

**INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION
AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES (IAC)**

NEWS BULLETIN



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INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES (IAC)

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Preparatory Informational Meeting for IAC COP 12

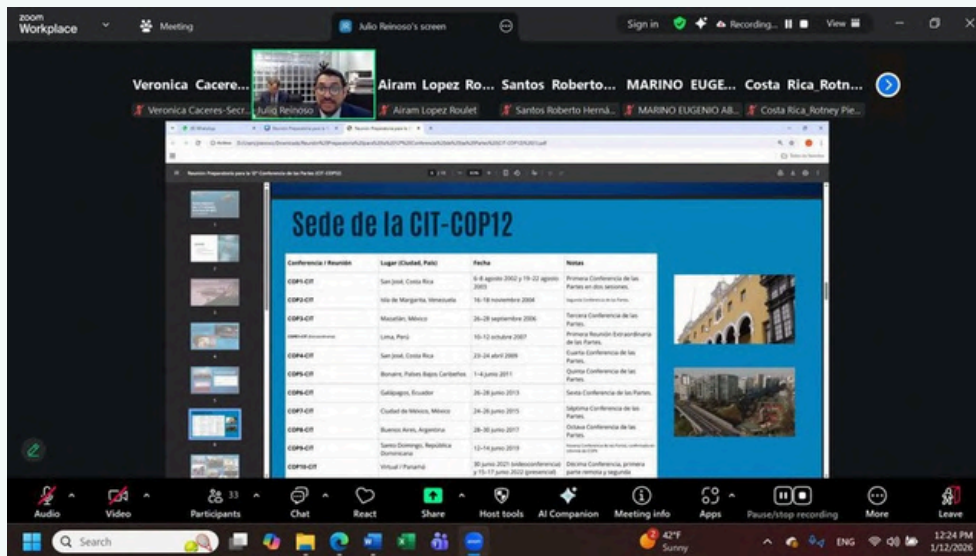
February 12, 2026

IAC Focal Points and advisors (approximately 30 participants) from the following countries attended: Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru, Panama, Guatemala, the United States, Venezuela, and Ecuador.

The welcoming remarks were delivered by Minister Julio Armando Reinoso, Chair of IAC COP 12 and Director of Maritime Affairs of the Directorate General of Sovereignty, Borders and Antarctic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru.

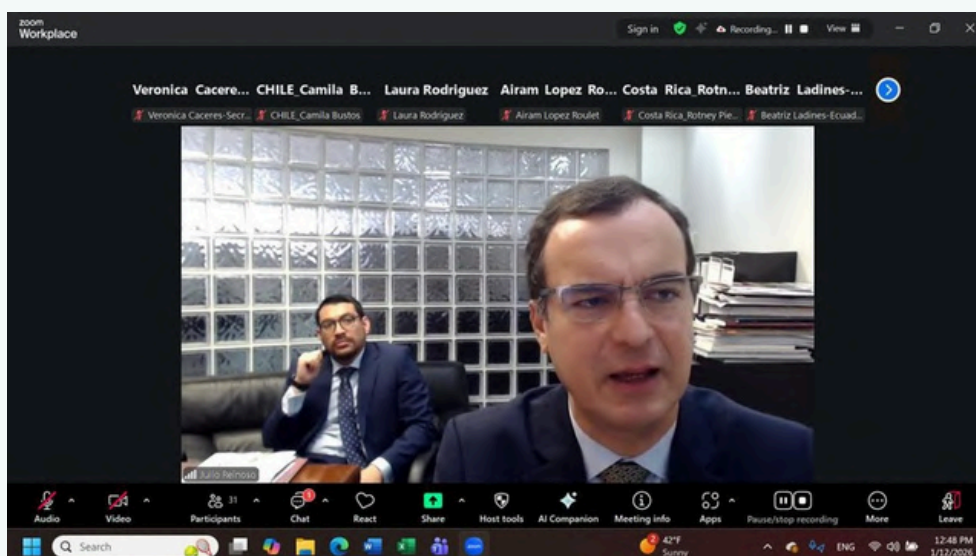
The purpose of the meeting was to provide IAC Parties with further information on the key issues to be addressed at the 12th Conference of the Parties, to be held in June 2026.





