



Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles

14th IAC Scientific Committee Meeting
Panama City, Panama - October 18 – 20, 2017

CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.6

Report on the 14th IAC Scientific Committee Meeting (SC14)

The Fourteenth Meeting of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles Scientific Committee (SC14) took place in Panama City, Panama at the Continental Hotel. The meeting began with welcoming remarks from Panama's IAC Focal Point, Ambassador Max Lopez from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Panama, Dr. Diego Alejandro Albareda – IAC Scientific Committee Chair (SC), and Ms. Veronica Caceres – IAC Secretary *Pro Tempore*.

The meeting was conducted with the participation of 26 attendants, including delegates from 15 Country Parties to IAC -Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Caribbean Netherlands, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and the United States; representatives of the Authority of Aquatic Resources of Panama (ARAP in Spanish) and two accredited observers representing JustSea and WIDECAST (*Annex I – List of Participants CIT-CC14-2017-Inf.1*).

The delegate of Panama to the Scientific Committee, Mr. Marino Abrego, presented a summary on the current regulations, and research in the country, as well as the actions implemented by ARAP regarding sea turtles and fisheries. Mr. Abrego also presented the Sea Turtle conservation activities in Panama, highlighting the process for the development of Panama's Sea Turtle Action Panama adopted in 2017. Furthermore, he presented the follow-up activities in Isla Cañas on the implementation of the Resolution on Exceptions, as well as the ongoing nesting data collection in the area, and the Management Plan that will be carried out through a consultancy that has been approved already, as well as the already institutionalized Panama's Sea Turtle Network, formed by 18 conservation organizations. Mr. Abrego emphasized that these activities have been developed with the support of the IAC Secretariat *Pro Tempore* through the funds granted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service Marine Turtle Conservation Fund.

The meeting included presentations about sea turtle conservation measures implemented by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), and research on the use of LED lights to reduce sea turtle bycatch by the delegate from the United States, Dr. Yonat Swimmer. Dr. Swimmer highlighted the value of establishing a Memorandum of Understanding with RFMOs, specifically ICCAT, considering the current opportunities; called the Scientific Committee to insist in signing a MoU with ICCAT, and suggested to draft an acknowledgment letter regarding the ICCAT SCRS actions for the conservation of sea turtles. Other presentations included the exchange of experiences between Mexican and Peruvian fishermen, by Dr. Javier Quiñones and Dr. Heriberto Santana, and the research on quantification and characterization of sea turtle

bycatch in Colombia and Panama by Dr. Juan M. Rodríguez (JustSea), including information on landing areas with a higher rate of leatherback catches in trammel nets and gillnets, as well as the catches in fisheries adjacent to Coiba National Park (Panama) and Malpelo Island (Colombia).

As a result of the discussions during the three-day meeting, the following recommendations and agreements were adopted.

Recommendations and Agreements of the 14th IAC Scientific Committee Meeting

1) Adoption of agenda and election of meeting rapporteur

The agenda was adopted without changes. Ms. Airam Lopez, delegate of Guatemala, was the Rapporteur. *Annex II (Agenda CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.1)*

2) Collaboration with international organizations

a. Collaboration with Albatross and Petrels Agreement (ACAP):

The Scientific Committee adopted document CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.2 that includes information relevant to the cooperation between IAC and ACAP. This document will be submitted to the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts for their review. The document, with contributions from both committees, will be submitted to ACAP's Executive Secretary as an input to activate the Memorandum of Understanding between both organizations.

Annex III (Document CIT-ACAP CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.2)

b. Collaboration with CITES in a Study on Legal and Illegal International Trade in Marine Turtles

The Scientific Committee recommended the outline terms of reference prepared by the Hawksbill Working Group supporting the implementation of CITES Decision 17.222 to carry out a study on the trade of marine turtle products in the IAC region. The outline terms of reference will be shared with CITES Secretariat.

The Working Group agreed on preparing a list of experts and organizations with experience in the issue to share with CITES by December 2017. The following organizations have been identified in a preliminary list: Traffic, Humane Society International, WIDECAS, among other.

Hawksbill Working Group Members: Costa Rica, Caribbean Netherlands, Brazil, Guatemala, and Belize.

Annex IV (Terms of reference for a study on trade of marine turtles)

c. Discussion on the work of ICCAT Sub-Committee on Ecosystems and Bycatch

The Working Group formed by Uruguay and the United States drafted a letter acknowledging and praising the work of the sub-committee on ecosystems and bycatch towards the conservation of sea turtles in ICCAT fisheries.

The Scientific Committee approved the letter and agreed that the IAC Secretary PT send this letter to the IAC Focal Points, and to the ICCAT Executive Secretary (copying the chairs of the SCRS and the Sub-committee on Ecosystems) with the request that this letter be distributed to ICCAT country commissioners at their Regular Meeting of the Commission in Marrakech on November 9th, 2017.

Annex V (Letter acknowledging the work of SCRS IATTC).

3) Strategies to work with International Organizations, such as Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs)

The Scientific Committee adopted the strategy proposed by the Working Group formed by Argentina and the United States. The strategy is a guide for this committee to provide technical inputs into the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) measures that are relevant to the IAC objectives, such CIAT, ICCAT, among other. The strategy goes as follows:

- i. Identify meetings and review agenda priorities to assess relevance to the IAC
- ii. Identify priority topics relevant for the IAC
- iii. Evaluate feasibility and value of participation by IAC Secretariat *PT* (or a designate).
- iv. Clarify potential product or outcome, such as letters of support, lobbying for MoU, etc.
- v. Identify appropriate personnel to assist in the development of the products identified.

