

2024



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ANNUAL REPORT

of the Consortium for the Conservation of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin Foundation (CCAHD)



© Yanoussa Saïrou Camara, CNSHB Guinée



CCAHD

Consortium for the Conservation
of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Consortium for the Conservation of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (CCAHD) continued to grow over the course of 2024, expanding its partnerships, budget, and recognition among regional and international conservation stakeholders. Highlights of 2024 include:

- Welcoming partners from Angola and Sierra Leone, contributing to the CCAHD's current network of over 100 individual partners representing a wide range of science and conservation bodies from 18 of the 19 Atlantic humpback dolphin range countries.
- Official recognition of the CCAHD as a Charitable (ANBI) organisation in the Netherlands where we are legally based and a near tripling of donations directly managed by the CCAHD as well as increased funding for CCAHD partners who are expanding the scope and scale of their data collection and conservation efforts on the ground. This includes incredibly valuable continued funding from the Nuremberg Zoo, who have supported the CCAHD's core operations since its foundation in 2020.
- The adoption, in February 2024, of two major international conservation measures in which the CCAHD played an integral role: the designation of Atlantic humpback dolphins as threatened under the US Endangered Species Act, and the adoption of the Convention on Migratory Species' (CMS) Single Species Action Plan for the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (See page 08).
- The publication of the Children's book, Keita and the Dolphins, and the distribution of thousands of copies in 6 *Sousa teuszii* range countries (see page 13).
- The participation of African CCAHD partners in several regional and international meetings, providing opportunities for them to expand their professional networks while also raising awareness of *Sousa teuszii* and the CCAHD (see page 09).
- The first in-person meeting of partners from 13 *Sousa teuszii* range countries in Kribi, Cameroon in December – an opportunity for strengthening of collaborations, information exchange, and capacity building for all who participated (see page 11 for more details).



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1. Introduction

The Consortium for the Conservation of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin Foundation (from here on referred to as **CCAHD**) continued to grow and mature over the course of 2024. Since its initial formation as an informal network in 2020, the CCAHD core mission statement remains unchanged and the group continues ‘working towards the long-term sustainability of **Critically Endangered** Atlantic humpback dolphin (*Sousa teuszii* – from here on AHD) populations and their habitats through research, awareness, capacity-building and action’. 2024 saw our growing network of over 100 individual partners from 18 of the 19 Atlantic humpback dolphin range countries and beyond strengthen their collaborations and commitment to AHD conservation. This report provides an overview of some of the highlights of the 2024 calendar year.

CCAHD FORMAL STRUCTURE AND STATUS

For almost two years following its inception in July 2020, the CCAHD functioned as an informal network without any legal status. In February 2022, the CCAHD became a foundation (Stichting) formally registered with the Chamber of Commerce in the Netherlands (RSIN number 863607366). The CCAHD Foundation is guided by a **Management Board and a Supervisory Board** which are both composed of international and *Sousa teuszii* range country members, as well as individuals with expertise in financial management and legal/administrative obligations in the Netherlands. In March 2024, the CCAHD was formally recognized as a Public Benefit or Charitable organisation in the Netherlands (**ANBI status**), complementing its 2023 **NGOsource** equivalency determination to a US public charity.

The Foundation is supported by a Secretariat, which is currently based in the Netherlands. The Secretariat consists of a General Secretary (Gianna Minton) who is engaged on a part-time consultancy basis. The Secretariat is supported by communications experts from the Gambia and Cameroon (see more under communication below) who are also engaged on part-time consultancy contracts, and a volunteer legal expert based in the Netherlands.

CCAHD Management Board



Maximin Djondo, Board Member, Chair (Benin)



Peter Schelvis, Board Member, Finance (Netherlands)



Aristide Takoukam Kamla, Board Member (Cameroon)



Caroline Weir, Board Member (UK/Falklands)



Judicael Regis Kema, Board Member (Gabon)



Nicola Hodgins, Board Member (UK)



Tim Collins, Board Member (Kenya/France)



Hans Eric Kuipéri, Board Member (Netherlands)

CCAHD Supervisory Board



Grant Abel, Board Member, Chair (USA)



Lindsay Porter, Board Member, Finance (Hong Kong)



Edem Eniang, Board Member (Nigeria)

CCAHD Secretariat



Gianna Minton, General Secretary (Netherlands)



Cedrick Fogwan, Social Media Coordinator (Cameroon)



Yandeh Salleh Muhammed, Communications (The Gambia)



Jacobien Viets, Legal assistance (Netherlands)

1: CCAHD Management Board, Supervisory Board and Secretariat as of January 1, 2024.

The CCAHD's fund-raising and day-to-day operations are guided by a suite of official and publicly available documents, that can all be found on our [website](#).

- ✓ The CCAHD Foundation's full Articles of Association (in both Dutch and English) can be found [here](#).
- ✓ The CCAHD Foundation's Financial Policy (in English) can be found [here](#). This is complemented by a Financial Due Diligence policy available [here](#).
- ✓ The CCAHD Foundation's 5-year Strategic Plan can be found [here](#).

PARTICIPATION AND WORKING GROUPS

As of January 2025, CCAHD partners include over 100 individuals and organisations from 18 of the 19 potential *Sousa teuszii* range countries as well as others from outside the region with interest and experience in protecting threatened cetaceans. The current list of CCAHD partners can be found [here](#), and more insight into range-country focal points and the status of knowledge about Atlantic humpback dolphins can be found by clicking on any of the range countries on our [interactive map](#). The CCAHD welcomes contact from *Sousa teuszii* range country biologists, NGOs or interested individuals to further expand this network and maximize opportunities for conservation and collaboration.

The CCAHD has ten working groups that meet on a regular basis online to discuss a range of topics related to the Consortium's [short and medium-term priorities](#) and [5-year Strategic Plan](#). Working groups are open to all range-country and international partners and are convened by active volunteers in the consortium.

WG 1: CMS Single Species Action Plan

WG 2: Outreach and Capacity Building

WG 3: Field surveys

WG 4: Genetics

WG 5: Stranding response and dolphin health

WG 6: Local Ecological Knowledge /interview surveys

WG 7: Fundraising

WG 8: Acoustic monitoring

WG 9: Bycatch and directed hunting

WG 10: Coastal Development

CORE OPERATION

Support from the [Nuremberg Zoo](#) since 2020 has made it possible for the CCAHD to employ, on a consultancy basis a part-time Coordinator (formally designated as the General Secretary of the Foundation) based in the Netherlands, as well as a Communications Coordinator/trainer in the Gambia and Social Media and Website Coordinators in Cameroon. In addition to the Nuremberg Zoo support for CCAHD core running costs, a donation was also received from [Georgia Aquarium](#) (USA) that supported part of those costs and educational materials including the Children's book, [Keita and the Dolphins](#), which was published in 2024 (see more below). In 2024, this core budget was fully managed through the CCAHD's bank account and administrative structures.

