

Report of the 9th Meeting of the IAC Scientific Committee

1. Welcome and opening remarks

The 9th Meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) began with welcoming remarks by Ms. Silvia Révora, Sub-secretary of Environmental Policy and Planning of the Secretary of Environment and Sustainable Development (SAyDS) and Ms. Fabiana Lugoso, General Director of Environmental Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Relations. The IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretary (SPT), Ms. Verónica Cáceres Chamorro, acknowledged the following for their attendance and support: SAyDS, Argentina's Regional Program for Sea Turtle Research and Conservation (PRICTMA) and the Buenos Aires Zoological Garden. The SC Chair, Mr. Jorge Zuzunaga and Vice-Chair, Mr. René Márquez, thanked everyone for their efforts in organizing this important meeting, which allows us to follow-up on the tasks of the SC and fulfill the objectives of the IAC. Mr. Pablo Mesa, Director of Conservation Biodiversity and Mr. Guillermo Lingua, Director of the Aquatic Resources Working Group of SAyDS, were also in attendance.

2. Presentation of participants and election of meeting rapporteur

The meeting was attended by 26 participants, including delegates and advisers from 15 IAC Party countries (Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, the Netherlands, Panamá, Peru, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela) as well as an observer representing the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) and the following IAC accredited NGOs: Karumbé, PRICTMA and WWF International (Annex I).

Victoria González Carman (Argentina) was elected as the rapporteur and was assisted by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

3. Presentation Sea Turtles of Argentina

Mr. Diego Albareda, delegate of Argentina, summarized the current situation of sea turtles in Argentina, describing the biology of the species encountered and their challenges as well as presenting what is being done by different governmental agencies and NGOs for their conservation. He was followed by Ms. María Laura Tombesi (SAyDS), IAC technical focal point, who described Argentina's maritime jurisdiction, the fishing zones for the different fleets operating in Argentina's ocean and their national laws. She mentioned that Argentina has still not developed a national action plan for sea turtles; however, specific actions that favor conservation are being taken jointly within relevant regions.

4. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with one change made regarding the name of the presenter of Uruguay's presentation titled "Impact of tuna fisheries on sea turtles of the Atlantic and Mediterranean". Mr. Andrés Domingo was replaced by Mr. Philip Miller (Annex II).

5. Report from the Chair of the Scientific Committee on its 8th meeting

Mr. Jorge Zuzunaga, SC Chair, gave a brief synopsis of the objectives of the IAC and the functions carried out by the SC in regard to these objectives. Similarly, he informed the Committee as to the main topics that have called to the attention of the SC Chairs, some of which were a result of the agreements made during the SC8 and others a result of the work done by the different Working Groups during the inter-sessional period.

The presentation given by the Chair included the following topics:

a. Document on habitat use in the framework of the MOU IAC-IATTC

The document CIT-CC8-2011-Doc.2 "Conservation status and habitat use of sea turtles in the Eastern Pacific Ocean" was approved at the SC8, requesting that the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat translate it and submit it to IAC Focal points with the recommendation that the document be presented to the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Committee (IATTC) within the frame of the MoU between the two organizations. This task has been completed and the document was presented before the IATTC in May of this year.

b. IAC Nesting Beach Manual

The final revision of the document CIT-CC8-2011-Doc.3 "Nesting Beach Manual", was done during the SC8, and it was agreed that it be sent for design and layout and be circulated by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat. It was also recommended that this manual, as the first of a series of technical documents produced the IAC SC, be placed on the IAC website in English and Spanish. Therefore, the recommendations of the CC8 regarding this topic have been achieved and the document will be made available to those interested on the IAC website.

c. Fisheries Working Group

i. Forms for collecting data on sea turtle interactions with gillnets.

The SC8 approved document CIT-CC8-2011-Doc.4 "Data collection forms to record information on interactions between gillnets and sea turtles" and its four tables (annexes), recommending that it be sent to the Focal Points for their comments and suggesting that it be implemented through pilot projects. The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat sent the forms back to the Fisheries WG so that they may review the comments made by the Focal Points and finish preparing them during the CC9. It is hoped that the Parties can begin implementing their use by the beginning of next year (2013).

ii. List of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) used by IAC Party Countries.

Taking into consideration the provisions established in order to fulfill the objectives of the IAC, including the development, improvement and use of appropriate gear, techniques or devices to reduce sea turtle by-catch and, specifically, the use of turtle excluder devices (TEDs), the SC included the elaboration of a list of TEDs currently being used by Parties in its Agenda, with the possibility of making any pertinent recommendations on the matter. During the SC8, the Fisheries WG prepared a preliminary list of the types of TEDs being used by Parties, however, the information was incomplete and thus a complete list of types of TEDs could not be provided. They recommended that the Parties be asked to make available any publications or research that contain information on the efficiency of TEDs in their ability to exclude sea turtles while retaining target species. This task will be completed during this meeting using the information that member countries have provided to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

d. IAC Annual Report Working Group

i. Analysis of the information provided on important nesting sites.

The SC8 agreed to perform an analysis of the information on nesting abundance reported in the table Important Nesting Sites (Annex 2 of the 2011 Annual Report) in order to evaluate the usefulness of this data to make recommendations to the Parties on the status of sea turtle populations in the area of the Convention. The analysis was done by the US delegate Jeffrey Seminoff during the inter-sessional period and the Parties were asked to submit any complementary information to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat. A presentation of the results of this analysis has been included in the SC9 agenda.

ii. Database

The SC8 agreed to create a Database to be used by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat for the purpose of storing the information contained in the IAC annual reports. Brazil's delegate Alex Santos was in charge of its creation during the inter-sessional period. A presentation on the database has been included in the agenda of this meeting.

e. Exceptions Working Group

The SC8 agreed to approve the recommendations on the analysis of the exceptions presented by Guatemala and Panamá in their 2011 annual reports, asking the SC Chair to submit them to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat so they may be sent to the interested Parties. The two Reports, prepared by the SC Chair, which included these recommendations, were then sent to the Focal Points of each country. Afterwards, the CCE5 reviewed the exceptions presented by Panamá and Guatemala (2011), taking into consideration the additional document facilitated by Guatemala on the topic. The CCE submitted their comments and draft recommendations to the SC in document CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.03, stating that the CCE will prepare their final recommendations for the COP6 based on the final report on exceptions prepared by the CC9.

The CCE5 also agreed to provide Panama and Guatemala with technical assistance in order to discuss the preliminary recommendations on exceptions. In order to do this, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat will invite both Guatemala and Panamá to meet with the delegates of Brazil, Mexico and Ecuador, who offered their technical assistance, during the SC9.

f. Pacific Hawksbill Working Group

The SC8 meeting agreed to review, during the inter-sessional period, the viability of preparing a multinational proposal for implementing a regional program for Pacific Hawksbills based on a document presented by the WG during that same meeting. The recommendation was to hold a workshop with experts and groups working with hawksbills in the Pacific in order to prepare this multinational proposal. In order to do this, the WG together with the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, needs to write a project profile for the workshop including fund raising options.

g. Directory of Experts

The SC8 meeting agreed to send the revised IAC Directory of Experts to the CCE members in order to include any further suggestions. The *Pro Tempore*

included their suggestions and finished the document, which is now available on the IAC website.¹

The SC8 meeting approved the 2012 – 2013 Work Plan, which has been completed for 2012. The plan will be updated during this meeting to include the 2013-2014 period.

6. Report on 2012 activities of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat

Ms. Veronica Cáceres (SPT) summarized the work done by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat over the past year, mentioning the following activities:

International Cooperation and MoU: A new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Ramsar Convention in June of 2012, thus offering those Ramsar sites associated with sea turtles greater protection due to the presence of these species. She invited everyone to come up with ideas on how to generate activities that bring this important MoU to life. Activities were carried out under the framework of the MoU with IATTC by presenting an IAC technical document at the meeting of the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee. This was an important collaborative effort since it was the first time the SC has presented at a conference of one of the tuna RMFOs. She congratulated the SC for making this participation possible, since now we are not only participating as observers but have valuable information to contribute. An MoU is currently being negotiated with ICCAT and, in order to make progress on the matter, we participated in the SCRS (Standing Committee on Research and Statistics) meeting of the ICCAT where it was agreed that the SCRS would make a specific recommendation to the ICCAT Parties to move forward with the preparation of this MoU. Next year ICCAT will begin a study on the interactions of sea turtles with fisheries and they have requested the help of the IAC in gathering information.

CPPS has proposed that working together to standardize data collection methods for nesting beaches by using the IAC manual and implementing it in the CPPS countries. They would also like to adopt a format similar to ours for reporting information on turtles and possibly use the forms for gillnets currently being developed by the IAC. We participated in the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP). Our interest stems from the fact that the birds and turtles face similar threats at sea and it is to our benefit to learn from them how they have worked together with different RMFOs so we can do something similar with turtles. The IAC also forms part of the

¹ <http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/National-directory-of-experts-related-to-STs-in-CPs.pdf>

Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
9th Meeting of the Scientific Committee
Buenos Aires, Argentina
October 24-26, 2012

CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.07

Eastern Pacific Leatherback working group that is in charge of preparing a regional management plan.

The IAC has begun collaborating with WWF on climate change in order to improve implementation of the IAC climate change resolution. A survey was circulated among the two committees and, based on its results, an online seminar will be held with experts from WWF. This was a recommendation of the CCE in light of the fact that Party countries were implementing very few of the recommended activities for the climate change resolution.

IAC Membership: Significant progress has been made with the Dominican Republic, which requested the official text of the Convention so that it can be reviewed by Congress, therefore, advancing in its ratification process. Another official visit was made to Colombia with the assistance of WWF-Colombia, to reinstate talks on its ratification. Their process is much longer since the topic of ratifying the IAC must be consulted first with local indigenous communities where sea turtles are found.

Management of financial resources: A proposal was sent to the marine turtle conservation fund (MTCF) requesting help to fund the participation of Party countries in the COP6.

Outreach and communication: Following up on the recommendation of the COP5, world sea turtle day was celebrated for the first time on June 16 presenting the topic “Sea Turtles Unite Us”. The Venezuelan Embassy sponsored an event for the occasion. Support from CONAP, TAMAR, WIDECAST, HSI, and USFWS also supported the event. We hope that next year we can do a similar event in some of the Party countries that can summon their community to celebrate this special day.

Working groups: Inter-sessional working groups of the SC, CCE and IAC legal WG have continued in preparation of each meeting organized.

