



TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Face-to-face meeting of the Working group on cetacean monitoring under MSFD in the scope of the ABIOMMED project

Rome, 14-15 June 2023

1. Context and background

The ABIOMMED project – “SUPPORT COHERENT AND COORDINATED ASSESSMENT OF BIODIVERSITY AND MEASURES ACROSS MEDITERRANEAN FOR THE NEXT 6-YEAR CYCLE OF MSFD IMPLEMENTATION” is an EU research project funded under DG EN9/M6FD 2020 CALL with the main purpose to support the competent authorities of the Mediterranean region, as well as the UNEP/MAP for a (sub)regional cooperation for the preparation of the next 6-year cycle of MSFD implementation. The project is implemented in cooperation between 17 partners, intergovernmental organizations, national authorities, research centres, institutes and other expert organizations. Project duration covers 2021 – 2023 period.

ABIOMMED partners	Location (country)
Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (HCMR) (Lead partner)	Greece
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens	Greece
Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)	Italy
National Research Council (Cnr)	Italy
National Inter-University Consortium for Marine Sciences (CoNISMa)	Italy
University of Bari Aldo Moro – Department of Biology	Italy
University of Bologna	Italy
Tethys Research Institute	Italy
Institute of Water of the Republic of Slovenia (IZVRS)	Slovenia
National Institute of Biology	Slovenia
Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (IZOR)	Croatia
Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)	Spain
AZTI	Spain
EcoOcean Institute	France
ACCOBAMS Secretariat	Monaco
UNEP/MAP SPA/RAC	Tunisia
UNEP/MAP Plan Bleu	France

The project consists of 6 activities, focussing on GES assessment of pelagic, benthic habitats, cetaceans, integration of GES biodiversity assessment in a pan-Mediterranean scale and socio-economic analysis of measures.

The GES assessment of cetaceans is analysed under the *Activity 4: Streamlining Descriptor's D1 selected criteria regarding mammal's species groups (small toothed cetaceans, deep diving toothed cetaceans and baleen whales) towards coordinated monitoring and assessment in the Mediterranean*. Activity 4 Partners are: ACCOBAMS Secretariat (Activity coordinator), EcoOcean Institute, CoNISMa, ISPRA and Tethys Research Institute. These partners have been in charge of preparation of technical documents (deliverables) that will be presented in the meeting, including revision of different elements of the MSFD related to cetaceans, definition of threshold values, spatial distribution modelling related to criteria D1C4 (Population distributional range and pattern) and D1C5 (Habitat for the species), analysis of complementarity of results of different cetacean monitoring platforms to relevant MSFD criteria, as well as assessment of potential factors of uncertainty on large-scale synoptic surveys (for more information see: List of documents).

In the scope of Task 4.1. "Strengthen regional coordination on cetacean monitoring", a Working Group was established, composed of researchers, managers and experts from all Mediterranean and Black Sea EU countries, in charge of the definition/implementation of their country's MSFD cetacean monitoring programme. The task of this Working Group was to facilitate preparation of deliverables. A key step in implementation of Activity 4 is organization of the face-to-face meeting of the Working Group in June 2023. The Italian ISPRA agreed to host the meeting at its premises in Rome.

2. Venue, date and language of the meeting

Venue: Rome (Italy), Premises of the ISPRA agency. The meeting will also be accessible online via Zoom link, which will be provided a few days before the meeting.

Date: 14 – 15 June 2023.

Language: English

3. Objectives of the meeting

The objectives of the meeting are:

- to review different deliverables prepared by Activity 4 project partners and to prepare common recommendations, in particular regarding definition of threshold values for MSFD D1 cetacean related criteria,
- to facilitate regional coordination and exchange of information between the EU and non-EU countries, in particular in the context of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) lead by UNEP/MAP.

4. Expected participants

All project partners, representatives of EU countries from the Mediterranean and Black Sea (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Slovenia, Spain and Romania), representatives of non-EU Mediterranean countries (Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Türkiye), representatives of the UNEP-MAP-SPA/RAC and Black Sea Commission Permanent Secretariat (BSC PS) and representative of the EC DG ENV.

