



Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
Tenth Meeting of the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts
February 15th, 2017

CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.4

Report of the 10th Meeting of the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts

Opening Remarks and Agenda Adoption

1. The Tenth meeting of the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE) took place on Wednesday, April 15th, 2017 by videoconference using the software Vidyo from the IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretariat office at US Fish and Wildlife Service headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia.
2. The meeting started at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time. After confirming that the participants had joined the conference room, the CCE Vice Chair, Mr. Joao Thomé, began the meeting with his opening remarks and proposed that the Secretary *PT* chaired the meeting in order to facilitate communication, which was approved by the Committee members.
3. Delegates from eleven (11) IAC Contracting Parties attended the meeting namely, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, the United States and Venezuela. Representatives of the Scientific, Industry and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) sectors attended as well with a total of 37 participants, a record in participation. (List of participants CIT-CCE10-2017-Inf.1 Annex I.A)
4. The CCE10 adopted the agenda (CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.1 Annex I.B) with inclusion of a presentation of the IAC Secretariat *PT* activities 2016-2017, and a special acknowledgment to the Consultative Committee members who passed in 2016 and 2017.

Summary of the 9th Meeting of the Consultative Committee of Experts

5. Ms. Verónica Cáceres, IAC Secretary *PT*, presented a summary of the CCE9, including the request to the Eastern Pacific Leatherback Task Force to present recommendations on urgent actions to implement the IAC Leatherback Resolution. The recommendations will be presented to the 8th Conference of the Parties (COP8). The CCE agreed on the proposal for a mechanism for cases of concern for sea turtles presented by NGOs, and the CCE Chair and Vice Chair were re-appointed for another two-year term.

Report of Secretariat *PT* Activities 2016-2017

6. Ms. Veronica Caceres, presented the activities including meetings organized and attended, cooperation with international organizations, capacity building projects supported by the IAC Secretariat *PT* in Belize, Costa Rica, Panama, Guatemala, Peru and Mexico, and support to countries in the implementation of Resolutions on Exceptions and Conservation of the Eastern

Pacific Leatherback Turtle. The upcoming meetings for 2017 were announced, including the IAC 8th Conference of the Parties in Buenos Aires in June, and the 14th meeting of the Scientific Committee in Panama. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels on December 2016 was highlighted. The summary of this presentation can be found in Annex II.

7. The delegate from Venezuela, Ms. Edis Solórzano, congratulated the Secretary *PT* and highlighted that the capacity building activities are critical for IAC Parties and expressed interest in participating.

Recommendations from the Eastern Pacific Leatherback Task Force working group to IAC Parties regarding urgent actions for the implementation of the Leatherback Resolution CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.2

8. Ms. Joanna Alfaro, delegate of the NGOs Sector and Coordinator of the EP Leatherback Task Force, presented the recommendations including five specific items (Annex III).

9. Regarding recommendation 1 of the document, on the convening of national workshops to communicate EP Leatherback status, the delegate from Chile, Ms. Patricia Zarate, inquired if the dates were defined. These workshops will be carried out as soon as possible. The IAC Secretariat *PT* stated that Peru is interested in organizing the workshop before COP8. The delegate of the United States, Ms. Alexis Gutierrez, inquired if besides Peru, other countries within the species range would be interested in organizing these workshops. The delegates from Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico and Panama agreed. Mr. Fernando Medrano, delegate of the Industry Sector, pointed out that CONAPESCA along with NGOs carries out this type of workshop in Mexico.

10. The delegate from the United States, Mr. Earl Possardt, suggested that the Secretary *PT* submits a proposal on April 1st to request funding from the *Marine Turtle Conservation Fund* to support the implementation of the EP Leatherback Task Force recommendations, such as the workshops. The delegate from Brazil, Mr. Joao Thomé, stressed that there is a mandate to allow for fundraise to implement the recommendations in the Leatherback Resolution (CIT-COP7-2015-R2). Costa Rica pointed out that item 9 of the Resolution refers to that.

11. The objectives and agenda for the national workshop were discussed by the delegates. The delegate from Chile, Mr. Jorge Azocar, stated that the objectives should be adapted to each country capacity and needs.

12. The delegates discussed the use of the term “closure of fishing areas” in recommendation 2 in the original document. The delegate from Costa Rica, Mr. Rotney Piedra, voiced his concern about the use of this term, he clarified that his intent is not to remove the topic from the national workshop's agenda, but being cautious with the selection of words, to avoid creating animosity in the fisheries sector that will attend the workshop. This will cause friction and difficulties for collaboration. The delegate from Costa Rica, Mr. José Miguel Carvajal, stated that his country has worked on fisheries zoning, and specific actions have been implemented. However, when the term “closure” is included in a dialogue with the fishing sectors, the communications becomes

difficult. Costa Rica delegates proposed that the topic of closures of fishing areas be included in the national workshop's agenda, but to not use the term “closure” in the recommendations document. The proposal was supported by Chile and Panama as the delegate, Ms. Haydee Medina, pointed out that more time will be needed for conversations with fisheries agencies and other sectors that could be affected, leading to obstacles for action implementation

13. Chile stated that due to the impact of a closure, the country requires a local assessment to identify small areas to implement this type of measure in the future, and clarified that a preliminary national discussion will be required.

14. Venezuela proposed that actions need to be prioritized in order to build an effective work plan.

15. The Leatherback TF Coordinator clarified that original recommendation does not propose closures but suggests a discussion on the measure during the technical workshops. She requested recommendations on the term that should be used.