At the end of the presentation, the SPT made the following clarifications in response to the question from the delegate of Ecuador regarding the distribution of the IAC Nesting Beach Manual. The SPT expressed that this manual will be placed on the website so that everyone can have easy access to it. Furthermore, Ecuador asked for an update on the legal situation of the Convention. The SPT mentioned that she has done outreach with various different international and intergovernmental organizations since last year, looking for a permanent location for the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and is working with the member countries of the IAC legal WG (Brazil, Peru, México and USA) in order to come up with a solution regarding its legal personality. The task of the group is to work on a document that provides alternatives to the Party countries in order to resolve this issue and present it at the

COP6. It must present alternatives for the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat to become a permanent one with a hosting agreement. Regarding the search for a location for the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, the CMS was contacted receiving a positive response, however, it would require that the IAC contribute in an amount indicative of belonging to a body of the UN, which is extremely high. CPPS was also contacted and the idea was presented to its Party countries, however, we haven't had any answer yet.

The CC Chair added that Peru has a proposal circulating within the legal WG to present an additional protocol to the IAC to try and search for a solution to this issue and suggested that the delegates of the WG further discuss this topic with the Focal Points so that there are concrete proposals presented at the next COP.

7. Report of the 5th Meeting of the Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE5)

Ms. Belinda Dick presented a summary of the agreements and results of the CCE5, which can be found in the report on the 5th Meeting², highlighting the following:

- a) The CCE reviewed the recommendations made by the SC8 and the additional information provided by Guatemala in regards to the exceptions presented by Panama and Guatemala and submitted a document with their preliminary recommendations to the SC to be reviewed during this meeting.
- b) A document on the Eastern Pacific leatherback was prepared including recommendations to the Party countries on how to improve the implementation of the IAC leatherback resolution. The document "Eastern Pacific Leatherback Turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*): a Summary of Current Conservation Status, Challenges and Opportunities"³ was reviewed by the SC.
- c) The document guidelines for preparing sea turtle management plans was presented and circulated among the members of the SC for their comments, which will later be sent to the COP6 for approval.

In regard to the second topic, the delegate of the USA mentioned that it is important to raise awareness on the risk of extinction faced by Pacific hawksbill turtles, similar to what was done with the leatherbacks. The SPT added that the CCE5 took Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) hawksbill turtles into consideration and are aware of the need to pay particular attention to this species. However, they also emphasized

² http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/comite-consultivo/5reunion/CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc_8_REPORT_ENG_FINAL.pdf

³ http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/tecnicos/CIT-CCE5-2012-Tec.3_EPO_Leatherbacks_ENG_aug_15_Final.pdf

the need to take up again the activities carried out during the 2009 Caribbean hawksbill workshop that was held with the collaboration of CITES and SPAW and recommended updating the status of hawksbill turtles in the Caribbean and, whenever possible, include information on the EPO hawksbill. In response to the request of the CCE, the IAC will continue the work jointly with CITES on this matter. The SPT proposed including information on the EPO as a part of this update and thus maintain the topic as a part of the agenda, creating an integrated document. CITES has expressed their interest in providing funds to carry this out. We are currently negotiating these funds in order to hire a consultant that will prepare this integrated document.

8. Presentation of the document “Conservation Status and Habitat Use of Sea Turtles in the Eastern Pacific Ocean”

Mr. Jeffrey Seminoff shared the draft document, which was prepared last year at the SC9, with experts from IATTC and later presented it at the IATTC advisory committee meeting in May of 2012. The complete document can be found online⁴.

The objective of presenting the document was to inform IATTC delegates on the current state of sea turtles and provide recommendations and ways for the IAC and IATTC to work together. He highlighted the importance of associating Pacific hawksbills with the Ramsar Convention since they feed in mangroves or estuaries after nesting and reducing the impact of fisheries close to nesting beaches. It was important to note that the MoU with IATTC presents us with the opportunity to reduce the pressure that fisheries have on these species especially between the months of January and February, which are peak nesting months in Costa Rica. During the presentation, the Mexican delegation expressed concern for reducing the impact of high seas fisheries on leatherback turtles as well as reducing the impact of artisanal fleets that are catching turtles close to nesting beaches. Overall the environment was very positive and everyone seemed to support the document.

The delegates suggested preparing a new draft (2012 version) that would include genetic information. Furthermore, they mentioned that focal points should converse with the IATTC representative in their country by setting up meetings between the IAC and IATTC focal points before each Convention meets in order to evaluate possible commitments between the two Conventions. They also pointed out that many of the IAC countries form part of IATTC and can implement the different recommendations unilaterally, thus working at both levels. Since the two Conventions are trying to collaborate, we can provide them with information so they are able to make better informed decisions by taking into consideration the information provided.

⁴ ([http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/tecnicos/CIT-CC8-2011-Tec.1_Habitat_Use_ENG_15_mayo\(1\).pdf](http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/tecnicos/CIT-CC8-2011-Tec.1_Habitat_Use_ENG_15_mayo(1).pdf))

9. Presentation of ACA P Work Strategies with RMFOs

In his presentation, Mr. Marco Favero highlighted points of common interest between ACAP and the IAC and mentioned their experience working with RMFOs. ACAP has 13 member countries and other countries like the USA and Canada that participate although they are not accredited to the agreement. They have an advisory committee that works on both scientific and political topics. Similar to turtles, these birds have problems both on land and at sea and are long lived species that do not recognize borders. Regarding incidental mortality, they are concerned not only for the EEZ but also international waters and, therefore, the objective of ACAP is to work together with priority RMFOs operating in the Eastern and Western Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans. One person within ACAP is assigned to work with each one of the RMFOs. Mr. Favero works with IATTC. Working with RMFOs means investing a great deal of human and financial resources. In the case of ACAP, they invest at least 30,000 \$US per year to work with the 4 different RMFOs, which makes up a large portion of its annual budget (700,000 \$US per year). Another challenge is in communication, it is imperative to have good rapport with government representatives of the fisheries sector. Alliances with NGOs like Birdlife International as well as with other agreements and conventions like IAC are also important to assist in the work with RMFOs; therefore, we are interested in signing an MoU with the IAC, allowing us to develop bycatch mitigation measures that are beneficial to both birds and turtles. Even though working with RMFOs presents certain challenges, we have been able achieve some conservation measures and the data collection by IATTC is very valuable.

Mr. Favero clarified the process for presenting informative documents within the RMFOs, pointing out that every year ACAP's Advisory Committee meets with the bycatch WG in order to be up to date on the information that they will take to the RMFOs the following year. For presenting at an RMFO they have to first decide what they will present and how, it depends on the strategy taken, whether ACAP will do it by itself or together with an NGO, or through a Party country of ACAP that is also party to the RMFO. For example, in IATTC they have presented documents through countries of the European Union that are both members to the RMFO and ACAP.

10. Presentation on the analysis of the technical information presented in the annexed tables on important nesting sites in the Annual Reports of the Parties

Mr. Jeff Seminoff presented the results from the analysis carried out on the information in table 2 of the annex of the annual reports in order to determine its usefulness to the SC. Information from 77 reports was analyzed summarizing the information on nesting abundance, identifying the beaches that recorded changes in

abundance, reporting on the strengths and weaknesses of the data reported and suggesting alternatives for what they are actually reporting. Collecting this information is important in order to identify priority turtle populations for further study and thus merit fundraising efforts. The results obtained show that not all Parties report nesting abundance, however, of those that do report it the majority used data referring to the number of nests as their variable. Furthermore, there were some problems with the data, for example, some Parties presented data in their own tables, which made it difficult to analyze or they did not specify which species the data pertains to. In addition, the information is not standardized which presents a challenge. Nevertheless, according to the data reported one can deduce that there was little change in abundance over the study period.

Based on the results of the analysis he proposed the following ways to improve reporting: a) adjust ranges so they have greater resolution and can better capture changes in abundance and b) use index sites. It is also important to know the sources of this information. He also proposed building a synergy with SWOT to get the information since its director, Bryan Wallace, has volunteered to work with the IAC.

They discussed the importance of using ranges that will provide the SC with the information they need to perform a scientific analysis and to know what the monitoring effort and methodology used were. The problem of standardization needs to be addressed as well through the use of existing manuals for this purpose (for example, from IAC and SWOT) by Party countries and try to create consensus within the IAC countries on collecting information and reporting it in a standardized way.

The U.S. delegate clarified that the information available right now in the IAC annual reports does not allow us to comply with our objectives. The way conservation initiatives are currently working is through the use of index sites (Ex. IUCN), which would reduce the amount of work it would take to fill out the reports. He proposed preparing an efficient strategy for the IAC on this topic in order to initiate discussion at this meeting, which would be continued during the inter-sessional period so that a proposal can be presented at the SC10.

The delegates expressed their challenges in reporting information, highlighting the importance of establishing clear objectives for why this information is needed and aim for a more specific objective that allows us to evaluate the status of each population. The work may be time consuming and each country may progress at a different speed, but we must progress towards a better estimation of the population sizes. Some recommended that it is better to report the number of nests per species instead of ranges in order to provide better monitoring of population trends. Other comments referred to complementing the information with a definition of index

beach for countries to use and include a measure of effort, indicating the monitoring duration during the reproductive season.

Perhaps with this one can obtain the information needed to observe changes in population trends. They mentioned that the use of ranges vary between species and location. For example, in the case of the Pacific leatherback a range sensible to changes in this species would be in the hundreds, but for this same species in the Caribbean it would be in the thousands. We must think of a scale sensitive to each species and flexible enough for the countries to be able to respond. By trying to be generalists we are reducing things too much. We are going to lose the sensitivity for measuring trends. Working with index beaches is important and their criteria must be defined, whether it be genetic, populations, etc.

11. Proposal for a Database to store information in the IAC Annual Reports

Ms. Belinda Dick, *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, and Mr. Alex Santos, advisor to Brazil presented the draft version of the database that was created during the inter-sessional period. The objective of this database is for the use of the IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretariat to store information from the annual reports and provide follow-up on compliance with resolutions. They clarify that it will not be used for population or biological data. In order for the database to be more useful they decided not to include any of the descriptive information contained in the report and use only the information that can be tabulated as well as improve certain sections of the report, for example, in terms of information provided on threats. Parties are not reporting the information in a standardized way so it makes it difficult to enter into the database and this can be improved by standardizing the answers. These challenges will be discussed during the meeting.

The plenary session discussed the importance of beginning with a simple database since we have only begun to receive answers to our initial questions and over time we can make this a more complex database. This database will be useful since by the end of this meeting we could have an idea of the compliance with resolutions, something that before we did not have. Furthermore, it will serve as an important administrative tool for the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

12. Report of the Hawksbill Working Group

The report was presented by Mr. Eduardo Espinoza delegate of Ecuador, reiterating the interest of the WG formed by Ecuador, USA, México and Panamá in presenting a draft multinational proposal for a regional Eastern Pacific hawksbill program (EPO). The WG was unable to provide much follow-up on the preparation of a project proposal for organizing a workshop of experts on EPO hawksbill turtles and fundraising opportunities to hold it. This will be done together with the *Pro*

Tempore Secretariat. During the V sea turtle symposium in Panamá, they met with other colleagues that have been working with this species and saw an opportunity for collaboration between IAC and ICAPO in order to prepare the workshop proposal.