Annex VI (Strategy to work with RFMOs CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.3)

4) Climate Change and Sea Turtles

The Climate Change Working Group, under the coordination of the Caribbean Netherlands, developed a form with instructions to report environmental data collected at index nesting beaches to be submitted to the IAC Conference of the Parties in 2019. This form was adopted by the Scientific Committee.

Annex VII (Form and Instructions for reporting environmental data collected from Index Nesting Beaches)

The Scientific Committee agreed on the following requests to the IAC Parties:

- That the Parties with nesting sea turtle populations be invited to participate in a pilot study, where each Party will select at least ONE representative index beach (i.e. a beach where monitoring of nesting sea turtles is already occurring) to report environmental data from the same beach using the instructions and the form developed by the IAC Scientific Committee.
- For the pilot study, every year from 2019-2023, the Parties will receive the form to report environmental data along with the IAC Annual Report request, to be submitted on the same date as the Annual Report.
- The Scientific Committee will analyze the information and prepare a report for the Parties after five years. Based on the results, the SC will recommend the procedures to follow in compliance with the Climate Change Resolution.

The Scientific Committee agreed on submitting the form to report the environmental data, the instruction sheet, and rationale for the request of this information from the Parties every year, after consideration of the next Consultative Committee CCE11.

5) Exceptions

The Working Group on Exceptions developed a roadmap for the Project on the regional analysis of *Lepidochelys olivacea* population trends.

Annex VIII (Outline to analyze trends and informative document on illegal trafficking of L. olivacea)

The Working Group formed by Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, Guatemala, and Mexico agreed that during the 2018 inter-sessional period they will prepare a project proposal and terms of reference for the Regional Analysis on the Population Trends of *L. olivacea*, and another proposal to find funding for a project to determine the status of cross-border trafficking of *L. olivacea*. The Secretary *PT* will send a basic form to develop the project proposal which will be adjusted in each case, and according to the requirements of potential donors.

The Working Group identified as potential donors: ICAPO, JICA, and AID

6) Review of the Annual Report Form

The Scientific Committee recommends the following modifications to the IAC Annual Report:

- **Table on Loggerhead Turtle Resolution Compliance**

The Scientific Committee adopted the table to be included in the IAC Annual Report, including the questions to monitor compliance with the Resolution for the Conservation of the Loggerhead Turtle prepared by the working group, coordinated by Brazil. It is requested to the Secretary *PT* that the table is submitted for review by the Consultative Committee. Subsequently, the table will be submitted for consideration of the IAC Focal Points.

Annex IX (Table on Caretta caretta Resolution for the IAC Annual Report CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.5)

- **Table on Hawksbill Resolution Compliance**

Considering the modifications in the Hawksbill Resolution made at COP8, the Scientific Committee reviewed the current table on Hawksbill Resolution compliance, and recommended including one additional question corresponding to the changes in the Resolution. It was agreed to request the Secretary *PT* to submit the hawksbill table with the additional question to the Consultative Committee for review, and subsequently to the consideration of the IAC Focal Points.

Annex X (Table on Eretmochelys imbricata Resolution for the IAC Annual Report)

- **Table on Fisheries Resolution Compliance**

The Scientific Committee recommended including a new table located below the Fisheries Resolution Compliance table, showing which species of sea turtles are impacted by particular fisheries. It was agreed to request the Secretary *PT* to submit the table proposed, for the consideration of the Consultative Committee, and subsequently to the IAC Focal Points.

Annex XI (Table to identify which species of sea turtle are impacted by particular fisheries)

Sea turtle foraging areas (Annex 3 - IAC Annual Report)

The Scientific Committee has acknowledged that there is no clear definition of what a foraging area is and that countries may use different criteria to define these areas. Furthermore, IAC Parties have expressed difficulties with reporting information on foraging areas, and the Consultative Committee has expressed doubts regarding the need and usefulness of reporting this information periodically in the Annual Report, due to the effort it requires for countries with limited resources.

The Foraging Areas Working Group formed by Argentina, Caribbean Netherlands, Peru, Chile, Panama, and Ecuador, agreed to continue the work to propose a feasible form to request and analyze information on important foraging areas. Once the form is ready, it will be submitted for consideration and approval of the Scientific Committee, to subsequently provide recommendations to the Parties.

The Scientific Committee agreed to send the above rationale to the IAC Parties with recommendations to remove the note on foraging sites in Annex 3 of the Annual Report.

Additionally, the Scientific Committee agreed that the Working Group would carry out an inter-sessional comprehensive analysis of the issue of reporting information on foraging areas. The issues to discuss would be 1) the definition of a foraging area, 2) what data would need to be collected to monitor the threats affecting foraging areas, 3) how priority foraging areas would be

identified, 4) how important/useful this information is for the Scientific Committee (technical information for management, outreach, etc.), 5) what mechanism(s) should be used to request the information from the Parties, and 6) how the data should be analyzed and reported to the Parties.

7) Update of the Technical Document on the IAC Sea Turtle Nesting Index Beaches

The Nesting Working Group coordinated by Brazil reminded the Scientific Committee that the technical document should be updated. The Scientific Committee agreed that at least one month before the 2018 annual meeting, the members of the Committee from countries where sea turtle nesting occurs, will send nesting index beach data from the period 2013-2018 to the Working Group coordinator and that the group will update the technical document during the meeting.

