



IAC BULLETIN

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

First Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties

The First Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties was held in Lima, Peru from October 10th-12th, 2007. All 12 Contracting Parties, including the newly ratified Uruguay, were present at the meeting. During IAC COP3, the need for holding the First Extraordinary Meeting of the Convention was agreed upon in order to discuss two very important issues: the financial aspects of the Convention and the conformation of a permanent Secretariat. After two days of deliberations, the Heads of Delegation approved the two proposed Resolutions - **Resolution CIT-COPE1-2007-R1 Establishment and Operation of a Permanent Secretariat** and **Resolution CIT-COPE1-2007-R2 Guidelines for Fi-**

nancing the IAC Operation.

Resolution CIT-COPE1-2007-R1 approved the "Terms of Reference for the Secretariat" and invited Costa Rica to present an official proposal within the next 60 days that contains the technical, financial and legal obligations it shall assume to establish itself as the host country of the Permanent Secretariat.

Resolution CIT-COPE1-2007-R2 urges the Contracting Parties to make financial contributions for the Convention's operation according to the established fee table. It also encourages the Secretariat to actively seek external funds for special projects and invites non-Party States and NGOs, among others, to contribute to the IAC Special Fund.



Results of the 7th Chilean Environmental Symposium

Chile held its 7th Environmental Symposium from September 27-29, 2007. Its focus was on the current state of sea turtle research and conservation efforts along the southeast Pacific coastline. Symposium participants declared the urgency for which all organizations (governmental and non-governmental) and com-

munities should assume the responsibility of preserving and protecting the different species of sea turtles in the region, coordinate their efforts in order to have the best available information for making decisions, and improve rehabilitation centers to increase the recovery of these species as well as the training of future profession-

als and public awareness. The importance of ratifying and implementing the IAC by those countries in the region was also mentioned, thus providing a common ground for the scientific community and governmental agencies to begin work and to regulate the main activities threatening this species' survival.

IN BRIEF:

- **Call for 2008 Conservation Leadership Team Awards (Deadline: November 23, 2007).** The Conservation Leadership Programme (formerly BP Conservation Programme) offers awards that contribute to long-term conservation in priority areas by engaging potential leaders in biodiversity conservation. For details and eligibility please visit their website <http://www.conservationleadershipprogramme.org>. 2007 winners include 3 Karumbé (Uruguay) projects working towards marine turtle conservation.
- **SWOT Report, Vol. III to be focused on hawksbill nesting beaches of the world.** The new State of the World's Sea Turtles report will be released at the 28th International Sea Turtle Symposium in January of 2008. For more information on past SWOT reports or how to join the SWOT team check out: <http://www.seaturtlestatus.org>
- The IAC has received funding from the Humane Society International and is awaiting more responses for its proposal on "Training in Sea Turtle Conservation and Management Techniques within the Scope of the IAC". The goal of this initiative is to establish a program for information exchange and training in sea turtle conservation and management techniques in the Western Hemisphere by holding workshops geared towards nesting beach protection, monitoring and data management. If you would like further information on this proposal please contact the IAC Secretariat (contact@iacseaturtle.org).

NOW AVAILABLE:

The new brochure "**Hawksbill Decline in the Wider Caribbean and Western Atlantic**" is now available for download from the IAC website: <http://www.iacseaturtle.org>. We hope this brochure provides you with up to date information regarding the critical state of this species and actions being taken to help reverse it.





WHMSI seeks to contribute significantly to the conservation of the migratory species of the Western Hemisphere by strengthening communication and cooperation among nations, international conventions and civil society, and by expanding constituencies and political support. All entities supporting the vision, mission and objectives of this initiative are invited to be partners in its implementation. The Third WHMSI Conference will be held in mid-2008. For more information: (http://www.fws.gov/international/whmsi/whmsi_Eng.htm)

The Eco-Index: Better Conservation Through Communication

The Eco-Index (<http://www.eco-index.org>), created by Rainforest Alliance, offers an online database of over 1000 conservation projects in the Americas, including projects carried out by non-governmental, governmental and research institutions. Project profiles outline contact information, summaries, objectives, sponsors, accomplishments, lessons learned, methodologies and much more. The goal of the initiative is to allow researchers in the Americas to learn from oth-

ers working on similar projects and avoid duplicating efforts and missteps. The Eco-Index offers a variety of other resources to conservation researchers, such as a bimonthly bulletin on environmental issues and success stories in the Americas and a monthly e-newsletter that lists new projects. It is also home to the WHMSI Pathway, a clearinghouse of information about migratory species conservation in the Americas (see side bar) and the Eco-Index of Sustainable Tourism, a searchable

database of sustainable tourism operations in Latin America and the Caribbean. You might want to check out some of the latest additions to the website, for example WIDECAST's "Building Capacity to Care for Sick and Injured Turtles: Standard Guidelines and Criteria for the Wider Caribbean Region". Project leaders interested in submitting their projects should fill out the questionnaire on the Eco-Index website or e-mail eco-index@ra.org.

A Guide to Bycatch Reduction in Tropical Shrimp-Trawl Fisheries

In tropical shrimp-trawl fisheries bycatch often consists of juvenile food-fish species, making it a threat to food security and sustainable fisheries production. FAO is addressing this problem through a five-year global project to reduce environmental impacts from tropical shrimp trawling. A "Guide to Bycatch Reduction in Tropical Shrimp-Trawl Fisheries" is

now available on the IAC or FAO website (<http://www.fao.org>) It is designed for fishermen, net makers, fishing technologists and others interested in a practical guide to the design, use and operation of effective bycatch reduction devices. Fishery managers, policy-makers and legislators will find this guide useful to help develop specifications governing the de-

sign and application of these devices in a shrimp trawl fishery. FAO strongly urges all fishermen to use appropriate bycatch reduction measures to help maintain the productivity of the fishery and the long term prosperity of the fishing industry. Fishermen can help to protect the marine environment and assist global food security both now and in the future.

Species Update . . .

The leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) nesting season in Playa Grande, Costa Rica is off to a good (and early) start, with 7 turtles arriving in September. More good news is that these turtles may nest more peacefully given that Costa Rica has taken measures to ensure the ecological integrity of this critically important nesting site. Las Baulas National Marine Park, which includes Playa Grande, Playa Langosta and Playa Ventanas, was created by law in 1995 with the purpose of protecting one of the last populations of leatherback turtles in the Eastern Pa-

cific. Since then, this park has been threatened by uncontrolled development although the law stipulates that properties within the boundary of the national park must be acquired. Over the past 8 months, more than 7,500 Costa Ricans and 1,500 foreigners have petitioned the President of Costa Rica to acquire these lands. On September 26, 2007 the president signed 32 decrees ordering the expropriation of properties within the Park. For more details: <http://www.tortugamarina.org>, www.redtortugasmarinascr.org, or www.leatherback.org

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