The topics discussed included:

- The status of IAC finances, presented by Ms. Allison Alexander, Vice President of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation;
- The report of the IAC Legal Working Group on mechanisms to strengthen IAC finances, presented by the Working Group Coordinator MSc. Rotney Piedra, IAC Focal Point for Costa Rica (National System of Conservation Areas – Ministry of Environment and Energy);
- Logistical planning for COP 12 in Peru (2026), presented by Mr. Alberto Andrés Soto of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru.



COP12 Organization Team - MRE Peru Minister Julio A. Reinoso President COP 12, and Lic. Alberto Soto

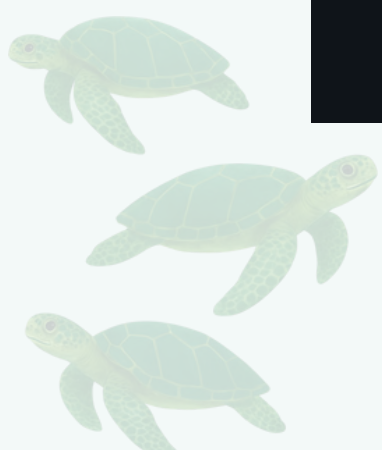




The IAC Green Turtle Working Group Meeting

January 22, 2026

The IAC Green Turtle Working Group, composed of members of the IAC Scientific and Consultative Committee from Ecuador (Coordinator), Peru, Chile, Costa Rica, Brazil, Caribbean Netherlands, the United States, Argentina, and Uruguay, met to initiate the preparation of a technical document on the status of green turtle subpopulations in IAC countries. The group also discussed national differences among subpopulations in relation to the global conservation status of the green turtle recently classified by the IUCN as “Least Concern.”

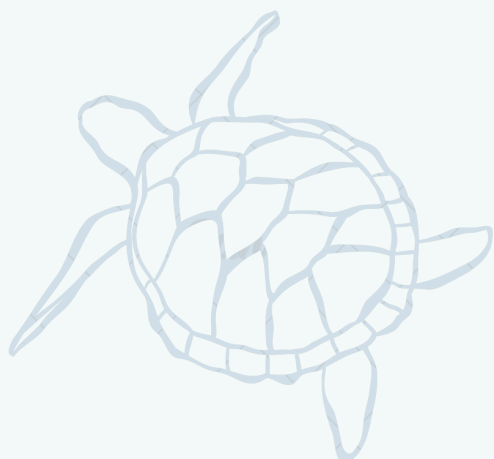
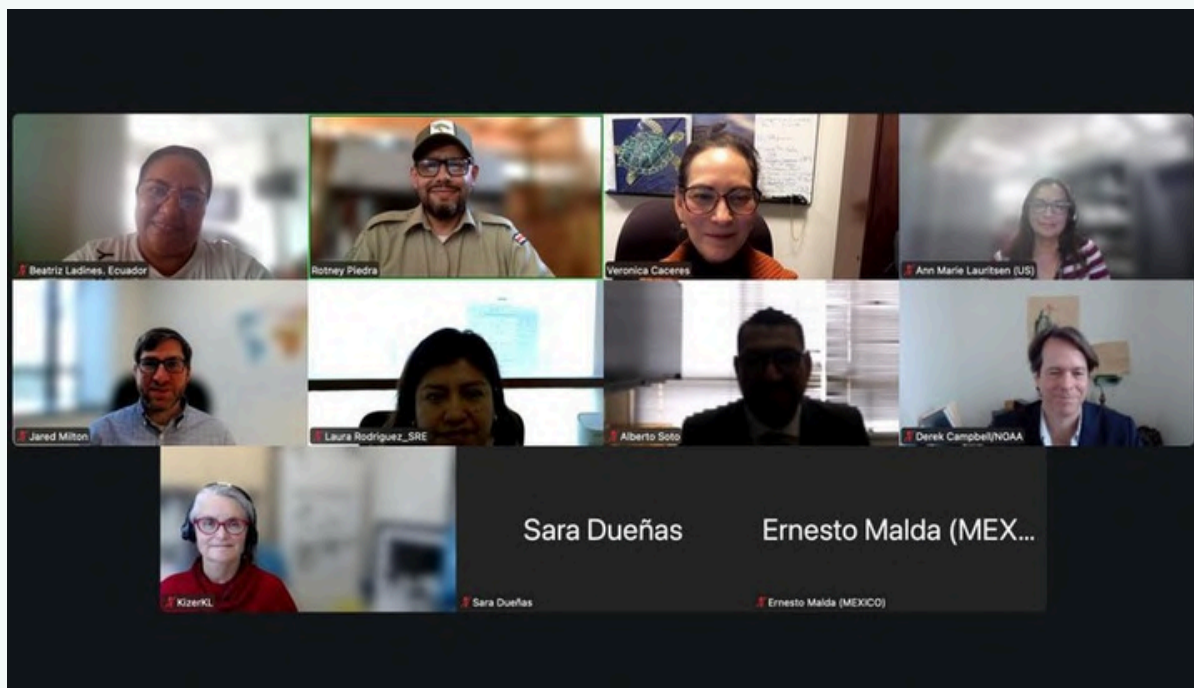




