



**Memorandum of Understanding Between
The Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) and the
Secretariat *Pro Tempore* of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and
Conservation of Sea Turtles**

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into by and between the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) (hereinafter "Secretariat") and the Secretariat *Pro Tempore* of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (hereinafter IAC), jointly called "the Parties";

ACKNOWLEDGING, that the objective of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) is to promote the protection, conservation and recovery of sea turtle populations and the habitats on which they depend, based on the best available scientific evidence, taking into account the environmental, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the IAC Parties;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the mission of the Convention on Wetlands includes the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local, regional and national actions and international cooperation as a contribution to achieving sustainable development throughout the world;

UNDERSTANDING that, based on the best available scientific data, species of sea turtles in the Americas are threatened or endangered and that some of these species could face an imminent risk of extinction;

AWARE that feeding, and nesting habitats of some endangered sea turtles species in the Americas coincide with areas that are designated as Wetlands of International Importance or are associated with sites that could be designated as Wetlands of International Importance, where they can be subjected to anthropogenic impacts, pollution and fishing activities that could cause an impact in habitat conservation or negatively affect sea turtles from performing their unique role in marine ecosystems;

NOTING that within the general obligations set out by the Convention on Wetlands, Contracting Parties, meeting as the Conference of Parties (COP), identify priorities for action through a Strategic Plan, and that Contracting Parties to the IAC meeting as the Conference of Parties (COP), identify priorities for action through a bi-annual work plan. Accordingly, implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding should be through

joint actions within the framework of the Convention on Wetlands Strategic Plan and the IAC Work Plan and as detailed in II. Areas of Cooperation;

RECALLING that Article XII of the IAC text states that the IAC Parties shall promote bilateral and multilateral cooperative activities to further the objective of this Convention and when they deem it appropriate, shall seek the support of relevant international organizations;

RECALLING that IAC and the Convention on Wetlands have jointly prepared the publication "Wetlands of International Importance and the Conservation of Sea Turtles", that reflects the technical collaboration between both;

NOTING the Convention on Wetland's Resolution XIII.24 "the enhanced conservation of coastal marine turtle habitats and the designation of key area as Ramsar Sites", that encourages Contracting Parties to strengthen the conservation and management of marine turtle habitats and requests the Secretariat to work with the Secretariat of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea turtles to enhance marine turtle conservation in Ramsar Sites and where possible and subject to the availability of resources, to work with Ramsar Contracting Parties to include marine turtle conservation actions in their Ramsar Site management plans;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that all IAC Contracting Parties are also Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands;

Considering the desire of both Parties to formalize their relationship for working together to conserve and wisely use wetlands containing habitats vital for sea turtles and to maintain the biodiversity and the health of wetlands, agree to strengthen their co-operation in the spirit of an efficient and effective partnership, and have reached the following understanding:

I. Objective

The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter "Memorandum") is to join efforts in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands and the IAC to reinforce existing mechanisms for enhancing synergies to build capacities of the Parties to both Conventions in order to achieve common goals through the application of the Convention on Wetlands Strategic Plan and the IAC work plan.

II. Areas of Cooperation

The activities to be undertaken under this Memorandum include:

(a) Regularly exchange information on relevant activities and materials to enable the listing of Wetlands of International Importance that are important for sea turtles.

(b) Exchange of information and co-operation to facilitate to Contracting Parties the necessary studies and analyses to identify measures for the mitigation of threats, factors that contribute to their persistence and needs, including best practices and guidelines for the management and sustainable use of wetlands and sea turtles;

(c) Inform Parties about sites shared by more than one Party or transboundary sites and habitats as they may be critical for the protection of watersheds and catchments and/or home ranges of indigenous sea turtles;

(d) Coordination and collaboration in the development of joint programs, capacity building and projects in effort to strengthen the conservation of selected sites recognized by both Conventions, and work together to mobilize resources for implementing such programs and projects;

(e) Informing, and inviting each other's participation to schedule meetings, studies, field visits to sites, design, organization, and carrying out of training programs, public awareness, education, and information dissemination activities, and other activities to promote Contracting Parties awareness of the application of the two Conventions.

Both Secretariats will review annually the progress in the implementation of this Memorandum.

The result of the joint collaborative activities carried out within the framework of this Memorandum may be published and available for the use by the Parties.

III. Duration, amendments, and termination

This Memorandum covers a period of 5 years, beginning with the date of signature.

The Memorandum may be reviewed at the request of either signatory and may be terminated by either Party subject to three months' notice in writing. Any amendment must be agreed in writing by both parties.

IV. Legal Status

Nothing in this Memorandum shall constitute a legal or financial obligation of either party. Any financial or legal commitments that arise from measures taken to implement this Memorandum will be made on a case-by-case basis and agreed to by both parties.

V. Settlement of Disputes

Both parties express their willingness to resolve, by mutual agreement and negotiation any disputes that may be generated in the interpretation and/or application of this MOU.

VI. Effective Date

This Memorandum is to take effect upon signature of both Parties.

In witness the parties sign, in duplicate copies in Spanish and English of equal content and value, on the 6 November, 2020.



Martha Rojas Urrego
Secretary General
Convention on Wetlands



Verónica Cáceres Chamorro
Secretary *Pro Tempore* of the Inter-
American Convention for the Protection
and Conservation of Sea Turtles