The support for these core running costs, which also include website maintenance, meeting and translation software subscriptions, professional translations, printing, etc., has been essential to the CCAHD's development over the past four years. Without a dedicated coordinator, communications, and administrative support, it would simply not be possible to implement the range of activities and projects presented below.


COMMUNICATION - INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

In 2024 the CCAHD Communications Working Group endorsed a [Communications Strategy](#) drafted by Gambian Communications Expert, Yandeh Sallah-Muhammed. The strategy guides both internal communications to promote exchange of information, knowledge and expertise among CCAHD partners, as well as external communications to raise awareness of *Sousa teuszii* conservation needs and how the CCAHD addresses those needs.

Website

The CCAHD website, <https://www.sousateuszii.org/>, which was launched in January 2021, is a trilingual resource (English, French and Portuguese) for members of the public, researchers, managers, and potential funders. The site provides updates on projects and regularly posts news items and new downloadable resources such as a stranding data collection guide designed by the US Marine Mammal Commission and reviewed and refined by the CCAHD Stranding and Health Working Group. The site also showcases CCAHD's donors and partners.


In 2024 the site had over 5,000 active users and 35,000 site visits from users all over the world. The most frequently visited pages on the site are the home page, the page providing basic information about the species, and the French and English downloadable resources pages. Statistics from the second half of 2024 indicate that site usage from *Sousa teuszii* range countries is on the increase.



9 JANUARY 2025

First in person CCAHD meeting and Street Whale festival 2024


From December 2-7th, 2024 CCAHD partners from 13 Atlantic humpback dolphin range countries gathered in Kribi, Cameroon. The first in person meeting of the CCAHD partners aimed at strengthening collaboration among partners, building capacities and developing strategies to promote the conservation of the Atlantic humpback dolphins. The CCAHD meeting was held in parallel to the [...]



17 DECEMBER 2024

The CCAHD and its Partners Make Waves at SMM 2024.

By Elizabeth Agyekumwaa The Consortium for the Conservation of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (CCAHD) and its partners made a notable impact at the Society for Marine Mammalogy's biennial Conference (SMM 2024) in Perth. Thanks to generous funding from two anonymous donors and the SMM itself, seven African CCAHD partners attended the meeting, the highest [...]

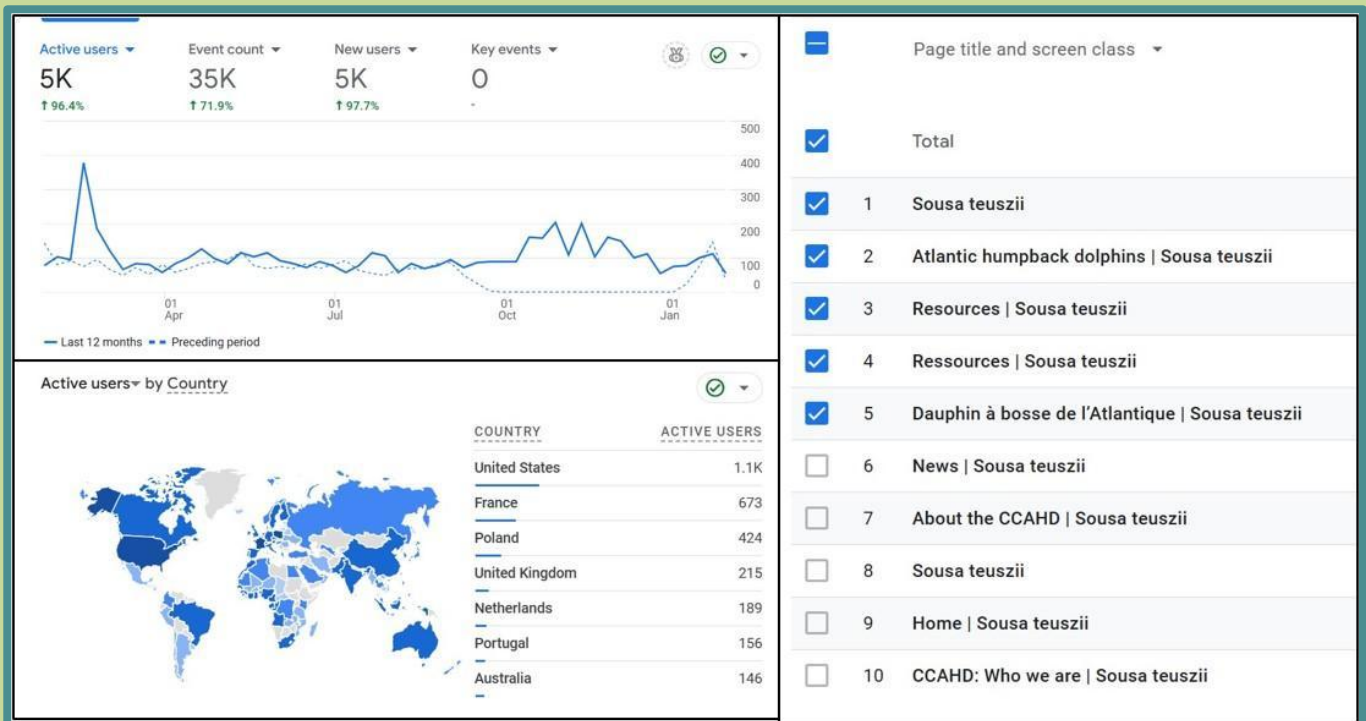


15 OCTOBER 2024

Back on the Beach and in the boat! Studying Atlantic Humpback Dolphins in the Konkouati-Douli National Park, Congo.

The Konkouati-Douli National Park (CDNP) is located on the northern border of the Republic of Congo, adjacent to the Mayumba National Park in Gabon. Since 2021, this Protected area has been managed by the NGO Noé, and their team has recently embarked on new studies on the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*). This work aims [...]

2: The CCAHD website is used to publish short news items highlighting new developments and amplifying partners' successes.



