CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

A. Proposal

Transfer of *Tursiops truncatus ponticus* from Appendix II to Appendix I.

B. Proponent

Georgia.

C. Supporting statement

1. Taxonomy

1.1	Class:	Mammalia
1.2	Order:	Cetacea
1.3	Family:	Delphinidae
1.4	Genus, species subspecies:	*Tursiops truncatus ponticus* (Barabash-Nikiforov, 1940 cited in Tomilin, 1967; type locality given as Black Sea at Novorisisk)
1.5	Scientific synonyms:	None
1.6	Common names:	English: Black Sea bottlenose dolphin French: Spanish: Bulgarian: Afala Georgian: Aphalina Romanian: Afalin, delfinul cu bot de sticia, delfinul cu bot gros Russian: Afalina chernomorskaya Turkish: Afalina Ukrainian: Afalina chornomors'ka
1.7	Code numbers:	A-111.002.014.002

2. Biological parameters

2.1 Distribution

The subspecies *Tursiops truncatus ponticus* is endemic to the Black Sea and isolated from other populations of bottlenose dolphins in the Mediterranean and other waters (Tomilin, 1967; Rice, 1998). There are considerable concerns about the status of the Black Sea cetaceans. For example, the European Cetacean Society issued a statement of concern about this population stating "There are no reliable population estimates for small cetaceans in the Black Sea... and various... serious pressures facing these species... The future for Black Sea dolphins is very bleak indeed. There is a very real possibility of their full disappearance over the next decade or two unless urgent action is taken (ECS, 1993). The IUCN has concurred that the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin is threatened. However, the species (*Tursiops truncatus*) is distributed worldwide in temperate and tropical waters (Wells and Scott, 1999).

In 2002, samples of bottlenose dolphins from the Black Sea, were analysed and compared with the Mediterranean and East North Atlantic bottlenose dolphin populations (*Tursiops truncatus*) (Natoli, A, 2002). Even though only a small number of Black Sea dolphins have as yet been analysed, statistically significant variations in microsatellite allele frequencies between the populations and four control region haplotypes unique to the Black Sea were identified. Genetic differences of the magnitude mean that such analyses can be used unambiguously to distinguish many individual Black Sea bottlenose dolphins from those in the Mediterranean and North East Atlantic.

2.2 Habitat availability

The species habitat is highly degraded and declining in quality due to contamination by sewage and industrial effluents, algal blooms, decrease in prey species due to overfishing and to by-catch in fisheries (Birkun *et al.*, 1992; Bogdanova *et al.*, 1996; Kulagin *et al.*, 1996; Pavlov *et al.*, 1996).

The Black Sea coastal zone is densely populated, containing a permanent population of approximately 16 million and another 4 million visitors during the summer tourist season (UNEP, 1999). The drainage area includes major parts of 17 countries, 13 capital cities and some 160 million people (BSEP, 1996). Because of its enclosed nature, limited water exchange and slow circulation, the Black Sea is especially vulnerable to pollution (Vinogradov, 1994). The input of nutrients from agriculture, industry and sewage has caused eutrophication and widespread algal blooms. Sewage pollution also introduces human pathogens which have been associated with disease in dolphins. Industrial and agricultural chemicals are also present in high concentrations and may be responsible for reported immunosuppression and potentially low reproductive rates in the dolphins.

It has been suggested that the vulnerable nature of the Black Sea and the profound impacts of human actions have caused the Sea to undergo an "ecosystem flip" to a new ecological state in which certain marine planktonic predators predominate and fish stocks have become greatly reduced.

2.3 Population status

To date, there are no reliable scientific data available on the abundance of the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin population. Recent Soviet estimates, from 1975-1993 (Mikhalev *et al.*, 1978; Yukhov *et al.*, 1986; Sokolov *et al.*, 1990; Mikhalev, 1996 a; Yaskin and Yukhov, 1997) have not yet been reviewed by the IWC's Scientific Committee (a review is schedule in 2003). However, it is thought that overall abundance of dolphins in the Black Sea has declined greatly due to severe over-exploitation until the 1980s by several nations, for human consumption and for industrial products. Original abundance of small cetaceans in the Black Sea may have been as high as 1.5-2 million (Zemsky, 1996).