IAC Legal Working Group Meeting

January 23, 2026

The IAC Legal Working Group, coordinated by the IAC Focal Point for Costa Rica, MSc. Rotney Piedra, and composed of Focal Points from Mexico, the United States, Brazil, Ecuador, Chile, and Peru, met to prepare the proposal for the IAC Financial Resolution and recommendations for COP 12 regarding the implementation of a strategy to strengthen the IAC’s financial sustainability.





IAC-IATTC: Fisheries Working Group Participates in the Sea Turtles Best Practices Workshop

January, 2026

Members of the IAC Fisheries Working Group from Argentina and Mexico participated in a workshop to review the Sea Turtle Best Practices Manual of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC).

This experience provided valuable technical elements to enrich the Sea Turtle Best Practices Manual currently being developed by the IAC.



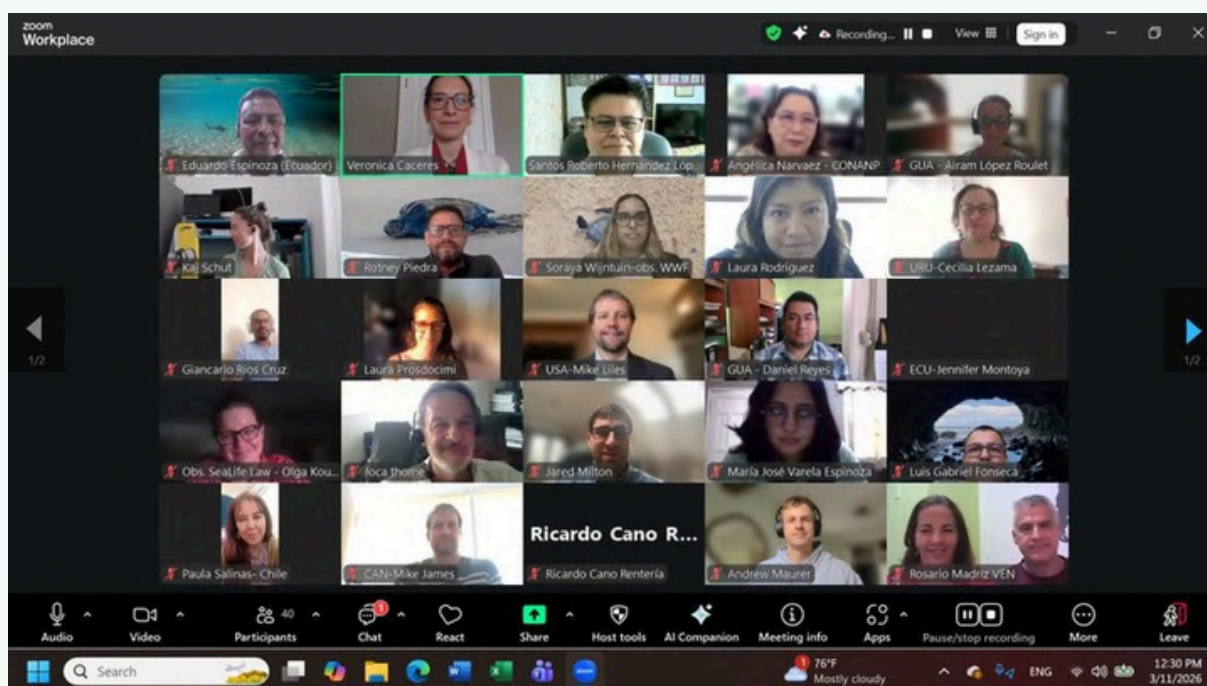


19th Meeting of the IAC Expert Consultative Committee

March 10 - 11, 2026

The 19th Meeting of the IAC Expert Consultative Committee was held via videoconference and chaired by Biologist Santos Hernández (SEMARNAT–Mexico). The meeting was attended by 50 participants representing all IAC member countries, NGO sector representatives, the scientific sector, and accredited observers.