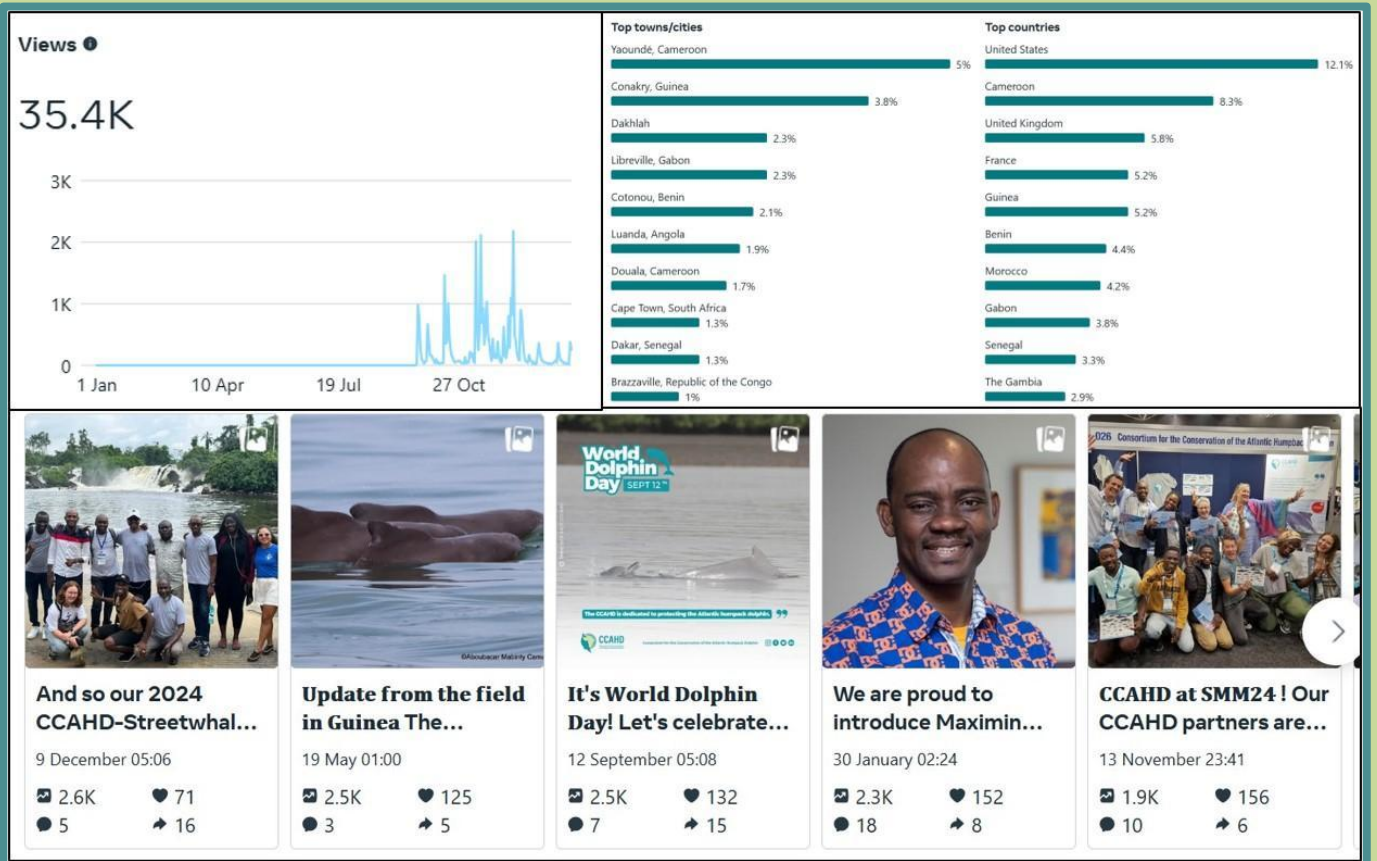
3: CCAHD website statistics for the 2024 calendar year.

Social Media

The CCAHD also has Facebook and Instagram accounts. In 2024 the decision was made to discontinue its X/Twitter account and to open a LinkedIn account instead. Updates are posted on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Where appropriate, posts recognise and thank donors, and provide links to their social media accounts, providing an excellent opportunity for Donors to be recognised for their contributions to CCAHD.

As of January 2025, CCAHD's Facebook account had 480 followers of which 201 were new in 2024. Facebook and Instagram posts had a reach of 21,500 individuals, and over 35,400 views from October 2024 (when Meta started tracking this metric) onward. Of the 10 top countries from which the Facebook page has been followed, 7 are *Sousa teuszii* range countries: Cameroon, Guinea, Benin, Morocco, Gabon, Senegal and the Gambia, indicating that these social media platforms are potentially a more effective way of reaching range country audiences than our website.

The newer LinkedIn account is still building a following, but has elicited encouraging personal engagement and responses within the global cetacean research and conservation community.



4: Statistics from the CCAHD's Facebook and Instagram accounts indicate that they are reaching a wide audience, with recent posts reaching an average of 2000 users or more.



2. CCAHD Activities in 2024

The CCAHD and its partners were able to continue and expand the wide range of activities described in the [CCAHD 2023 Annual report](#), as well as initiate several new exciting projects. Given the highly collaborative nature of the CCAHD, activities described below include both those that were purely initiated and funded through the CCAHD, and those that are hosted and managed by CCAHD partners, but where the CCAHD has played a strong role in helping to secure funding and/or providing technical advice and feedback.

INTERNATIONAL MILESTONES FOR *SOUSA TEUSZII* CONSERVATION

Adoption of the CMS Single Species Action Plan for the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin

During its triennial Conference of Parties (COP) held in Uzbekistan on 12-17 February 2024, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) formally adopted a regional Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) for the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin. The plan, which can be accessed [here](#), examines the known threats to the species, ranks their severity, and details a series of recommended actions that are needed to address each one. The plan places strong emphasis on capacity building and collaboration between a wide range of stakeholders at local, national, regional and international scales. CCAHD Board and Secretariat members as well as many partner organisations were involved in the drafting of the SSAP, as well as a [meeting in Senegal in September 2023](#) where *Sousa teuszii* range-country government representatives provided feedback and input into the final version of the plan. The chair of the CCAHD Foundation's Management Board, Maximin Djondo attended the CMS COP in Samarkand Uzbekistan, where he was able to formally express support for the SSAP and encourage other range-country and non-range-country representatives to do the same. To learn more about the CMS COP and its outcomes, please feel free to access [this summary](#).



UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc. 27.5.2/Rev. 2/Annex 2

DRAFT SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR THE ATLANTIC HUMPBACK DOLPHIN (*Sousa teuszii*)



© L. Keith-Diagne, AACF

5: CCAHD Chair, Maximin Djondo from Benin was present at the CMS Conference of Parties where the Single Species Action Plan for the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin was unanimously adopted, providing a strong regional framework for conservation of the species.

***Sousa teuszii* designation under the US Endangered Species Act**

On February 20th the United States' NOAA Fisheries agency announced a final rule to list *Sousa teuszii*, as an endangered species under the US Endangered Species Act (ESA). This followed a comprehensive status review of the species and considered public comments submitted on the proposed rule as well as new information received. Based on the best available scientific and commercial information, NOAA Fisheries determined that the species is presently in danger of extinction throughout its range and warrants listing as an endangered species. The status review was prompted by a [petition from the Animal Welfare Institute, Center for Biological Diversity, and VIVA Vaquita on September 8, 2021](#) to list the Atlantic humpback dolphin as a threatened or endangered species under the ESA. The final status review report and the final rule may be downloaded from the following webpage: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/atlantic-humpback-dolphin#conservation-management>. CCAHD partners were integrally involved in providing information, feedback, photos and formal peer-reviews during the various stages of the process that led to this official designation.

