



# Cetaceans conservation plan for Montenegro

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# State of the art

- Cetaceans are protected in Montenegro by Law of nature protection O.Gazzete 62/13.
- Montenegro signed ACCOBAMS in 2008, started EU accession negotiation in 2012, ratified a number of other treaties requesting cetacean conservation.
- No management actions exist until today
- That was the reason to start with preparation on Management plan

# State of the art

- Institute of marine biology is part of University of Montenegro and present is the only organisation in charge of marine research in Montenegro
- Number of NGOs and individuals expressed their interest but lack of funding and institutional framework prevented some longer term activities
- Since 2011 Institute of marine biology started with occasional data collection on strandings and presence of different cetacean species.
- First monitoring data collection start with Blue world Institute and continue within NETCET project

# Overview of the species

Until now following species have been recorded in Montenegrin waters

1. *Tursiops truncatus* – photoID, strandings, aerial survey
2. *Stenella coeruleoalba* - strandings, aerial survey
3. *Ziphius cavirostris* - aerial survey
4. *Grampus griseus* - aerial survey
5. *Balaenoptera physalus* – observation in Boka Kotorska bay

It can be expected that other species regularly present in the Ionian and Med can appear occasionally, particularly *Physeter macrocephalus*



# Bottlenose dolphin

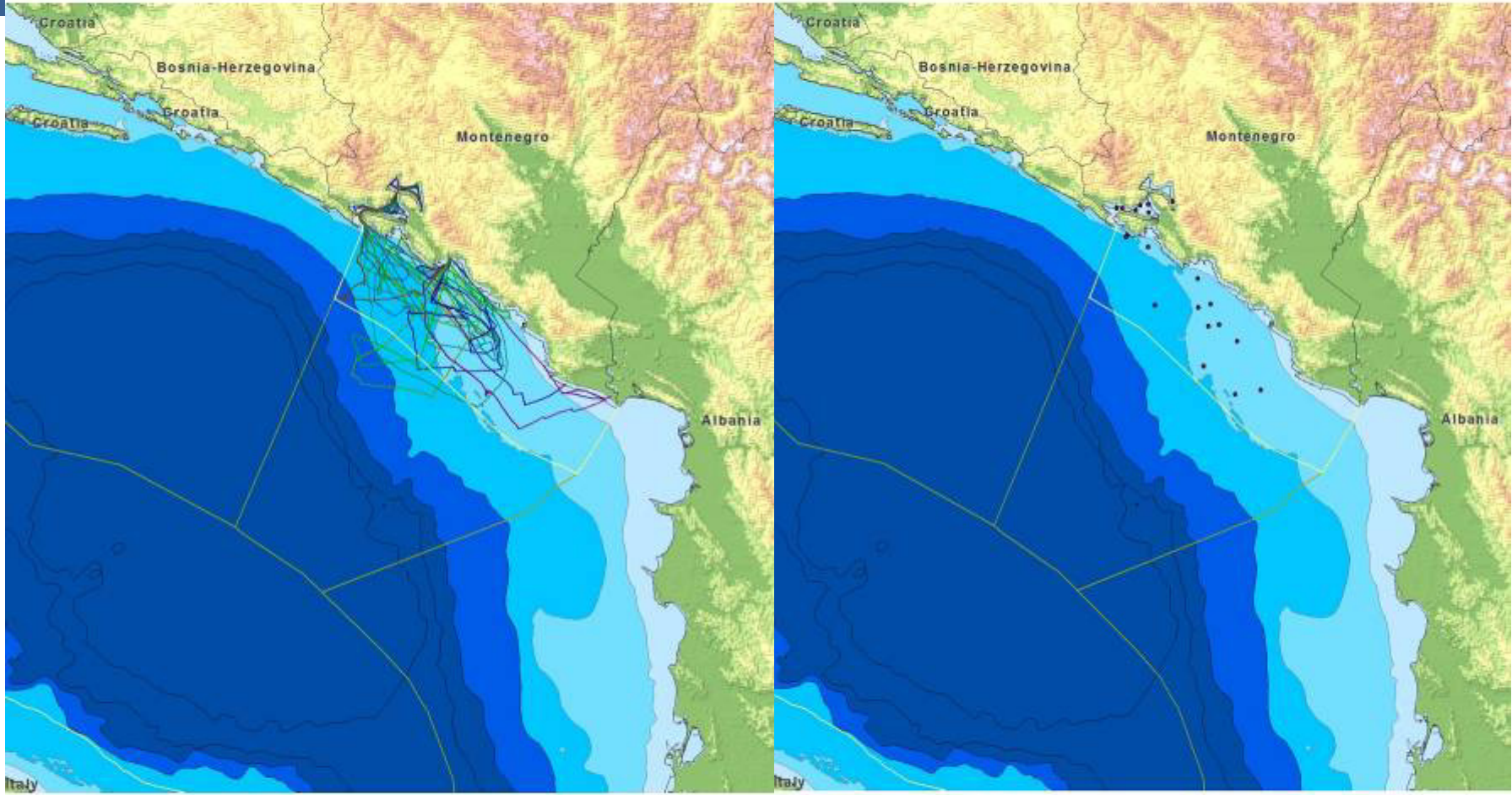
The only species regularly present in the coastal and territorial waters

PhotoID survey was carried out in 2013-2014

During the survey, the IMB team had 59 trips, covered a total of 3,205 nautical miles (5,936 km) and spent a total of 329 hours on survey

Group size was from 2-14, we identify 74 individuals

Animals were regularly observed entering Boka – photoID will identify residency patterns





# Other species

- Research indicates that
- Striped dolphin is regularly present in larger numbers in the offshore areas
- Stranding records are rare and usually present during winter/spring months
- Occasional sightings of Cuviers beaked whale and Risso's dolphins indicate that offshore areas are potentially important habitat



# Threats

The most important threats identified are

1. Fisheries interactions (overfishing)
2. Direct takes (records of animals being killed – Joca)
3. Hydrocarbons exploration and extraction (currently SEA is being developed and exploration fields are being licensed)

# Conservation plan

- Current data are scarce and clearly show that more focused data collection is needed before detailed account on the threats and impact on Cetaceans in Montenegro can be prepared
- With the intent of developing the activities further, initial agreement was done to form a working group has been established between Institute of marine biology, Ministry of sustainable development and tourism and Ministry of agriculture and rural development.



- UNEP - Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria



# Recomendations

Therefore, instead of actual conservation plan a list of recommendations was developed

1. Ensure funding and support for more focused data collection on species abundance and distribution
2. Ensure institutional coordination and cooperation in establishing and evaluating threats and impacts of human activities on cetacean populations
3. Ensure regular monitoring programs
4. Build institutional capacity to carry out research and monitoring activities
5. Develop public awareness activities for citizens and visitors