8) Working Group on Sea Turtles Conservation Status

It was agreed to design a form per species and suggest references from the literature. For that purpose, a group was formed by Argentina, Uruguay, USA, Brazil, Ecuador, and Panama.

9) Scientific Committee Work Plan

The Scientific Committee updated the 2017-2019 work plan adding the inter-sessional activities of the SC working groups to be reported at the next meeting.

Annex XII (Work Plan CIT-CC14-2016-Doc.4)

10) Venue of the 15th IAC Scientific Committee Meeting (CC15)

Ms. Carolina Montalván, the delegate from Honduras and representing the Ministry of Environment, announced that Honduras will be the host of the SC15. The next meeting will be convened tentatively in October 2018. Dates will be determined in coordination with the host country.

ANNEXES

Annex I List of Participants CIT-CC14-2017-Inf.1

COUNTRY	NAME	INSTITUTION	E-MAIL
DELEGADOS/DELEGATES			
Argentina	Diego Albareda	Scientific Committee Chair	diego.albareda@gmail.com
Belice	Kirah Forman	Belize Fisheries Department	kirahforman@yahoo.com
Brasil	Alexsandro Dos Santos	Fundación Projeto TAMAR	alex@tamar.org.br
Brasil	Maria Angela Marcovaldi	Fundación Projeto TAMAR	neca@tamar.org.br
Chile	Miguel Donoso	Pacífico Laúd	pacificolaudchile@gmail.com
Costa Rica	Didiher Chacon Chaverri	WIDECASST América Latina	dchacon@widecast.org
Ecuador	Eduardo Espinoza Herrera	Parque Nacional Galápagos	eepinoza@galapagos.gob.ec
Guatemala	Airam López	Departamento de Vida Silvestre – CONAP	aroulet@conap.gob.gt
Honduras	Belkis Carolina Montalván	Secretaría de Recursos Naturales – SERNA	carolmontalvan1568@gmail.com
México	Heriberto Santana	Instituto Nacional de Pesca – INAPESCA	heriberto.santana@inapesca.gob.mx
CN - Barbados	Julia Anne Horrocks	University of the West Indies – Barbados	julia.horrocks@cavehill.uwi.edu
Panamá	Max López	Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Panamá	
Panamá	Bolivar Cañizales	Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Panamá	bcanizales@mire.gob.pa
Panamá	Marino Abrego	Dirección de Costas y Mares – Ministerio de Ambiente de Panamá	meabrego@miambiente.gob.pa
Panamá	Robert Shahverdians	Panatotugas	panatotugas@gmail.com
Perú	Javier Quiñones	Instituto del Mar de Perú – IMARPE	javierantonioquinones@gmail.com
República Dominicana	Cristiana De La Rosa	Viceministerio de Recursos Costeros y Marinos	cristiana.delarosa@ambiente.gob.do
Uruguay	Andrés Domingo	Dirección Nacional de Recursos Acuáticos – DINARA	adomingo@dinara.gub.uy
The United States	Yonat Swimmer	NOAA	yonat.swimmer@noaa.gov
CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS			
Brasil	Joao Thomé	CCE Vice Chair	jocathometamar@gmail.com

COUNTRY	NAME	INSTITUTION	E-MAIL
OBSERVERS			
Colombia	Juan Manuel Rodríguez	JUSTSEA	juan.manuel@justsea.org
Panamá	Argelis Ruiz	WIDECAST	delfin@cwpanama.net
IAC SECRETARIAT			
CIT	Verónica Cáceres	IAC	veronica@seaturtle.org
CIT	Luz Helena Rodríguez	IAC	asistentecit@gmail.com
CIT	Paul Schiffan	Interpreter	pschiffan@yahoo.com
CIT	Tatiana Mantilla	Interpreter II	tatianamantilla@gmail.com

Annex II
Agenda CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.1

Wednesday – 18.10.17

- 08:00-09:00 Registration of participants
- 09:00-09:40 Welcome remarks
Ambassador Max López
IAC Focal Point
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Panama

Dr. Diego Albareda
Scientific Committee Chair

Ms. Veronica Caceres
IAC Secretary *Pro Tempore*
- 09:40-10:15 Sea Turtle Conservation Activities in Panama. Panama Delegation
- 10:15-10:35 Coffee Break
- 10:35-10:45 Introduction of participants and accredited observer list /CIT-CC14-2017-Inf.1
- 10:45-11:00 Adoption of the agenda and election of meeting rapporteur/**CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.1**
Dr. Diego Albareda, SC Chair.
- 11:00-11:30 Report of the 13th IAC Scientific Committee Meeting Activities. *Dr. Diego Albareda, SC Chair.*
- 11:30-12:00 Report on Activities of the Secretariat *Pro Tempore* and COP8 Recommendations.
Ms. Veronica Caceres, IAC Secretary PT.
- 12:00-01:00 Lunch Break
- 01:00-01:30 Report of the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts.
Sr. Joao Thome, Consultative Committee Vice-Chair

Reports on the IAC Scientific Committee Inter-sessional activities of the Work Plan and presentation of results

01:30-02:00 a. Results of the survey on trawl fisheries targeting non-crustacean species (Fisheries Working Group).
b. Recommendations for priority actions from the CCE on the Loggerhead Turtle Conservation Status CIT-CC13-2016-Tec.13, for IAC Annual / **CIT-CC14-2017- Doc.5.**
Sr. Joao Thome, Consultative Committee and Dr. Neca Marcovaldi, Scientific /Consultative Committee.