CCAHD ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

2024 was a landmark year for the CCAHD, with several opportunities to participate in regional and international fora that helped to raise awareness of *Sousa teuszii* and their conservation needs, while also allowing *Sousa teuszii* range country scientists to expand their professional networks and gain valuable knowledge and skills.

CCAHD at the Regional Forum on Marine and Coastal Development (PRCM)

In April 2024, funding from multiple sources allowed CCAHD partners from Guinea and Cameroon to attend the Regional Forum on Marine and Coastal Environment, organized by the [PRCM](#). Cedrick Fogwan represented the CCAHD and delivered a presentation on the CMS Single Species Action Plan for the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (see above) and the CCAHD's role in helping to implement actions to halt the decline of the Critically Endangered Atlantic Humpback Dolphin through regional collaboration. He and Aristide Kamla from AMMCO in Cameroon also presented progress on their innovative Siren reporting app, and CCAHD partners from Biotope Guinea and the Guinean National Marine Research Center (CNHSB) shared key results from the social interview surveys conducted as part of the collaborative project in Guinea (see below). The meeting provided valuable opportunities for networking and collaboration between CCAHD partners who had not met before, as well as the opportunity to raise awareness of *Sousa teuszii* and the CCAHD among other regional marine conservation stakeholders.



6: CCAHD partners from Cameroon and Guinea presented their work as well as the CMS Single Species Action Plan at the PRCM Forum in April 2024.

CCAHD AT THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Four papers relevant to *Sousa teuszii* were presented at the International Whaling Commission (IWC) Scientific Committee meeting in Bled, Slovenia in April, 2024. These included the [CCAHD 2023 Annual report](#), a report of the [results of boat surveys in Guinea](#), an [update on cetacean landings in Ghana](#), and summary of [perceived knowledge and data gaps on cetacean bycatch in *Sousa teuszii* range countries](#). Discussion following these presentations resulted in a general commendation of the CCAHD's ongoing work, and specific recommendations to 1) continue and expand research and conservation efforts in Guinea, 2) continue and increase collaboration between the CCAHD and the IWC Bycatch Mitigation

Initiative to improve data collection and archiving relevant to bycatch monitoring and mitigation in *Sousa teuszii* range countries, and 3) foster collaboration between the IWC Stranding Initiative and partners in Ghana to improve data collection on stranded/bycaught dolphins. Funding from an international NGO supported the travel and accommodation costs for CCAHD Board member, Judicael Regis Kema Kema to attend the meeting, providing him valuable insight into the working methods of the IWC, and preparing him for future meetings where he will be able to present the outcomes of his ongoing PhD research, and potentially play a role in advising on cetacean policy and management in the future. Funding had also been secured to support the participation of a CCAHD member from Ghana, but sadly, her visa was not granted in time for the meeting.

CCAHD AT THE SOCIETY FOR MARINE MAMMALOGY BIENNIAL MEETING IN PERTH, AUSTRALIA

The CCAHD and its partners made a notable impact at the Society for Marine Mammalogy's biennial Conference (SMM 2024) in Perth. Thanks to generous funding from two anonymous donors and the SMM itself, seven African CCAHD partners attended the meeting, the highest representation from Central and West Africa to the SMM to date. Five of these team members gave posters or presentations highlighting research and conservation efforts for Critically Endangered Atlantic humpback dolphins (*Sousa teuszii*) and Vulnerable African manatees (*Trichechus senegalensis*), both of which are endemic to the west coast of Africa.

An Exhibitor's booth was set up by the CCAHD to raise awareness about the consortium's mission, objectives, and conservation efforts aimed at protecting *Sousa teuszii*. Donations from Georgia Aquarium, the Nuremberg Zoo, the National Marine Mammal Foundation, Ocean Alliance, and Abel Conservation made it possible to print and display a variety of the CCAHD materials, including a slide show, an illustrated regional ID guide for marine mammals in western Africa, stranding protocols, and the newly launched [children's storybook Keita and the Dolphins](#). These resources captivated conference attendees, creating a steady stream of visitors and sparking enthusiastic discussions.

Beyond the booth, CCAHD partners actively engaged in all the conference had to offer, meeting members of the global research community, and attending a multitude of presentations, posters, and panel discussions. Through their interactions the team made valuable new professional contacts, and helped raise awareness about the Atlantic humpback dolphin and the CCAHD's work with many researchers who were not previously aware of the species or the consortium. See this [website post](#) for more details.



7: CCAHD partners at the Biennial meeting of the Society for Marine Mammalogy in Perth, Australia, November 2024.

FIRST IN-PERSON MEETING OF RANGE-COUNTRY CCAHD PARTNERS

From December 2-7th, 2024 CCAHD partners from 13 Atlantic humpback dolphin range countries gathered in Kribi, Cameroon. The first in person meeting of the CCAHD partners aimed at strengthening collaboration among partners, building capacities and developing strategies to promote the conservation of the Atlantic humpback dolphins. The CCAHD meeting was held in parallel to the Fourth edition of 'Street Whale', an annual event organized by CCAHD partners, the African Marine Mammal Conservation Organization (AMMCO) in Cameroon. The street whale event combines science, sport and culture to raise awareness of marine and coastal conservation among a broad range of stakeholders, and collaboratively develop strategies for a better management of marine resources in Cameroon and the region.

The first in-person meeting of CCAHD range country partners was made possible through funding from the [Dolphin Quest Foundation](#) and [The International Whaling Commission \(IWC\)](#).

The meeting began on the 2nd and 3rd of December with a two-day theoretical and practical capacity-building workshop for CCAHD members only, led by Prof. Ellen Hines, and her colleague Dr. Sarah Farinelli. Following the ByRA training workshop, the CCAHD participants engaged fully in the main Street Whale regional event that brought together policymakers, marine conservation stakeholders, researchers, fishers, and others from 4th to 7th December 2024. In addition to plenary sessions on general marine and coastal conservation issues, CCAHD-specific sessions were led by experts on topics such as stranding response and data collection, boat-based cetacean survey methodology, legal and regulatory tools for dolphin conservation, conservation communication, and tips for successful grant proposal writing.

CCAHD partners and representatives of local Cameroonian and regional fisheries were also treated to demonstrations of a low-cost, low-tech method to reduce cetacean bycatch in gillnet fisheries using empty plastic drinks bottles. This technique was demonstrated by Dr. Federico Sucunza and fisherman Nene, who travelled all the way from Brazil to share their experience, courtesy of the [Nuremberg Zoo](#), who have been long-term supporters of the CCAHD and also sponsor dolphin conservation work on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

The face-to face meeting allowed CCAHD partners to strengthen their friendships and motivation for collaboration. Many participants volunteered their time to help advance CCAHD goals and objectives, and expressed their deep appreciation for the practical resources, support and sense of community and friendship that has developed through the CCAHD. A full workshop report is available [here](#).





