

EMPOWERING COASTAL COMMUNITIES TO BECOME ALLIES IN CONSERVATION

Click [here](#) to return to the introduction.



CCAHD

Consortium for the Conservation
of the Atlantic Humpback Dolphin

COASTAL COMMUNITIES HOLD THE KEY TO BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND PROTECTION OF THE SPECIES WITH WHICH THEY SHARE HABITAT AND RESOURCES.

Atlantic humpback dolphins (*Sousa teuszii*) are confined to shallow waters in estuaries, mangroves and open coastlines. They can often be spotted from a beach or a jetty, as well as by small scale artisanal fishers who use the same waters and target many of the same fish species for food. Members of coastal communities throughout the species' range are perfectly placed to drive better understanding and to protect the species from extinction.

Scientists cannot be everywhere at once, and boat-based surveys can be expensive and logistically challenging, particularly in areas where this work has never been conducted. CCAHD partners are using a range of strategies and tools to enable coastal communities and other marine stakeholders to share their local ecological knowledge and help address critical knowledge gaps that will support effective conservation today:

- Interview surveys with fishers use a questionnaire developed by a team of international and range-country scientists, which provides vital insight into whether Atlantic humpback dolphins are present in an area, and if so, how they are perceived and whether they interact with fisheries.
- National reporting networks, supported by social media and specialized smartphone apps like Siren (see https://www.ammco.org/telecharger_siren) allow fishers and other coastal users to report live sightings, strandings, or incidents of bycatch of dolphins.
- Outreach and awareness-raising materials are needed to encourage community members to value the role that dolphins play in healthy coastal ecosystems, and to report dolphin sightings, strandings and bycatch. These materials would include paper posters or books that are physically displayed in schools, fish landing sites, and other public venues, or digital media that can be shared through smart phones.
- Where communities provide good evidence that Atlantic humpback dolphins are present, CCAHD partners would organise follow-up boat-based or acoustic surveys to accurately document their habitat use, (relative) abundance, and conservation needs.
- Where entanglement in fishing nets is documented, fishers can work with scientists and fisheries experts to design and test the use of more selective fishing gears like lines that result in higher quality target catch but less bycatch, or alternative livelihoods to reduce or eliminate unwanted bycatch.





Mock-up illustrations for the forthcoming 'Keita and the dolphins' Children's book.

Researchers in the Gambia conduct an interview with a local fisherman.



Top left: Researchers share dolphin ID guides with fishers in Guinea.
 Top right: Poster displayed at the annual Street Whale event held in Kribi, Cameroon, hosted by CCAHD partner, AMMCO.



Over 700,000 Euros are needed to conduct the CCAHD's ambitious outreach and citizen science plan over 5 years. Your contribution, no matter how big or small, will make a difference!

- **100-500 Euros** can support the printing and distribution of awareness-raising posters or the children's book, 'Keita and the Dolphins', or provide a fisher with a mobile phone that he can use to take photos and send reports.
- **1,000-5,000 Euros** can fund a local community workshop to raise awareness of dolphins and empower community members to become citizen scientists.
- **10,000-50,000 Euros** could fund a project to conduct interview surveys in a (suspected) Atlantic humpback dolphin range country using tools and resources developed by the CCAHD.
- **50,000-100,000 Euros** can fund a national reporting network, supported by a smart phone App and a national database coordinator.

Note that tools and resources developed to support CCAHD outreach and citizen science projects will be produced in the appropriate languages for the communities involved.

[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.