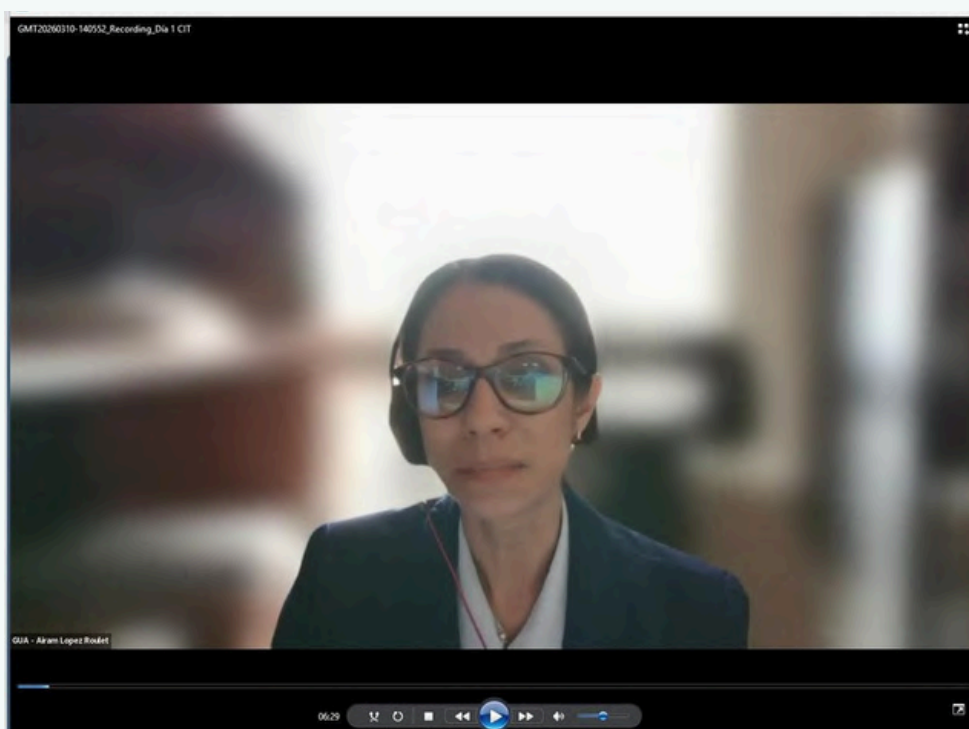
The meeting achieved important milestones in preparing draft resolutions and technical documents for COP 12, including the Financial Resolution proposal and a technical document on the role of the IAC in safeguarding sea turtles, as well as the adoption of new activities for the Consultative Committee Work Plan for the next biennium.





Biol. Santos Roberto Hernández President of IAC CCE19

Reports were presented by the Eastern Pacific Leatherback, Atlantic Leatherback, and Legal Working Groups. Costa Rica presented its first progress report on the implementation of the management plan for its Ostional exception, based on indicators developed by the IAC.