8: CCAHD participants at the first in-person meeting of range-country partners in Kribi, Cameroon, December 2-7, 2024.

PRINTING AND DISSEMINATION OF RESOURCES TO RAISE AWARENESS OF, AND IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION FOR SOUSA TEUSZII

The IWC, SMM and In-person meetings described above provided wonderful opportunity for CCAHD participants to receive and disseminate multiple copies of printed resources like the *Keita and the Dolphins Children’s book*, waterproof *regional marine mammal identification guides and protocols and kits for data and sample collection from strandings*. The CCAHD thanks our various donors, including the *Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund*, the *Nuremberg Zoo*, *Georgia Aquarium*, the *National Marine Mammal Foundation*, the *US Marine Mammal Commission*, and *Ocean Alliance* for making it possible to print and distribute these materials.



9: Generous donations have made it possible to print and distribute CCAHD awareness raising materials and resources to a broad audience in Africa and abroad.

A true highlight of 2024 was the publication of the [Children's book, Keita and the Dolphins](#). The book's development was funded by the Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund through the multi-year [collaborative project in Guinea](#) (see more below). The MBZF funding supported the research and collaboration to adapt this traditional fisherman's tale into an illustrated children's book, and to print 500 copies for [distribution in Guinea](#). The Guinea project also developed [classroom resources](#), such as an activity booklet, games, discussion topics and a powerpoint presentation to help teachers and environmental education facilitators throughout the region use the book to impart and explore valuable lessons about marine and coastal conservation, and the role that local communities play in protecting their marine resources. Additional funding from the Nuremberg Zoo and Georgia Aquarium made it possible to print and distribute 500 copies each in Congo, Gabon, Cameroon, Nigeria and Senegal. Furthermore, the book is available for [online purchase](#) in French and English through European Partners 'Biotope Editions', with a portion of sales costs supporting future CCAHD conservation activities. Additional support is being sought to print and distribute more copies in Africa, and to find a printing and distribution centres in the US, Europe and/or Australia where it is hoped that book sales could support *Sousa teuszii* conservation work.



© Aurore Malapert, Biotope

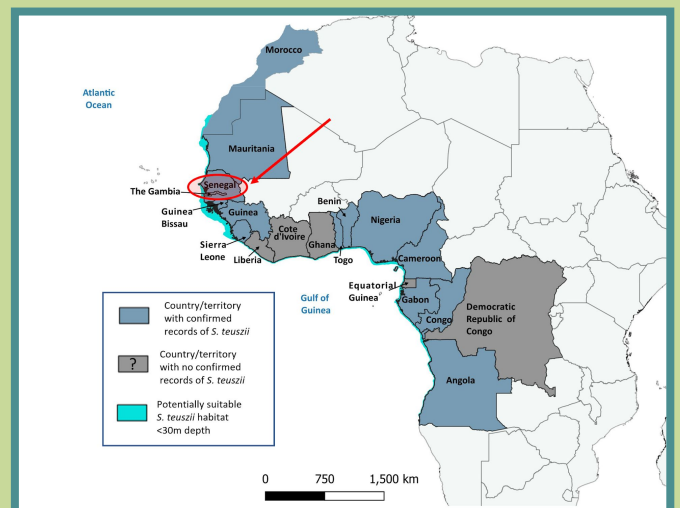
10: The children's book, *Keita and the dolphins*, is based on a traditional fisherman's tale. It imparts important lessons about marine and coastal conservation. It is available as a PDF in French and English, and has been printed and distributed in six *Sousa teuszii* range countries. Pictured here are launch ceremonies in Guinea and Nigeria.

3. Collaborative research and conservation action in *Sousa teuszii* range countries

CCAHD partners throughout the *Sousa teuszii* range are engaged in a variety of activities to help raise awareness about the species and collect data when and where possible. Here we highlight a few activities that have had the most direct support or involvement of the CCAHD Foundation. This does not reflect the full scope of our partners' activities, especially where partners have secured their own funding and resources to engage in marine and coastal conservation work. For example, new partners West Africa Blue in Sierra Leone were able to document [the first confirmed records of both live and bycaught *Sousa teuszii*](#), while partners from the Agostinho Neto University and the Kissama Foundation in [Angola are embarking on new cetacean research](#) and conservation projects, which still require more funding. Meanwhile CCAHD partners [Renatura](#) and [Noe](#) in Congo, and [Aquatic Species ONG](#) in Gabon continue to conduct boat-based, acoustic, and community work relevant to *Sousa teuszii* with their own funding streams. More details on each partner organisation and the scope and scale of their activities can be found by exploring the CCAHD Social Media platforms or by clicking on the logos of partners represented on the ['partners and support'](#) page of the CCAHD website. The projects below are presented in order from north to south.

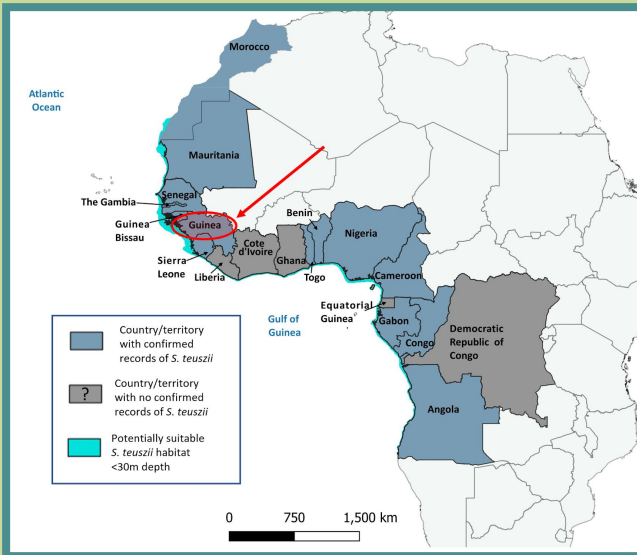
Survey in the Saloum Delta, Senegal

Dedicated research on Atlantic humpback dolphins in the Saloum Delta commenced in July 2021, and annual surveys have taken place in every subsequent year. The [2022 report](#) to the International Whaling Commission's Scientific Committee provides detail on the survey methods, which include mapping of distribution and relative abundance, photo-identification, passive acoustic monitoring, and capacity building for Senegalese and range country scientists. This [project](#) is led by the African Aquatic Conservation Fund (AACF) and was able to continue thanks to a fourth year of funding from the Loro Parque Foundation and an Early Career Ocean Professionals grant to Diana Seck from the Marine Conservation Action Fund (MCAF) of the New England Aquarium. The [February 2024 survey](#) was the first to be run entirely by the Senegal-based team, with fieldwork led by AACF team member, Diana Seck, who used the photo-identification data collected in 2021 and 2022 to expand the Saloum Delta photo-ID catalogue and generate new mark-recapture estimates for her Masters' thesis completed in April 2024. The Senegal team also gave a poster presentation to the Society for Marine Mammalogy (see above). The 2024 survey included 18 days on the water, during which 1,771 kms were



navigated and 18 sightings of *Sousa teuszii* were recorded, a lower encounter rate than in previous years. During the [2024 surveys](#), three passive acoustic recorders were recovered and re-deployed on two occasions, adding to the body of acoustic recordings of *Sousa teuszii* in the region, which is being analysed through a formalised [collaboration with the University of St. Andrews](#). Collaboration with the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History also continues for the collection and analysis of water samples for Atlantic humpback dolphin DNA, with water samples collected annually.

