recommendations made by the Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea, relative to regulations, and take the necessary steps to act against illegal fishing, and
- ◆ support the new texts drafted by the FAO concerning monitoring of fisheries outside national waters.

2004

**LIST OF EXPERTS^(*) AND ORGANISATIONS
INVITED TO ATTEND THE FIRST MEETING
OF THE AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS
CONVENED BY RAC/SPA IN ACCORDANCE WITH
THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA**

(Montpellier, France, March 5 1994)

Experts:

-Mrs. E. ANDROUKAKI	Greece
-Mr. A. AGUILAR	Spain
-Mr. P. BEAUBRUN	France
-Mr. J.M. BOMPAR	France
-Mr. Z. BOUTIBA	Algeria
-Mrs. Founoune CHAKROUN	Tunisia
-Mr. Johanatan GORDON	IFAW
-Mrs. LOCKYER	CMS
-Mr. Giuseppi NOTARBARTOLO DI CHIARA	Italy
-Mr. Giullio RELINI	Italy
-Mr. Patrick VAN KLAVEREN	Monaco

Organisations:

- CMS Secretariat
- Bern Convention Secretariat
- EEC
- GREENPEACE International
- Europe Conservation
- RAMOGE Agreement Secretariat
- International Maritime organisation
- IUCN
- GFCM (FAO)

^(*) For budgetary reasons, the experts invited were chosen from among those registered to participate at the 8th ECS conference