



CCAHD

Consortium for the Conservation
of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin

2023 Annual report

Of the Consortium for the Conservation of the Atlantic
Humpback Dolphin Foundation

January 2024

Photo ©Diana Seck, AACF/CCAHD

Executive summary

2023 has been a year of growth and development for the Consortium for the Conservation of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin (CCAHD). The previously informal network of scientists and conservationists consolidated its legal status as foundation (*Stichting*) in the Netherlands, enabling the organisation to accept and manage donations. In 2023 the CCAHD was recognised as a Charity through an Equivalency Determination issued by [NGOsource](#). Core coordination and communication activities were driven by the CCAHD Secretariat, thanks to ongoing funding from the Friends of Nuremberg Zoo. Research and conservation projects are underway in 11 Atlantic humpback dolphin range countries (see infographic below), and over 34,000 Euros were received in 2023 to support priority actions for the species.

A new Chair was appointed to the Management Board per January 1st 2024, while the Outreach & Capacity Building, Fieldwork, Acoustic, Stranding & Health, Bycatch and Fundraising Working groups all contributed to the development of new partnerships and resources. The CCAHD added several new downloadable materials and other content to its website, and published over 60 posts across three social media platforms. Vital collaboration with international conservation platforms continues and will guide activities in 2024 and beyond.

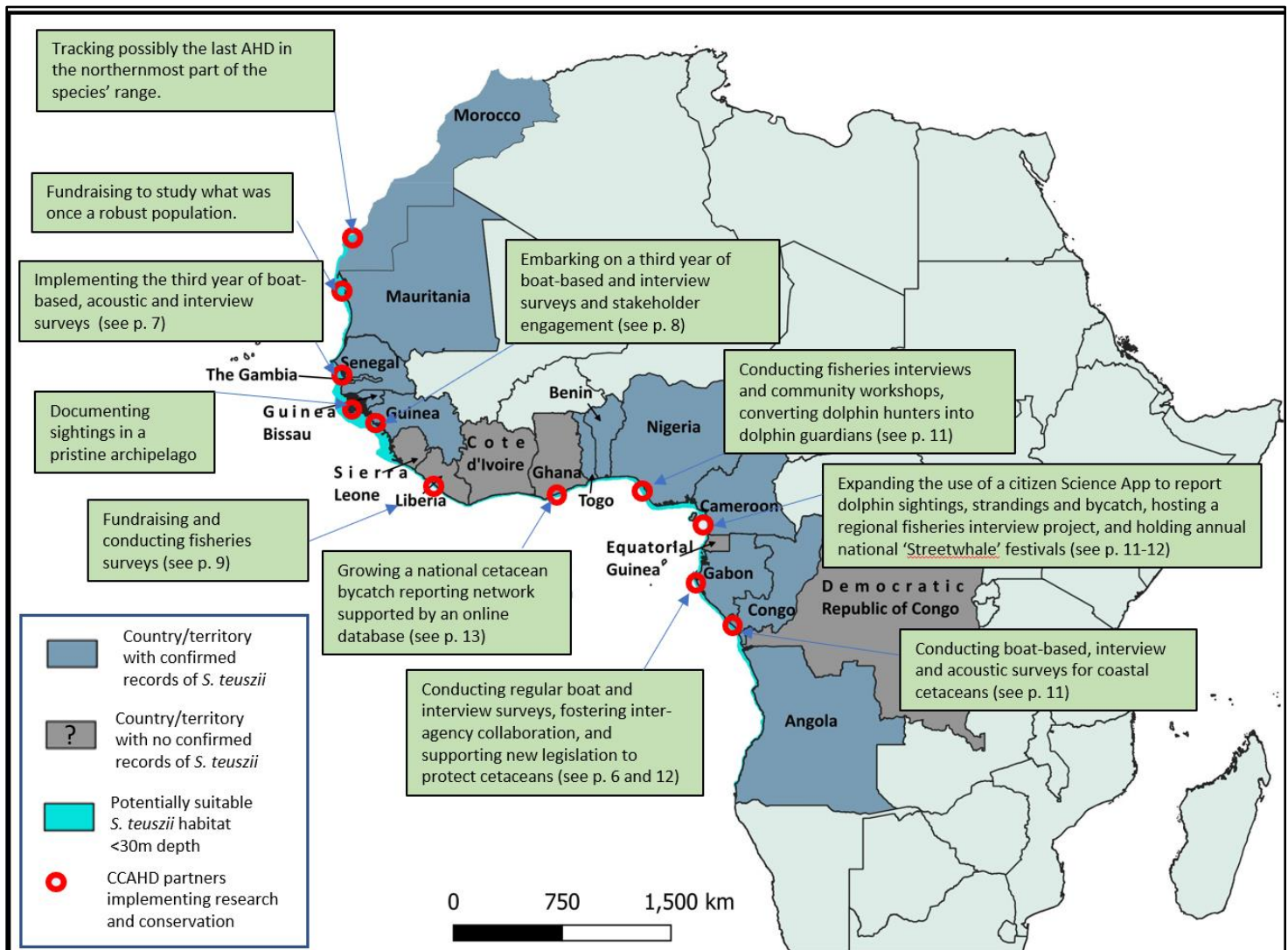


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1. Introduction

2023 has been a year of growth and development for the Consortium for the Conservation of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin Foundation (from here on referred to as [CCAHD](#)). What started as an informal network of scientists in 2020, has become a formally established Foundation that supports, and in turn is supported by partners all over the world. 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*) populations and their habitats through research, awareness, capacity-building and action’. This mission places a strong emphasis on ensuring that CCAHD partners in the 19 *Sousa teuszii* range countries have the access to support, technical expertise and resources they need to effectively promote and implement research and conservation actions. Through formalizing and growing our structure, the CCAHD hopes to be able to consolidate funding and technical support more effectively and to foster exchange of expertise and resources at a regional and international level. Read on to learn more about the ways we have addressed these goals in the past year.