5. List of documents

Documents	Partner in charge
Review of the different elements of the MSFD related to cetacean in the EU Mediterranean countries (Deliverable 4.1)	ACCOBAMS Secretariat
Proposals for the definition of threshold values for cetaceans' related criteria (Deliverable 4.3)	ISPRA
Report on the Spatial distribution modelling and the application of criteria for the assessment of D1C4 and D1C5 (Deliverable 4.4)	CoNISMa
Report on the complementarity of results from different monitoring platforms, airplane, boat and ferry, to answer the MSFD criteria for cetaceans (Deliverable 4.5)	EcoOcean Institute
Assessment of potential factors of uncertainty on large-scale synoptic surveys assessing distribution and abundance of highly mobile species (Deliverable 4.6)	Tethys Research Institute

6. Expected outcomes of the meeting

- inputs for the revision and finalization of the presented documents prepared in the scope of Activity 4 (see List of documents), including common recommendations
- active exchange and update of other information relevant for GES assessment in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

The Report of the Meeting will be prepared and circulated after the meeting (English).

7. Provisional agenda

Moderator: ACCOBAMS Secretariat

14 June 2023

Time	Agenda	Speaker
8:15 – 9:00	Registration of participants	-
Agenda item 1. Introduction		
9:00 – 9:20	1.1. Welcome addresses and presentation of participants	ISPRA ACCOBAMS Secretariat All participants

9:20 – 9:40	1.2. Overview and update of the ABIOMMED project's implementation	Popi PAGKOU (HCMR) Celia LE RAVALLEC (ACCOBAMS Secretariat)
Agenda item 2. Overview of cetaceans GES assessment processes		
9:40 – 9:55	2.1. GES assessment of cetaceans in the EU context: MSFD	Alice BELIN (EC-DG ENV)
9:55 – 10:10	2.1.1. Case study: GES assessment in the Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast in the scope of the CetAMBICion project	Nair VILAS (IIM CSIC)
10:10 – 10:25	2.2. GES assessment of cetaceans under the EcAP/IMAP	Lobna BEN NAKHLA (SPA/RAC)
10:25 – 10:40	2.3. GES assessment of cetaceans under the BSIMAP	Iryna MAKARENKO (BSC PS)
Coffee break		
10:40 – 11:00		
Agenda item 3. Review of documents/deliverables under Activity 4 of the ABIOMMED project		
11:00 – 11:40	3.1. Review of the different elements of the MSFD related to cetacean in the EU Mediterranean countries (Deliverable 4.1) - <i>15 min presentation & 25 min discussion</i>	Ana ŠTRBENAC (ACCOBAMS Secretariat Consultant) All participants
11:40 – 12:20	3.2. Report on the Spatial distribution modelling and the application of criteria for the assessment of D1C4 and D1C5 (Deliverable 4.4) - <i>15 min presentation & 25 min discussion</i>	Antonella ARCANGELI (ISPRA) All participants
12:20 – 13:00	3.3. Report on the complementarity of results from different monitoring platforms, airplane, boat and ferry, to answer the MSFD criteria for cetaceans (Deliverable 4.5) - <i>15 min presentation & 25 min discussion</i>	Lea DAVID (EcoOcean Institute) All participants
Lunch break		
13:00 – 14:30		
Agenda item 3. Review of documents/deliverables under Activity 4 of the ABIOMMED project - continues		
14:30 – 15:10	3.4. Assessment of potential factors of uncertainty on large-scale synoptic surveys assessing distribution and abundance of highly mobile species (Deliverable 4.6) - <i>15 min presentation & 25 min discussion</i>	Simone PANIGADA / Arianna AZZELLINO (Tethys Research Institute) All participants
15:10 – 15:50	3.5. Proposals for the definition of threshold values for cetaceans' related criteria (Deliverable 4.3) - <i>15 min presentation & 25 min discussion</i>	Giancarlo LAURIANO / Caterina FORTUNA (ISPRA) All participants
Coffee break		
15:50 – 16:10		

Agenda item 4. Other matters		
16:10 – 16:15	Any other business	All participants
Agenda item 5. Conclusion of the Meeting		
16:15 – 17:00	Conclusions	ACCOBAMS Secretariat All participants

15 June 2023

Time	Agenda	Speaker
09:00 – 11:00	Meeting of the Working Group <i>(Proposed points of discussion: Recommendations from the meeting, Development of the Policy Briefing as one of the deliverables of ABIOMMED project, Other issues)</i>	Members of the WG and Activity 4 Partners