

**SD24 SIGHTINGS OF ROUGH-TOOTHED DOLPHINS  
(*STENO BREDANENSIS*) OFF ANGOLA AND GABON,  
SOUTH-EAST ATLANTIC OCEAN**

**Weir, C.R.**

*Ketos Ecology, 4 Compton Road, West Charleton, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 2BP, UK*

Rough-toothed dolphins are distributed in tropical and warm temperate seas around the world. Although documented off North-west Africa and in the western Gulf of Guinea, there are no published records of rough-toothed dolphins along the remainder of the African west coast. This paper presents four sightings of rough-toothed dolphins off Angola and Gabon, extending the confirmed distribution range of this species within the South-east Atlantic Ocean. Marine mammal observations were carried out off Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo and Gabon during 2004 and 2005, in association with geophysical seismic surveys. During watches a single observer scanned 360° around the vessel with the naked eye and 10x42 binoculars. Effort logs (comprising position, water depth, vessel activity and environmental data including Beaufort sea state) were completed for every watch. Standardised positional, environmental and behavioural data were noted for cetacean sightings. A total of 3678.5 hr survey effort was collected over 14 survey months between March 2004 and September 2005. Survey effort covered water depths of 10–4000 m, and was concentrated off Angola. A total of four sightings of rough-toothed dolphins was recorded, three in Angolan waters and a single sighting off Gabon. Records occurred in March, September and November. The water depth of sightings ranged from 402 to 2139 m (mean = 1141), indicating that rough-toothed dolphins occupy shelf edge habitat in this region. Group size ranged from 11 to 20 animals. Three of the sightings occurred in association with other cetacean species, twice with short-finned pilot whales and once with an unidentified small ‘blackfish’ species. Bottlenose dolphins were also present during one mixed-species feeding aggregation with rough-toothed dolphins and pilot whales. These sightings provide novel information on the distribution and biology of rough-toothed dolphins off Angola and Gabon in the South-east Atlantic Ocean.