The proportions of the three endemic small cetaceans (bottlenose dolphin, harbor porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena relicta*) and long-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis ponticus*) in these catches and their relative degrees of depletion is not known with confidence. No reliable information on intentional killing of wild Black Sea bottlenose dolphins is available since the ban on cetacean fisheries was implemented in 1983, but direct removals are known to continue, including live capture for dolphinaria and those resulting from conflict between marine mammals and coastal fisheries (Birkun, 2002a).

2.4 Population trends

Because no reliable population trend data are available, harvest figures are used as a population trend indicator. Harvest of small cetaceans of three species in the purse-seine fishery were in the tens of thousands annually and exceeded 100,000 in some years, followed by collapse of the fishery in the 1960s (Zemsky, 1996) although catches continued in Turkey (Yel *et al*., 1996). In the

20th Century in the former Russian empire and then in the USSR the precise number of Black Sea cetaceans killed and processed undoubtedly exceeded 1.5 million animals of all three species, while other Black Sea states together probably killed about four or five million (Birkun *et al.,* 1992; Birkun and Krivokhizhin, 1996 and Birkun, 2002a). Present status is unknown but inferred to be depleted.

2.5 Geographic trends

There are no known sub-populations. As noted above abundance is thought to have declined greatly due to over-exploitation and habitat destruction. The Black Sea bottlenose dolphin population is divided into several quite distinctly separated herds, each herd consisting of 60-150 animals (Bel'kovich, 1996 and Birkun, 2002a).

2.6 Role of the species in its ecosystem

Feeding is primarily on benthic species of the neritic zone, including the fishes *Raja clava, Bothus maeoticus, Gadus euxinus, Scorpaena porcus, Mugil cephalus* and other species, as well as crustaceans. Pelagic fishes are also consumed if they are present in dense concentrations (BSEIN, 1999). Habitat is a narrow strip close to the shore, as opposed to the broad pelagic habitat of the common dolphin, which occurs throughout the Sea.

2.7 Threats

It is evident that the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin is significantly threatened and meets the 'biological' criteria in Annex I of Res. Conf. 9.24. Threats to the species and its habitat have been comprehensively highlighted by several international groups of experts and have been acknowledged by the range states. Decision Com. 11.23, which was adopted by consensus at CoP11, directed the CITES Secretariat to "Co-ordinate measures with the relevant international organisation ... specifically the Bern Convention, the Bucharest Convention, the Bonn Convention and the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black and Mediterranean Seas (ACCOBAMS)".

Environmental threats

The ecosystem of the Black sea is highly changed and disturbed as a result of extensive riverine and coastal input of pollution, coastal development, disturbance caused by extensive vessel traffic, over-fishing and the impacts of introduced species, particularly the comb jelly, *Mnemiopsis leidii,* which now dominates the ecosystem (GESAMP, 1997).

The main habitat of the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin is also under continuous pressure from various man-made physical changes to the seabed, coasts and rivers flowing into the sea. These include channel dredging and marine dumping of removed sediments, sand extraction from the sea bottom, offshore gas and oil exploration and bottom trawling. Some of these activities present important threats to dolphins as they may be responsible for widespread habitat degradation and also permanent or periodical disturbance of dolphin herds (Birkun, 2002a).

The bottlenose dolphin has a low reproductive potential; females are slow to mature (sexual maturity is at 5-12 years of age), bear a single calf, and have long inter-birth intervals (2-3 to 6 years) (Leatherwood and Reeves, 1983; Evans, 1987; Tomilin, 1957 and Burkin, 2002a). It is unlikely that current reproduction, undoubtedly depressed by environmental factors, is keeping pace with current mortality and live-capture removal. As a result of significant riverine and coastal input of pollutants, contaminant burdens in Black Sea cetaceans are high. DDT contamination is particularly high compared to other parts of the world, indicating its continued use in the region (Tanabe *et al.*, 1997). Black Sea bottlenose dolphins accumulate high levels of persistent organic pollutants in their tissues (BLASDOL, 1999 and Birkun, 2002a).