Research, capacity building and conservation for Atlantic Humpback Dolphin in Guinea



In 2022 the CCAHD launched a **2.5 year long project focused on research and conservation of *Sousa teuszii* in Guinea**. This project was implemented jointly by Biotope and CCAHD, supported by Mubadala and its asset GAC through a fund managed by the **Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund (MBZF)**. CCAHD scientists collaborated closely with the Guinean *Centre National des Sciences Halieutiques de Boussoura (CNSHB)*, Biotope (International Department), **Guinée Ecologie**, and **Biotope Guinea**, who hosted and administered the project. The project's final boat-based survey was conducted in May 2024, during which two Guinean scientists and the project's Guinean fisheries liaison

officer consolidated hands-on training in survey methodology, data entry and data processing. Some of the best photos of the survey were taken by the Guinean trainees.

In the following months a series of important stakeholder meetings were held to present the project results to government and industry stakeholders, launch the Keita and the Dolphins book, which was developed under this project (see above), and begin the process of planning for a National Action Plan for Atlantic humpback dolphins. Read more about this project and these stakeholder meetings [here](#).

Final reporting on the project to Guinean stakeholders as well as the funders, MBZF and Mubadala, included preliminary population estimates based on photo-identification, provided by Dr. Tilen Genov, who led the boat surveys throughout the project. The project also mapped the distribution and threats to *Sousa teuszii* in Guinea based on both boat surveys and over 600 interview surveys. Full reports are available on request. Now that the first funding cycle for this project has come to an end, the CCAHD and Biotope are actively seeking funds to continue the valuable monitoring and capacity building to ensure that the support and momentum from Guinean stakeholders is not lost.



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Regional collaboration on the design and implementation of interview in six *Sousa teuszii* range countries

In 2024 the multi-country fisheries interview project funded by the [Society for Marine Mammalogy \(SMM\) Conservation Fund](#) was formally concluded. Hosted by the African Marine Mammal Conservation Organisation ([AMMCO](#)) in Cameroon, the project involved almost 800 interviews in 58 coastal fishing communities in Congo, Gabon, Cameroon, Liberia, the Gambia and Senegal. Regular online meetings throughout the data collection and archiving stages of the projects allowed partners to share experiences focusing on challenges faced and solutions. By early 2024, all teams had completed fieldwork and had archived and 'cleaned' their data in preparation for analysis. Some teams undertook initial analysis of the data identify the most salient results and trends, while other teams have made their data available for more centralized analysis. While the funded portion of the project has been completed, and a [full report](#) submitted to the Society for Marine Mammalogy, project partners are now working with the colleagues in Guinea where almost 600 additional interviews were conducted, and Nigeria where interviews are currently underway, to compile and standardize all the data, a more extensive undertaking than originally envisaged. This compilation and standardization will allow project partners to collaborate with external experts from the Zoological Society of London to conduct a regional-meta-analysis of the data and provide insights and guidance for future work with fishing communities to try and reduce bycatch risk.

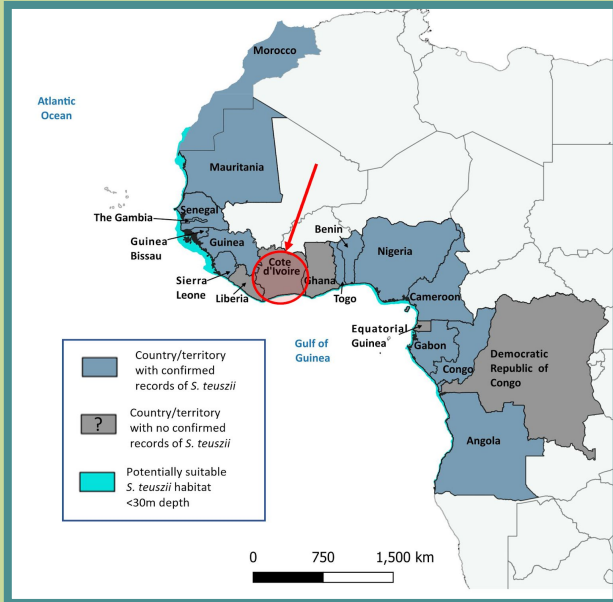


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Systematic documentation of the cetacean stranding and bycatch in Côte d'Ivoire

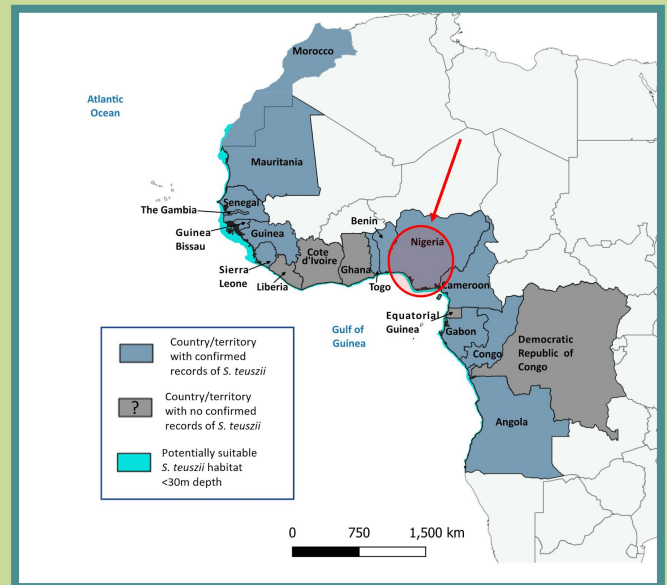


In 2023 the CCAHD received a private donation of 10,000 USD to support Emergency action for Atlantic humpback dolphins. A transparent process was put in place for applications to this fund, with a maximum of 2,000 euros being available to a single CCAHD partner per year. In early 2024, CCAHD partner, Conservation des Espèces Marines (CEM) in Côte D'Ivoire expanded their marine turtle work to include investigation of landings of turtles, sharks and rays at fish landing sites in Côte D'Ivoire.

