



IAC BULLETIN

PUBLISHED BY THE PRO TEMPORE SECRETARIAT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES (IAC)

Welcome to the First IAC Quarterly Bulletin



We are pleased to present the first IAC Bulletin, providing you with up to date information on IAC achievements, upcoming activities and sea turtle current events. The IAC is an intergovernmental treaty which strengthens the legal framework of countries in the Americas to take actions in benefit of these endangered species. Six of the seven species of sea turtles are found in the Continent. The IAC entered into

force in May of 2001 and currently has eleven Contracting Parties. The Convention promotes the protection, conservation and recovery of sea turtle populations and their habitats, based on the best available data and taking into consideration the environmental, socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of the Parties. We hope you that you find this brief bulletin useful and encourage you to contact us with your feedback, questions or ideas.

contact@iacseaturtle.org

The IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was created to support, organize and participate in meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its Subsidiary

Bodies; coordinate and facilitate communication among Parties, Non-Parties and Observers; provide documents and reports to the Parties and general public in both English and Spanish; and administrate the IAC Special Fund. We are located in San José, Costa Rica.



IN BRIEF:

- **Resolutions approved at the COPs can now be found on our website** (www.iacseaturtle.org/iacseaturtle/English/conf1.asp)
- **Interested in becoming more active in the IAC?** Check out the new information available to IAC Observers (www.iacseaturtle.org/iacseaturtle/English/acerca_obs.asp)
- **A new version of the ever popular brochure IAC: An Introduction is now available** (www.iacseaturtle.org/iacseaturtle/English/pub.asp)
- **We would like to extend a warm welcome to the new IAC Consultative Committee members Marydele Donnelly (Caribbean Conservation Corporation) and Rafael Ruiz Moreno (Mexico).**

27th International Sea Turtle Symposium

The 27th Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation was held from February 24 - 28, 2007 in South Carolina, USA. This is a unique annual global event where almost one thousand *sea turtles* gather to share knowledge, present the latest

information on sea turtle issues and simply reunite with old friends and make new ones. The theme of this year's event was "Migration", an important and repeating theme of the IAC since sea turtles are a shared resource among nations and only through infor-

mation exchange and international cooperation will these species survive. For more information on the Symposium and loads of useful tools, such as satellite tracking maps and sea turtle directories, visit www.seaturtle.org.

COMING SOON:

IAC Interactive Map will soon be available on our website, providing updated information on sea turtle nesting sites and migratory routes throughout the Americas.





WIDECAST
“working to secure a future where humans and sea turtles can live together in balance,”

RETOMALA & WIDECAST Meetings

RETOMALA, the Latin American Sea Turtle Specialist Meeting, was created under the framework of the International Sea Turtle Symposium and provides an opportunity for discussion, development and strengthening of regional networks, at a technical as well as political level. The 14th Latin America meeting was held just prior to the 27th International Sea Turtle Symposium. The IAC took advantage of this gath-

ering of sea turtle specialists to inform them on the IAC achievements as well as present the upcoming Interactive Map of nesting sites. For additional information on RETOMALA: <http://members.seaturtle.org/retomala/>

WIDECAST, the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network, is an international network comprised of country coordina-

tors (many are IAC Committee members), and Partner Organizations in more than 30 Caribbean nations and territories. Their short term goals are to provide governments with regional sea turtle data, specific recommendations for their management and recovery and assist them in implementing their national and international obligations (such as the IAC or SPAW). For more information visit www.widecast.org.



Mexico Passes Responsible Fishing Regulation

Sea turtles are often referred to as keystone species, because they are indicators of the overall health of the ecosystem in which they live. Their decline may indicate a demise in the health of the entire marine ecosystem. This is bad news not only for marine species, but also for those whose livelihoods depend on marine resources. Because incidental capture in

fisheries has been identified as a major threat to sea turtles, fishermen, governments and conservationists alike are working together to find solutions. One example is the new shark and ray fishing regulation recently passed in Mexico thanks to the hard work of many governmental institutions and NGOs. This regulation executes several mechanisms to de-

crease incidental capture of turtles, such as gear replacement (use of circle hooks), changes in fishing techniques (fishing below 40 meters), improved handling of turtles caught (use of turtle de-hooking devices and resuscitation) and attending workshops on conservation of endangered species. For more check out the website: www.semarnat.gob.mx

Species Update . . .

Satellite tracking reveals unexpected foraging grounds for leatherbacks. For many years the Caribbean Conservation Corporation (CCC) has been tracking adult leatherbacks from nesting beaches in Costa Rica and Panama. Latest tracking research indicates that these animals may be foraging in the Gulf of Mexico, thus representing a significant foraging ground for leatherbacks from the Carib-

bean coast of Central America. This may be due to the recent population explosion or general availability of their main prey, jellyfish, in the area. However, this also means that by-catch in the Gulf of Mexico could be contributing to the slight decline in number of nests observed on the Caribbean Costa Rica. For more information on their latest research, or to follow tagged turtles, check out www.cccturtle.org.

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