The SPT explained that the possibility of holding this expert workshop was explored, but ICAPO did not meet in 2012. The CITES Secretariat contacted the IAC this year in order to continue working together and collaborating with funds destined for the Caribbean hawksbill, taking up once again the recommendation of the CCE in its 5th meeting to update the assessment of the conservation status of this species from 2009 to date. Taking advantage of this opportunity, she proposed to CITES that data on Eastern Pacific hawksbills also be included in this update. Essentially their response was positive, but the priority remains to be Caribbean turtles. The SPT mentioned that she is currently negotiating with the CITES Secretariat to agree to the funds needed for this update, and also mentioned the need to hire a consultant to compile and present the updated document within the timeframe established. The SPT emphasized that if the IAC agrees to include Pacific hawksbills in the document the WG will need to commit to assisting the consultant so that information on both oceans is represented in the final document.

The delegates recommended focusing this updated document on matters relating to population trends, climate change, habitat loss due to coastal development and trade as well as current information on the EPO hawksbill. It was suggested that the consultant be responsible for looking for and processing the information available in the ICAPO database and that the IAC works together with ICAPO on their objective of preparing a work plan for the EPO hawksbill. ICAPO will be asked to become an official IAC observer, which will allow them to participate in meetings and advise this Committee.

13. Presentation on the impact of tuna fisheries on sea turtles of the Atlantic and Mediterranean

Mr. Philip Miller gave a presentation in which he explained that ICCAT has a Committee on Research and Statistics and a Sub-committee on Ecosystems whose activities include monitoring interactions of non-target species like turtles. One of the recommendations made by this sub-committee was to assess sea turtle bycatch in all ICCAT fisheries starting in 2013. Data was collected in 2012, which identified gaps and tried to determine the best methods to evaluate their impacts. As a result of this work, three ICCAT documents were prepared including all of the information compiled and the analysis done. The IAC could begin collaborating with the ICCAT in the same way it did with IATTC. Starting in 2013, an assessment on sea turtle bycatch will be done in order to determine which species are the most endangered. The idea is to also carry them out for and compare them with non ICCAT fisheries.

This is where the IAC may be able to offer information perhaps through a member of the SC who can contact and work with ICCAT. It would be a good idea to find a way for the delegates of each country to communicate with ICCAT delegates in their respective countries in order to collaborate on this topic.

The SPT mentioned that she had spoken with the coordinator of the ICCAT bycatch working group during the Statistics and Ecosystem Committee meeting and it was agreed that ICCAT would inform the IAC as to what information is needed to carry out the work mentioned by Mr. Miller in order for the SC to determine whether the information that ICCAT needs is available or not and how they can provide them with it. In order to proceed, ICCAT must send a request explaining its objectives for this information.

14. Review of other recommendations of the Consultative Committee CCE5 to the SC

- a) Guidelines for Preparing Sea Turtle Action Plans for IAC Party Countries: The SPT explained that the document CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.05 Guidelines for Preparing Sea Turtle Action Plans for IAC Party Countries was circulated among SC members requesting their comments. Only two members responded so the SPT once again reminded the Committee to give her any comments they might have since this document will be submitted to the COP6 for approval and implementation by the Parties.
- b) Artisanal gillnet fisheries and their interactions with sea turtles: It was pointed out that the CCE reviewed this topic mentioning the importance of using the forms created by the SC to collect information on gillnet fisheries. In order to provide further information on this topic the SPT invited Ms. Yonnat Swimmer (NOAA) to prepare a presentation on her experience with experimental fishing gear to mitigate sea turtle bycatch in gillnets and provide us with an outlook into the future on what we can begin to do under the framework of the IAC once we have begun collecting data on these interactions.

15. Presentation on sea turtle bycatch mitigation experiments in gillnet fisheries.

Ms. Yonnat Swimmer (NOAA) presented two types of experiments being done to reduce sea turtle bycatch in gillnets:

- 1) Illuminating nets as a visual alert: this experiment was done in Baja, Peru and Brazil. Preliminary results showed that there was a 24% reduction in bycatch in Baja and a 44% reduction in Peru, therefore, this technique shows promise. These experiments showed that there was almost a 60% decline in bycatch due to the illumination of nets. In each of these cases the capture of the target

species stayed the same. In the case of Brazil, no decrease in turtle bycatch was seen and capture of the target species was reduced. She mentioned that they will continue experimenting in Brazil in order to see if the results improve and they are able to decrease sea turtle bycatch without affecting the target species.

- 2) Experiments with *C. caretta* in pound-nets: this experiment consisted of creating a flap in the net that allows turtles to escape. It is known as a PED (pound-net excluder device).

Ms. Swimmer further explained that three different colors of lights were tested, including UV. A recent work was published indicating that turtles can see in UV, but fish cannot. Preliminary data of this study are divided into capture of target species and discarded species. The idea is to not reduce capture of the target species while reducing capture of discarded species. Furthermore, she mentioned that they work with light sticks (they are reused) and the battery can be changed every two weeks, but it is very expensive. There is a new technology that uses LED lights that can be more efficient, less expensive and do not generate as much waste.

16. Formation of Working Groups

The following working groups were formed:

Working Group: Review 2012 Annual Reports.

Participants: Jeff Seminoff (USA, Coordinator), Eduardo Espinoza (Ecuador), Neca Marcovaldi and Alex Santos (Brazil), Rafael Amaro (Honduras), Robin Coleman (Belize), Belinda Dick (*Pro Tempore* Secretariat). Observers: Laura Prosdocimi and Victoria Massola (PRICTMA) and Diego Amorcho (WWF)

Working Group: Review Exceptions.

Participants: Didiher Chacon (Costa Rica, Coordinator), Begoña Mora (Venezuela), Julia Horrocks (Caribbean Netherlands), René Márquez (México), Marino Abrego (Panamá), José Martínez (Guatemala).

Working Group: Fisheries.

Participants: Francisco Ponce (Chile, Coordinator), Miguel Donoso (Chile), Jorge Zuzunaga (Peru), María Laura Tombesi, Débora Winter and Diego Albareda (Argentina), Phillip Miller (Uruguay), Yonat Swimmer (USA). Observers: Alejandro Fallabrino (Karumbe) and Victoria González (PRICTMA).

17. Presentation of the Results of the Exceptions Working Group

Mr. Didiher Chacón presented the results of the WG and their recommendations, which they grouped into 3 categories: a) the documentation needed to present the

exception, b) hatchery administration, and c) the socio-economic effects of the exceptions. The WG found that there was insufficient data to conclude whether or not the use of the turtle eggs is sustainable, however, for the information that was analyzed, they were able to make recommendations for each one of the categories.

The WG reviewed inter-sessionally the working documents with recommendations on the exceptions presented by Guatemala and Panamá that were prepared by the SC during their 8th meeting (CIT-CC8-2011-Doc.9) and by the CCE in their 5th meeting (CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.3), as well as the 2011 and 2012 annual reports, containing the presentation of the exceptions for Panama and Guatemala. Once the previously mentioned documents were analyzed and thoroughly discussed, draft recommendations and final comments were prepared and presented in plenary for approval by the SC. The SC thought the document to be reasonable, adding that it is important that countries make all feasible efforts to monitor population trends in order to maintain healthy populations and also asked for more time to review the document after the meeting in order to edit it. The document Comments from the SC on the Exceptions Presented by Guatemala and Panama and Recommendations for All Parties When Presenting Exceptions (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.2) in Annex III, is the final product that was approved by the Committee. The SC requested that the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, in accordance with the procedure established in Resolution CIT-COP5-2011-R2, send the document CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.2 with the final considerations of the SC on the exceptions reported by Panama and Guatemala to the CCE for their consideration.

18. Presentation of the Results of the Fisheries Working Group

Mr. Francisco Ponce presented the results of the WG:

List of TEDs: Using the information collected during the inter-sessional period, the document (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.03) Turtle Excluder Devices (Annex IV) was prepared. This document details the types of TEDs being used by the Party countries of the Convention in order to reduce sea turtle bycatch in shrimp trawling operations. They requested that those countries that have yet to present their information on TEDs do so in a timely and efficient manner in order to complete the document. It was agreed that the list would be updated using the information sent by the Parties in their annual reports. The WG recommended that this information be sent to the CCE for their feedback so it can be presented at the next COP.

Gillnet data collection forms: The 4 forms and their instructions created at the SC8 (CIT-CC8-2011-Doc.4) were reviewed and modified. In order to assist IAC Party countries with their implementation, the WG proposed guidelines for testing their usefulness and effectiveness (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.04) Annex V. It was recommended that the Parties support to the greatest extent possible the

development of this activity. The delegates of Chile and Peru expressed their interest in testing the forms in 2013 and will present their results at the next SC meeting.

Onboard management of sea turtles caught: The WG agreed to work inter-sessionally to compile current information on onboard management practices for handling sea turtles incidentally caught in coastal fisheries. The delegate of Argentina will gather the information with help from other members of the group with the objective of preparing a comprehensive document on the topic and to standardize management practices for handling sea turtles onboard in coastal fisheries. This activity was included in the 2013-2014 Work Plan.

19. Presentation of the 2012 Annual Reports Working Group

Mr. Jeff Seminoff presented the results of the WG.

Analysis of Annual Reports: When reviewing the tables in the annex of the report, the WG noticed that some of the information is not being reported by the Party countries and/or is not relevant to a scientific analysis. Therefore, they agreed to make the following changes in order to facilitate filling out these tables:

- Table 2: Geographic location of the nesting beaches changed and now only one geographic reference point is required.
- Table 2: Season changed to monitoring period/sampling frequency in order to permit future analysis.
- Table 2: The column with protection measures was eliminated since this is not strictly scientific information.
- Table 3: Rows for filing in the name of the area and its coordinates (referring to only one geographical reference point), the size of the area in Km² and life stages (juvenile, sub-adult and adult) were added in order to make the table more comparable to the nesting table.

After identifying the modifications to table 2 of the annex to the IAC annual report needed for the SC to perform an analysis of population trends, which they need to do in order to report on the population status of the six species of sea turtles, they decided to form an inter-sessional working group made up of delegates from: Belize, Honduras, Ecuador, Argentina, Brazil and the USA (coordinator). The group will review the use of index beaches in the reports and define their criteria, the use of real numbers instead of ranges to report clutches and females, and identify the minimum data needed to analyze trends in order to report back at the SC10. The timeline for this inter-sessional work can be found in the working group report that is included in this report (Annex VI). It was also agreed that the WG would present

a model or example analysis of two index beaches (that have all of the information necessary to be analyzed or have the minimum data required) to be presented at the next COP6. This is a practical way of demonstrating the type of analysis that can be done with the IAC data once we have agreed on the best way to report this information as well as the usefulness of this data analysis to show population trends for the 6 species we work with.