Immediately they started to notice a high number of dolphin carcasses among the landings. In the hopes that examination of these carcasses might lead to the first confirmed record of *Sousa teuszii* from Côte D'Ivoire, the CCAHD extended an emergency grant to CEM, and provided (remote) training and for the team on how to collect data from cetacean carcasses. Over the course of 2024, the team documented 17 cetacean landings, including an increasing number of videos and photos sent from fishermen while at sea. All records have been stored in an online database. To date these landings have included cetacean species that occur further offshore than would be expected for *Sousa teuszii*.

Coastal community engagement in Nigeria

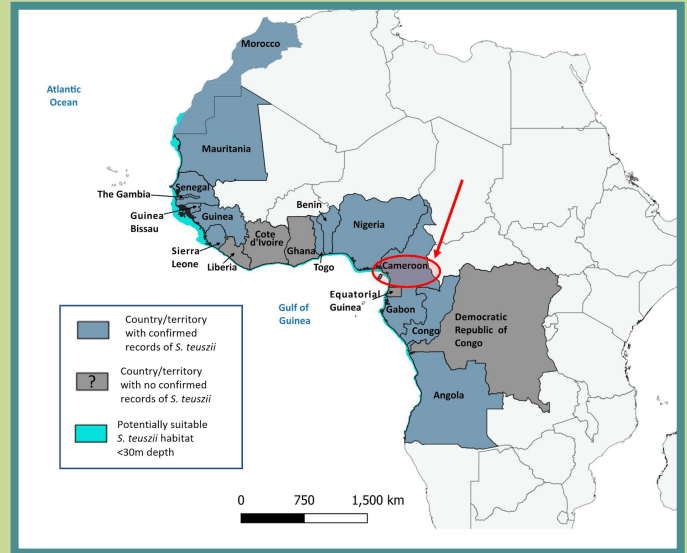
In 2024 the Biodiversity Preservation Center in Uyo (BPC) completed interview surveys and community outreach visits funded by the Marine Conservation Action Fund at the New England Aquarium. During community interventions, a total of 12 'Dolphin Guardians' were trained in 8 coastal communities. The Dolphin Guardian system has resulted in an increased number of reports of dolphin and marine megafauna strandings, bycatch events and/or direct hunting. The BPC team requested support from the CCAHD Emergency fund to purchase equipment and be able to rapidly respond to stranding reports to collect valuable data and samples. The support from the New England Aquarium and the CCAHD resulted in a total of 12 marine megafauna reports in 2024, of which 5 were examined by BPC staff.



11: Butchered rough-toothed dolphin documented in a coastal village in Nigeria during a project implemented by CCAHD partner the Biodiversity Preservation Center in Uyo

Training for boat-based surveys and stranding response in Cameroon

In May 2024, CCAHD partners, the African Marine Mammal Conservation Organization (AMMCO) hosted CCAHD General Secretary Gianna Minton, to conduct a week-long field training course. This was made possible through funding provided by National Geographic Society, to support ground-truthing and follow-up to marine mammal reports received through AMMCO's innovative [SIREN reporting App](#). Roughly 10 participants from the AMMCO team as well as CCAHD partner [Tube_Awu Ebodje](#) took part in the trainings, which included three full days classroom-based sessions and four full days of boat-based surveys.



The event was held in Kribi, and boat surveys covered the areas to the north and south of the town to include the locations where fishermen had used SIREN to report two *Sousa teuszii* bycatch events in recent years. Classroom based sessions included boat-based survey methodology using the CCAHD published protocols, data collection from strandings (also using CCAHD guidelines and sampling kits that were donated to each organisation), and a guest remote lecture on passive acoustic research methods to study cetaceans by Dr. Julie Oswald of St. Andrews University. Team members, most of whom were already proficient with Excel, and GIS, also gained hands-on experience with transect design, and all aspects of data download and archiving. While only one common dolphin sighting (*Delphinus delphis*) was made during the four days of boat surveys, opportunistic discussions with fishers in nearshore areas north of Kribi indicated that *Sousa teuszii* are regularly seen in the area, inspiring the team to raise funds for future surveys.

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4. Fundraising and financial accounting

The CCAHD [5-year strategic plan](#) continued to guide fundraising efforts in 2024. This Plan covers all aspects of the CCAHD's activities, with a focus on fundraising to support range-country partners in their efforts to better understand and protect *Sousa teuszii*. Fundraising strategies are guided by the CCAHD Fundraising Working Group, which is chaired by the Chair of the CCAHD Supervisory Board, Grant Abel.

FUNDRAISING

The CCAHD has two main approaches to fund-raising – the first is to fundraise centrally so that the CCAHD can secure and manage funds to support conservation activities throughout the *Sousa teuszii* range. The second is to alert (range-country) partners to funding opportunities and to support them in their proposal writing.

Significant fundraising developments in 2024 include:

- [Zoo Nuremberg](#) continued their support for core operations to cover Coordination, website, communications, administration and software costs, and also made a significant donation to allow printing of Keit and the dolphins books in 6 *Sousa teuszii* range countries (see above). This funding has been essential to maintaining the progress and momentum of the Consortium. Furthermore, the zoo funded the participation of a scientist and a fisherman from Brazil to the CCAHD-Streetwhale meeting in Cameroon (see above) in order to demonstrate their effective dolphin bycatch reduction technique, providing valuable links between dolphin conservation work on both sides of the Atlantic.
- The [Georgia Aquarium](#), which is formally recognised as an IUCN SSC [Centre for Species Survival](#), provided a donation for core running costs and community outreach and education.
- The [Seattle Aquarium](#) provided valuable support by receiving and transferring US-based donations to CCAHD account in the Netherlands.
- [Fundraising flyers](#) were professionally printed and distributed to potential donors and at various events, piquing the interest of a few donors with whom discussions are underway.
- The [online donation](#) page of the CCAHD Website allows users to make donations using PayPal, Credit cards (through Stripe), or direct debit transfers. The links to this donation page are included in the fundraising flyers and should facilitate donations from 2024 onwards.
- Five formal funding applications were prepared in 2024, of which 3 were successful (see table below).