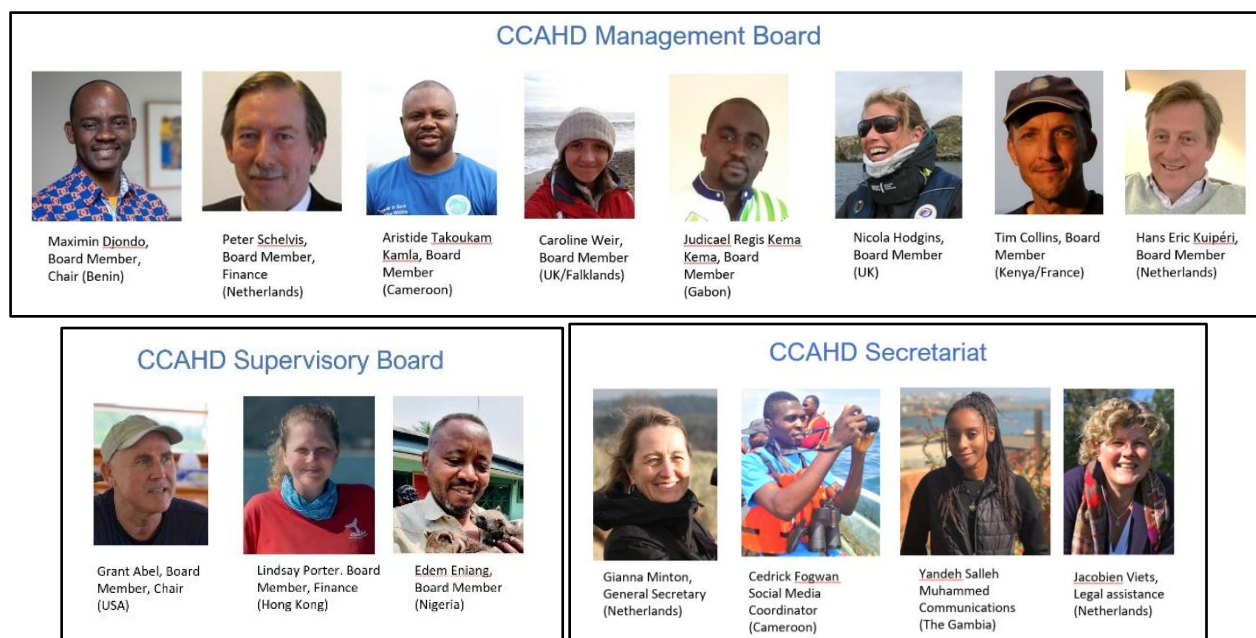
2. CCAHD structure and participation

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. Since February 2022, the CCAHD has operated as 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 2023 a new Chair, Maximin Djondo from Benin, was appointed to the Management Board to take on the role from 1 January, 2024.

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

- 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](#).
- The CCAHD Foundation also in the process of applying for formal recognition as a Public Benefit or Charitable organisation in the Netherlands ([ANBI status](#)), and has already been certified as equivalent to a US public charity through an equivalency determination issued by [NGOsource](#).



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

Participation and working groups

As of January 2024, CCAHD partners include over 90 individuals and organisations from 15 of the 19 potential *Sousa teuszii* range countries as well as others from outside the region with interest and experience in protecting threatened cetaceans. This includes cetacean conservation groups that have updated their organizational missions to include extending active technical or organisational support for the CCAHD.

The current list of CCAHD partners can be found [here](#), and more insight into 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 local 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 Concerted Action
- 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 8: Acoustic monitoring
- WG 9: Bycatch and directed hunting
- WG 10: Coastal Development
- WG 12: Fundraising

Core operations

Support from the Friends of Nuremberg Zoo since 2020 has made it possible for the CCAHD to be supported by a part-time Coordinator (formally designated as the General Secretary of the Foundation) based in the Netherlands. In 2023 this support also covered modest compensation for a Communications Coordinator/trainer in the Gambia and a Social Media coordinator in Cameroon. The Nuremberg grant also covered other core running costs, such as website maintenance, annual subscription fees for translation and meeting software, and printing of educational and promotional material. In 2023, this core running budget was fully managed through the CCAHD's bank account and administrative structures.

The Secretariat's role included:

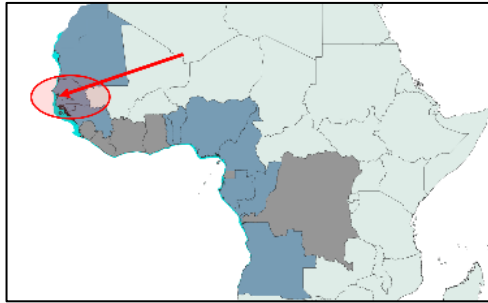
- Coordination of CCAHD board meetings and support to the CCAHD Foundation Board in the administrative, financial and legal processes related to the running of the Foundation;
- Management of the CCAHD partnership and Google Group mailing list as well as individual communications with partners regarding funding opportunities, meetings, new publications, calls for collaboration, etc.;
- Preparation of fundraising materials, concept notes for potential donors, and grant applications in collaboration with the Fundraising Working Group; and
- Support to partners in their efforts to raise funds by sharing news of grant opportunities, reviewing draft applications, and writing letters of recommendation;
- Support for [capacity building](#) at individual, project-based, and regional levels through support to those pursuing academic degrees, online and in-person training sessions, and webinars;
- Support [ongoing research and awareness raising projects](#), including provision of technical advice and support, and ensuring effective exchange of resources and expertise between projects;
- Collaboration with Working Groups to create [protocols manuals and resources](#) to support awareness-raising, research and data collection throughout the *Sousa teuszii* range.
- Maintenance and updates to the CCAHD [website](#), including posting news items and revising text and pages as and when required;
- Collaboration with the CCAHD Social Media coordinator to ensure regular posts on the CCAHD [Facebook](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts;
- Coordination of communication and collaboration between the CCAHD and other international stakeholders, such as the IWC, CMS and IUCN.

3. CCAHD Activities in 2023

Research and conservation

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, boat surveys in Gabon to document cetaceans, including *Sousa teuszii* have continued over the past year through funding from the National Parks Agency, and CCAHD partners in Congo are conducting boat surveys and acoustic surveys with support secured without direct CCAHD involvement. 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.



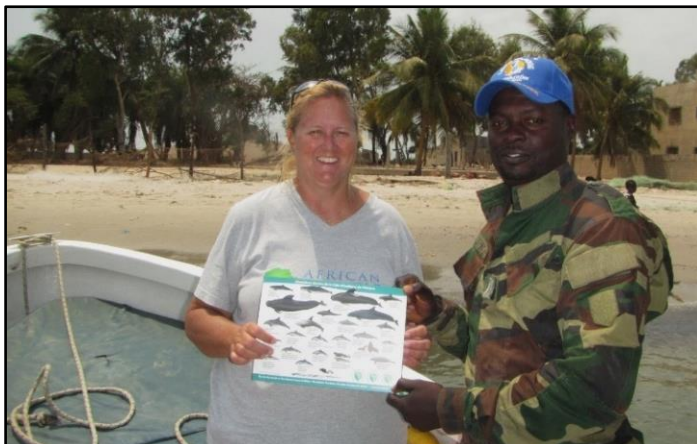
Surveys in the Saloum Delta, Senegal

Following from successful surveys in July 2021 and March-April 2022 (see the [2022 report](#) to the International Whaling Commission's Scientific Committee for more detail), research continued in Senegal on what is believed to be the largest known population of *Sousa teuszii* in the species' range. This [project](#) to study the distribution, habitat use, and abundance of *Sousa teuszii* in the Saloum Delta is led by the African Aquatic Conservation

Fund ([AACF](#)) and was able to continue thanks to a third year of funding from the Loro Parque Foundation and new funding from the New England Aquarium. The [March-April 2023 survey](#) allowed the core Senegal team members to further consolidate their field research and data analysis skills. Participation from CCAHD board member, Judicael Regis Kema Kema from Gabon allowed for fruitful exchange of experience and expertise with the Senegalese team. The 2023 survey covered a total of 1,650 kms of track line and resulted in a total of 29 sightings of *Sousa teuszii*, and thousands of photos that will be analysed and entered into the photo-identification catalogue. In 2023, AACF team member, Diana Seck, was also able to use the photo-identification data collected in 2021 and 2022 to expand the Saloum Delta photo-ID catalogue and generate the first population estimate for the area using mark-recapture model as the focus of her Masters' degree (see more under [Capacity building](#) below).

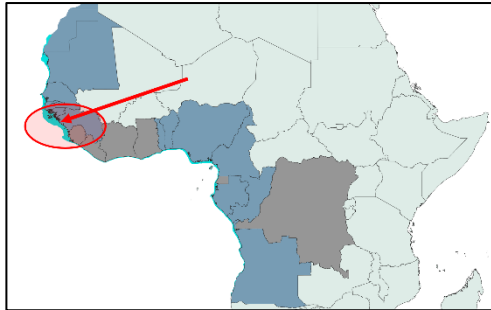
During the survey two passive acoustic recorders were recovered and re-deployed, adding to the body of acoustic recordings of *Sousa teuszii* in the region. For the first time, the recorders were also deployed over the side of the boat during *Sousa teuszii* encounters hopefully ensuring that 'voucher data' is now available to confirm that any vocalisations recorded by the passive moored devices are indeed those of *Sousa teuszii*. The devices were recovered and redeployed again in September 2023 (see more on acoustic analysis in [Section 5](#) below).