Incidental mortality - *Tursiops* are susceptible to entanglement in fishing gear and from ship strike injuries. Four percent of stranded Black sea cetacean species examined in 1989-1991 had traumas (wounds, skeletal fractures and haematomas), whilst 17% had gastric lesions similar to stress-induced ulcerations (Evans, 1993). Bottlenose dolphin by-catches occur in shallow waters of the continental shelf in all six range states (Birkun, 2002a). The level of incidental mortality is not known, but is believed to be significant: Cetaceans were found in 113 out of 3450 fishing nets examined in 1980-1981 in the Crimea (Zhuravleva et al., 1982), and 194 dead dolphins were found in driftnets on 14 Turkish boats arrested in the Spring of 1992 (Pasyakin, 1991). Given the very high level of fishing activity in the Black sea, bycatch is likely to be "very large" (Evans and Addink, 1993). The death of 20 dolphins in 1998 was attributed to entanglement in turbot nets (Svilen Enev, pers comm to WDCS, 9/9/98).

Lack of food resources - Coastal and pelagic fisheries can affect Black Sea bottlenose dolphins through excessive exploitation of fish species that constitute the dolphins' prey (Birkun, 2002a). Black Sea fishermen are said to have seen the number of fish species in their waters drop from 170 to 44 in just ten years. This is believed to have resulted in acute interspecific competition for food, and may render animals more susceptible to disease, parasitic infection and mobilization of toxic pollutants (Birkun *et al.*, 1992).

Disease - The normal mortality rate is not known for Black Sea bottlenose dolphin populations but some natural pathogens can lead to lethal disease in these animals (Birkun *et al.* 1992, Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b). The cetacean strandings recorded in the Crimea (Krivokhizhin and Birkun, 1999, Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b) demonstrate an elevation in bottlenose dolphin natural mortality since 1989. A prominent peak of 20 dead bottlenose dolphin strandings was recorded in 1990, its cause unclear (Krivokhizhin and Birkun, 1999 and Birkun, 2002a).

Several researchers have suggested that Black Sea cetaceans now exhibit an unusually high degree of poor health and a high death rate and link these to the state of the Black Sea environment (e.g. Bogdanova *et al*. 1996 and pers. comm. from A. A. Birkun, BREMA Laboratory, Ukraine, to WDCS). Industrial and sewage pollution have been linked to cetacean health - one as a source of immuno-suppression and the other as a significant source of infectious agents. The most frequent pathological disorders observed in stranded and by-caught cetaceans in the Black Sea are: pneumonia and sinusitis caused by nematode infection; gastritis caused by trematode infection; and skin, intestinal, liver and lymph node disorders caused by cestode infections (Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b). Lung infections by nematodes (complicated with bacterial and possibly viral superinfection) have been identified as the main "natural" causes of death for Black Sea cetaceans. Sixty-seven percent of bottlenose dolphins examined during 1989-1991, had destructive lesions in their lungs (Birkun *et al.*, 1992). There have been several cetacean mass strandings in the Black Sea, apparently related to immuno-deficiencies exacerbated by pollution (including morbillivirus outbreaks) (Birkun et al., 1999). A spate of similar epizootics has affected many other marine mammal populations worldwide (Simmonds and Mayer, 1997).

Commercial exploitation

Pressures on Black Sea dolphins have included direct hunts both for products and for live capture (see 3 below). The dolphin processing industry, based on mass direct killing of these animals, took place in all Black Sea Riparian countries (Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b). A dolphin fishery was initiated in 1870 by the former Soviet Union, primarily for blubber oil (Birkun, 2002b). Turkey joined this fishery in the 1930s, harvesting between 40-70,000 cetaceans annually (Berzin and Yablokov, 1978). Landings peaked in 1938 with 147,652 cetaceans killed by the USSR alone (Bodrov et al, 1958). Commercial dolphin hunting was banned in 1966 by the former Soviet Union, Georgia, Bulgaria and Romania and by Turkey in 1983. Poaching is reported to continue, with evidence of mass illegal killing detected in Turkey (Anonymous, 1991). Illegal exploitation of marine biological resources is one of the major environmental, economic and social problems affecting the entire Black Sea subregion (Birkun, 2002b).

3. Utilization and trade

Since the 1960s, many hundreds (and probably up to one thousand) of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins were captured alive in the former USSR and Romania for military, commercial and scientific use. Such activity continues by the Russian Federation and Ukraine in Taman' Bay (Kerch Strait) and off the south Crimea (Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b). Capture operations use a purse-seining method and sometimes result in solitary and serial deaths of bottlenose dolphins due to stress and asphyxia (Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b). When dolphinaria first opened in the Black Sea states, hundreds of dolphins are reported to have been drowned because of a poor capture technique, called 'aloman catch'. As a rule, these mortalities were not reported (Birkun et al., 1992 and Birkun, 2002a).

