

Agenda Item 8.2.2 and 9.2: Publicity/PR Issues and Year of the Dolphin

Report on Educational and Promotional Activities 1/2007

Submitted by: Secretariat



NOTE:
**IN THE INTERESTS OF ECONOMY, DELEGATES ARE KINDLY REMINDED TO BRING
THEIR OWN COPIES OF THESE DOCUMENTS TO THE MEETING**

**Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the
Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS)**

Report on Educational and Promotional Activities 1/2007

1. Introduction

The Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas was concluded in 1991 under the auspices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). The main aim of the Agreement is to promote close co-operation amongst Parties with a view to achieving and maintaining a favorable conservation status for small cetaceans in the Agreement area. International cooperation is vital in order to achieve effective protection, as migrating cetaceans regularly cross national boundaries. The Conservation and Management Plan, forming part of the Agreement, obliges Parties to prohibit intentional taking and killing of small cetaceans and to engage in habitat conservation and management, surveys and research, public information and education.

In September 2006, at the 5th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS, Resolution No. 8 on educational and promotional activities was adopted. This resolution recommends that the Secretariat should continue and step up its activities to raise awareness of issues related to cetacean conservation in the Agreement area and to promote the Agreement itself with non-party range states. It further particularly proposes the production of targeted information materials on conservation issues concerning small cetaceans in the region.

2. Current public awareness initiatives: Year of the Dolphin (YoD)

In a quest to spread awareness of the problems being faced by small cetaceans and the unfavorable conservation status of many species and populations, CMS, ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS, the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS) and the German-based tourism group TUI decided to designate 2007 the Year of the Dolphin. The aim of the initiative is to stimulate awareness of, and concrete activities for the conservation of these species and their habitats, while at the same time contributing to the target agreed by all Governments to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by the year 2010.

The Year of the Dolphin (YoD) was officially launched on 15th September in Monaco, in the presence of H.S.H. Prince Albert II. With direct relation to ASCOBANS, a special launching event was subsequently held at the recent 5th Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement (Egmond aan Zee, Netherlands, 18-20 September 2006). Further launches have been held on the occasion of the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Convention (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 28 November 2006), in Germany (Bonn, 4 December 2006) and in the Canaries (Island of Tenerife, 16 February 2007). The campaign was also brought to the attention of the Spanish public, through an outreach event in Lanzarote in early November 2006, and of small island states in the Pacific Ocean (Apia, Samoa on the 5-9 March 2007).

The CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat has been developing initiatives, tools and actions for the Year of the Dolphin worldwide. Intense activities are expected particularly in the areas covered by existing CMS Agreements on whales and dolphins: the Mediterranean and Black Seas; the

Baltic and North Seas; and the Pacific Islands. Activities will also involve areas where agreements are planned for development (Central/West Africa and South East Asia) or where CMS has been undertaking whale and dolphin conservation or research activities such as South America and South Asia.

Special invitations were made to all Governments and representatives of the civil society to join the celebration. There was also a call to all governments to contribute to this campaign by undertaking conservation activities and public awareness campaigns, and to report on those directly to the CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat. Governments were also requested to support the YoD Campaign more directly by providing financial assistance to the work of the YoD team within CMS and WDCS, by covering staff and educational material printing costs. Donor governments were also asked to consider funding special prizes for dolphin conservation and education, to be awarded to the best small-scale conservation project and to the best educational work performed by schools around the world.

CMS/ASCOBANS reaching out to the private sector not only assists in additional resources for implementation but gives the YoD Campaign a unique opportunity for an innovative partnership involving the United Nations, Governments, Non-Governmental Organizations and the Private Sector, working together through different means towards the achievement of the same objectives. Private sector companies may support the Campaign through other media initiatives, direct funding of YoD activities or YoD products and advertising. Individuals and interested groups will be able to join the YoD campaign as well by initiating and organizing special YoD activities at the local and national levels, giving direct support to the campaign, purchasing YoD products and using the educational material.

The support and communication channels offered by the private sector, in particular by the tourism business (TUI-AG), whose outreach potentials through tourist clients has effectively increased public awareness on dolphins, is commendable. TUI has already initiated a strong promotional campaign through their media, which is expected to reach hundreds of thousands of tourists, support scientific and educational publications and provide in-kind assistance to CMS events on cetacean conservation.

Some ongoing activities being carried out include:

- The Dolphin Diploma, a certificate acknowledging the owner to be a junior expert in dolphin conservation, which children will be able to obtain after undertaking a test on conservation or specific activities. A special action kit will also be developed to create awareness of cetacean species inhabiting the Mediterranean region, their biology, their needs and habitat and the threats they face. It will also promote acceptance and support for cetacean conservation measures, as it enhances enthusiasm and opportunities to become engaged and join in the conservation efforts.
- YoD merchandise supporting dolphin conservation such as caps, T-shirts, beachwear, inflatable animals and soft toys, and calendars to be sold online and in TUI destinations. Sales of YoD products will support the goals promoted by the YoD for dolphin conservation, as a small percentage of the revenue will be earmarked to support profiled conservation projects.
- The YoD is being advertised by TUI through its catalogues and relevant media, including direct mailings, flight plans, catalogues (e.g. section on nature and environment), in-flight magazines, logo on plane tailfins, etc. Additional media space will also include: article in "Welcome" magazine and "Flugjournal" and their partners Hapagfly - online

newsletter, online travel confirmation, advertising spot on Airtrack, printing of paper napkins; and HLX -HLX flight plans; webpage advertising bargain tickets; confirmation of reservation, ticket envelopes; postcards/flyers on board aircraft.

CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat has also developed:

- YoD postcards;
- YoD posters including practical suggestions on how to help the campaign (in collaboration with the German Ministry of Environment (BMU));
- YoD leaflets which contain information on the importance of dolphins, the threats that they face, what CMS and its relevant Agreements are doing to conserve them and how Governments, organizations and individuals can contribute to the campaign. (Also in collaboration with BMU);
- The Dolphin Manual. This is an educational booklet to be delivered to children in TUI destinations through UNESCO channels and by CMS to ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS focal points for distribution. The booklet will be ready for distribution in early May in the following languages of ASCOBANS area: English, French, German and Spanish. Information will be delivered in an easy and 'fun' format, and will include news on UN and other initiatives for protecting dolphin species.

A dedicated website is active at: www.YoD2007.org. This website reports about the various activities undertaken within the campaign and will be enriched with more features in the course of 2007. This website will also contain reference pages for those Governments, organizations and individuals that are interested in learning more about the initiative, support it directly or indirectly, and develop an activity in the context of this dedicated year. Various articles are also available on this website. These include:

- o A message from the Patron of the Year of the Dolphin with information on the YoD campaign.
- o World of Dolphins: characteristics and threats to the survival of dolphins.
- o Logo of the Year of the Dolphin, for downloading and use by interested partners.
- o The Dolphin Diploma and how to obtain relevant material.
- o The educational programme and links to relevant publications to download.
- o Initiatives around the world (those adhering to the YoD are requested to register their activities on the website).
- o Media room with information for the press.
- o On-line sales of YoD products.
- o Specific references and links to CMS Agreements on cetaceans.

ASCOBANS commitment to increasing the public awareness of marine life led to the publication of the book **Whales and Dolphins of the North Sea** by *Kees Camphuysen, Gerard Peet & Frits-Jan Maas* in collaboration with The North Sea Foundation. This publication impressively documents the variety and beauty of cetaceans in the North Sea area as it promotes knowledge of this important part of our regional natural heritage. The book contains information about whales and dolphins that regularly occur or just occasionally visit this area, about the threats to which cetacean populations are exposed and measures that are taken to reduce such threats.

Several articles were published in the German and international press following YoD launch events, which have allowed a better outreach with the public interest in marine life. Examples include articles like *UN entdecken ihr Herz für Delphine* on *Weltspiegel* (5 December, 2006), *Der Ozean ist kein Streichelzoo* on *Reise-Magazin* (7 January, 2007) and *Tierschützer und Tourismusbranche ziehen an einem Strang* on *Deutsche Welle* (6 January, 2007). Creditable is United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) press and magazines that have also widely publicized the initiative.

The activities outlined above aim at increasing general awareness on dolphin conservation, providing effective educational and information tools for better outreach to a broader audience, creating stronger partnerships for further action as well as providing a platform for joint activities and common goals for UN agencies, the private sector and other NGOs.

Several of these activities took place in CMS member states and several in the ASCOBANS Parties (Germany, France, Poland, United Kingdom, Belgium have so far reported activities on the YoD website), however other activities are yet to take place. A summarized sample of planned activities within the ASCOBANS region is provided below. These are activities undertaken by supporters, i.e. organizations that joined the YoD through the website and will report accordingly to CMS/ASCOBANS. To date the CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat has received over 140 requests from organizations and institutions to join the YoD and is currently processing them.

Activity	Location	Time period
Photo exhibition	Frankfurt , Germany	20 April
[Information Exhibition: The main 5-4 stars hotels will exhibit a x-banner with information about the YoD during the year 2007.]	[Canary Islands, Spain]	Year-round
Production of YoD-official song- "Dolphins of Bali" and Music Video	Düsseldorf, Germany	Music video under production
[Film project on Whales and Dolphins. Topic: The maritime environment of Canary Islands.]	[Canary Islands, Spain]	Ongoing
Film project on the history of the river Ganges and the Ganges River Dolphin- Comparison of the Ganges in 1995 and 2006.	France, Paris	Year round
1. Development of photo identification database: study on free ranging cetacean populations. 2. Support to the implementation of national stranding networks and their coordination into a wider regional network. (Both associated to the launch of a perfume by INIS Perfume Ireland.)	Germany	Summer
Information material being sent for distribution	Worldwide	Ongoing
YoD logo for their website	Diverse	Ongoing

Ambassador for Dolphin Fund gives Tribute Concert: Christina Branco	Noordwijk, Netherlands	12 May
Whale Action Day: Give information about the Conservation of Whales and Dolphins, organizing of a sponsors' run, quiz games and films about marine mammals.	Germany, Meinerzhagen	23 April
Production of the book: In Defense of Dolphins- The New Moral Frontier. A discussion of the philosophical and ethical implications of the scientific research of dolphins.	England, France, Italy, Germany	Translation into German ongoing
Children art competition through the media house in the Ruhr region. (To raise awareness of threats to Dolphins and Whales.)	Germany, Ruhr	Start April
Interviews about YoD	Australia, Canada, Germany	Ongoing
"Sailors for Dolphins" – A sponsorship project to support the YoD	Marseille, France	Year-round

More initiatives are planned by Governments; for instance in Germany, the creation of an exhibition in collaboration with the Wadden Sea National Park is planned to take place in summer. This exhibition is geared to raise awareness of threats to, and conservation measures for marine mammals. The focus on the Wadden Sea will ensure that the information goes far beyond just the German audience reaching also tourists and people from neighboring countries e.g. Denmark.

At the end of December 2006, CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat sent invitations to all ASCOBANS coordinators to join the YoD. ASCOBANS countries are also invited to join the initiative and report activities to the CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat.

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