As with previous surveys, local MPA authorities were invited to participate, providing good opportunities for discussion and exchange.





The 2023 Delta Saloum survey again fostered collaboration and hands-on experience for Senegalese team members as well as a CCAHD partner from Gabon. Surveys also included participation from local marine protected area rangers and managers. The team took thousands of photos with an aim toward expanding the photo-identification catalogue that will allow recognition of individuals over time to map their movements and habitat use and to generate an abundance estimate. Photos by Diana Seck, AACF/CCAHD.

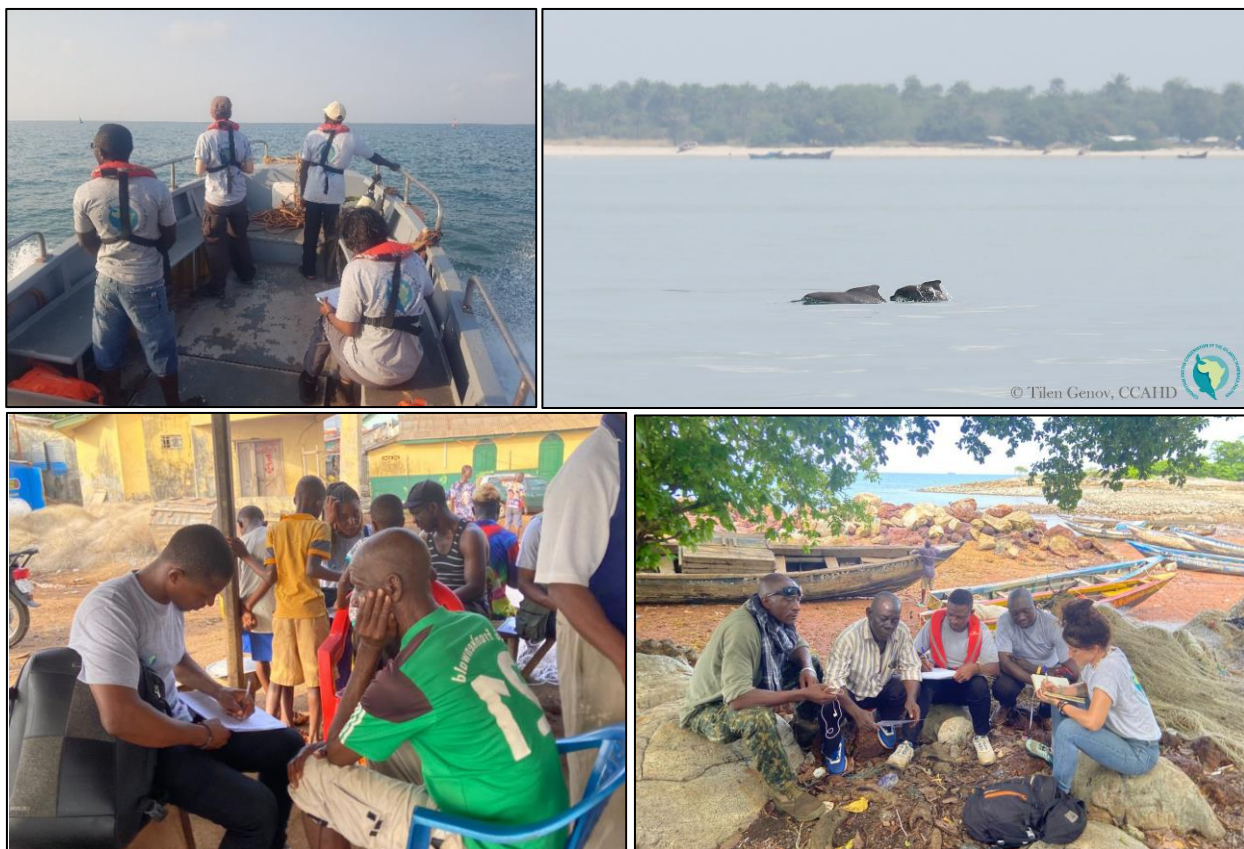


Research, capacity building and conservation for Atlantic humpback dolphins in Guinea

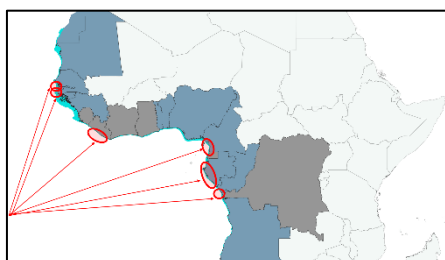
In 2022 the CCAHD launched a [3-year long project focused on research and conservation of *Sousa teuszii* in Guinea](#). This project is implemented jointly by Biotope and CCAHD, supported by Mubadala and its asset GAC through a fund managed by the [Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund](#). CCAHD

scientists are collaborating closely with the Guinean *Centre National des Sciences Halieutiques de Boussoira* (CNSHB), Biotope (International Department), [Guinée Ecologie](#), and [Biotope Guinea](#), who host and administer the project. In 2023, the project continued its series of boat-based surveys focusing on mapping distribution, estimating relative density and identifying habitat preferences of *Sousa teuszii* in surveyed regions. These surveys also include photo-identification work and a strong element of hands-on training for Guinean scientists. The June 2023 survey focused on the area around the country's capital, Conakry, the country's capital and Boffa to the north. The survey met with numerous logistic difficulties and adverse weather made conditions difficult. Although *Sousa teuszii* were encountered, the team was able to conduct valuable training and stakeholder engagement.

2023 also saw the launch of the project's interview survey campaign, with three major surveys completed in the Capital and the region of Forecariah in the South. In total over 390 fishers and coastal community members were interviewed using the CCAHD standardized questionnaire (see more below). The Guinea team also took the lead on producing manuals, training and support materials for the CCAHD regional interview survey project (more below). They provided online training for partners in that project, including training in the use of the Kobo-collect App for interview surveys. Following the next planned interview survey in early 2024, these data will be analysed in collaboration with that collected from other range countries in order to identify patterns in distribution and trends in fisheries interactions and perceived threats to dolphins.



Boat-based surveys in Guinea in 2023 focused on the capital area of Conakry and Boffa. Over 390 fishers and coastal community members were interviewed in the South of the country and the capital area, using the standard CCAHD questionnaire to assess local ecological knowledge of dolphins as well as risks of fisheries interactions and other human-induced threats.

