

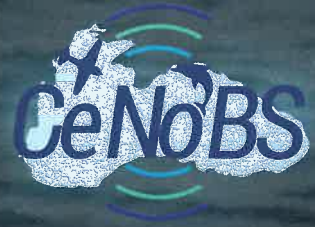


ACCOBAMS SURVEY INITIATIVE

A BLACK SEA SUCCESS STORY

The largest cetacean aerial survey mission in the Black Sea!

After 3 weeks in June-July 2019 and more than 7,000 km surveyed, the most extensive aerial survey activity on cetaceans in the Black Sea basin was completed!



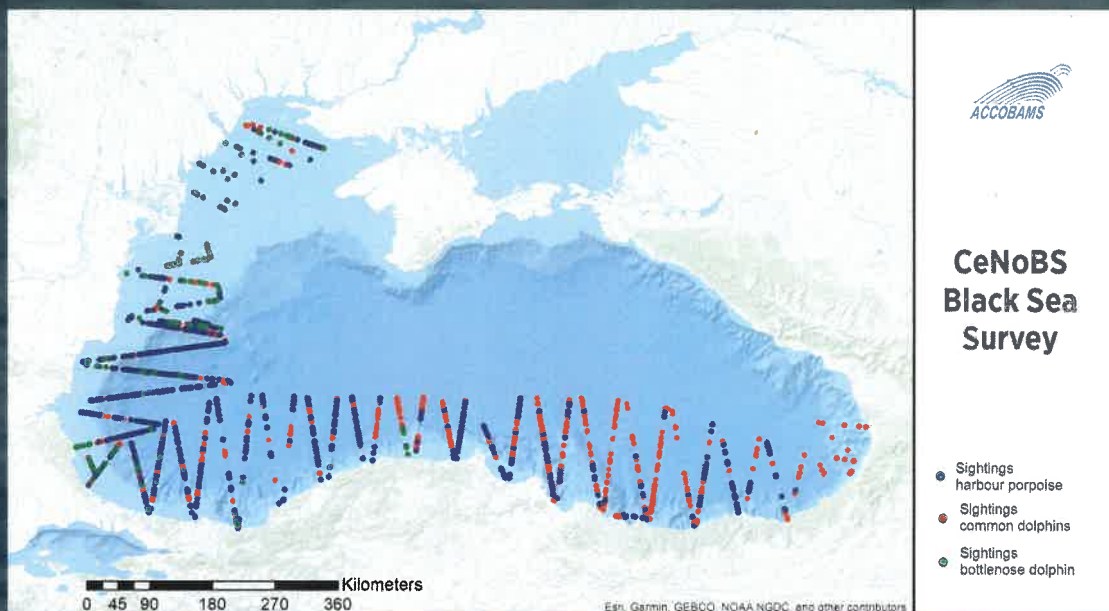
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The aerial survey was conducted over the Black Sea waters in Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine. Two observer teams collected data on the abundance of cetaceans as well as fish, birds (Descriptor 1 Biodiversity) and marine litter (Descriptor 10). These descriptors are used for defining the Good Environmental Status (GES), the main objective of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). The survey was carried out as part of the CeNoBS project (Support MSFD implementation in the Black Sea through establishing a regional monitoring system of cetaceans (D1) and noise monitoring (D11) for achieving GES), co-funded by the European Union and the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS).

Eleven experts from all 6 riparian countries of the Black Sea participated to the training workshop and 9 observers actually joined the survey. It is a historic cooperation effort of the countries both within and outside the Black Sea basin, involving experts from the ACCOBAMS area. It corresponds to the Black Sea component of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative, a unique cooperative project which engaged all countries in the ACCOBAMS area of the Mediterranean and Black Sea with the aim to establish an integrated, collaborative and coordinated monitoring system for the status of cetacean populations at the whole ACCOBAMS area level.



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According to preliminary results, in 18 days and 7,000 km surveyed, more than 1,750 dolphin and porpoise sightings were recorded. Harbour porpoises are by far the most numerous species, with 50% of the total sightings, followed by common dolphins (41%) and bottlenose dolphins (7%). Human pressures have been observed all over the area, with an alarmingly high number of plastic debris, evenly distributed throughout the surveyed area.

CeNoBS is a 24-month project involving several partners, which aims to improve the implementation of the second cycle of the MSFD for two key descriptors: Descriptor 1 – marine mammals / cetaceans and Descriptor 11 – noise in the Black Sea by achieving greater coherence in determining, assessing and achieving GES. The proposed activities will complement the lack of background data on the distribution / abundance of cetacean populations and the incidence of by-catches.



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