3.1 National utilization

It is difficult to separate national utilization from international traffic. Captures for exhibit, research and commercial export have occurred in some of the range states, including Russia, Ukraine and Georgia (Entrup and Cartlidge, 1998). The scale of captures for national internal use is not known. Some dolphins shipped abroad were subsequently re-imported to the nation of origin and may have been converted to national use or re-exported.

There are currently eight dolphinaria in Russia, eight in Ukraine, one in Romania and one in Bulgaria (Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b). A total of 80-120 marine mammals (primarily bottlenose dolphins) are currently held in these facilities (Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b), including 40-50 bottlenose dolphins in Ukraine (Birkun and Krivokhizhin, 2001 and Birkun 2002**a**) and three in Romania. These range states facilities reportedly have capacity for over 150 marine mammals. Defects reported in 1992 include the lack of water filtration and sterilisation systems and poor water circulation. In Ukraine, at least, half of its dolphinaria share common defects including lack of water preparing and sterilizing systems, slow water circulation, obsolete equipment and deteriorated constructions (Birkun, 2002a). Birkun et al. (1992) reports that every year between 24 and 48 wild cetaceans are captured to replace dolphins that die in the facilities. The most frequent cause of death reported is bacterial pneumonia and septicaemia. The role of allergy and secondary immune deficiency in the pathogenesis of cetacean infectious diseases has been detected (Birkun et al., 1990). No successful breeding programmes and technologies exist for Black Sea cetaceans (Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b).

Ukraine, as part of the former Soviet Union, captured and trained 70 Black Sea bottlenose dolphins for 'special forces'. When the Cold War ended, the trained animals were no longer needed and the military tried to persuade oil companies that the dolphins would be useful to them following retraining. In 1994, a large number of ex-military Black Sea bottlenose dolphins were reported to be kept in very poor conditions in the Ukraine (Anon, 1994). The destination of these animals is not known, although three years later about 20 Black Sea bottlenose dolphins are reported to be in use in Ukraine in 'human therapy' programmes (Specter, 1997). At present, there are no cetaceans in captivity in Georgia (pers. comm. with Dr. Iraki Shavgulidze, NACRES and Birkun, 2002a). Formerly, the Batumi Dolphinarium kept 7-8 individuals. Mortality was frequent (with replacement from local populations), and there was no breeding success.

3.2 Legal international trade

During the 1980s and 1990s, the exploitation of captive cetaceans by the Range States intensified and the number of seasonal dolphinaria for public display and 'swim-with-the-dolphins' programmes has increased. During the last decade, exports of bottlenose dolphins from the Black Sea has expanded and dolphins have been exported to Argentina, Byelorussia, Cyprus, Egypt, Hungary, Iran, Israel, Lithuania, Romania, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Vietnam, Canada and former Yugoslavia countries (Entrup and Cartlidge, 1998, Birkun, 2002a and Birkun, 2002b).

There clearly has been a substantial international commercial trade in bottlenose dolphins from the Black Sea. The maximum volume is unknown, as some international shipments abroad have been illegal and not recorded. World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) data records the export of at least 112 *Tursiops truncatus ponticus* between 1990 and 2001. However, WDCS reports additional exports that have not been documented by the countries involved in the trade, which brings the number of animals in trade to at least 120 (WDCS, 2002).

A recent investigation tracked 43 bottlenose dolphins exported from the Ukraine, Georgia and Russia to foreign captive facilities during the period 1990-1997 (Entrup and Cartlidge, 1998). All details of the transfers cannot be established, because of incomplete documentation. At least 20 have died; another three are likely to be dead. Only nine were confirmed still alive as of 1997 (Entrup and Cartlidge, 1998). Additional traffic has been reported since and WDCS now documents in detail up to 70 dolphin exports. 32 of these animals are confirmed dead. Another three are thought also to have died and the fate of many other animals held in countries such as Iran and the United Arab Emirates is unknown. Traders advertising specimens on the internet offer only 15 day survival guarantee (WDCS, 2002).