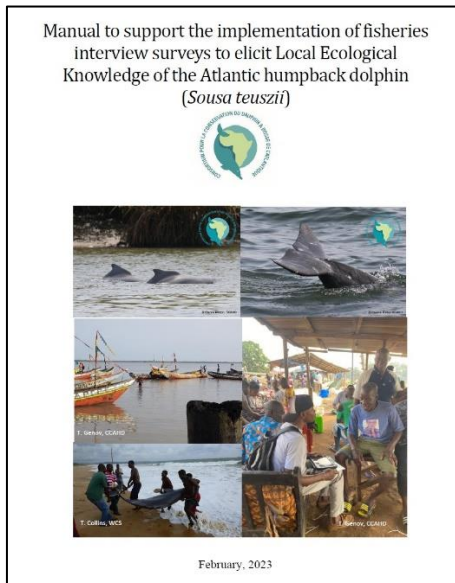
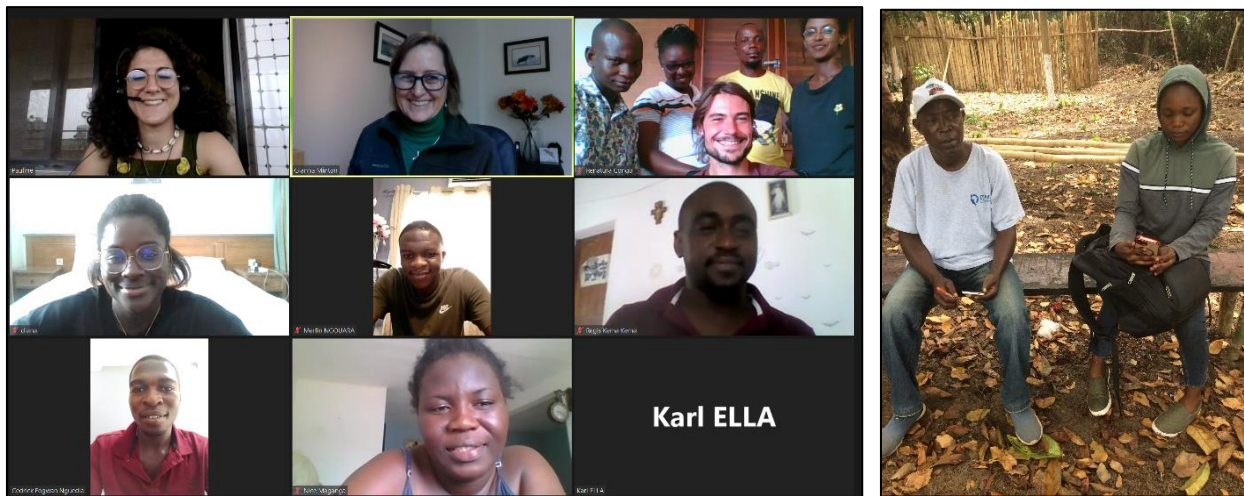


Regional collaboration on the design and implementation of interview surveys in six *Sousa teuszii* range countries

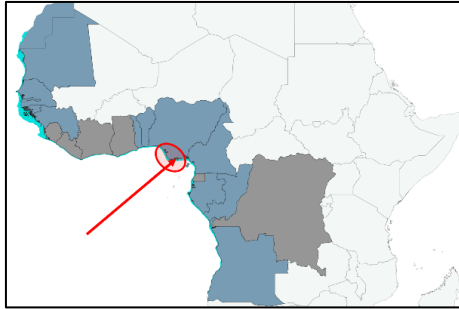
In 2023 the coalition of six CCAHD partners participating in a project funded by the [Society for Marine Mammalogy](#) (SMM) collectively conducted over 800 interviews in coastal fishing communities in Senegal, The Gambia, Liberia, Cameroon, Gabon and Congo. The project, titled ‘Harnessing local ecological knowledge to fill data gaps and support conservation of the Critically Endangered Atlantic humpback dolphin’ is one of the first to be funded under the SMM’s new [Conservation Fund](#) and is hosted by the African Marine Mammal Conservation Organisation ([AMMCO](#)) in Cameroon. In January and February of 2023, project partners met online to consolidate the final drafts of the standardized questionnaire, the manual for interviewers, and various support materials (marine mammal species identification guides, maps of each survey location etc). Online training sessions were held in both English and French to ensure that all participating teams were aware of best practice with regards to interview techniques and representative sampling in fishing communities. Training included a separate session on the use of the electronic data collection method, Kobo-Collect, which

facilitates data entry. Regular online meetings were held throughout the year to allow partners to compare their experiences and discuss challenges and solutions.

All six teams have completed their fieldwork and are now reviewing and 'cleaning' their data to ensure that it is in a consistent format for analysis. Some teams are using the data collected at national level to support work toward academic qualifications for team members, but the data will also be compiled at a regional level and analysed by project partner and interview survey data expert, Dr. Sam Turvey, working with the Zoological Society of London.



Online trainings and meetings allowed the Interview project partners to share expertise between project locations. Many partners used the Kobo-Collect Tablet or Smartphone based App to conduct their interviews, while some preferred paper datasheets. A manual and shared other shared resources ensured consistency in methodology across locations.

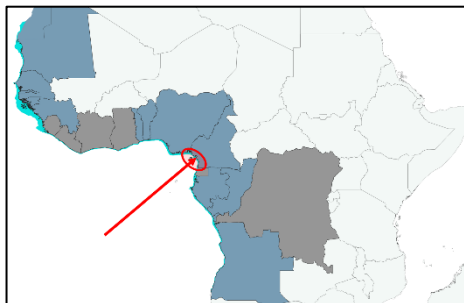


Coastal Community engagement in Nigeria

In July 2023, the CCAHD Interview survey working group supported the The [Biodiversity Preservation Center in Uyo](#) (BPC) in their bid for funding from the Marine Conservation Action Fund at the New England Aquarium, which was successful. The focus of the project is implementing interview surveys in areas of known and suspected *Sousa teuszii* habitat using the CCAHD standard questionnaire and support materials (see above), accompanied by awareness raising and community engagement. One of the main motivations for the project was a growing body of anecdotal evidence that coastal communities were still deliberately hunting dolphins and/or killing dolphins found in fishing gear rather than releasing them. The BPC team started fieldwork in November 2023 with visits to 12 coastal communities in the three different coastal states of Nigeria. During this first survey they established a rapport with many community members, training several ‘dolphin guardians’ in each community and teaching them how to collect basic data on dolphin sightings, strandings and bycatch. Among the trainees was an ex-dolphin hunter who has now become an enthusiastic citizen-scientist and collaborator, regularly reporting live dolphin sightings and accidental entanglements in his region.



Left: Training of Dolphin Guardians in the Andoni region (Rivers State) of Nigeria. Right: Dolphins caught in August 2023 at Iko, Eastern Obolo LGA, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The team is focusing on communities where dolphin bycatch and hunting are frequent, and working to convert hunters into citizen scientists.



Innovative stakeholder engagement for marine conservation in Cameroon

In June, 2023, CCAHD partners, [AMMCO](#), held the third annual Streetwhale event, bringing together more than 120 participants representing 17 nationalities for a scientific symposium that ran parallel to sporting events, art and dance performances, and other forms of art and sculpture that directly involved over 1,000 participants. The event has been growing in size and scope since it was first held in 2021. The event focuses on marine conservation and raises awareness in the general public, as

well as government and industry stakeholders. The 2023 included a series of workshops and meetings for regional stakeholders focusing on shark conservation and resulted in the drafting of a regional strategic plan for the protection of sharks and rays in the Gulf of Guinea. The CCAHD hopes to be able to raise funds to host a similar series of workshops during the 2024 Streetwhale event, during which partners focusing on *Sousa teuszii* conservation can exchange knowledge and skills on topics such as, conservation communication, the use of acoustic methods to study dolphins, stranding response and data collection, fund-raising strategies, etc.