The SC asked the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat to incorporate the changes made to both tables (table 2 and 3) in the annexes so that the Parties can include these changes in their next annual report (2013) and to send a formal note to the Focal Points that have still not submitted their 2012 annual reports (Belize and Costa Rica) requesting that they submit them as soon as possible.

Database for storing information in IAC Annual Reports: The changes made in order to tabulate certain information so that it can be included in the database and the necessary modifications to the format of the annual report that will facilitate collecting this information were presented. It was agreed that these suggestions would be sent to Mr. Alex Santos so they can be included in the final version of the database that will be completed and ready to use by the end of December 2012. They also agreed that the database would be updated on a yearly basis along with a periodic review of its format and contents whenever necessary.

20. Update of the 2013-2014 SC Work Plan

The CC Chair proceeded to review in plenary the proposals for items to be included in the Work Plan. He recommended that the products to be generated be made very clear and that they eliminate activities that are no longer necessary 2014. He clarified that this Plan is part of a general strategic plan of the IAC that includes the two Committees, which is then updated every two years and approved at the COPs. The SC Chair stated that in order to fulfill the strategic objectives of the IAC certain goals must be achieved through specific activities. After reviewing the document, the recommendations and activities of the SC and its working groups were incorporated into the SC Work plan (CIT-CC9-2012 Doc. 5) found in Annex VII.

21. Adoption of SC Recommendations and Agreements

The draft document on agreements and recommendations was presented and each item was discussed in plenary session. Comments were incorporated and the document CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.06 was approved (Annex VIII).

22. Proposed COP6 agenda items

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The COP6 will be asked to include the following items on their agenda: SC 2013-2014 Work Plan, analysis of Annual Reports, report on the activities of the SC and list of TEDs.

23. Election of SC Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the SC were reelected for a period of two more years. The next elections will be held at the SC11.

24. Proposals for location and dates of the next meeting

It was agreed that the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat will consult with focal points on this matter and it is most likely that it would be held between September and October of 2013. Countries interested in supporting the next meeting are encouraged to send in their proposals.

25. Closing remarks

After completing all of the proposed agenda items, the meeting was adjourned and special thanks were given on behalf of the Chair and *Pro Tempore* Secretariat to the meeting hosts and sponsors. Closing remarks were given by Mr. Guillermo Lingua on behalf of the Secretary of Environment and Sustainable Development.

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Annex I

Participant List of the IX Scientific Committee Meeting

Country	Name	Institution	E-mail
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Argentina	Diego Albareda	PRICTMA	diego.albareda@gmail.com
Argentina (Asesora)	Maria Laura Tombesi	SAyDS	mtombesi@ambiente.gob.ar
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Brazil (Advisor)	Alex Santos	ICMBio/Tamar	alex@tamar.org.br
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USA	Jeffrey Seminoff	Marine Turtle Ecology and Assessment Program, NOAA- NMFS-Southwest Fisheries Science Center	Jeffrey.seminoff@noaa.gov
USA (Advisor)	Yonat Swimmer	NOAA	yonat.swimmer@Noaa.gov
Venezuela	Begoña Mora	Oficina Nacional de Diversidad Biológica, Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Ambiente	bmora@minamb.gob.ve, moraceli@gmail.com
Observers			
ACAP	Marco Favero	Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels	marco.favero@acap.aq

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Secretariat			
	Verónica Cáceres	IAC PT Secretary / Secretaria PT CIT	secretario@iacseaturtle.org
	Belinda Dick	IAC Secretariat/Secretaria CIT	contact@iacseaturtle.org

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Annex II

Agenda 9th Meeting of the IAC Scientific Committee

<i>Hour</i>	<i>Agenda Item</i>	<i>Presenter</i>
	Day 1	
8:30 am	Participant registration	
9:00	1. Welcome and opening remarks Dra. Silvia Revora, <i>Subsecretaria de Política y Planificación Ambiental</i> Ing. Jorge Zuzunaga, <i>Presidente CC</i> Sra. Verónica Cáceres, <i>Secretaria PT CIT</i>	
	2. Presentation Sea Turtles of Argentina	María Laura Tombesi Diego Albareda
	3. Presentation of participants and election of meeting rapporteur	SC Chairman
	4. Adoption of the agenda	
	5. Report from the Chair of the IAC Scientific Committee	
11:00	Coffee break	
11:15	6. Report on 2012 activities of the <i>Pro Tempore</i> Secretariat	PT Secretariat
	7. Report of the of 5 th Consultative Committee Meeting	PT Secretariat
1:30 pm	Lunch	
2:30-3:30	8. Reports on activities of the Committee work plan and presentation of results. a. Report on collaboration IAC-IATTC “Conservation Status and Habitat Use of Sea Turtles in the Eastern Pacific Ocean Oriental” b. Report on Analysis of the technical information presented in the table II on important nesting sites of IAC Annual Reports. c. Status on the proposal for a Database to store information contained in the IAC Annual Reports. d. Report of hawksbill working group. e. Report of fisheries WG-List of the different types of TEDs used by IAC Party countries -Prepare report for IAC Parties	Jeff Seminoff Jeff Seminoff Secretariat / Alex Santos Hawksbill WG Fisheries WG
3:30	9. Presentation Impact of tuna fisheries with sea turtles of the Atlantic and Mediterranean. Progress in the work of ICCAT - Identify technical collaboration areas with IAC.	Phillip Miller
3:50	Coffee break	
4:00-5:00	10. 2012 Annual Reports and exceptions SC recommendations to the IAC Parties on Annual Reports SC recommendations on Exceptions	SC Chair/ IAC Secretariat
	11. Working Group formation by topic: Topic 1: Review 2012 Annual Reports (item 10) Topic 2: Exceptions (item 10)	
	Day 2	
8:30 am	12. Review other recommendations of the CCE5 to the SC - Artisanal gillnet fisheries interactions with sea turtles	

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	- Guidelines to Preparing Sea Turtle Action Plans	
	13. Working Group formation by topic: -Topic 3: Fisheries (item 12 and 8.e) -Continue WG Topic 1 and 2	
12:30pm	Lunch	
2:00	Continue working groups by topic. Begin drafting recommendations Coffee break 3:30	
5:00	14. Update the SC Work Plan (2012-2014)	SC Chairman
6:00	Meeting Adjourns	
	Day 3	
8:30 am	15. Present reports/results from working groups.	WG rapporteurs
	16. Propose COP6 agenda items and recommendations	SC Chairman
12:30pm	Lunch	
2:00 pm	17. Adoption of Recommendations and Agreements Review and approve SC recommendations to IAC Parties and SC agreements of the 9 th meeting. Coffee break 3:30	SC Chairman
	18. Preparation of next meeting (SC10) Election of SC Chair and Vice-Chair Propose locations and preliminary dates for next meeting	
5:00 pm	19. Closing remarks	

Annex III

COMMENTS FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON THE EXCEPTIONS PRESENTED BY GUATEMALA AND PANAMA, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL PARTIES WHEN PRESENTING EXCEPTIONS (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.2)

Considering that *Lepidochelys olivacea* on the beaches of the Eastern Pacific (Mexico to Panama) is the only turtle species that can tolerate a carefully controlled amount of egg harvesting, and only when the population to be harvested has demonstrated a status of “recovery or verifiable stability”.

Considering that *Lepidochelys olivacea* is classified as vulnerable, a status recently given to the species by the IUCN.

Taking into consideration the depleted status of all species from the genus *Chelonia*, *Eretmochelys*, *Caretta*, and *Dermochelys* as well as the species *Lepidochelys kempii*, their populations must be protected from commercial exploitation.

Considering that these exceptions existed prior to Panama and Guatemala forming part of the IAC, and that today they remain operational under the control of the different relevant governmental organizations.

Considering that the review of the technical information presented by Guatemala and Panama for Exceptions in their 2011 and 2012 Annual Reports revealed insufficient data to determine the sustainability of use of turtle eggs in these countries.

Considering the recommendations made intersessionally by some members of the Scientific Committee, comments received from the members of the Scientific Committee in their 9th meeting and the information submitted by the CCE during their 5th meeting (CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.3).

The IAC Scientific Committee recommends that Panama and Guatemala apply the precautionary principle by implementing the Protection Measures below, in accordance with the national laws governing the exceptions, while they gather the suggested technical information and implement actions in the recommendations below.

PROTECTION MEASURES RECOMMENDED TO GUATEMALA AND PANAMA:

Guatemala

- Increase the percentage of eggs that must be deposited in hatcheries to 30%-40% until more detailed data on population size is available.
- Increase the percentage of eggs bought from egg collectors to be deposited in hatcheries, obtaining funds through fund-raising in schools, institutions and with tourists, among other means.

Panama

- Increase the size of the “natural hatchery” stretch of beach and/or move it to encompass more of the nesting while ensuring that this protected area fulfills the standard technical requirements of a hatchery.
- Increase and document the control and protection of clutches in the hatchery zone of Cañas Island.
- Strengthen co-management of the harvest with the Canas Island community, including training of participants.
- Promote protection efforts, non-consumptive use and operation of hatcheries in communities surrounding Cañas Island.

On the other hand, the countries that presented exceptions must take into consideration the following recommendations:

The country must present, in addition to their request for an exception, a complete study of the species on the beach or beaches where the egg harvesting will occur, a full description of the management of the hatchery, and a socio-economic study as well as a justification for the activity according to that established in the text of the IAC.

The minimum information required is as follows:

- i) A complete study of the species on the beach or beaches where the egg harvesting will occur**
 - Monitor the impact of egg harvesting on the species exploited (for a period of at least 10-15 years) and on all other species that are nesting

on the same beaches. Take into consideration the impact of illegal harvesting on these beaches.

- Location and length of nesting beaches.
- Monthly counts/estimates of the number of nesting activities per species (tracks, nest counts, number of clutches).
- Description of wild and domestic predators that impact clutches left *in situ*
- An estimate of the natural mortality and survivorship of the clutches left *in situ*.
- Justification for the percentage of clutches removed to hatcheries of the total number of nests laid that is sufficient to maintain a stable population.

ii) Hatchery management:

- Know how many hatcheries there are.
- Number of nests incubated and number of hatchlings released.
- A full description of the procedures for collecting and handing over the eggs destined for the hatchery.
- How the eggs of olive ridleys are distinguished from other species to avoid the mixing of eggs from different species in the same clutch in the hatchery.
- How the hatching success of eggs in the hatchery is managed to maximize the number and optimal sex ratio of hatchlings released.
- How the increased level of nearshore predation caused by large numbers of hatchlings being released en masse from hatcheries is managed.

iii) Socio-economics:

- A socio-economic study of the beneficiaries of the egg harvest.
- Justification for traditional use.

It is further suggested:

- Ensure the use of published biological data to interpret abundance trends more accurately and to reduce the chance that the change in numbers that is being attributed to hatchery rearing is being erroneously explained.