3.3 Illegal trade

The level of illegal trade is unknown. It is unclear whether the exports of bottlenose dolphins from Black States documented by WDCS (Entrup and Cartlidge, 1998, WDCS, 1999, 2000 and 2002) since 1990 fulfilled the requirements of CITES Article IV as complete documentation has been lacking. For example, it is not known if the purpose of transaction (e.g., captive breeding or commercial purposes) or the source of the specimen (e.g. captive bred or wild-caught) was recorded accurately on export permits (or even whether these items were recorded at all). Likewise, it is unlikely that the requisite detriment determination was made, since it is unlikely that any harvest level was (or is) sustainable.

3.4 Actual or potential trade impacts

The population is likely depleted, and its habitat badly degraded and declining. Any removals are hastening the further decline of the population. Georgia and the United States submitted a proposal to CITES CoP 11 to uplist *Tursiops truncatus ponticus* to Appendix I. The proposal received strong support from Parties, including both range and importing states, as well as independent reviewers. For example, in its analyses of proposals to amend the CITES appendices, IUCN made the following statement: "Reviewers ... concur that the stock is threatened and that a precautionary approach and better trade controls are needed ... The majority of reviewers agree that the case for the uplisting of the population is strong, and that the population is subject to a number of serious threats".

3.5 Captive breeding for commercial purposes (outside country of origin)

While the purpose of captive breeding has often been used to justify the export of bottlenose dolphins for public display, breeding success with the subspecies has been attained in only one oceanarium outside the Black Sea, in Israel (Entrup and Cartlidge, 1998, Birkun, 2002a). In many cases, the new facilities have been inadequate for the purposes of breeding or even maintenance.

4. Conservation and Management

4.1 Legal status

4.1.1 National

Russia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania and Georgia ban directed takes of dolphins in the Black Sea. The Black Sea bottlenose dolphin was placed in the Ukrainian National Red Data Book

in 1989; this requires protection by government programs. It was also included in national red data books of Russia, Bulgaria and Georgia in the 1980s. In Georgia the subspecies is protected by the Law on Wild Fauna Protection of 1996, Article 30, under which all marine mammals are protected and no taking is allowed except for scientific, educational or veterinary purposes. All three Black Sea cetaceans will be included in a new Georgian red list.

4.1.2 International

All Cetacea not listed in Appendix I were listed in Appendix II of CITES in 1979. The bottlenose dolphin as a species is classified by IUCN as Data Deficient. The Black Sea population/subspecies is also listed in Appendix II of the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and is defined as Endangered in the UNEP Global Plan of Action on Marine Mammals. It is also protected under the Bern Convention (under Appendix II, which imposes a clear and unequivocal duty to protect habitat; Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania are Parties) and EC Directive 92/43/EEC.

Black Sea range states have agreed several regional mechanisms to control and prevent pollution of the Black Sea, and maintain and enhance its biodiversity. In November 2001, the Standing Committee to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) adopted Recommendation No.86 on the conservation of the Black Sea bottle-nosed dolphin *Tursiops truncatus ponticus* recommending that Contracting Parties to the Convention strictly enforce the prohibition of capture and keeping of these animals, support efforts to provide improved protection of this subspecies in the framework of CITES and support regional coordination of conservation efforts of this subspecies (see section 2.7).

The Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS) entered into force in June 2001 and bans the deliberate taking of cetaceans, including live specimens. The first meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS adopted Resolution 1.12 on the Conservation of the Black Sea *Tursiops truncatus:* Bottlenose Dolphin, which calls for more action to prohibit the deliberate taking and keeping of animals from this population and, in particular, for the "uplisting" of these animals to Appendix I of CITES (see section 2.7 and 4.2.).

4.2 Species management

4.2.1 Population monitoring

At present, there are no formal programs to monitor the status of the population. In Georgia, a monitoring activity by the Biodiversity Activity Centre in Batumi is expected to be part of the TACIS Black Sea Programme under development Action 3 of the Priorities for Implementation prepared by ACCOBAMS at MOP 1.

