

Assessing the Vulnerability of the Black Sea Marine Ecosystem to Human Pressures

Common borders. Common solutions.

ANEMONE Stakeholder Workshops Dedicated to Cetacean Monitoring



The project “Assessing the vulnerability of the Black Sea marine ecosystem to human pressures“ (ANEMONE), coordinated by the National Institute for Marine Research and Development “Grigore Antipa”, Romania, in partnership with Mare Nostrum NGO, the Institute of Oceanology - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IO-BAS), the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey/Marmara Research Center (TUBITAK-MAM), the Turkish Marine Research Foundation (TUDAV), Turkey, and the Ukrainian Scientific Center of Ecology of the Sea (UkrSCES), has completed the second round of national stakeholder engagement workshops. While the first round was dedicated to marine litter, these workshops focused on cetacean monitoring and finding ways of stakeholder involvement in dolphin monitoring activities.



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ROMANIA

The second public engagement workshop in Romania, dedicated to “Stakeholder involvement in dolphin monitoring activities”, was organized by Mare Nostrum NGO on 17 October 2019, in Constanta. It was attended by 43 participants, from various activity sectors like NGO’s, education, research, authority/policy makers, and was divided in two parts. The first one was focused on discussion with authorities and issues related to the monitoring activities of the Black Sea dolphins, legislative aspects regarding their conservation and availability of data related to cetaceans. The second part was dedicated to training the members of the Stranding Monitoring Network, represented by teachers from different schools from Constanta County. After the workshop, Mare Nostrum developed the diagram information on cetaceans in the Romanian Black Sea waters, a diagram about how to communicate inter-institutional the information related to cetacean monitoring program in the Black Sea Romanian waters and formed the Stranding Monitoring



Network for the school year 2019-2020, network that increased after this workshop and performed land surveys in order to collect data about cetaceans and stranding events. After this workshop, the trained teachers organized 13 trainings in schools, recruiting members for the network, which at this time is formed by 85 teachers and 360 students from the Constanta County.



BULGARIA

The second workshop of stakeholders in Bulgaria on cetaceans was organized by the Institute of Oceanology - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IO-BAS) and NGO “Green Bolkans” in the format called “ Science Cafe” on 25 October 2019. The workshop was focused on the topic cetaceans. The present state of Black Sea cetacean populations is not certain in spite of research and conservation measures during last twenty years. The insufficiency of scientific information concerns the population abundance, distribution, migrations, critical habitats, anthropogenic and natural threats as well as some basic aspects of life history and pathology. The workshop was attended by 45 participants, representing governmental organizations, universities, research institutes, NGOs and general public. The workshop program was organized in the form of short presentations of ANEMONE project, monitoring activities on cetaceans in Bulgaria, as well as presentations of projects and activities within the Black Sea region dealing with cetaceans. The discussions covered

questions related to the by-catch of cetaceans, monitoring activities and also the obtained results from the First Monitoring campaign on marine litter were presented.



TURKEY

TUDAV’s second public engagement workshop was on cetaceans, especially cetacean strandings on the Turkish Black Sea coasts. It was held on 2 December 2019 in Istanbul, Turkey. Presentations were made on the basic characteristics of cetaceans, such as “which species do we have in our waters?”, “what we should do if we see a stranded dolphin?”, “how can we create a stranding network?”, “what kind of information we need to record for a stranded cetacean?” etc. Twenty-seven people participated in the workshop. The participants profile consisted of fishery experts working for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of 12 coastal cities on the Black Sea (Kırklareli, Istanbul, Sakarya, Zonguldak, Bartın, Kastamonu, Sinop, Samsun, Ordu, Giresun, Trabzon and Rize), teachers, researchers, and students. Before the workshop, a questionnaire on stranding cetaceans was sent to experts in order to have information regarding the current situation of their coasts. The experts presented their information at the workshop followed by a discussion session. Networkin, as well as a need for functional mechanism within the relevant authorities are key issues for the monitoring of cetacean strandings, as agreed by the whole participants.



UKRAINE

The Second Workshop of Local Stakeholders “Public involvement in the conservation of Black Sea cetaceans” was held on 21 November 2019 in UkrSCES, Odesa. 48 people attended the workshop and more than half of them (54.2 %) were students and their teachers. In addition, there were colleagues and researchers from UkrSCES and NGO that attended and participated in the Workshop. The Focus Group method was used to involve participants in discussions concerning the topic. All participants (students and teachers) were distributed around the 3 tables. Each table had its own subject for discussion and their own moderator (lecturer). Then the participants were invited to share results from their conversations with the rest of the whole group. During the workshop, participants received important information about the problem of cetaceans’ conservation in the Black Sea region: they learned about the species composition of cetaceans, their biology, physiology and ecology, threats; about the ethical and commercial component of keeping dolphins in captivity, and also discussed possible ways of solving these problems for the Black Sea.



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