02:00-02:20 Coffee Break

Collaboration with RFMOs and other International Organizations

02:20-03:00 Collaboration with Albatross and Petrel Agreement (ACAP): Review proposal from ACAP to prepare a document on collaboration and synergies IAC-ACAP. **CIT- CC14-2017-Doc.2**

03:00-03:30 Results of the research on Hawksbill products trade in CA and Colombia “Endangered Souvenirs“ *Mr. Didiher Chacon SC-Delegate Costa Rica.*

Discussion on implementation of the Hawksbill Resolution adopted in COP8 **CIT-COP8-2017-R.2** and design of a strategy to implement IAC Collaboration with CITES on a study on the trade of turtles in accordance with CITES Decision 17.222.

03:30-04:00 Report on the IAC Participation in the IATTC 7th Meeting of the Bycatch Working – and results of the 92nd IATTC Commission Meeting. *Dr. Yonat Swimmer, SC Delegate - USA and Ms. Veronica Caceres, IAC Secretary PT.*

4:00 Visit to the Panama Canal Miraflores Locks organized by the Government of Panama to welcome the IAC delegations.

Thursday - 19.10.17

09:00-09:40 Recent work of RFMO to strengthen Sea Turtle Conservation measures

Discussion on recommendations about sea turtles from Ecosystem and bycatch subcommittee SCRS- ICCAT. Informative document Page 281
Dr. Yonat Swimmer NOAA

09:40-10:10 Develop a strategy to work with organizations that IAC has MoU and RFMOs/CIT- CC14-2017-Doc.3

10:10-10:20 Coffee break

Working Groups Meeting

10:20-12:30 a) Fisheries Working Group/Leatherback task force: Discussion Collaboration with IATTC.

b) IAC-ACAP Working Group: Include text from the perspective of sea turtle conservation and the opportunities for collaboration with ACAP in the document submitted by ACAP Secretary.

c) Climate Change Working Group: Review of environmental data form for Parties – First request for information will be in 2018. Prepare form to request climate data when necessary including rationale to be presented to CCE.

d) Hawksbill working group: Prepare guideline for implementation of the collaboration with CITES on the study of sea turtle trade.

e) Exceptions Working Group: Prepare an outline for *Lepidochelys olivacea* regional trend analysis. The working group will be formed for this task and they will prepare a project proposal to seek funding to carry out such analysis. - Informative document on *L. olivacea* traffic in the Gulf of Fonseca (Costa Rica and Honduras Working Group)

f) Sea Turtle Conservation Status Working Group: Prepare a format per sea turtle species and suggest bibliography references to find the information.

g) Sea Turtle Foraging Sites working group: Technical document on foraging sites within the IAC (Argentina, United States, Caribbean Netherlands and Ecuador).

12:30-01:30 Lunch Break

01:30-03:00 Continue working group meetings preparing recommendations

03:00-03:20 Coffee Break

03:20-05:00 Reports and Recommendations from Working Groups. *Working Groups Coordinators.*

Friday–20.10.17

- 9:00-10:00 **IAC Annual Reports**
IAC Resolution compliance Report 201-2017.
Sr. Joao Thome, Consultative Committee
- Proposal for the new table in IAC Annual Report to follow up the compliance with the Resolution Conservation of *Caretta caretta* **CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.5**.
Dr. Neca Marcovaldi, Scientific /Consultative Committee.
- 10:00-10:30 Gillnet LED work as means to reduce sea turtle bycatch.
Dr. Yonat Swimmer, NOAA
- 10:30-10:50 Coffee Break
- Exceptions**
- 10:50-11:20 Review of Exceptions Presented to the IAC Convention
a) Follow up on recommendations on Exceptions from the SC13 to Panama and Guatemala.
b) Follow up on recommendations from the SC13 to Honduras.
- 11:20-12:30 Update Scientific Committee Work Plan **CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.4**
Ms. Carolina Montalvan, Delegate Honduras - WG Coordinator.
- 12:30-02:00 Lunch Break
- 02:00 -03:00 Review and Adoption of Agreements of the meeting
- 03:00-03:30 Presentation of results of Project “Capacity building for fishermen to create awareness and promote conservation of East Pacific leatherback turtles” and updates on Peru’s Sea Turtle National Action Plan.
Mr. Javier Quiñones IMARPE and Dr. Heriberto Santana INAPESCA.
- 03:30-3:50 Coffee Break
- 03:50-04:20 Preliminary results of the “Characterization of Sea Turtle Bycatch in the Colombian Pacific and Panama” *Dr. Juan M. Rodriguez. JustSea Foundation*
- 04:20-04:40 Other business: The delegates are invited to propose other topics relevant to the meeting.

Preparation of the next meeting (CC15)

04:40-05:00 Country proposal to host CC15
Delegates are invited bring their hosting proposal and dates for the next meeting.

05:00-05:30 Closing Remarks

Annex III
Document CIT-ACAP CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.2

**Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the IAC and ACAP:
cooperation to promote conservation actions of both Organizations**

In December 2016, the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) Secretariat *Pro Tempore* and the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The primary objective of this MoU is to facilitate cooperation between these organizations in order to achieve and maintain a favorable conservation status of the species listed by both Organizations. The areas of cooperation identified in this memorandum include the development of management approaches and the exchange of relevant scientific information on sea turtles, albatrosses and petrels. These objectives can be enhanced by the presence of some parties participating in both agreements (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay) and thus would be beneficial to both Organizations.