AMMCO has also further expanded and refined the use of the [Siren smartphone App](#), which has helped to document more than 20,000 observations of marine megafauna since it was first launched in 2014. Records include sightings, strandings and bycatch of 13 marine mammal species, including two records of *Sousa teuszii* bycatch events in an area of Cameroon where the species had not previously been documented, providing guidance on where future research efforts should be focused. In 2023 the National Geographic Society provided a support for AMMCO to share the tool in other *Sousa teuszii* range countries, and the team travelled to Ghana, Senegal, and Togo (where colleagues from Benin also joined) to train partners to use the App and set up the necessary data management and support networks to ensure that the reports collected from fishers can be properly received, archived, analysed, and used to help inform conservation management in each location where it is used. In 2024 the team will also train partners in Gabon, and the Republic of Congo, as well as other countries where partners express interest in using the App.

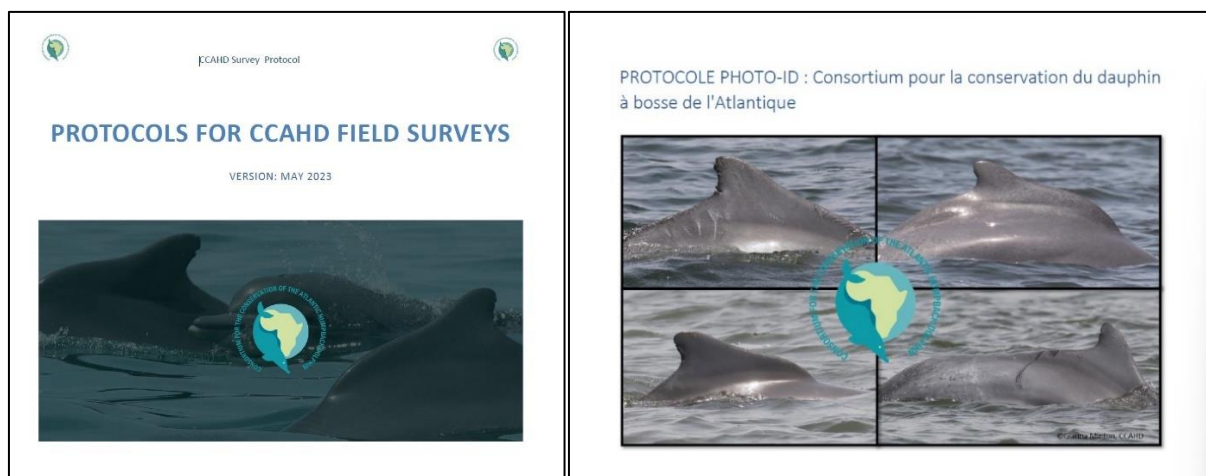


*Photos from the 2023 Annual 'Street Whale' event hosted by CCAHD partner AMMCO in Cameroon where conservation messages focusing on *Sousa teuszii* were shared with a wide range of stakeholders.*

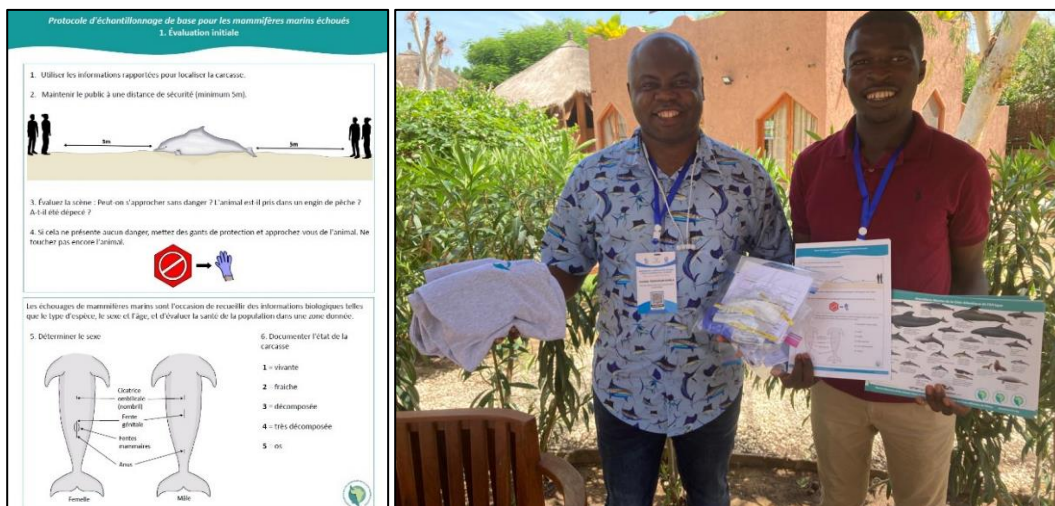
Capacity building for *Sousa-teuszii* range country scientists

Creation of resources to support data collectors throughout the range of *Sousa teuszii*

In 2023, CCAHD Working Groups developed several guides and manuals to support data collection by scientists in *Sousa teuszii* range countries. These complement the [species ID guides](#), an [infographic](#) and [factsheets](#) that were developed for the launch of the CCAHD website in 2021, and the interview survey manual and resources described above. The CCAHD's Fieldwork Working group conducted a review of the boat-based survey and photo-identification protocols that had been developed for the projects in Senegal and Guinea, and further adapted them for regional consultation and use. These two guides are now available in [French](#) and [English](#) on the CCAHD website, along with the necessary Excel and Word templates to facilitate data collection and analysis.



The CCAHD's Stranding and Health working group also reviewed an earlier draft of a regional manual and supporting data sheet for collection of data from cetacean carcasses. This was updated and professionally illustrated and is also available in [French](#) and [English](#) on the CCAHD website. Printed copies, together with simple data collection kits donated by the US Marine Mammal Commission were shared with several range country partners during fieldwork in Senegal and during a [regional meeting hosted by the Convention on Migratory Species](#)). More kits are available and will be sent to partners in early 2024.

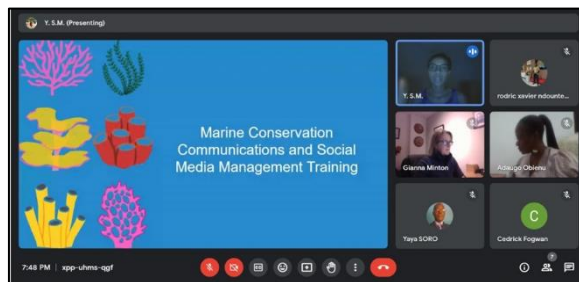


Webinars

In addition to providing data collection resources, field-based training opportunities and regional exchanges described above, in 2023 the CCAHD began to offer Webinars for its members with the aim of fostering information exchange. The first webinar in June 2023 featured CCAHD partners in Ghana who described the highly successful national stranding and bycatch monitoring programme they have implemented. The recording can be accessed [here](#). The second allowed project partners in Gabon and Cameroon to share information about their successful stakeholder engagement strategies. In Gabon, collaboration between the National Parks Agency, the Aquatic Species NGO and coastal communities has resulted in better management of fisheries and the [successful release of *Sousa teuszii*](#) accidentally caught in beach seine nets. In Cameroon, the use of the [Siren smartphone app](#) has resulted in a rapidly growing citizen science network and new reports of *Sousa teuszii* strandings in a part of the coastline where they were not previously known to occur. Participants to the webinars were inspired and new collaborations to expand the use of Siren and adopt elements of the Ghana monitoring programme in other range countries are under way.



The first CCAHD webinars to promote capacity building through exchange between regional partners were held in June and November 2023. More are planned for 2024.