- Take into consideration the possibility that there might be mixing of animals with other nesting colonies in the Eastern Pacific region.
- In order to improve incubation results, eggs from different nests must not be combined. Growth rates and incubation lengths can vary from one nest to another depending on genetic and environmental variables, and this can introduce an additional source of mortality. Their management must be maintained as close as possible to natural conditions.
- Handling of eggs must be avoided to the greatest extent possible and time outside of the sand minimized, since prolonged exposure to elements outside of their natural incubation environment (nest) significantly reduces the embryos' chance of survival. Therefore, eggs must be buried within the shortest time possible and with the least amount of handling. Eggs received as donations or confiscated eggs that might be contaminated must be reported and managed outside of any hatcheries.
- Recommend the use of existing technical manuals to those presenting the exception in order to implement the suggestions mentioned in this document. This must be endorsed by a technical institution of the Party country. It is up to the Party country presenting the exception, if they wish that their manual be reviewed by the IAC Scientific Committee.
- The country that presents the exception must establish the control, registration and management of hatcheries, which must include a full survey and identification of all the clutches collected.
- Develop and apply strict inspection, vigilance and control measures in order to ensure that all egg collectors comply with the required mandatory submission of eggs and try to get them to submit complete clutches instead of only a fraction of them.
- Establish spatial closures or seasonal closures on exploited beaches to protect the rest of the turtle species from exploitation.
- Ensure that the Government looks for partnerships with other organizations, institutions and NGOs in order to guarantee sea turtle conservation and research.
- Implement education campaigns in order to better manage and reduce egg consumption.
- Propose alternative livelihoods, including those that utilize sea turtles in a non-consumptive manner. Countries with exceptions should strive to present at least one model community where this is being done successfully and is technically appropriate.

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- Provide an analysis of the national legal framework that legally permits the exception, recommending the necessary adjustments to comply with the objectives of the Convention.
- Urge Party countries to designate or allocate sufficient human resources and funds to allow them to succeed in correctly managing their exception.
- The Party country must present on a yearly basis, a progress report on the harvesting program as a part of the annual report and, in addition, a report that includes the analysis (evaluation) of the exception, as a precaution, every 5 years.

In the case that the above recommendations are met and they demonstrate that the populations of the species being harvested have a verifiably stable status or are in recovery, the IAC Scientific Committee will consider that the exception does not undermine the objectives of the Convention.

Annex IV

TURTLE EXCLUDER DEVICES (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.3)

In order to fulfill the provisions established in Annex III, numerals 3 and 7, clauses a) and b) and 8 of the text of the Convention, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat requested that the Focal Points of the Parties send information on the turtle excluder devices (TEDs) currently being used in accordance with the mandates established in their national legislation.

Based on the information submitted by the Focal Points and the information reported by the Parties in their Annual Reports, the IAC Scientific Committee, in its ninth meeting, prepared a list of TEDs that the countries party to the Convention reported using in order to reduce sea turtle bycatch in shrimp trawl operations.

This list, as provided for by the IAC, will be periodically updated with the information reported by the Parties in their Annual Reports and evaluated by the Scientific and Consultative Committees.

The list should be submitted at the next meeting of the Consultative Committee of Experts for their information. With the favorable opinion of the CCE, the list should then be submitted as an agenda item for the information and consideration of the Parties of the Convention at their next meeting.

The Scientific Committee urges the party countries of the IAC to fulfill their obligation in requiring the appropriate use (installation and operation) of turtle excluder devices (TEDs) in all shrimp trawl vessels under their jurisdiction, in a way that leads towards an increased selectivity of shrimp trawlers in order to reduce sea turtle bycatch in fishing operations in the area of the Convention.

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LIST OF TURTLE EXCLUDER DEVICES															
COUNTRY/ TYPE OF TED	ARGENTINA	BELIZE	BRAZIL	CHILE	COSTA RICA	ECUADOR	USA	GUATEMALA	HONDURAS	MEXICO	NETHERLANDS	PANAMA	PERU	URUGUAY	VENEZUELA
OBSERVATIONS	NA	NA		NA	**	NA*	***				NA	****	NA	NA	NA
LEGISLATION			Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			
TYPE OF TEDs															
ANTHONY WEEDLEESS										X					
FED-INP										X					
FLOUNDER TED							X								
GEORGIA JUMPER									X	X					
HARD TED 2"									X						
HOOPED HARD TEDs							X								
MATAGORDA									X						
SAUNDERS GRID										X					
SINGLE GRID HARD TEDs							X								
SPECIALIZED TEDs							X								
SUPER SHOOTER (rigido) 6"								X							
SUPER SHOOTER 4"			X			X			X	X					
TED DE BARRA PLANA									X						
WEEDLESS TED							X		X						
NA - Does not apply															
Y - The country has legislation that establishes mandatory use of TEDs															
* As of October 2012 trawl fishing is prohibited in Ecuador.															
** Art. 149 of the Fishing and Aquiculture Law 8436, makes the use of TEDs mandatory on shrimp trawling fleet.															
*** USA only require TEDs in otter trawls and there are no requirements in skimmer trawls yet.															
***Executive Decree N° 82 of April 1 of 2005, establishes that specifications established by the National Marine Fisheries Service of NOAA will be used for TED inspections.															

Annex V

GUIDE FOR TESTING FORMS TO COLLECT INFORMATION ON SEA TURTLE INTERACTIONS IN FISHERIES USING GILLNETS (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.04)

During the 9th meeting of the IAC Scientific Committee the forms to collect information in gillnet fisheries that interact with sea turtles were reviewed and approved. It was agreed that a recommendation would be made to the IAC Focal Points for these documents to be sent to the Party countries of the Convention for their experimental use in 2013. It is hoped that the IAC PT Secretariat would begin receiving the results of their application (forms 1 and 4) at the beginning of 2014 so they could be analyzed in the 11th meeting of the IAC SC.

This document provides a guide to testing their usefulness and effectiveness.

1. Objectives

1.1. General

The general objective of the project is to field test the usefulness and effectiveness of the forms to collect information on fisheries operating with gillnets and their interaction with sea turtles.

1.2. Specific

- 1.2.1.** Identify potential fleets that fulfill the requirements needed in order for the forms to be tested.
- 1.2.2.** Complete the forms, through observers on board or surveys, depending on the specific case.
- 1.2.3.** Inform the IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretariat as to the results of forms tested.

2. Methodology

In order to fulfill specific objective 1.2.1, all relevant stakeholders related to fisheries operating with gillnets must be contacted (for example, Governmental Organizations, fishing communities, Academic and

Scientific Institutes, Civil Society Organizations, etc.), and request information on the fleets they are working with.

In order to choose the fleets where the forms will be tested, one must take into consideration elements like its size, characteristics of the fishing gear and how it is operated, extent of sea turtle interactions, target species, seasonality, accessibility and ease to which the information can be obtained.

In order to fulfill specific objective 1.2.2 and obtain the necessary information, forms will be completed through observers on board and/or visiting ports to survey fishermen. Any other methodology that is considered to be more appropriate for local conditions may be used, however, an adequate description must be given when reporting the results.

In order to fulfill specific objective 1.2.3, a report must be prepared including a separate evaluation for each one of the forms. Challenges and problems encountered during the use of the forms must be described along with proposals on how to improve them.

3. Expected Results

By implementing this project, it is hoped to attain the following results:

- 3.1.** A list of fleets operating with gillnets and that meet all the necessary conditions to allow them to be used to test the new forms.
- 3.2.** Forms tested by different people in different fleets.
- 3.3.** Report containing the results of the field tests of the forms sent to the IAC PT Secretariat.

Annex VI

Report from the Annual Report Working Group

After hearing the results of the analysis of Table 2 (important nesting sites) of the IAC annual report which was done between sessions by Jeff Seminoff (USA delegate) and the presentation of the database for storing information contained in the annual reports given by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and Alex Santos (delegate/advisor to Brazil), the working group discussed the following topics with the objective of performing future analysis of the information contained in Table 2 and finishing and implementing the database:

Analysis of the IAC Annual Reports

- The working group explored the idea of using ranges versus real numbers for reporting number of clutches and females at nesting beaches in order to recognize changes in nesting abundance and trends. Furthermore, they agreed to use of index beaches and define their criteria as well as discuss the possibility of using existing information in other databases like SWOT.
- The working group agreed to report real numbers for nesting beaches since ranges do not allow us to see changes in populations or determine trends.
- The working group discussed the value of using index sites and what criteria are currently being used to define these index sites (they can be found in different manuals). Criteria for index beaches are not meant to be exclusive nor exhaustive; however, they help to evaluate trends. Criteria for determining these index sites will depend on my factors inherent to each country (politics, sampling, distribution, ect.). It was agreed that an inter-sessional working group would be formed with the objective of reviewing the parameters defining an index beach and determine what criteria will be used for index sites. The group will decide what information can be requested from Party countries in order to provide similar criteria and create an index for the IAC and, therefore, be able to standardize the information.

Database

- The working group discussed the fact that some of the fields in the report form are being filled in differently and, therefore, recommend standardizing the way data would be input through the use of drop-down menus or lists in addition to closed answers.
- The working group agreed not to include any qualitative information or information that cannot be tabulated in the database such as comments included in the policies and management section.

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- In the section on national legislation a form can be created to include closed answers (yes/no) and for international legislation it can be classified with a yes/no answer from a standardized list of international instruments.
- In regard to the resolutions, the section referring to “describe actions” can be taken out of the database with the exception of the fisheries resolution. In this case, a classification system should be created (for example, identifying different types of fisheries) in order to be able to clarify what actions are being taken in what fisheries.
- In the research section, the table on threats and conservation actions is an important component to be included in the database and should be standardized for that purpose. A list of threats with check boxes (closed answers) could be included in the threats table and leave out the part regarding “actions”. Currently, the conservation and research actions are being described, but they don’t really report on what action is being carried out. One idea is to create a drop box with a list of specific conservation actions where they could check off yes or no. Another possibility would be to add a check box by species and include all lines of research (tagging, migration, genetics, habitat monitoring, fisheries interactions, and disease) that are being carried out (metadata).
- Table 3 (foraging sites) change description for geographical location with coordinates.