This MoU also offers an opportunity to expand the linkages with countries that are parties to one of the two agreements and which have relevance for the conservation of species listed in the other agreement. This MoU facilitates the sharing of information on nesting sites, reproductive sites, migratory routes, fisheries bycatch mitigation measures, etc. for species of concern for IAC and ACAP. This cooperation allows the scope of protection to be extended and conservation measures to be more effective over a wider geographic range.

This MoU also facilitates efforts by the member countries of ACAP and IAC to generate a joint approach on issues in common.

The participation of both ACAP and IAC at regional fisheries management meetings has demonstrated the value of addressing the problem of fisheries bycatch from a multi-taxa perspective. Conservation issues relevant to both Organizations include, for example, the need to improve capacity of observer programs; gaps in data gathering and reporting bycatch; and the need to improve and implement effective conservation measures.

In order to achieve the goals of this memorandum, the IAC will send a representative to the ACAP fisheries bycatch working group on a regular basis. This engagement will promote effective and complementary cross-taxa bycatch reduction work and will facilitate the development of joint seabird/sea turtle bycatch mitigation projects. Additionally, the IAC and

ACAP Secretariats will strategize at the beginning of each year to identify common areas of interest at the RFMOs.

The document above is the final version submitted to ACAP's Executive Secretary in February 2018 and includes the edits from the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts.

Annex IV

Outline terms of reference for Study on Sea Turtle International Trade to support the implementation of CITES Decision 17.222 (2016)

CITES Decision 17.222 (2016) requests Status, Scope and trends, Conservation Impacts, Management Options, and Areas where immediate mitigation is needed.

- The scope of action: the Americas and Caribbean. Other international agreements need to define their geographical scope of actions
- Regarding the IAC's interests, the study would focus on hawksbill, olive ridley, and green turtles.
- Topics to be included:
 - Biological aspects, regional trends and migrations (summary); using information from e.g., Fleming (2001), and Campbell (2015), *inter alia*. See references below.
 - Legal aspects regulating trade by country; traditional use by country.
 - Use of the animals, products, and sub-products.
 - Information on trade by country (literature review) and cross-border trade (including Internet study).
 - Information on trade with verification *in situ* (product origin, product description, quantity estimation, photographic record, market description and trade flows; including Internet study)
 - Analysis of the local trade trend (where possible)
 - Analysis of the regional trade trends
 - Recommendations for local actions, focusing on police, judicial and customs departments
 - Recommendations for international alliances to reduce illegal trade.
- The MIKES Programme is expanding adaptive management and monitoring approaches at selected sites, including the Caribbean region. Review the implementation and collaboration within the MIKES projects framework in the IAC region, including Result 5 and Activities 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3.
- Action Plan by country, with a specific analysis of international tourism, internet marketing, and identification of primary countries involved in the trade as points of origin and as major markets.
Potential sources of funding: EU, NFWF, ACP, CARICOM, and international agreements such as CITES.

REFERENCES RECOMMENDED:

Fleming, E.H. 2001. Swimming Against the Tide: Recent surveys of Exploitation, Trade, and Management of Marine Turtles in the Northern Caribbean. Traffic North America, Washington D.C. 161 pp.

Chacón, D. 2002. Diagnóstico sobre el comercio de las tortugas marinas y sus derivados en el istmo centroamericano. Red Regional para la Conservación de las Tortugas Marinas en Centroamérica (RCA). San José, Costa Rica.

Bräutigam, A.L. and Eckert, K.E. 2006. Turning the Tide: Exploitation, Trade, and Management of Marine Turtles in the Lesser Antilles, Central America, Colombia and Venezuela. TRAFFIC International, Cambridge, UK.

Campbell, C.L. 2014. Conservation Status of Hawksbill Turtles in the Wider Caribbean, Western Atlantic, and Eastern Pacific Regions. IAC Secretariat *Pro Tempore*, Virginia USA. 76p

Annex V
Acknowledgement Letter submitted to ICCAT for circulation to the Contracting Parties
during their Regular Meeting of the Commission in November 2017

November 3rd, 2017

Mr. Driss Meski
Executive Secretary
International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

Dear Mr. Secretary,

The Scientific Committee of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) at its 14th Meeting noted the progress made by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) at the July 2017 meeting of its Sub-committee on Ecosystems with regards to addressing sea turtle conservation in ICCAT fisheries.

The IAC Scientific Committee would like to express its satisfaction with the progress made by ICCAT and to urge the SCRS to continue work on the conservation of species caught incidentally in ICCAT fisheries, particularly sea turtles.

The objective of the IAC is to promote the protection, conservation, and recovery of the populations of sea turtles and those habitats on which they depend. The IAC relies upon the best available data and takes into consideration the environmental, socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of the 16 member countries in the Convention.

The environmental impact of activities such as fishing and exploitation of marine resources on marine turtles in the region is, in particular, a priority on the agenda of the IAC Scientific Committee. The critically endangered East Pacific leatherback turtle and the threatened loggerhead turtle have prompted the IAC to form permanent working groups to address threats to their populations and to provide scientific basis for their effective recoveries.

The IAC Scientific Committee would like to reiterate its offer to collaborate with ICCAT regarding its information and knowledge on sea turtles in general and in particular in the Atlantic Ocean area.