Support and training for communications and social media focal points

In 2023 core CCAHD funding supported the work of a conservation communications expert, Yandeh Sallah-Muhammed from the Gambia. Yandeh designed a 5-year Communications Plan to complement the CCAHD [5-year strategic plan](#), which identified the need to designate and train communications focal points in as many *Sousa teuszii* range countries as possible. An open invitation was issued to range country partners, and in 2023 five range country focal points participated in a series of six online training sessions, each of which was accompanied by a communications toolkit to support future implementation of communications activities. It is anticipated that this training will expand to include more CCAHD partners in 2024.

Mentorship for range country scientists pursuing higher academic degrees

In 2023 CCAHD partners in Gabon, Cameroon and Senegal were pursuing master's or PhD qualifications with a focus on *Sousa teuszii* research and conservation activities. Cedrick Fogwan in Cameroon was mentored and supported by Dr. Aristide Takakoum Kamla, CCAHD Board member, as well as other experienced scientists in the network. He obtained his master's degree at the University of Douala in Cameroon with a thesis focusing on citizen science with interviews and boat-based surveys to assess cetacean diversity, distribution and threats in Cameroon, with an emphasis on the Atlantic humpback dolphin in Cameroon. Diana Seck in Senegal was mentored by Dr. Lucy Keith-Diagne, Dr. Gianna Minton, and Emma Longdon of St. Andrews University, and is expected to sit her Viva in early 2024 to obtain a master's degree focusing on the use of photo-identification to map patterns in *Sousa teuszii* distribution and to generate the first mark-recapture abundance estimate of the species in the Delta Saloum. Judicael Regis Kema Kema in Gabon is pursuing a PhD through La Rochelle University (France) and Omar Bongo University (Gabon), focusing on cetacean distribution and conservation with a focus on *Sousa teuszii*. He is formally supervised by Prof. Vincent Ridoux, and mentored by Dr. Gianna Minton and Tim Collins.

Collaboration with relevant International/Intergovernmental organisations



Convention on Migratory Species (CMS):

In 2023 the CMS published a [Draft CMS Single Species Action Plan for the Atlantic humpback dolphin](#). The CCAHD Coordinator and several Board members had previously helped to design the action plan. The CCAHD Coordinator was able to attend the CMS Scientific Council meeting in July 2023 during which the draft SSAP was formally recommended for adoption by the upcoming CMS Conference of Parties in February 2024. In September 2023, many of them attended a meeting in Saly, Senegal, during which participating government representatives from 13 of the 19 countries within the *Sousa teuszii* range were invited to review the draft plan action-by-action and provide input and feedback. The meeting concluded with resounding expressions of commitment to ensure endorsement of the plan in February, but more importantly, to begin taking actions to implement the plan as soon as possible. The CMS Secretariat presented the CCAHD as a vital partner to support implementation of the plan. The CCAHD was able to distribute [infographics](#) and [ID guides](#), and to share information about other resources available on the CCAHD website. Read more about this meeting on the CCAHD website [here](#).



*The CCAHD was recognised as a vital partner for the implementation of the CMS Single Species Action Plan for *Sousa teuszii*. Support from the CMS and the Friends of Nuremberg Zoo made it possible for the CCAHD Coordinator, three board members, and the Communications team to attend a range-country meeting in Senegal in September, 2023.*



International Whaling Commission (IWC):

In April-May 2023, several CCAHD partners attended the IWC Scientific Committee meeting in Bled. The CCAHD Coordinator was able to give brief presentation of the CCAHD 2022 Annual report during a meeting of the Small Cetaceans Subcommittee. The Committee commended the work completed, formally supported the workplan and requested an update at the next 2024 meeting. The IWC continues to offer technical support, particularly on issues related to bycatch and stranding to *Sousa teuszii* range country partners.



IUCN SSC Cetacean specialist Group (CSG):

Sousa teuszii continues to feature as a [priority conservation species](#) for the work of the CSG. Several CCAHD Board members, working group convenors and partners are CSG members who continue to provide vital support to research and conservation efforts for this species.

United States Endangered Species Act:

CCAHD partners contributed extensively to a [species review](#) conducted by NOAA in response to a petition to include the Atlantic humpback dolphin as a threatened species under the U.S. ESA. In April 2023 NOAA announced the proposed rule to list the Atlantic humpback dolphin as endangered under the ESA. This proposed rule is now awaiting formal adoption following a [final comment period](#) that ended in September 2023. A final ruling is expected by April 2024.

Establishment of a bank account and recognition as a charitable organization

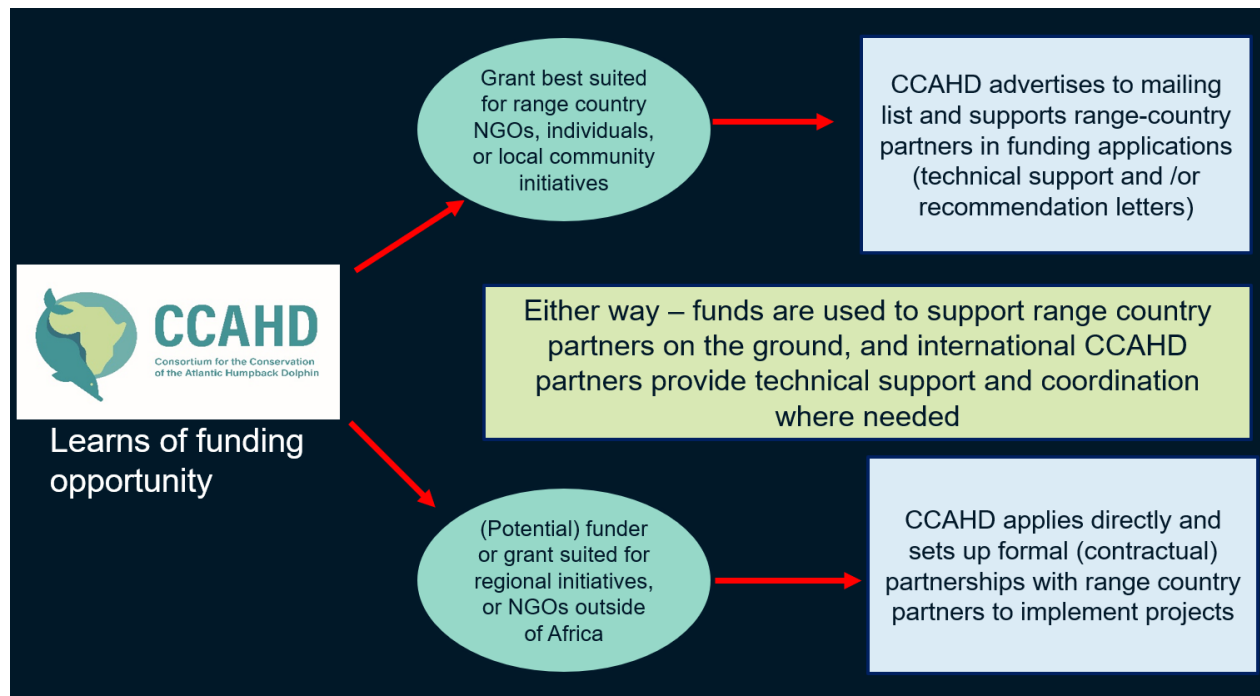
Despite having been recognized as a legal entity in the Netherlands since February, 2022, the extensive research and due diligence requirements under new anti-money laundering and tax fraud regulations delayed the process of the CCAHD obtaining a bank account. In March 2023, the CCAHD was finally able to begin managing its own funds through a bank account with the ABN-AMRO Bank in the Netherlands. The rigorous screening process required a great deal of time from the Secretariat and relevant board members, but also ensured that the Foundation has a [financial policy](#) and a [5-year strategic plan](#) and a [due diligence policy](#) that have passed rigorous scrutiny.