Revision of the Annual Report Form

- The working group agreed to not make any changes to the content of the report and to clarify only the scientific parts necessary to develop the database and perform future analyses.
- Tables 2 and 3 of the annex were modified.
- Table 2: It was suggested that those countries already providing their data to SWOT do so in a similar format to IAC, however, not all countries use the SWOT database. The column requesting protection measures was eliminated from the table since it is not necessary for a biological analysis. The ranges for females and clutches will stay the same until the inter-sessional working group has had a chance to change them. It was suggested to change season to work period/monitoring frequency in order to improve the analysis once real numbers are obtained. The data requested on geographic location will be changed to match the SWOT databases (only one point).
- Table 3: This table was changed to be more like table 2 so that it can be treated in a similar fashion as the nesting beaches. GPS coordinates for location and life stages of animals were added. For foraging grounds it was suggested that “study area” be added to identify whether it is definitely a feeding area, yes or no, and thus

differentiate between information on areas turtles might be passing through from actual foraging grounds. This was not taken into consideration since it was decided that it would be better to make the table strictly for foraging grounds where research is being done. The words priority sites was changed to read study sites. At the end of the discussion the following was added to the table: i) name of the area and its coordinates (adding only one geographical reference point); ii) the size of the area in Km²; iii) life stages (juvenile, sub-adult, and adult). The second column was eliminated since it was redundant with the study area column.

Timeline for Inter-sessional Working Group

Given the importance and complexity of defining criteria to identify index beaches, the working group recommends forming an inter-sessional group in order to define index site criteria. In order to do this, the group will use information available from a sample of index nesting sites with long term studies and come up with an example that will demonstrate to the Conference of the Parties the importance and usefulness of reporting these sites. The work plan agreed to is described below: Jeff Seminoff will be in charge of making a list of existing criteria at the beginning of December, 2012. This list will be circulated within the working group in order to agree on the criteria for selecting index sites. At the beginning of February, the members of the working group shall return the list with their comments and suggestions and around the middle of February the PT Secretariat will incorporate the comments and recommendations of the group and send it back to the working group. Once they have received the document, the working group will have 15 days to submit any further comments or recommendations.

At the end of March this document will also include the criteria that will be applied when defining index sites in addition to a sample report demonstrating how this information will be used. This document will be presented at the COP in order to approve the changes suggested.

Once the COP approves the suggested changes, they will be incorporated into the annual report format in order to be analyzed at the next Scientific Committee meeting.

Recommendations of the Working Group

Recommend that the PT Secretariat incorporate the changes in the annexes to be sent to the Parties as part of the next annual report (see document below).

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The PT Secretariat will provide the delegate of Brazil with the changes made by the working group in order to finish the database that will be used to analyze the annual reports.

IAC Annual Report General Instructions

Annex IV of the Convention text states that each Contracting Party shall hand in an Annual Report. To complete this Annual Report, Focal Points should consult with various stakeholders involved in sea turtle issues. If you have any questions regarding this Annual Report, please write to the PT Secretariat at secretario@iacseaturtle.org

Please note that the date to submit this Annual Report is **April 30th of 2012**.

Part I (General Information)

Please fill out the following tables. Add additional rows if necessary.

a._ Focal Point

Institution	
Name	
Date Annual Report submitted	

b._ Agency or Institution responsible for preparing this report

Name of Agency or Institution	
Name of the person responsible for completing this report	
Address	
Telephone(s)	
Fax	
E-mail	

c._ Others who participated in the preparation of this report

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Name	Agency or Institution	E-mail

Part II (Policy and Management)

a._ General description of activities carried out for the protection and conservation of sea turtles

In accordance with Articles IX and XVIII of the text of the Convention, each Party shall establish monitoring programs, policies and plans for implementation at a national level for the protection and conservation of sea turtles and their habitat.

As a result, the Party shall report on the action plans, management plan or other types of instruments, describing their location, the species considered and the actions implemented by governmental, non-governmental and private institutions related to sea turtles.

In addition to the above, please fill out the following tables and explain the level of progress in the comments column.

	YES/NO/ In Progress	Comments
Does your country have a national plan of action in accordance with Article XVIII?		
Does your country have policies and programs at local and regional levels in accordance with Article XVIII?		
Does your country have monitoring programs in accordance with Article IX?		

b._ National legislation and international instruments related to sea turtles adopted in the preceding year

Describe any national regulations, international agreements and other legal instruments adopted during the preceding year (April 30, 2011-April 30, 2012) related to sea turtles and/or relevant activities. Provide a reference and attach the digital file for the legislation and its corresponding number. The laws adopting the international legislation should be included, when they exist.

National Legislation

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Type and name of legal instrument (No.)	Description (Range of application)	Sanctions(s) Imposed
International Instruments		
Treaty, Convention, Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding		Year signed and/or ratified

***Note:** If this is the first time a country is submitting this information, please include all pertinent national legislation and international instruments currently in force.*

c._ Actions for compliance with national and international legislation

c.1 IAC Resolutions

*Fill in the following tables for each of the IAC Resolutions listed below. In the case that a Resolution does not apply to your country, please mark the box **RESOLUTION DOES NOT APPLY**, and if a specific question does not apply, please mark the column **DOES NOT APPLY**. If you need more space to describe these actions, please attach additional pages and note the resolution and question number to which you are responding.*

Resolution CIT-COP2-2004 R1: Conservation of leatherback turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*)

ACCORDING TO RESOLUTION CIT-COP2-2004-R1, REPORT WHETHER YOUR COUNTRY:

			RESOLUTION DOES NOT APPLY	
IS COMPLYING WITH THE FOLLOWING:	YES	NO	DESCRIBE ACTION (*)	DOES NOT APPLY
1a) Have you created conservation plans and long-term programs that can reverse the critical situation of the leatherback turtle in the Eastern Pacific?				
1b) Are you implementing these conservation plans and monitoring programs?				
2a) Have you taken conservation measures to significantly reduce the use of leatherback turtle products and by-products?				

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2b) Do you evaluate these conservation measures?				
3a) If your country has leatherback turtle nesting beaches in the Eastern Pacific: Have you taken conservation measures to protect the nesting sites and their associated habitats?				
3b) Do you evaluate the conservation measures taken to protect those nesting sites and their associated habitats?				
4. Has your country adopted fishing techniques that reduce incidental capture and mortality of this species?				
5a) Is your country collecting information on incidental capture of leatherbacks in the following fisheries:				
Artisanal fisheries				
i) Long-line				
ii) Gillnets				
iii) Other fishing gear (indicate which one(s))				
Industrial fisheries				
i) Long-line				
ii) Gillnets				
iii) Other fishing gear (indicate which one(s))				
5b) Have you provided the IAC with information on incidental capture of leatherbacks in the following fisheries:				
Artisanal fishing				
Long-line				
Gillnets				
i) Other fishing gear (indicate which one(s))				
Industrial fisheries				
Long-line				
Gillnets				
i) Other fishing gear (indicate which one(s))				
6. Have you established agreements and/or understandings with countries fishing within international waters to adopt fishing techniques that reduce incidental capture of leatherback turtles? List which countries:				
7. Have you encouraged other non-Party states to the IAC, carrying out activities that affect leatherback turtles, to adopt measures in favor of their conservation, by means of bilateral, multilateral or regional contacts?				
8. Have any cooperative agreements or alliances been established with pertinent organizations? List:				

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(*) Specify actions implemented, name of the project or relevant document, location, objective(s), institutions responsible, contact, financial or other support (optional), results (both positive and negative) and duration.

Resolution CIT-COP3-2006 R-1: Hawksbill turtle conservation (*Eretmochelys imbricata*)

ACCORDING TO RESOLUTION CIT-COP3-2006-R1, REPORT WHETHER YOUR COUNTRY:

IS COMPLYING WITH THE FOLLOWING:		RESOLUTION DOES NOT APPLY			
		YES	NO	DESCRIBE ACTION (*)	DOES NOT APPLY
1. Has your country promoted synergies with other Conventions, treaties, international organizations, and/or regional fisheries bodies on the management and conservation of hawksbill turtles and their habitats? Indicate which one(s).					
2 a) Are you strengthening monitoring of the illegal use and trade of hawksbill turtles and their products?					
2 b) Are you enforcing pertinent hawksbill legislation?					
2 c) Are activities being carried out in order to stop illegal trade of hawksbill products?					
3. Does your country support and strengthen the research and monitoring activities required to improve the scientific basis of conservation measures for the hawksbill turtle? Especially in:	Genetics				
	Migratory behavior				
	Location and conservation status of foraging habitats.				
	Location and conservation status of prey species.				
	Population dynamics at foraging sites				
	Integrity of nesting habitats				
	Others (specify)				
4. As indicated in the recommendations from FAO's Technical Meeting on the conservation of marine turtles and fisheries that was held in Bangkok in 2004 and adopted by the 26th Session of FAO's Fisheries Committee (COFI), does your country carry out any activities mentioned in a) and/or b)?	a) Evaluate incidental capture of hawksbill turtles in jurisdictional waters.				
	b) Actions to mitigate incidental capture of hawksbill turtles in their jurisdictional waters.				

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5. Does your country apply the precautionary approach when considering proposals for seismic exploration on priority marine habitats of the hawksbill turtle?					
6. Indicate if your country is strengthening the protection of important nesting and foraging habitats by declaring protected areas and regulating anthropogenic activities that adversely impact these habitats.	a) Protection of nesting habitats				
	b) Protection of feeding habitats				
7. Does your country promote exchange of technical capacity and collaborative research on hawksbill habitats among Parties as well as non Parties and other involved organizations in the Area of the Convention?					

(*) **Specify actions implemented, name of the project or relevant document, location, objective(s), institutions responsible, contact, financial or other support (optional), results (both positive and negative) and duration.**

Resolution CIT-COP3-2006-R2: Reduction of the adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles

ACCORDING TO RESOLUTION CIT-COP3-2006-R2, REPORT WHETHER YOUR COUNTRY:

IS COMPLYING WITH THE FOLLOWING:	YES	NO	DESCRIBE ACTION (*)	DOES NOT APPLY
1. Adopted the "Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality induced by fisheries operations", of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), including:				
A. Research and monitoring of adverse impact of fisheries on sea turtles				
• Collect information by fishery				
• Observer programs				
• Research on sea turtle/fishery interactions				
• Information on non-Party vessels				
• Cooperation with non-Party states to obtain information				
B. Mitigation measures for the following fisheries:				
i) Long-line				
ii) Gillnets				
iii) Trawling (e.g., 1. TEDs: specify legally approved TEDs, their dimensions, material, and target species for that fishery, 2. time-area closures: specify geographical area,				

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time of closure and target species for that fishery, 3. tow times and/or 4. other measures)				
iv) Other fishing gear (indicate which one(s))				
C. Training, education and dissemination				
• Training, education and dissemination activities				
D. Harmonization of policies and legislation				
• Modifications to instruments				
E. Capacity building				
• Creation of a national sea turtle committee/network				
F. Financing				
• Financial support obtained to implement guidelines in this resolution				
G. Socio-economic considerations				
• Support socio-economic activities that help mitigate adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles				
H. Other aspects				
• Environmental impact studies for mariculture projects				
2. Sent information and documents on sea turtles created by your country to the Secretariat of the Convention? List documents.				
3. Initiated activities that assist the Convention Secretariat in contacting non Party States through established mechanisms, especially in the area of the Convention, so that they may provide, in a cooperative spirit, the Secretariat with available data on incidental sea turtle catches in their fisheries?				
4. Supports the Convention Secretariat, through established mechanisms, to commence discussions with regional fishery management organizations in order to develop Memorandum of Understandings.				