4.2.2 Habitat conservation

There are no formal programs of habitat conservation at present. In Georgia, Kolkheti National Park is under development (with support by the World Bank) and will include adjacent marine waters utilized by the bottlenose dolphin. Action 4 of the Priorities for Implementation prepared by ACCOBAMS at MOP 1 recommends the Development and implementation of pilot conservation and management actions in well-defined key areas containing critical habitat for populations belonging to priority species (*Delphinus delphis, Phocoena phocoena, Physeter macrocephalus, Tursiops truncatus*). There are a number of agreements or plans designed to reduce pollution levels in the Black Sea, including the

Bucharest Convention, the Odessa Declaration, and the Strategic Action Plan for the Rehabilitation and Protection of the Black Sea (BS-SAP) signed by all range states in 1996.

4.2.3 Management measures

Action 6 of the Priorities for Implementation prepared by ACCOBAMS at MOP 1 recommends a Conservation plan for cetaceans in the Black Sea. This project envisages the co-operation between ACCOBAMS and the Black Sea Commission to prepare a proposal to be submitted to the GEF, concerning a comprehensive conservation and management plan for Black Sea cetaceans. The plan should include efforts to fill the existing knowledge gaps concerning the distribution, abundance, population structure, and factors threatening the conservation of the three species involved, as well as management measures such as the establishment of specially protected areas, the development and implementation of regulations to increase sustainability of human activities in the subregion, and the organisation of training, education and awareness initiatives (ACCOBAMS, 2002a).

4.3 Control measures

4.3.1 International trade

There are no control measures on international trade other than CITES.

4.3.2 Domestic measures

There are no domestic measures to ensure sustainability of removals. Ratification of ACCOBAMS is intended to result in the establishment of such measures, as part of domestic conservation plans. In Georgia, marine inspectors at the major seaports of Batumi and Poti are responsible for monitoring captures and exports (none since 1992).

5. Information on Similar Species

It should be noted in terms of identifying animals in trade that the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin trade involves live, whole animals (rather than parts). The Black Sea bottlenose dolphin is morphologically similar to those from other waters. However, bottlenose dolphins typically bear distinctive marks and other features allowing individuals to be recognised. Animals could also be marked, for example by freeze branding, to help track them in trade. Genetic studies of this taxon are still at an early stage and further research may also yield tools to further aid identification.

6. Other Comments

Georgia and the United States consulted with all CITES Parties and certain non-Parties that are range states for *Tursiops truncatus ponticus* in 2000. Turkey, Bulgaria, and Romania supported transfer of the species from Appendix II to Appendix I, while Russia and Ukraine did not offered an opinion. Further consultation has been conducted in 2002, and responses will be sent to the CITES Secretariat in due course.

7. Additional Remarks

CITES parties are urged to note that the efforts undertaken by ACCOBAMS, the Bern Convention and other international and regional instruments that seek effective conservation measures for the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin are compatible with the uplisting of this geographically isolated sub-species from CITES Appendix II into Appendix I.

Tursiops truncatus ponticus meets the biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I, as listed in Resolution Conf. 9.24. Specifically, the species meets:

Criteria B: The wild population has a restricted area of distribution and is characterized by (iii) a high vulnerability due to the species` biology or behaviour, and iv) an observed, inferred or projected decrease in the number of individuals, area or quality of habitat, and reproductive potential.

Criteria C (iii): A decline in the number of individuals in the wild, which has been inferred or projected on the basis of levels of patterns of exploitation, and threats from extrinsic factors such as the effects of pathogens, competitors, parasites, predators, hybridisation, introduced species, and the effects of toxins and pollutants.

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MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND WATERS
"NATIONAL NATURE PROTECTION SERVICE" DIRECTORATE
CITES Management Authority of Bulgaria

22, Maria Louisa Blvd. 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria, Tel. (00 359 2) 940 6537, Fax (00 359 2) 981 6610,
E-mail: nnpsf@moew.government.bg

To
CITES Management Authority of Georgia
Ministry of Environment
Department of Biodiversity Protection
68, Kostava Str.
380015 Tbilisi

Ref. Your letter No10-31/136, 16 May 2002

Dear Colleagues,

According to the scientific expertise provided by the Institute of Fisheries and Aquacultures, Varna and the information available in the Ministry of Environment and Water, the wild population of the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin ***Tursiops truncatus ponticus*** is not a subject to capture and trade in Bulgaria.
Deliberate capture of dolphins in Bulgaria is strongly prohibited since 1966.