Respectfully,

Diego Alejandro Albareda
Scientific Committee Chair
CC. Dr. Miguel Neves dos Santos
Dr. Paul de Bruyn
Dr. David Die

Annex VI
Strategy to work with RFMOs

- 1) Identify meetings and review agenda priorities to assess relevance to the IAC
- 2) Identify priority topics relevant for the IAC
- 3) Evaluate feasibility and value of participation by IAC Secretariat PT (or a designate).
- 4) Clarify potential product or outcome, such as letters of support, lobbying for MoU, etc.
- 5) Identify appropriate personnel to assist in the development of the products identified.

Annex VII

Instructions for reporting Environmental data collected from Index Nesting Beaches

Index beaches are typically those with high use by nesting turtles. Environmental quality of index beaches should be recorded because changes in beach quality can directly affect numbers of females nesting, sex ratio of hatchlings, hatching success, and mortality of hatchlings. This applies to all sea turtle species.

Please complete the form for an index nesting beach (es) in your country where environmental data are being recorded.

Recommendations on what environmental data to collect and suggested methodologies can be found in CIT-CC12-2015-Tec.10. *Mitigation strategies to reduce the impact of climate change on nesting beaches.*

Three environmental characteristics of index beaches are particularly important to monitor: Hinterland (behind the beach) habitat type and land use because this may affect nesting turtles and hatchlings; Beach width because it is an indicator of the area of dry beach available for nesting; and Sand Temperature because it affects incubation success and sex ratio.

For purposes of detecting trends on beaches over years, consistency of monitoring is critical. Data must be taken at the same location, at the same time, and with the same methodology.

NOTES TO ASSIST COMPLETION

The form consists of 4 sections. The cells are expandable to allow space needed and more rows can be added.

A. General information

Months of the nesting season: Please indicate between which months nesting occurs on the index beach.

Physical description of nesting beach: Please indicate color of sand, substrate type (coralline, siliceous, etc.), natural/re-nourished, high or low wave energy.

Hinterland: This information will indicate to what extent the index beach is affected by human alteration of the land inland from the beach. Human impacts in the hinterland may affect the stability of the beach in the long term. Please indicate what % of the total length of index beach consists of natural versus human-altered habitats. Enter 0 for habitat types not found at the index beach. If there is another land use that is not listed, please add under “Others”, as required.

B. Dry beach width. This section is to be completed if you are measuring dry beach width on the index nesting beach. Otherwise, please leave blank.

This is a measurement of the beach from the normal high tide line landwards to where the substrate becomes unusable for nesting. The beach is normally dry, i.e. only washed over by high

storm swells. Comparison of beach widths at the same place at the same tidal/lunar cycles can allow long term increases or decreases in dry beach available for nesting to be detected.

Bench marks are permanent markers (e.g., a post, a specific built structure, a large tree) used to define the landward boundary when measuring beach width. The use of bench marks ensures that the location where beach width is measured is constant. Please provide a GPS position of the bench mark.

Date: This is the date of measurement (dd/mm/yy).

Trends in dry beach width: What trends in beach width (if any) have been detected on the index nesting beach. Please indicate if the beach was unusually affected by a hurricane, storm, other erosional/accretional events, unusually heavy rainfall, etc. at times when measurements were taken.

Respondents may add more bench marks as needed.

C. Sand temperature. This section is to be completed if you are measuring sand temperature on the index nesting beach. Otherwise, please leave blank.

Location: Please provide GPS for location sampled. Add more locations as needed.

Depth: Please indicate at what depth sand temperature is measured. **If data came from a temperature datalogger positioned in a clutch of eggs, please indicate.**

Frequency of measurement: Are temperatures recorded hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, or at longer intervals at this location?

Start and end date of monitoring: the date that temperature measurements began and the date that they finished.

Temperature should be expressed as Mean temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C} \pm\text{SD}$) per calendar month. Please also report Mean Maximum temperature ($\pm\text{SD}$) per calendar month, if available.

D. Please list any studies/reports/theses that have included environmental data collected on the index nesting beach(es).

Country:	
Year of report:	
A. Index beach description	
Name and Lat-Long of Index beach:	
Length of index beach (km):	
Physical description of nesting beach (e.g. sand characteristics, wave energy):	
Species nesting:	
Description of hinterland (the land lying inland from the beach)	% dunes:
	% coastal forest:
	% lagoon, wetland
	% buildings (hotels, houses):
	% sea wall:
	% roadway, boardwalk:
	% Other:

B. Dry beach width			
Bench mark	Date (dd/mm/yy)	Width (m)	Trend(s) in dry beach width; Comments on storms and other impacts that may affect beach dynamics
Bench mark 1			
Bench mark 2			
Bench mark 3			

C. Sand temperature	Location	Depth	Frequency of measurement (hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, other)	Start and end date of monitoring	Temperature (°C)	Trend(s) in temperature; Comments on storms and other impacts that may affect temperature
Year 1	1					
	2					
	3					
	4					
Year 2	1					
	2					
	3					
	4					
Year 3	1					
	2					
	3					
	4					
Year 4	1					
	2					
	3					
	4					
Year 5	1					
	2					
	3					
	4					

D. Please list studies of environmental characteristics of index nesting beach(es) that have been published in the last 5 years.

Annex VIII
Outline to analyze trends of *L. olivacea* and
Informative Document on illegal trafficking of *L. olivacea* eggs

A) Outline for the Document on the Regional Analysis of the Population Trend

- Scope: Mexico and Central America including the species range.
- Items:
 - Biological aspects related to the species population trend (summary)
 - Establishment of comparison parameters (comparison units)
 - The IAC Parties will provide data from at least one index beach. Data from at least 10 years.
 - Population trends and regional migrations.