(*) **Specify actions implemented, name of the project or relevant document, location, objective(s), institutions responsible, contact, financial or other support (optional), results (both positive and negative) and duration.**

Resolution CIT-COP4-2009-R5: Adaptation of sea turtle habitats to climate change

ACCORDING TO RESOLUTION CIT-COP4-2009-R5, REPORT WHETHER YOUR COUNTRY:

IS COMPLYING WITH THE FOLLOWING:	YES	NO	DESCRIBE ACTION (*)	DOES NOT APPLY
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1 a) Have marine and coastal habitats on which sea turtles depend been included in national plans and programs for adaptation to climate change? Specify habitats and plans				
1 b) Are these plans for adaptation to climate change being implemented?				
2 a) Are corrective measures and measures on adaptation to climate change included within management plans and/or protection and conservation programs for sea turtles and their habitats?				
2 b) Are you evaluating the corrective measures and measures on adaptation to climate change included within management plans and/or protection and conservation programs for sea turtles and their habitats?				
3. Have you identified any organizations or pertinent expert groups as possible partners to work on the topic of adaptation by sea turtles to climate change? Please list.				
4. Have you carried out research and monitoring to improve knowledge of the effects on, and vulnerability of sea turtles and their habitats, to climate change?				
5. Has your country hosted capacity building workshops for monitoring techniques and/or adaptation to climate change?				
6. Has your country implemented mitigation measures for non-climatic threats as a way to improve the resilience of populations to the impacts of climate change? Specify which ones.				

(*) **Specify actions implemented, name of the project or relevant document, location, objective(s), institutions responsible, contact, financial or other support (optional), results (both positive and negative) and duration.**

c.2 National and International Mandates

List actions that are being carried out to comply with national and international mandates (Ex: inspections, confiscations, sanctions, etc.)

d. _ Application[submission] of exceptions established in the Convention

Describe in detail the exceptions allowed in accordance with article IV, item 3(a,b,d) and Annex IV of the text of the Convention, in accordance to the procedure established by the COP (Doc. CIT-COP5-2011-R2). Attach management program.

Part III (Research information)

a. _ Threats

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*Indicate threats (Coastal development, incidental capture, direct use, contamination and pathogens, and climate change) by species, with information on the area and activities taken to control them in the following table. Lo = *Lepidochelys olivacea*; Lk = *Lepidochelys kempii*; Dc = *Dermochelys coriacea*; Ei = *Eretmochelys imbricata*; Cc = *Caretta caretta*; Cm = *Chelonia mydas*.*

Species	Threat(s)		Actions
Lo	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	
Lk	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	
Dc	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	
Ei	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	
Cm	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	
Cc	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	

b. Research

Describe scientific research that is being carried out in the country relating to sea turtle population assessments including tagging, migration, and genetic studies, as well as those relating to conservation issues including habitat monitoring, fisheries interactions, disease, etc. Provide a list of references for the information used in this report and note how to obtain them when needed.

In addition to the above, please fill out the following table on the types of research being carried out in the country and with what specie(s).

Research	Specie(s)(Lo, Lk, Cm, Ei, Cc, Dc)
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	

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Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	

c. _ Other activities

Include information on: environmental education activities, programs to establish and manage protected areas, and cooperative activities with other Party countries.

Part IV: Annexes

Table 1: Species Present

*Place an X in the box when the species listed is present in the oceanographic basins of your country as established in Article III of the text of the Convention. Lo = *Lepidochelys olivacea*; Lk = *Lepidochelys kempii*; Dc = *Dermochelys coriacea*; Ei = *Eretmochelys imbricata*; Cm = *Chelonia mydas*; Cc = *Caretta caretta*.*

Species	Pacific Ocean	Atlantic Ocean	Caribbean Sea
Lo			
Lk			
Dc			
Ei			
Cm			
Cc			

Table 2: Important nesting sites for sea turtle conservation

- a. *This table is intended to report information on the priority nesting beaches (for example, sites with greater abundance, endemism, genetic importance, others) for each species. For beaches that have multiple species nesting, enter that beach under the list for the primary nesting species. When entering information on nesting beaches, information is to be entered for each species independently. Indicate the names of nesting sites.*
- b. *Monitoring period: Indicate the starting and finishing date of monitoring efforts.*
- c. *Survey frequency: Indicate the frequency with which the surveys are done (daily, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, among others).*
- d. *Geographic location: Specify latitude and longitude in degrees, minutes and seconds - provide one point for each nesting sites.*
- e. *Extension: Provide the total length (in Kilometers) of the nesting beach.*
- f. *Declared protection area: Indicate (yes or no) if the area is declared as some type of protected area.*
- g. *Annual nesting abundance: Where possible, provide information on the total number of females and/or nests deposited at the nesting beach. If a specific value is not available, please provide a range for annual number of nesting females or nests deposited. If data are unavailable, enter 'unknown' or 'unavailable'. The ranges for annual number of females are: 0-10, 11-100, 101-500, 501-1000, 1001-5000, 5001-10000, 10001-50000, 50001-100000, >100000. The ranges for annual number of nests are: 0-10, 11-100, 101-500, 501-1000, 1001-5000, 5001-10000, 10001-100000, 100001-500000, >500000. On a separate sheet, provide a brief description/justification on why each site that was mentioned is considered important (sites with greater abundance, endemism, genetic, others). Include historical information (graphic and/or tables) showing the population status of each species present at the site.*
- h. *Information from tagging program: Indicate if there have been any tagging activities at the nesting beach by using the letters of the type of tagging being done: flipper tagging (FT), passive integrated transponder (PIT) tagging, and satellite telemetry (ST) programs. If possible, on a separate sheet or as attached reference provide greater detail about the type of tagging efforts conducted. Also provide satellite telemetry maps or flipper tag recovery information if available.*
- i. *Tissue sampling: Indicate if there has been tissue sampling conducted at this site. This includes skin, blood, and other body tissues. On a separate sheet, or as attached references, describe these tissue sampling programs in greater detail. For example, were samples collected for genetic, contaminant, and/or stable isotope studies?*
- j. *When inserting new rows, please copy and paste the drop down menus when applicable.*

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Spp	Name of Priority Nesting Site (Regular nesting)	Monitoring period	Survey Frequency	Geographic Location (Lat/Long) in Degrees, Minutes, and Seconds												Extension (km)	Declared Protected Area (Yes/No)	Annual Nesting Abundance		Tagging Program (FT, ST, PIT)	Tissue Sampling (Yes/No)		
				Females	Clutches																		
Lo					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Lk					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Dc					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Ei					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Cm					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Cc					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.
					°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.			Choose an item.	Choose an item.

Table 3: Important foraging sites for sea turtle conservation

- a. This table is intended to contain information for foraging sites being studied for each species. For marine habitats that have multiple species present, enter the specific site under the heading for the priority species at that site.*
- b. Name and geographic location: Provide the name of the site and geographic location in Lat/Long coordinates (one reference point).*
- c. Declared protection area: Indicate if the area is declared as some type of protected area.*
- d. Area: Indicate the size of the study site (en Kilometers²).*
- e. Information from tagging program: Indicate if there have been any tagging activities at the in-water site by using the letters of the type of tagging being done: flipper tagging (FT), passive integrated transponder (PIT) tagging, and satellite telemetry (ST) programs. If possible, on a separate sheet, or as attached reference provide greater detail about the type of tagging efforts conducted. Also provide satellite telemetry maps or flipper tag recovery information if available.*
- f. Tissue sampling: Indicate if there has been tissue sampling conducted at this site. This includes skin, blood, and other body tissues. On a separate sheet, or as attached references describe these tissue sampling programs in greater detail. For example, were samples collected for genetic, contaminant, and/or stable isotope studies?*
- g. When adding new rows, please copy and paste the drop down menus when applicable.*

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Species	Name of the Study Site	Geographic Location (Lat/Long) in Degrees, Minutes, and Seconds												Area (Km ²)	Declared Protection Area (Yes/No)	Life Stages (Juvenile, Sub-adult, Adult)	Tagging Program (FT, ST, PIT)	Tissue Sampling (Yes/No)	
Lo			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Lk			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Dc			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Ei			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Cm			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Cc			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			°		'		"	N		°		'		"	W		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

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Annex VII

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE 2013-2014 WORK PLAN (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.05)

This document was taken from the original work plan approved by the COP5 (CIT-COP5-2011-Doc.3) and the 2012-2013 work plan approved at the SC8. This document will be presented at the COP6 in 2013.

STRATEGIC PLANNING	WORK PLAN - GOALS – SCOPE – REQUIREMENTS							
Strategic Activities	Verifiable Goals/ Products	Indicators	Year 2013		Year 2014		Responsible	Not Financed
			I semester	II semester	I semester	II semester		
2.3.1 To elaborate and update its Work Plan following the guidelines of the Convention and the agreements and resolutions of the Conference of the Parties (COP’s).	a. Prepare the committee’s bi-annual work plan with actions to be performed, chronogram and those responsible.	Updated Work Plan				X	Scientific Committee	
	b. Complete this work plan at the next Scientific Committee meeting, identifying the tools and mechanisms necessary to carry out their work with help from Focal Points and other organizations like SPAW, IATTC, CPPS, OSPESCA, WIDECAST, ASO and SWOT.	Mechanisms proposed by Annual Report Working group		X		X	Scientific Committee	
2.3.2 To evaluate the conservation status of the sea	a. Prepare yearly technical report on annual reports.	Report submitted		X		X	Scientific Committee	

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turtle populations in the region, based on the most trustworthy scientific data and considering the environmental, socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of the Parties.	b. Yearly maintenance and update IAC database with the information provided in the annual reports.	Updated database	X		X		Scientific and Consultative Committees and Secretariat	
	b.1 Review database format and contents when necessary	Updated database	X	X	X	X	Scientific and Consultative Committees and Secretariat	
	c. Report on progress made in applying technical guidelines adopted by the Parties (Annual Reports).	Report submitted	X		X		Scientific Committee	
	c.1 Analyze the technical information presented in the annexed Tables of the Parties' Annual Reports referring to important nesting sites.			X		X	Scientific Committee	
	d. Carry out inter-sessional work groups formed by the Scientific Committee.	Reports on the results of working group(s)		X		X	Scientific Committee	
	d.1 Prepare a strategy for reporting index beaches	Mechanisms proposed by Annual Report Working group	X	X			Annual Report WG/ Scientific Committee	
	d.2 Update list of different types of TEDs used/approved.	Updated list of TEDs.	X		X		Fisheries WG/ Scientific Committee	
	d.3 Information complied on best practices and procedures for handling sea turtles onboard that were incidentally caught in coastal fisheries.	Document/Manual on best practices	X Collect information	X Distribute with WG members and analysis	X Manual/document draft		Fisheries WG/ Scientific Committee	