Table 1: Grants actively managed by the CCAHD, sometimes in close partnership with range country partners. Note that several private donors wish to remain anonymous, but all private donors and donors using the online donation page of the CCAHD website are known to the Secretariat and conform with the CCAHD [Due Diligence policy](#)

Month grant awarded	Funding body	Amount secured	Host organisation	Proposed activities
Jan-22	Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund	410,000.00 €	Biotope	3-year collaborative project to study and conserve Atlantic humpback dolphins in Guinea (payments and spending spread over 3 years and activities completed in September 2024)
Jan-22	Society for Marine Mammalogy	24,271.84 €	AMMCO	Interview Survey project in 6 <i>Sousa teuszii</i> range countries- project completion end Oct 2024
Jul-23	Private Donor	9,000.00 €	CCAHD	Grant to allow CCAHD partners to respond to emergencies - strandings, etc.
Aug-23	New England Aquarium	12,000.00 €	BPC Nigeria	Funding for community outreach and interview surveys in coastal communities in Nigeria
Jan-24	National Geographic Foundation	11,000.00 €	AMMCO	Funding to support ground-truthing of reports received by AMMCO through the SIREN reporting App- training in boat-based survey methods and 4 days of boat surveys.
Jan-24	Zoo Nuremberg	25,000.00 €	CCAHD	Coordination, software and services related to core functioning of the Consortium
Jan-Dec- 24	Private Donor	2,295.14 €	CCAHD	To support capacity building for CCAHD partners
Mar-24	Private Donor	7,351.15 €	CCAHD	Donation to support African CCAHD partner participation to Society for Marine Mammalogy meeting in Perth, Australia
May-24	Georgia Aquarium	9,221.61 €	CCAHD	Donation to support CCAHD core costs and printing of Keita books for range countries
Jul-24	Loro Parque Foundation	37,365.05 €	AACF	Boat-based surveys, acoustic surveys, community outreach and capacity building in the Delta Saloum, Senegal
Jul-24	Hurtigruten Foundation	8,845.63 €	AACF	Staff time for photo-identification and data analysis in the Delta Saloum, Senegal
Aug-24	Friends of Nuremberg Zoo	6,000.00 €	CCAHD	To support printing of Keita and the Dolphin books in 5 <i>Sousa teuszii</i> range countries
Aug-24	American Cetacean Society	1,332.62 €	CCAHD	Printing of English language Keita and the Dolphin books
Sep-24	Dolphin Quest	36,694.06 €	CCAHD	Support for first in-person meeting of CCAHD range country partners in Cameroon
Oct-24	International Whaling Commission	7,702.00 €	AMMCO	Organisation of a Bycatch Risk Assessment workshop in conjunction with CCAHD-Streetwhale meeting in Cameroon
Nov-24	Ocean Alliance	466.94 €	CCAHD	For printing of CCAHD outreach materials to be distributed at SMM and CCAHD-Streetwhale meeting
Nov-24	National Marine Mammal Foundation	839.44 €	CCAHD	For printing of CCAHD outreach materials to be distributed at SMM and CCAHD-Streetwhale meeting
Jan-Dec-24	Online donations	1,875.09 €	CCAHD	Online donations from private donors and fans of Keita and the Dolphins books
	Managed directly by CCAHD	100,076.05 €		
Total		611,260.57 €		

FINANCIAL REPORTING

The CCAHD Foundation has only held a bank account since February 2023 after rigorous Know-Your-Client investigations and endorsement by the ABN-AMRO bank in the Netherlands. In 2023, €34,201.59 Euros were received, and 23,534.73 Euros were spent. At the start of 2024, the bank balance was €10,665.86. €91,076.05 Euros were received of the course of the calendar year, and €92,017.78 Euros were spent. The bank balance on December 31st, 2024 was €9,724.13. A full financial statement is available upon request.

CCAHD PARTNERS AND SUPPORT

For more information and links to each organisation listed below, please consult the [Partners and Support](#) page of the CCAHD website.

Donors



International Organisations



International and Range-country partners



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5. 2025 and Beyond

The CCAHD is proud of its progress in 2024, but looks forward to 2025 and beyond with a vision of how we can continue to strive toward greater awareness, understanding and protection of Atlantic humpback dolphins. The following activities - all foreseen in our 5-year strategy - are priorities for 2025:

FUNDRAISING

The CCAHD feels fortunate to have once again secured funding from Nuremberg Zoo for core operations in 2025. This is complemented by an additional grant from the Georgia Aquarium, which will support research, education and outreach on the ground. The CCAHD intends to build on these early funding commitments by using its fundraising flyers to reach out to other potential donors. We are also collaborating with the CMS and the IWC and other partners to draft major funding proposals in the hopes that funds can be secured to implement the much broader scope and scale of our 5-year strategy and the CMS Single Species Action Plan. As of February, 2025, three large-scale grant applications have already been submitted in collaboration with the CMS and other partners.

CAPACITY BUILDING

2024 saw some landmark progress for African CCAHD partners pursuing higher academic degrees focusing on cetaceans, with CCAHD technically supporting two completed Masters' degrees and two PhD candidates in Cameroon, Senegal, Ghana and Gabon. The creation of online resources for researchers, and the hosting of capacity building sessions during fieldwork in Guinea and Cameroon and the 2024 CCAHD Streetwhale meeting have also created more capacity in the region. In 2025 the CCAHD plans to organise online training in Excel and GIS, and host a series of webinars to further promote exchange of information and expertise between CCAHD partners. Funding from a private donor will make it possible for us to arrange simultaneous translation during these events, making them accessible to both anglophone and francophone partners.

DISSEMINATION OF PROJECT RESULTS

In addition to hosting webinars as part of our internal capacity building efforts, the CCAHD would like to find more opportunities, particularly for African CCAHD partners to present project results in international meeting and peer-reviewed publications. The latter is a particular priority, essential to ensuring that our work is accessible to a wider academic and conservation management audience, and to consolidating the scientific credentials of our partners.

DOCUMENTING DOLPHINS IN PRIORITY LOCATIONS

The repeated dedicated boat surveys in Senegal and Guinea have demonstrated how valuable long-term research and monitoring is to better understand the fine-scale distribution, population size, and threats to *Sousa teuszii*. Data on dolphin distribution and fisheries effort in the Delta Saloum from 2021 onward was used in a test exercise of the Bycatch Risk Assessment Toolbox training in December 2024 to map bycatch risk areas, which can be applied to practical management recommendations. There are several other locations where the species has been documented in the past (e.g. the Banc D'Arguin in Mauritania, the Bijagos Archipelago in Guinea Bissau, and the Flamingo Lagoon in Angola) or through recent anecdotal observations (e.g. Sierra Leone), where research efforts are urgently required to assess distribution and threats so that CCAHD partners can work in collaboration with coastal communities and relevant agencies to design effective conservation strategies.

ANALYSIS OF ACOUSTIC RECORDINGS FROM BOAT-BASED AND BOTTOM MOUNTED RECORDER

Continued collaboration with the University of St. Andrews will continue to work toward the development of classifiers that will enable the differentiation between *Sousa teuszii* vocalisations and other marine mammal species with overlapping habitats. This will enable more effective use of passive acoustic monitoring to document *Sousa teuszii* distribution and seasonal or diurnal patterns in places and times where boat-based surveys are not feasible or practical.



© Yamoussa Saïfou Camara, CNSHB Guinée

12: The Guinea research team taking water measurements in the Rio Nunez Estuary, Guinea.



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13: The ACF research team returning from a long day of boat surveys in the Saloum Delta, Senegal.

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