B) Outline for the Informative Document on Cross-border Traffic in *Golfo de Fonseca*

- Use and consumption of eggs
- Harvest and usage purpose of the product
- Commercial trade legal framework in each country
- Information on trading per country (literature review) and cross-border traffic
- Information on trading with field verification (source of the product, description of the product, estimation of quantities, photographic record, description of the market and trade flows)
- Analyze the local trade trend (where possible)
- Analyze the regional trade trend
- Recommendations of local actions, for police departments, judicial bodies, and customs
- Recommendations for alliances

Annex IX
Table for compliance with *Caretta caretta* Resolution for the IAC Annual Report
CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.5

Resolution CIT-COP7-2015-R3: Conservation of the Loggerhead Sea Turtle (*Caretta caretta*)

ACCORDING TO RESOLUTION CIT-COP7-2015-R3, REPORT WHETHER YOUR COUNTRY:

IS COMPLYING WITH THE FOLLOWING:	RESOLUTION DOES NOT APPLY			DOES NOT APPLY
	YES	NO	DESCRIBE ACTION (*)	
1. Has your country created national action plans or monitoring programs to promote loggerhead sea turtle conservation?				
2. State if these are plans or recovery programs, or bilateral or regional cooperation.				
3. Are these action plans or monitoring programs being implemented?				
4. Is there protection of the species at a state or federal level?				
5. If your country has loggerhead turtles nesting beaches:				
5 a. Has your country taken conservation actions to protect nesting beaches and their associated habitats?				
5b. Are there laws on turtle-friendly lighting in areas impacted by coastal development?				
5c. Are there long-term (minimum 10 years) standardized data available for population trend studies?				
6. Is there exploitation or direct harvest of loggerhead sea turtles in your country?				

(*) Specify actions implemented, the 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

Annex X.

Table on *Eretmochelys imbricata* Resolution for the IAC Annual Report

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. Are you strengthening monitoring of the illegal use and trade of hawksbill turtles and their products?					
2. Are you enforcing pertinent hawksbill legislation?					
3. Are activities being carried out in order to stop the illegal trade of hawksbill products?					
4. 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				
5. Does your country support or strengthen protection measures causing social and economic impacts (positive or negative)? Suggested for consideration					

(*) Specify actions implemented, the 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.

Question No.5 is pending for approval as there is no consensus among the members of the Scientific Committee because it is not clear what the question is asking for. The Consultative Committee should decide on it.

Annex XI

Table to identify which species of sea turtle is impacted by particular fisheries, annexed to the Fisheries Resolution Table in the IAC Annual Report

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
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, 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))				
v. Training programs for fishermen about best practices for safe handling and release of sea turtles incidentally caught.				
C. Socio-economic considerations				
• Support socio-economic activities that help mitigate adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles				

(*) Specify actions implemented, the 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.

Table suggested by the Scientific Committee for consideration

Based on the table above, indicate which actions are taken per species, to reduce the adverse impacts according to each fishery, using the following codes

RM - Research and Monitoring

MT Mitigation measures

SE Socio-Economics activities

	Longline	Gillnets	Trawling	Others
CC				
LO				
DC				
CM				
EI				
LK				

Annex XII
Work Plan 2017 – 2019 CIT-CC14-2017-Doc.4

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Time Frame
Scientific Committee Exceptions Working Group	Exceptions	1) Follow up on the implementation progress of recommendations on exceptions to Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Panama. 2) The Scientific Committee will write proposals to develop a study on <i>L. olivacea</i> population trend, and a study on cross-border traffic of <i>L. olivacea</i> eggs in Golfo de Fonseca.	1) Recommendations from the Scientific Committee to countries when appropriate. 2) Proposal on <i>L. olivacea</i> population trend. 3) Proposal on cross-border traffic of <i>L. olivacea</i> eggs in Golfo de Fonseca	February 2018 June 2018
Scientific Committee, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	IAC Website & Newsletter	1) On a monthly basis, the Scientific Committee will provide news relevant to IAC's Parties to the Secretary <i>Pro Tempore</i> for the IAC Newsletter.	1) Updated news in the IAC website, and regular publication of the IAC's Newsletter.	Permanent
Fisheries Working Group	Fisheries	1) Update list of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDS's) that have been utilized/approved within the IAC region.	1) During the next SC15, Mexico's delegate will present an updated chart summarizing TEDS's that are in use up to 2018.	2018
Fisheries Working Group	Fisheries	1) Develop a report with the survey results on trawl fisheries targeting non-crustacean species. 2) Define common topics to work within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding IAC - ACAP. 3) Continue to support the work with the EP Leatherback regarding fisheries.	1) Report on trawl fisheries targeting non-crustacean species interacting with sea turtles including the results of the analysis presented in SC13. 2) Activities identified within the framework of the MoU IAC-ACAP to prepare a work plan. 3) Scientific Committee recommendations to COP, when needed.	Intersessional 2017 CC14 2017 2017-2018
Nesting Working Group and Scientific Committee	Conservation Status of Index Nesting Beaches	1) Compile information of annual nesting in index beaches using the form designed for it and analyze it periodically (every 5 years). 2) The Scientific Committee will provide data from nesting beaches from 2014-2018, at least one month prior the next Scientific Committee meeting in 2018 to update the nesting beaches report.	1) Updated form including information provided by IAC Parties. 2) Report on the analysis of nesting in index beaches 2014-2018 updated during the Scientific Committee meeting SC15 (2018) to be presented at the COP9.	Permanent

