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5	Abstract title:	ISSUES CONCERNING CETACEANS IN THE STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR?
6	Abstract:	Recent studies have demonstrated an important presence of cetaceans (common dolphin (<i>Delphinus delphis</i>), long finned pilot whales (<i>Globicephala melas</i>), killer whales (<i>Orcinus orca</i>), striped dolphin (<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>), bottlenose dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>), sperm whales (<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>)) in the Strait of Gibraltar. The object of this study is to make aware of the environmental impact that the following factors are imposing upon the population of cetaceans in this area. 1) The Strait is the second most busy in marine traffic, amounting to more than 80000 passage annually (merchant, military ships and ferries (28000 per year)). 2) Due to the importance of the fishing industry there are numerous interactions between the fishing fleets and cetaceans. 3) The increasing activity of whale watching is lacking regulations up until today, causing interactions in the habitat and behaviour of the existing cetacean species. 4) Due to the joined political interests in the area, the management of the problems posed in this study is quite difficult. This poster analyses the results obtained during the period March-October, 1999. A total of 132 hours of observation from ferries were accounted for in the study area with a sum of 185 sightings where their behaviour with respect to the vessel was annotated. The Whale watching foundation, firmm [®] España, which is active in the Strait, performed a total of 268 tours with a duration of 2:05 hours of average, and accounted for a sum of 501 sightings where the behaviour of the animals toward the boats and fishing vessels was also observed. More than once, more than 30 fishing vessels within a nautical mile around the groups of animals. Among others nine killer whales were identified, and their interactions with the tuna boats were observed. This poster concludes with a series of principal recommendations for a possible management plan of the zone.
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