No export of live specimens or products from the wild population has been recorded. The last export of 3 captive-bred live animals to India was recorded in 1998.
The incidental killing, the water pollution, food deficiency and physiological or pathogenic disturbances seem to be the factors that significantly threaten the dolphins population along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

Unfortunately there is no scientific evidence to demonstrate that the population of bottlenose dolphins in Black Sea is declining, stable or increasing, but considering the threats, mentioned above and the low reproductivity of these species affected by 11-12 years maturation period, 12 month of pregnancy and the vulnerability of the newborn, we agree that precautionary approach and better protection and decisive measures are needed.

In agreement with the Recommendation No 86 (2001) of the Bern Convention on the Conservation of the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin and the Resolution 1.12 of ACCOBAMS (MOP1, 2002) for the Conservation of the Black Sea *Tursiops truncatus*: bottlenose dolphin, **the CITES Management Authority of Bulgaria supports the proposal that Georgia intents to submit to the 12 th Meeting of Parties to CITES for transferring the Black Sea and Azov Sea population of the Bottlenose Dolphin from Appendix II to Appendix I.**

Sincerely yours,

Christo Bojinov
Director NNPS

Nr. 125471/00
Data 21.05.2002

ROMANIA
MINISTRY OF WATERS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Directorate of Biodiversity Protection and Conservation, Protected Areas and Natural Monuments

CITES Management Authority
12 Libertatii Blvd, sector 5, Bucharest, 70005, tel: +40 1 410 0531
Fax: +40 1 410 0282; e-mail: biodiv@mappm.ro

To: Dr. Malan Lindeque,
Chief, Scientific Support Unit

Subject: Conservation and management of Black Sea bottlenose dolphins

[illegible] agrees the transfer of the subspecies *Tursiops truncatus ponticus* to Appendix I due to following reasons:

- The Appendix II of CITES comprises species which "although are not threatened with extinction yet, they should became vulnerable in the case when the trade with individuals or part of individuals or products from them are not under strictly regulations" or in the geographic scope of ACCOBAMS this species is "already threatened with extinction" being entered the Black Sea Red Data Book, justifying enough the transfer.
- ACCOBAMS clearly addresses the problem of live capture of cetaceans in its waters and calls on Parties to "prohibit and take all necessary measures to eliminate any deliberate taking of cetaceans" (Article II). Ratifying the ACCOBAMS agreement, by the Law no.91/2000, Romania should comply with all its provisions, including these of Article II.
- As Party and Partner of ACCOBAMS, Romania took part at the first Meeting of Parties, where the Resolution 1.12 proposing the transfer of the bottlenose dolphin in Appendix I of the CITES, in order to strengthen the prohibition measures for deliberate catch and trade for commercial purposes, was adopted. Consequently, Romania should also comply with this decision.

Also, we are in position to inform that, in the framework of NIMRD, focal point for implementation of ACCOBAMS ' provisions at the Romanian Black Sea region, the project entitled "Conservation of the dolphins from the Romanian Black Sea waters" is developing since 2001, with financial support from the European Community, by its financial instrument Life-nature. The project includes actions for management and conservation of this species.

Romania did never trade in dolphins. After a period of commercial hunting practiced by riparian countries during 1930s-early 1980s, Romania stopped hunting in 1966, as a consequence of the moratorium of Black Sea cetaceans fishing declared in 1966.

Best regards,
Adriana BAZ, Director CITES Management Authority

CITES ROMANIA

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT
General Directorate of Environment Protection

CITES Secretariat
15, Chemin des Anemones
CH-1219 CHATELAINE-Geneve
Switzerland

06.06.2002

URGENT

Our Ref. :B 19 0 ÇKG 0 08 00 01/ 1704
Subject : Tursiops truncatus ponticus

Dear Sir/Madam,

In our country, capture of dolphins were prohibited since 1983. However available information is limited on the situation of the population and trade of Tursiops truncatus ponticus in Black Sea.

Therefore the national studies are still going on this subject and we are still not in a position to have a common consensus, between the national authorities.

I hope that after completion of the studies about this subject, our position will become more clear.

With our best regards.

Yours sincerely,

Serpil BAĞCI
Director General

c.c.

-CITES Management Authority of Georgia