Airam López Roulet-CONAP-Guatemala Vicepresident of IAC CCE19



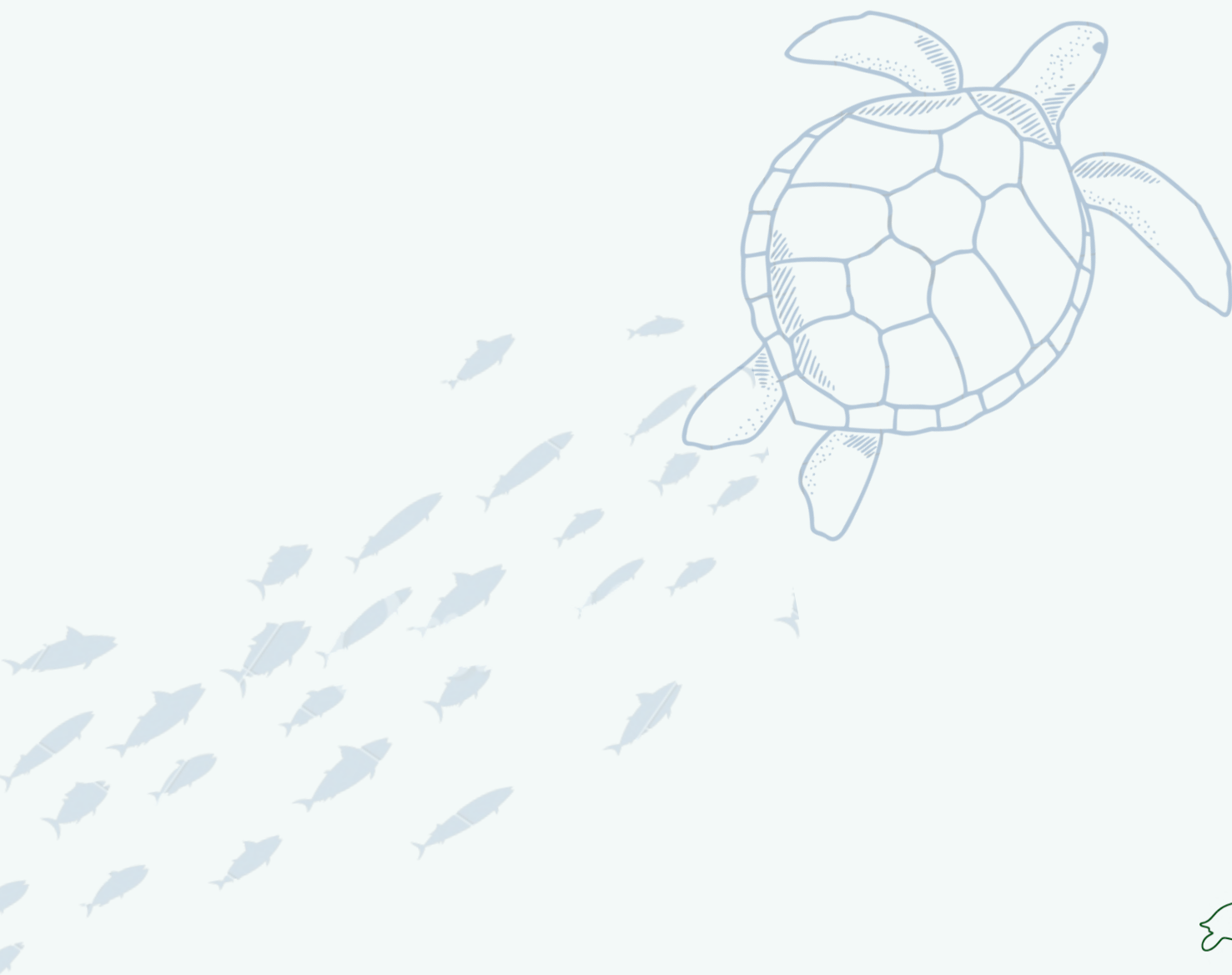


5th Coordination Meeting for IAC COP 12

April 08, 2026

The IAC Secretary, Ms. Verónica Cáceres, held the fifth coordination meeting with the organizing team at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru, including Minister Julio Armando Reinoso, Ms. Sara Dueñas, and Mr. Alberto Andrés Soto.

The meeting addressed COP 12 delegation registration, the development of a communication strategy for invitations through diplomatic missions in Peru, and the review of logistical arrangements.





In 2026, Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) will be celebrating its 35th anniversary.

Written by: Kaj Tamar Schut, director de Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire

Back in 1991, when STCB was founded, one of the first goals of the organization was to lobby for protection of sea turtles in all life stages. And with success: sea turtles are protected on land and in the waters of Bonaire. Over the past 35 years, STCB has focused on changing mindsets and inspiring people to care for our nature, including sea turtles and the habitats they depend on. The organisation has been conducting standardized research since the early 2000s: every year, staff and volunteers conduct capture-mark-recapture research on Bonaire's west coast and in Lac Bay to get a better insight into Bonaire's foraging green and hawksbill populations, and nest monitoring patrols on Bonaire's beaches to learn more about the nesting population, hatching success and to take management actions to protect Bonaire's sea turtles. STCB has also been involved in regional work for many years. The organization has been a member of IAC's Consultative Committee since 2010, and also is an active partner in WIDECAST, collaborating with partners throughout the region.