In 2023 the CCAHD worked with [GreenbergTaurig Law firm](#) in the Netherlands who provided pro-bono support in the process of applying for recognition as a charity under Dutch Law ([ANBI status](#)). The outcome of this application is expected soon. In 2023 the CCAHD was also certified as equivalent to a US public charity through an equivalency determination issued by [NGOsource](#).

Fundraising

The CCAHD [5-year strategic plan](#) continued to guide fund raising efforts in 2023. 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.

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, as illustrated below:



The CCAHD dual approach to fund-raising.

Key fundraising developments in 2023 include:

- Through his affiliation with the Seattle Aquarium, the Fundraising Working Group Chair has been able to secure support from the Seattle Aquarium. In 2023 the Fundraising Working Group collaborated to produce a series of fund-raising flyers, which are in the final stages of layout and formatting by a professional designer. These flyers are expected to be ready for use in early 2024.
- The CCAHD worked with a professional web design firm to develop a new [online donation](#) option on the CCAHD Website. This 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 fund-raising flyers and should facilitate donations from 2024 onwards.
- Six grant applications were prepared in 2023. While most of those submitted through traditional calls for proposals to grant bodies were not successful due to the very competitive nature of the grants, several private and corporate donations were secured in 2023 (see table below).
- Notably, the Friends of Nuremberg Zoo pledged a continuation of their support for core operations to cover Coordination, website, communications, administration and software costs.

Table 1: Grants actively managed by the CCAHD, sometimes in close partnership with range country partners. Note that the CCAHD Foundation only secured a bank account in March 2023. All grants and projects before that date were hosted and administered by partner NGOs. For insight into grants obtained in 2020 or 2021 for which the associated work has been completed – please see the 2021 and 2022 Annual reports.

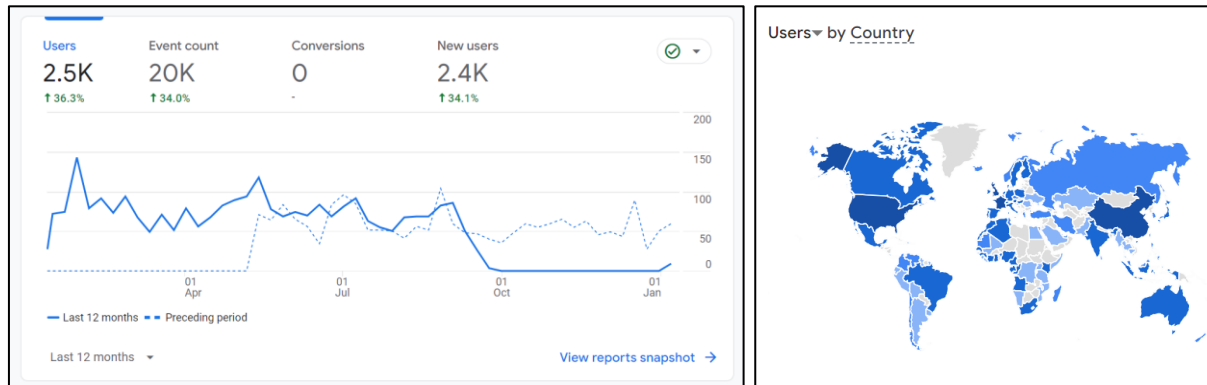
Month grant awarded	Funding body	Amount secured	Host organisation	Proposed activities
Nov-23	Friends of Nuremberg Zoo	25,000.00 €	CCAHD	Coordination, software and services related to core functioning of the Consortium
Aug-23	Private Donor	500.00 €	CCAHD	To support travel for CCAHD members to regional meetings
Aug-23	New England Aquarium MCAF	10,927.00 €	BPC Nigeria	Fisheries surveys and community outreach and education in coastal communities in Nigeria
Aug-23	Friends of Nuremberg Zoo	3,000.00 €	CCAHD	To support travel for CCAHD members to regional meetings
Jul-23	Private Donor	6,931.81 €	CCAHD	Emergency fund to allow CCAHD members to travel to strandings or bycatch incidents to collect data and work with communities
Jun-23	Private Donor	448.39 €	CCAHD	To support illustration of data collection guide and other capacity building materials
Mar-23	Friends of Nuremberg Zoo	20,234.00 €	CCAHD	Coordination software and services related to core functioning of the Consortium
Jul-21	SMM Conservation Fund	20,500.00 €	AMMCO, Cameroon	Development and Implementation of interview surveys in 6 <i>Sousa teuszii</i> range countries
Dec-20 - Dec-23	Loro Parque Foundation	80,000.00 €	AACF, Senegal	Three years of field surveys in the Saloum Delta, Senegal
Dec-21	Mohammed Bin Zayed Species Conservation fund	410,000.00 €	Biotope, Guinea office	Three-year project to conduct boat surveys, interview surveys, capacity building and awareness-raising in Guinea - will be extended to Dec 2024 or beyond.
	Hosted directly by CCAHD	59,614.20 €		
	Total	577,541.20 €		

External communication - CCAHD website and social media

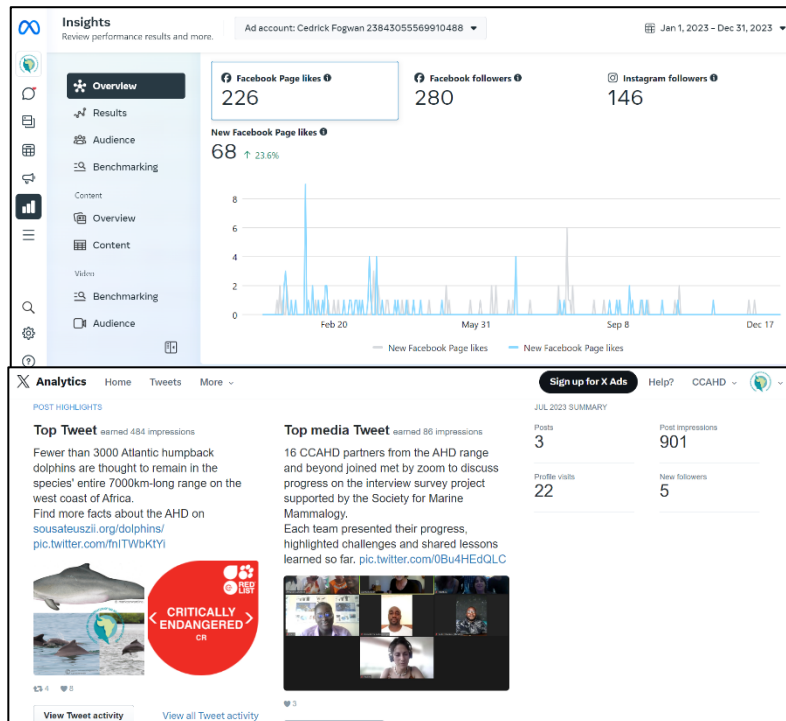
The CCAHD website, <https://www.sousateuszii.org/>, which was launched in January 2021, is a trilingual resource (English, [French](#) and [Portuguese](#)) for members of the public, researchers, managers, and potential funders. One new [project](#) was added, while other project descriptions were updated (see more details above). Five [news items](#) and a number of new downloadable resources were also added. The searchable table of literature was also updated to include newly published papers focusing on *Sousa teuszii*.

