

ADDRESSING KNOWLEDGE GAPS

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CCAHD

Consortium for the Conservation
of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin

WITHOUT URGENT ACTION, ATLANTIC HUMPBACK DOLPHINS MAY DISAPPEAR BEFORE WE EVEN KNEW WHERE THEY WERE.

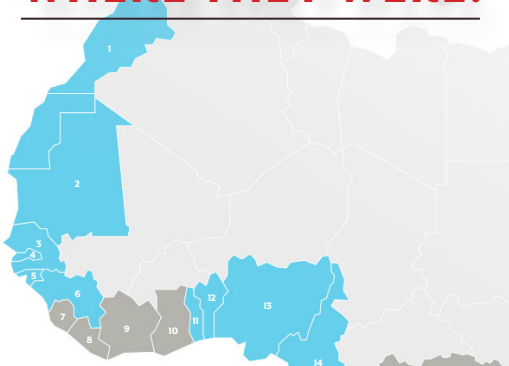
Atlantic humpback dolphins (*Sousa teuszii*) are shy and inconspicuous. Confirmed records of their presence are available from 13 of the 19 possible countries encompassed in their range on the west coast of Africa. In the six countries where there are no records, we do not know whether this reflects a true gap in distribution, or a lack of dedicated research. Where records do exist, they are often based on single strandings, entanglements in fishing gear, or one-off scientific surveys of small geographical areas.

We do know that throughout the species' range, habitat is being drastically changed by coastal development and ever-increasing levels of fishing with gillnets that are known to entangle dolphins as well as fish. CCAHD scientists are in a race against time to document where the dolphins are, when and why they are there, and exactly which threats they face throughout their range.

Without this knowledge, government and industry decision makers cannot be expected to enact policies or practices that will reduce threats and protect dolphins.

Research is desperately needed to address knowledge gaps that are preventing effective conservation:

- In areas where the species has not yet been documented, the CCAHD continues to form partnerships with local NGOs who can conduct interview surveys and solicit reports from the public.
- In areas where there is (past) evidence that the species is present, boat-based surveys are urgently needed to map their current distribution and habitat use, employing methods that will also allow recognition of individuals over time and calculation of population size.
- Passive acoustic recorders are ideal tools to be used in addition to boat-based surveys, to detect the presence of dolphins at any time of night or day and over longer periods, allowing insight into activity patterns related to times of day, tidal states, or seasons.
- In areas where more recent surveys have been conducted, continued research is needed to detect potential changes in distribution, population size or habitat parameters in response to increasing threats or conservation measures.



Sousa teuszii CONFIRMED
in 13 of 19
POSSIBLE COUNTRIES

- 1 • MOROCCO
- 2 • MAURITANIA
- 3 • SENEGAL
- 4 • THE GAMBIA
- 5 • GUINEA BISSAU
- 6 • GUINEA
- 7 • SIERRA LEONE
- 8 • LIBERIA
- 9 • CÔTE D'IVOIRE
- 10 • GHANA
- 11 • TOGO
- 12 • BENIN
- 13 • NIGERIA
- 14 • CAMEROON
- 15 • EQUATORIAL GUINEA
- 16 • GABON
- 17 • REPUBLIC OF CONGO
- 18 • DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO
- 19 • ANGOLA



High quality cameras with zoom lenses allow researchers to capture images of dolphins that can be recognized by the nicks and scarring on their dorsal fins. Right photos by G. Minton, CCAHD.



© Lucy Keith-Diagne, AACF

Above: Researchers photograph dolphins in the Delta Saloum, Senegal.
Left: Taking water measurements in the coastal waters of Guinea. Photo by Tilen Genov.





Over 1 million Euros are needed to conduct the CCAHD's ambitious 5-year research plan that will address the knowledge gaps that are hindering effective conservation. Your contribution, no matter how big or small, will make a difference!

- **100-500 Euros** can purchase vital survey equipment like GPS units.
- **1,000-5,000 Euros** can purchase a high-end camera with a zoom lens suitable for photo-identification of individual dolphins that can be recognized over time, providing insight into population size and ranging patterns.
- **10,000-50,000 Euros** can fund a boat-based survey in a location where dolphins are likely to be present.
- **50,000-100,000 Euros** could fund repeated boat-based surveys complemented by passive acoustic methods.

Note that ALL research conducted through CCAHD includes and builds upon regional capacity building and hands-on training for range country scientists.

Donations in kind are also welcomed, & can include things like:

- High resolution digital single lens reflex cameras with 100-400mm zoom lenses for photography to identify individual dolphins during boat-based surveys.
- Boats, cars, and fuel for marine surveys and transportation to and from survey sites.
- Flights for biologists to travel and accommodation at field sites.
- Specialized acoustic monitoring devices and equipment to measure water parameters including salinity, turbidity, depth and temperature.

[CLICK HERE](#) or scan the QR code to make a donation, or get in touch with the CCAHD Secretariat at infoccahd@gmail.com to learn more.