STCB participation in IAC has provided an important contribution to the Caribbean Netherlands IAC Annual Report, with data from the Bonaire 2 index nesting sites Klein Bonaire (loggerhead and hawksbill) and Playa Chikitu (green turtles). On average, STCB confirms 100 nests per season, with hawksbill activities being the most abundant. 2025 was a record year: STCB confirmed 149 nests! . The information provided to IAC from these index beaches is then used to inform IAC 16 members countries on sea turtle population trends included in the technical document IAC index nesting beach data analysis (2009-2023) CIT-CC20-2023-Tec.22 in this link». [http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/tecnicos/CIT CC20 2023 Tec 22 Index Beaches 2009 2023 E NG update may 16 2024 FINAL WEB.pdf](http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/tecnicos/CIT_CC20_2023_Tec_22_Index_Beaches_2009_2023_ENG_update_may_16_2024_FINAL_WEB.pdf)





Venezuela strengthens cross-sectoral cooperation for the protection of sea turtles

April 27, 2026

CARACAS: In a joint effort to ensure the conservation of marine biodiversity, technical teams from the Ministry of People's Power for Ecosocialism (MINEC) and the Ministry of People's Power for Fisheries and Aquaculture (MINPESCA) held a strategic meeting on April 27. The meeting, held via videoconference, was advised by the Secretariat of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) with a view to preparing the 2026 IAC Annual Report.

Technical and Multidisciplinary Cooperation:

The meeting was coordinated by Venezuela's Technical Focal Point to the IAC and was attended by key partners in the country's environmental and fisheries management. Representing MINEC were officials from the Office of Integration and International Affairs, led by Carolina Moreno, Director of International Affairs, and Maxwell Mendoza; along with Rosario Madriz, Director of Endangered Species Conservation, and Liliana Suárez, National Coordinator of the Sea Turtle Conservation Program



Representing MINPESCA were fisheries engineer Jeirys Galicia, Director General of Industrial Fisheries; Giovanna Giandolfi, Director of Coastal Artisanal Fisheries; Elena Quintero, Director of Multipurpose Artisanal Fisheries; and Alexandra Natera, Coordinator of the Directorate of Artisanal Marine Fisheries, who provided the technical perspective of the Industrial and Artisanal Fisheries directorates. The team was also guided by Dr. Heriberto Santana, advisor to the IAC Scientific Committee.

Fisheries Monitoring and Impact Mitigation:

The main objective was to review Section VI of the IAC Annual Report, which focuses on the interaction between industrial longline, purse seine, and gillnet fisheries and sea turtles. During the exercise, mitigation measures implemented by Venezuela to reduce bycatch were documented, such as:

Regulation of artisanal trawl fishing: Implementation of spatio-temporal measures restricting activity in areas near nesting beaches.

Current ban: Reaffirmation of the ban on industrial shrimp trawl fishing.

- Best practices: Promotion of proper handling and release of accidentally caught specimens.

Challenges and Commitments:

One of the key points of the discussion was the analysis of operational challenges. The inoperability of the on-board observer program in the Atlantic longline fleet since 2018 was discussed.



Noting that the Venezuelan government has maintained the flow of data through fishing logs and sworn statements from artisanal fishing captains, who even provide video evidence of turtle releases.

As a result of the meeting, the Venezuelan delegation proposed a technical improvement for the future version of the IAC Annual Report: to include the category of “unidentified species” in bycatch reports to increase the accuracy of data collected in the field.

Toward Comprehensive Management:

This meeting, attended by a comprehensive and multidisciplinary team representing Venezuela’s environmental and fisheries agencies, is an example of the collaboration and dialogue promoted within the framework of the IAC, and is the most effective way to prepare a National Annual Report, which demonstrates a national commitment to the implementation of the Convention, which requires coordinated actions for the protection of sea turtles and their habitats within a multisectoral framework with active participation from the environmental and fisheries sectors.





ICMBio's National Research and Conservation Centers are facilitating discussions at COP 15 events - CMS

Written by: Sandra Tavares - Centro Tamar/ICMBio

Migratory species, such as birds, fish, and sea turtles, require integrated conservation efforts across national borders, as they do not respect national boundaries. With this goal in mind, ICMBio actively participated in COP 15 of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), held in Campo Grande, Brazil, through its research centers, conservation units, and the institute's presidency.

During the event, Brazilian researchers presented studies and proposals focused on the protection of these species, with a highlight being the presentation by the TAMAR/ICMBio Center on the conservation of sea turtles and the creation of so-called Blue Corridors. These corridors aim to identify and protect essential areas along the turtles' migratory routes, based on scientific data such as satellite telemetry.