Unfortunately, a glitch in the connection between the website and Google Analytics meant that website usage was only tracked through mid-September 2023. The usage trends up to that point, indicate an increasing

number of visitors from 2022, when roughly 3,000 visitors engaged in over 4,400 sessions. Visitors to the website span the entire globe, with the highest number of visitors from the United States, followed by France and the UK. Visits from users in *Sousa teuszii* range countries are gradually increasing, with Senegal, Nigeria, Morocco, Gabon, Cameroon and Guinea featuring in the top 20 countries using the site.



Google Analytics charts and maps for the CCAHD website: sousateuszii.org



The CCAHD also has [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts. Updates are posted on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. In 2023 the Friends of Nuremberg Zoo core budget again included modest compensation for a CCAHD partner from Cameroon to create and manage regular social media posts to highlight CCAHD activities and attract more attention to website resources. A total of 60 posts were created for these platforms over the course of 2023.

In 2023 the Facebook account had 226 page likes and 280 new followers, and posts directly reached 9,140 people directly (this does not account for the posts that were reshared by users). The top 5 *Sousa teuszii* range countries from which the Facebook page has been followed are Cameroon (8.9%),

Morocco (7.1%), The Gambia (5%), Gabon (4.6%), and Senegal (2.9%)

In 2023 the CCAHD Instagram account had 146 new followers, 96 page likes, and a total of 240 visits. The CCAHD's X/Twitter account had a total of 11,217 post impressions and 58 new followers.

In 2023 the Friends of Nuremberg core budget was also used to engage a CCAHD partner and conservation communication expert from the Gambia who developed a [5-year communication strategy](#) for the CCAHD to complement the more general 5-year Strategic Plan. This strategy is now guiding social media posts, website content, the organisation of webinars, and other actions more effectively reach target audiences in *Sousa teuszii* range countries.

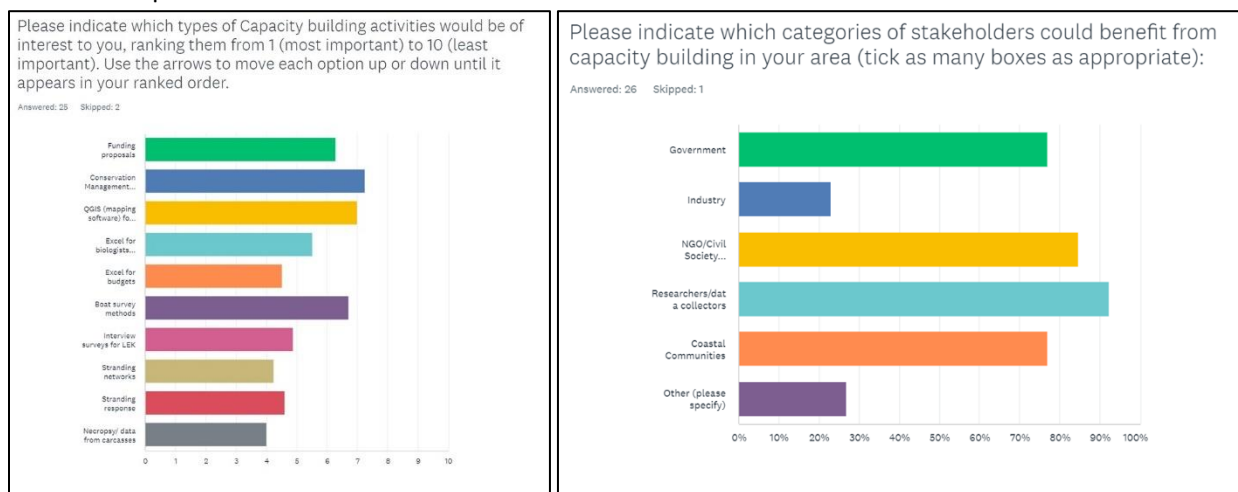
4. Financial reporting

The CCAHD Foundation bank account was approved in February 2023 after rigorous Know-Your-Client investigations and endorsement by the ABN-AMRO bank in the Netherlands. As such, the opening bank balance in January 2023 was 0.00 Euros. The bank balance on December 31, 2023, was 10,665.86 Euros. Over the course of the year a total of 34,200.59 Euros were received, and 23,534.73 Euros were spent. A full financial statement is available upon request.

5. Plans for 2024 and Beyond

In 2024, the CCAHD will continue implement its [5-year Strategic Plan](#), which highlights a wide range of activities identified as priorities by CCAHD working groups. We urge interested parties to consult this Strategic plan to gain insight into the full range of planned activities. The CCAHD's ability to implement recognised priorities will be limited by available funding. However, funds already secured for ongoing projects and the promise of core funding from the Friends of Nuremberg Zoo for 2024 will ensure that the following:

- **Fundraising:** The new fund-raising flyers will be posted to the [Get Involved](#) and [Donate](#) pages of the CCAHD website and used to launch an online fundraising campaign. CCAHD Board Members and partners will also use the flyers to engage potential donors through their professional networks and at international events.
- **(Online) Training for range-country stakeholders:** In 2023, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the CCAHD outreach and education working group conducted a survey to assess range-country partners' most urgent capacity building needs. Funding has been secured to support the costs involved with organising online training sessions to address some of the highest priority topics for different stakeholder groups. Planned topics include conservation planning, GIS skills, and stranding response.



Results of a 2023 survey of CCAHD range country partners to assess capacity building priorities.

- **Supporting the implementation of the CMS Single Species Action Plan:** The CCAHD will produce a Factsheet on the CMS Single Species Action Plan for Atlantic humpback dolphins that partners can share with their CMS focal points who will be attending the [Conference of Parties](#) in Uzbekistan in February 2024. The factsheet can also be used during the meeting to inform participants

of the key actions and the value of the regional Action Plan. Once endorsed, the CCAHD will work closely with the CMS and all range country stakeholders to support implementation of the plan.

- **Continuation of fieldwork in Senegal, Guinea, and SMM interview project partner countries.** Funding has been secured to continue fieldwork, interview surveys, community awareness raising and capacity building in both Senegal and Guinea, while the 6-country interview project will enter the final phase of data analysis, report writing, and preparation of manuscripts for peer-reviewed journals.
- **Acoustic research and analysis:** The CCAHD Acoustic Working group has initiated new collaborations with experts from St. Andrews University, who will support analysis of existing data collected in the Delta Saloum, Senegal, as well as the collection of additional data from Gabon and Guinea, improving the ability to distinguish *Sousa teuszii* vocalisations from other species and use passive acoustic monitoring to detect and monitor the species throughout its range.
- **Creating outreach and awareness-raising materials for coastal communities and fishers:** The funding provided by the Mohamed Bin Zayed Conservation Fund for the CCAHD project in Guinea includes funding for the development of posters and awareness-raising materials specifically targeting fishers and community members. Work is already underway with a renowned children's illustrator, Howard Gray, to create a children's picture book titled 'Keita and the dolphins'. The book takes inspiration from traditional folklore shared by fishermen interviewed in coastal areas of Guinea, and the story features important conservation messages aimed at helping coastal community members throughout the *Sousa teuszii* range understand the threats posed to dolphins and other marine life from fisheries by-catch and coastal development, and ways that communities can combat these threats. The characters and illustrations from this book will be used to create a range of posters and other educational materials that can be translated into the relevant languages spoken in the region.



Draft illustrations for the 20-page children's story book that will be published in 2024.

CCAHD Partners and Support

International organisations



Donors



International and range country partners