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Time Frame
Climate Change Working Group	Climate Change	1) The Scientific Committee will submit to the Consultative Committee CCE11 the form and instructions prepared by the Climate Change WG to be used in a pilot study where each Party with nesting beaches, will be invited to collect environmental data from one (or more) nesting index beaches during five years (2019-2023).	1) Form to report environmental data from nesting index beaches submitted to the CCE11. 2) Data collection begins using the pilot study form as agreed in the SC14. The first request to the Parties will be in 2019 for 5 years	2018-2023
Scientific Committee	Work Plan	1) Update the Scientific Committee Work Plan following IAC guidelines and the COPs Resolutions.	1) Scientific Committee bi-annual work plan including actions, timetable, and responsibilities.	Permanent
Scientific Committee	Collaboration with Other Organizations and Strategic Alliances	1) Review the Scientific Committee Work Plan to include topics and mechanisms towards improving the cooperation with Focal Points and other entities. 2) Internal Strategy for the Scientific Committee to collaborate with RFMOs	1) Identification of synergies with similar organizations to share information (ACAP, SPAW, IATTC, CPPS, WIDECAS, ICCAT, RAMSAR, SWOT, ICAPO, ASO, WWF, CBD, CMS, IOSEA, TLT -The Leatherback Trust, CITES). 2) Strategy to work with RFMOs adopted by the Scientific Committee.	Permanent January 2018
Scientific Committee	IAC Annual Report	1) Review technical information included in the IAC Annual Report.	1) Review of technical information included in the IAC Annual Reports.	Permanent
Scientific Committee WG: Argentina, Peru	Sea turtle foraging areas	1) The Foraging Areas WG will develop a comprehensive review of the issue on data collection in foraging areas.	1) Report prepared with information based on what was agreed at the 14th SC meeting.	2018-2019
Scientific Committee	Projects	1) Develop recommendations about high priority projects to apply for funds and other resources needed to achieve the IAC objectives.	1) Recommendations for high priority projects when needed.	Permanent
Scientific Committee, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	COP and Consultative Committee of Experts Recommendations	1) Address COP and Consultative Committee of Experts requests and make recommendations accordingly.	1) Make recommendations to the COP and Consultative Committee of Experts as needed.	2018 - 2019
Scientific Committee	IAC Technical Documents	1) Develop technical documents as needed.	1) Technical documents available at the IAC's website and shared with IAC Parties.	Permanent 2018

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Time Frame
Scientific Committee, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	IAC Expert Directory	1) Review and update the IAC Expert Directory.	1) Updated directory available on IAC's website.	Permanent
Scientific Committee, Leatherback Task Force, Fisheries Working Group	Eastern Pacific Leatherback <i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	1) Request the data form IAC Parties to complete the analysis on the Leatherback Resolution compliance CIT-CC14-2017-Inf.2. 2) Develop a report on the Leatherback Resolution compliance. 3) Develop a communication strategy for intersessional work of the Leatherback EP Task Force 4) Standardize, adapt and develop a strandings protocol (necropsies). 5) Develop a report per country, on the current status of occurrence and threats for the EP Leatherback. 6) Standardize bycatch records to identify the presence of other threats. 7) Strengthen participation of other stakeholders in the EP Leatherback network. 8) Systematize leatherback strandings data 9) Develop a compliance assessment for the suggestions made during the Scientific Committee in Belize CIT-COP8-2017-Doc.2	1) Updated Leatherback Resolution compliance analysis. 2) Updated report on leatherback Resolution compliance presented to the Scientific Committee. 3) Communication System developed by the Leatherback TF members 4) Per Country reports including information on the status of occurrence and threats to the Leatherback 5) Presentations on the progress of activities 4 to 9, and presentation of a strandings protocol.	2018
Scientific Committee	Hawksbill turtle <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	1) The Secretary <i>PT</i> will communicate the Terms of Reference developed by the IAC Scientific Committee to CITES Secretary. 2) The working group will submit a list of experts involved in this kind of work for consideration of CITES within the following 30 days.	1) Terms of Reference for the development of a study on the legal and illegal trade of marine turtles to be presented to CITES. 2) List of experts for consideration of CITES Secretariat.	2017 - 2018

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Time Frame
Scientific Committee	Capacity Building	1) Support from Scientific Committee members in workshops and training on topics identified by IAC Parties, and those for which funding is available.	1) Strengthening capacities on topics related to sea turtles in the IAC Parties.	Permanent
Scientific Committee	Capacity Building	1) Technical support from the members of the Scientific Committee in a working group to monitor the development of the project "Artisanal Fisheries Facilities in Puerto Lopez, Manabi" in Ecuador.	1) Technical support is given to Ecuador from relevant experts of the Scientific and Consultative Committees.	2018
Scientific Committee Working Group: Brazil, Argentina, Panama, Uruguay, Ecuador	Sea turtle populations status	1) Design a format per species to develop a report on the conservation status of sea turtle populations.	1) Report format per species	2018

PHOTOS



Group of the 14th Scientific Committee Meeting – October 18-20, 2017 Panama City, Panama



Working Groups session during the 14th IAC Scientific Committee meeting



Discussion to update the 14th IAC Scientific Committee Work Plan (2017-2018)



Presentation of Costa Rica's delegate, about the study on trafficking of hawksbill products in Central America and Colombia "Endangered Souvenirs" during the 14th IAC Scientific Committee Meeting