Brazil presented information on the five species of sea turtles that inhabit its coastline, as well as data on nesting areas, feeding habits, migration, interactions with fisheries, and strandings. Other ICMBio centers also contributed information on topics related to seabirds, small-scale fisheries, and the conservation of various migratory species.



COP 15 Decision 25.3.1, linked to the Blue Corridors for Turtles initiative, strengthens international cooperation, transboundary management, and the creation of marine protected areas, aligning with global goals such as 30x30 (protecting 30% of the planet by 2030) and the BBNJ agreement, aimed at conserving biodiversity in areas of the ocean beyond national jurisdictions.



Fernando de Noronha Island, in Brazil, is experiencing an atypical breeding season in 2026

Written by: Sandra Tavares - Centro Tamar/ICMBio

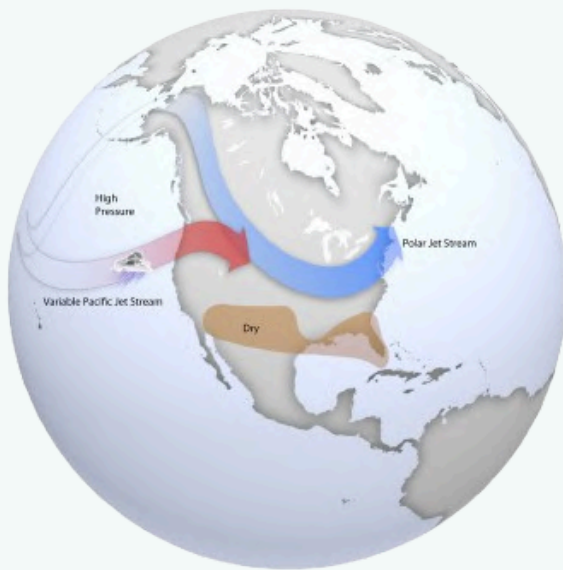
Volunteers assisted with daytime and nighttime reproductive monitoring of sea turtles on the island of Fernando de Noronha, in northeastern Brazil. In stark contrast to the successful 2025 season, which set a historic record of 805 nests, the 2026 breeding season shows unusually low numbers of green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) nestings, with only 43 nests recorded so far.

According to the *Centro TAMAR/ICMBio*, this decline is not limited to Fernando de Noronha Island but extends to several islands in the South Atlantic, such as Atol das Rocas and Trindade Island, as well as international islands like Saint Helena and Ascension. Among the hypotheses are a possible decline in the productivity of feeding areas, high reproductive effort in the previous season, and the effects of climate change, which may be delaying reproduction.