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d.4 Inter-sessional working group on climate change to provide recommendations on actions to help IAC parties better implement the climate change resolution.	Document with recommendations	X	X			Climate Change WG/ Scientific Committee	
e. Make recommendations on high-priority projects that need financing and other types of support needed to achieve intended objectives.	Number of high priority project profiles		X		X	Scientific Committee	
e.1 Promote actions within the IAC hawksbill and leatherback Resolutions.	Improved compliance and implementation of actions in resolutions by IAC Parties.		X		X	Scientific Committee	
f. Prepare a model to analyze index beaches in order to demonstrate the importance of standardization and reporting data in the Annual Reports with the objective of determining the status and trends of nesting sea turtles.	Technical document and reports from workshops and/or meetings if relevant.	X	X			Annual Report WG/ Scientific Committee	
g. Identify synergies with other organizations related to the IAC to help create and/or share information for a database (SPAW, IATTC, CPPS, WIDECAST, ICCAT, RAMSAR, SWOT, ICAPO, ASO, WWF).	Present a summary of possible activities/synergies with other organizations in meeting		X		X	Scientific and Consultative Committees	

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		report						
2.3.3 To address requests from the Conference of the Parties and the Consultative Committee and make recommendations accordingly.	a. Send recommendations to the Consultative Committee and COP, as requested.	Number of documents with recommendations sent		X		X	Scientific Committee	
2.3.4 To foster alliances and synergies with competent specialists and organizations that shall facilitate the achievement of the IAC objectives.	a. Make recommendations that promote synergies and coordination mechanisms with entities relating to achieving the IAC objectives.	Specialists and organizations identified and/or contacted. Number of meetings at which members of the SC promoted the IAC by presenting its activities.	X	X	X	X	Scientific Committee	
	b. Update and maintain a directory of scientists and/or experts in fields related to the IAC.	Directory on the IAC web site updated.	X	X	X	X	Scientific and Consultative Committee	

Annex VIII

Agreements and Recommendations of the 9th Meeting of the IAC Scientific Committee (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.6)

1) IAC Annual Reports

a) After analyzing the information provided on important nesting sites in Table 2 of the annex of the 2011 IAC annual reports, as well as from earlier years (a total of 70 reports), the Scientific Committee (SC) concluded that the way the information on nests and females is being reported by Party countries does not allow the SC to perform an analysis on population trends that they need to do in order to report on the population status of the six species of sea turtles.

The SC agreed to form an inter-sessional working group made up of delegates from: Belize, Honduras, Ecuador, Argentina, Brazil and the USA (coordinator) with the objective of identifying the necessary modifications to Table 2 of the annex of the IAC Annual Report that will include, among others consideration of:

- Use of index beaches in the reports and definition of their criteria.
- Use of real numbers instead of ranges to report clutches and females.
- Identification of the minimum data needed to analyze trends.
- Preparation of a model analysis of an index beach to be presented at the 6th Conference of the Parties (COP6).

The timeline for this intersessional work can be found in the working group report in the Report on the 9th Meeting of the SC (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.07).

b) When reviewing the tables in the annex of the report, the SC noticed that some of the information is not being reported by the Party countries and/or is not relevant to the scientific analysis. Therefore, it was agreed to make the following changes in order to facilitate filling out these tables:

- Table 2: Geographic location of the nesting beaches changed and now only one geographic reference point is required.
- Table 2: Season changed to monitoring period/sampling frequency in order to permit future analysis.
- Table 2: The column with protection measures was eliminated since this is not strictly scientific information.
- Table 3: Rows for filing in the name of the area and its coordinates (referring to only one geographical reference point), the size of the area in Km² and life stages

(juvenile, sub-adult and adult) were added in order to make the table more comparable to the nesting table.

c) The SC requests that the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat incorporate the changes made to both tables (tables 2 and 3) of the report annex and send them to the Parties as part of next year's 2013 annual report.

d) The SC requests that the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat sends a formal note to the Focal Points of those countries that have not yet submitted their 2012 annual reports (Belize and Costa Rica) and ask them to send them as soon as possible.

2) Database for storing information from IAC Annual Reports

The SC reviewed the proposed database that will be used to store information provided in the IAC Annual Reports, which was prepared with the assistance of Alex Santos (Advisor to Brazil), and it was agreed that only tabular information from the annual reports will be included in the database.

a) It was agreed that the Annual Report working group will send the changes made to the format of the annexes of the annual report so that they may be included in the database, which will be finished and ready to use by the end of December 2012.

b) It was agreed that this database will be updated annually and reviewed periodically in terms of its format and contents whenever necessary.

3) Exceptions

The SC reviewed the working documents on the exceptions presented by Panama and Guatemala in their 2011 and 2012 annual reports, the recommendations made by the SC in its 8th meeting (CIT-CC8-2011-Doc.9, Exceptions WG Report) and the preliminary recommendations made by the CCE in their 5th meeting (CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.3). Recommendations were then made based on the cases presented.

After an exhaustive review, the SC approved the exceptions document (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.02).

The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat is asked to submit this document with its recommendations to the Consultative Committee of Experts for their consideration, according to established procedures (CIT-COP5-2011-R2).

Fisheries Interactions

a) Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs): Recommend that the IAC Party countries fulfill their obligation in requiring the appropriate use (installation and operation) of turtle excluder devices (TEDs) in all shrimp trawl vessels under their jurisdiction, in a way that leads

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towards an increased selectivity of shrimp trawlers in order to reduce sea turtle bycatch in fishing operations in the area of the Convention.

The SC prepared the document (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.03), listing the TEDs that the countries party to the Convention reported using and agreed to the following:

- Update the list with the information provided by the Parties in their Annual Reports.
- The list (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.03) will be submitted at the next meeting of the Consultative Committee of Experts for their information. With the favorable opinion of the CCE, the list will then be submitted as an agenda item for the next meeting of the IAC Parties.

b) Gillnet data collection forms: These forms and their instructions were developed during the 8th SC meeting to be sent to the Parties of the Convention for their use. They were then finalized and approved at the SC9 (CIT-CC8-2011-Doc.4). The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat should begin receiving the results from those countries that were able to field test them (forms 1 and 4) in 2013. In order to do this, the 9th meeting of the SC approved a series of guidelines (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.04) that can be used by the Party countries of the IAC as a tool to help determine their usefulness and effectiveness.

It was agreed that the Parties would be asked to support to the greatest extent possible the activities proposed in order to test the usefulness and effectiveness of the forms to collect data on sea turtle bycatch in gillnet fisheries.

Peru and Chile have offered their support in testing the forms and will report their results at the SC10.

c) Onboard management of sea turtle bycatch: The fisheries working group made up of: Chile, Peru, Argentina and Uruguay agreed to work inter-sessionally to compile current information on onboard management practices for handling sea turtles incidentally caught in coastal fisheries in order to obtain updated information on the best management practices onboard. To facilitate this process, the delegate of Argentina will gather the pertinent information with help from other members in the group during the second semester of 2013 and present it at the SC10.

It was recommended that the Parties offer all possible support to test the usefulness and effectiveness of developing this activity.

4) Proposal for an inter-sessional working group on climate change to assist the parties to meet the objectives of Resolution CIT-COP4-2009-R5.

- 5) Given the potential impacts of climate change on sea turtles are manifold and are likely to worsen, a Resolution on adaptation of sea turtle habitats to climate change (CIT-COP4-2009-R5) was passed by the COP4. In order to meet the objectives of this Resolution and in response to a recommendation of the CCE, the SC proposed that a working group be established on this topic. The WG is made up of: Chile, the Caribbean Netherlands (Julia Horrocks, Coordinator), USA, and Peru.

Several Party countries have already indicated in their reports that climate change and coastal development are affecting sea turtles and their habitats, but to date little analyzable information has been provided. The first task of the WG will be to review what kinds of information Parties are already submitting and what they could potentially submit in order that an assessment of the impacts of climate change on nesting beaches and nesting behaviour can be monitored. It was agreed that the group will work inter-sessionally and will present their results at the 10th meeting of the SC.

6) Hawksbill Turtle Working Group

During their 9th meeting, the Scientific Committee acknowledged the importance of evaluating the conservation status of *Eretmochelys imbricata* in the Eastern Pacific in order to establish conservation priorities and actions. The WG also recognized the importance of the activities being developed by the ICAPO Initiative regarding this species. The information presented by the Hawksbill working group, which consisted of Eduardo Espinoza (Ecuador), Laura Sarti (México), Marino Abrego (Panamá) and Jeffrey Seminoff (USA), explained that it was not possible to hold the meeting of experts for this species and region due to a lack of funding. However, possible synergies and the interest of CITES to continue supporting the IAC in their Caribbean hawksbill research by updating the current status of Caribbean and western Atlantic populations, were acknowledged. This opportunity can be used to include information relevant to hawksbills in the Eastern Pacific. Based on this information, the SC made the following conclusions:

- Contribute to the agreement currently being negotiated with CITES in order to update information on the Caribbean hawksbill and include, if there is enough information available, data on the Pacific hawksbills by requesting access to the ICAPO database.
- Invite a representative from ICAPO to realize the established procedures and participate as an accredited observer of the IAC.

7) 2013-2014 Work Plan

The SC approved the Work Plan for the 2013-2014 period (CIT-CC9-2012-Doc.05) to which the following inter-sessional working group activities were added:

- a. Climate Change WG: The WG will present the results at the SC10 on the type of information Parties should report in order to improve their answers regarding climate change at nesting beaches.
- b. Annual Report WG: The WG will present the changes to table 2 of the IAC report annex at the SC10 and the analysis on index beaches at the COP6.
- c. Fisheries WG: The WG will present the results obtained from testing the gillnet forms and summarize the procedures on best practices aboard for handling turtles caught incidentally, at the SC10.

8) Cooperation and outreach with regional inter-governmental bodies related to sea turtle conservation

The SC agreed to support to their greatest ability and with the consent of the IAC parties with the information that ICATT will request in order to evaluate the impact of ICATT fisheries on sea turtles.

9) Items requested to be included in the COP6 agenda

- a. Scientific Committee 2013-2014 work plan.
- b. Presentation of the results of the annual report working group.
- c. List of TEDs used.
- d. Report on the 2011 and 2012 activities of the SC activities.

10) Election of chair and vice-chair of the SC

The Scientific Committee mentioned that due to the effectiveness with which the SC has been lead over the past few years and the tangible products it has produced, it was agreed that Jorge Zuzunaga and Dr. Rene Márquez be re-elected as chair and vice-chair, respectively.

11) Location of the SC10

Depending on the funds available, Focal Points and SC members will be consulted as to their capacity to provide financial and in-kind support for the next meeting in order to decide on its location. It is asked that countries interested in hosting this meeting send in their proposals.