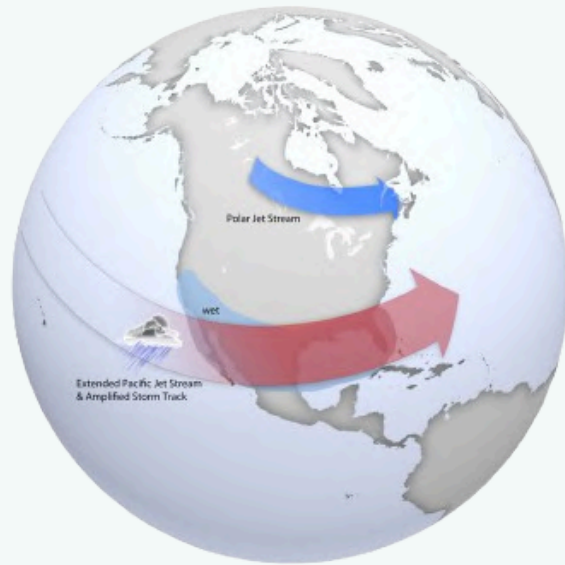




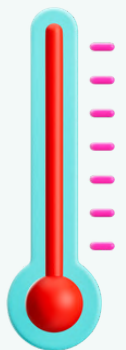
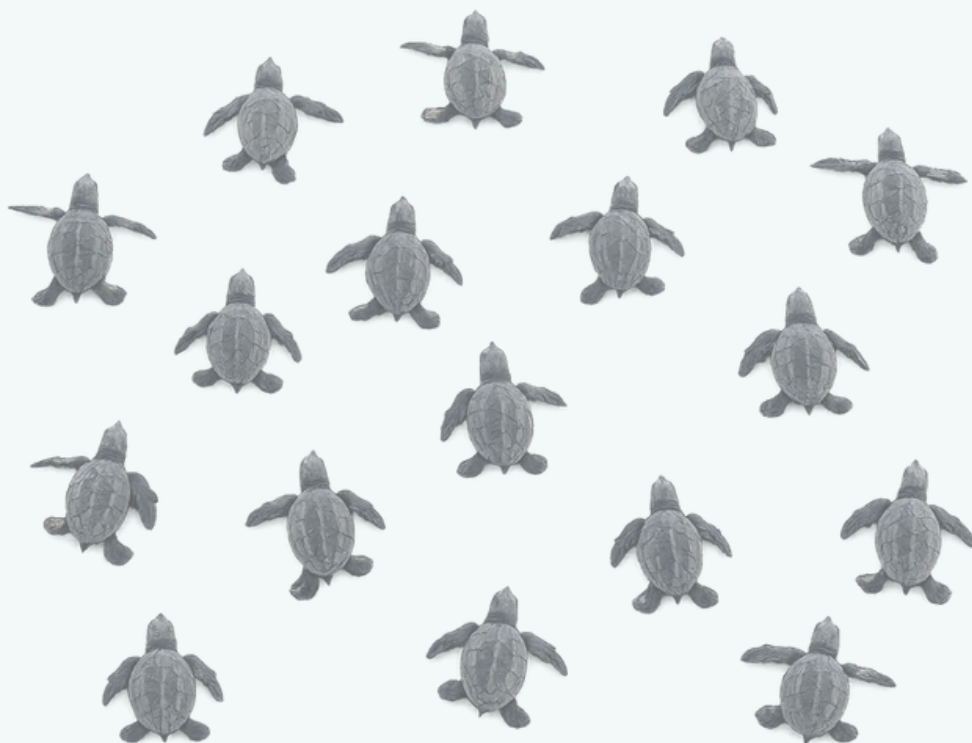
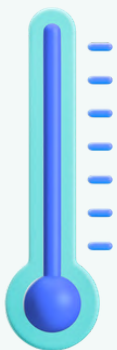
La Niña



El Niño



Temperature fluctuations in the sand directly influence the sex determination of hatchlings - a process known as the pivotal temperature - which can affect population balance. Climate phenomena such as El Niño and La Niña, which have disrupted rainfall patterns, may also be a factor. The *Centro TAMAR/ICMBio* has ruled out natural threats such as predation and continues to monitor and investigate the causes of this unusual season.





You can access the Convention's bulletins through this link:

<http://www.CITseaturtle.org/boletin.htm>

Next IAC Meeting:

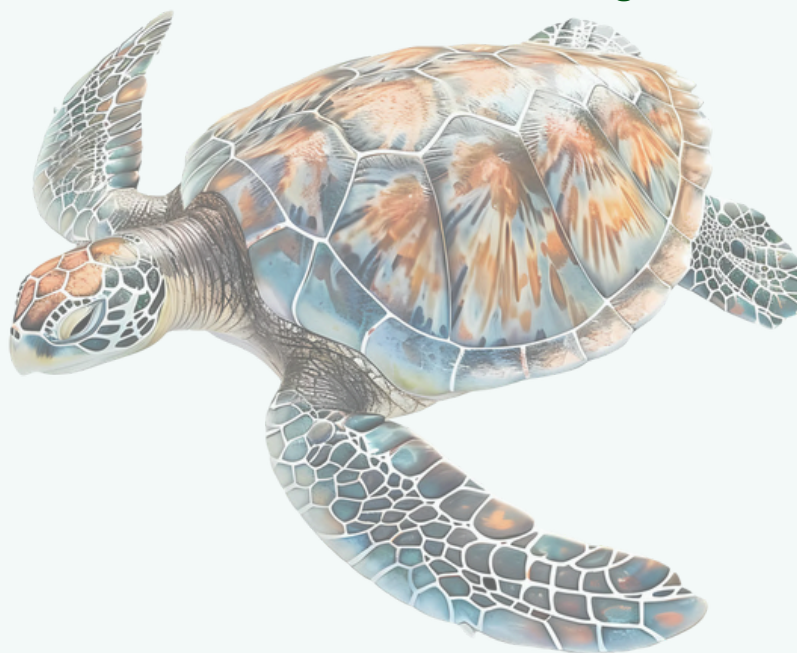
12th Conference of the Parties – Lima, Peru June 30 - July 3, 2026

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