16. The United States delegate suggested using the terms “spatial and temporal management” in the document instead of “closure.” The delegate understands Costa Rica and Chile position regarding a cautious use of terms because in the US these conversations with fishery sectors are challenging as well. She mentioned management in some areas of the US where if the number of interaction with sea turtles exceeds a quota the fishery is closed. The delegates accepted the change in terms.

17. Costa Rica, Chile and Mexico drafted recommendation 1 in the document. The group presented their text to the meeting, recommending convening national workshops with objectives and agendas adapted to each country capacities including the discussion of spatial/temporal management measures. The new text for this recommendation was adopted in plenary.

18. Chile stated that observer’s coverage is low and data on fisheries interactions with sea turtles is insufficient to justify a closure. The United States expressed his understanding of the challenge in the lack of data, but pointed out that given the critical condition of the species, urgent actions should be implemented such as finding new fishing areas with low mortality of leatherbacks, and increasing the efforts to communicate the critical status of the population to the government agencies with the data available at this moment.

19. Brazil stated that from a COP’s mandate the Leatherback TF was formed, and it includes experts who drafted recommendations for the Leatherback Resolution compliance, using the best available scientific information which should be acknowledged by the Consultative Committee.

20. The meeting moved to the discussion on recommendation 2. The recommendation states requesting the IAC’s COP to convene a high-level meeting with relevant authorities from the countries within the EP Leatherback home-range with the purpose of sharing the Leatherback TF recommendations and urgent actions to be implemented. The United States delegation pointed out that a high-level meeting could provide a bigger political impact, but may not be feasible to achieve due to the logistics and funding required to convene ministries, environmental and

fisheries agencies from 15 countries. Instead it was proposed as a more viable option with similar results, to convene meetings of the IAC Secretariat *Pro Tempore* and a small delegation (committee's members) with the authorities from each country suggested, aiming to inform the results from the national workshops and the urgent measures that need implementation. Brazil supported this proposal as being more viable, and lower in costs. Panama agreed that a high level meeting would be more appropriate from a political and a foreign relations perspective, but they understand the urgency on moving forward, and supported the idea proposed by the United States delegation. Information from these workshops will provide more evidence to prioritize actions in favor of the species. The changes in the original recommendation were agreed, and instead of a high-level meeting, it is recommended to organize individual meeting between the IAC Secretary PT delegation and relevant authorities from each country.

21. Brazil suggested that the above-mentioned meetings should take place before the workshops, as there is enough information to present already. The United States stated that discussions in the meetings will be more effective if the results and recommendations obtained from the workshops are presented. Venezuela expressed concern about the costs of the meetings and agreed with the United States to convene with the workshops first.

22. Costa Rica requested OSPESCA and OLDEPESCA to be included among the regional organizations suggested to work with. Venezuela suggested including item number "b" under Item 3 to "Develop mechanisms to share successful experiences".

23. The CCE10 agreed with the edits in the document on Recommendations from the EP Leatherback Task Force. The final document will be presented to COP8 in June 2017. Annex III-CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.2 adopted.

Recommendations from the 13th IAC Scientific Committee Meeting CIT-CC13-2016-Doc.6

24. On behalf of the Scientific Committee Chair, the IAC Secretary *PT* presented the Scientific Committee recommendations regarding the implementation of resolutions on exceptions, changes in the annual report concerning sea turtles foraging areas, and collecting data on climate change and sea turtles. For details on these recommendations, please refer to the 13th SC meeting Report at: www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/comite-cientifico/13reunion/SC13_Meeting_Report_CIT-CC13-2016-Doc.7_Final_Web.pdf

a) Progress in the implementation of the Resolution on Exception in Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Panama, and recommendations to exception presented by Honduras

25. According to the SC13 recommendations on the implementation of Exceptions (see CIT-CC13-2016 – Annex IV) the delegate from Ecuador, Mr. Harry Reyes, requested to obtain information on the number of people involved in the exception activity at Ostional, Costa Rica. The delegate from Costa Rica, Mr. Rotney Piedra, invited Ecuador to observe the process of the exception *in situ* and to exchange information on the management of this process.

26. The delegate from Mexico, Ms. Laura Sarti, enquired about the possibility to develop the baseline study on exceptions proposed by the SC before 2020. Furthermore, considering that Mexico has been using Valverde method since 2008, Ms. Sarti suggested a comparative work with Costa Rica, aiming to learn if the methods used are standardized therefore both countries can coordinate efforts. **It was agreed that the Secretary *PT* will communicate Mexico's delegate request to the SC Chair on the possibility for the Scientific Committee to prepare a baseline study on *L. olivacea* status before 2020.**

27. Brazil suggested including in the study information related to the increase/decrease of human populations benefiting from the exception activity. The Scientific Sector delegate, Ms. Hedelvy Guada, stated the importance of the socio-economic information. **The Secretary *PT* will communicate these suggestions to the Scientific Committee, to include information on human populations involved in the activities of the exception including social and economic characteristics.**

b) IAC Annual Report modifications regarding sea turtle foraging areas

28. The Secretary *PT* reported that the IAC Annual Report format 2017 does not request information on sea turtles foraging areas, as it was agreed by the Scientific Committee they will compile the information on foraging areas available to this date in a technical document that will be updated every 5 years

29. The United States delegation indicated that they do not understand the purpose that the SC is seeking in collecting foraging information from IAC Parties, furthermore it is unclear the value to the IAC Member Countries of this exercise, considering the amount of effort and time required to gather foraging data. Brazil agreed with this inquiry adding that Brazil's foraging areas are very large which would make it challenging to collect this information without the SC having a clear purpose on how it will be used by them. The Secretariat *PT* will communicate the inquiry to the Scientific Committee for their consideration, indicating that both committees will discuss this to agree on a way forward. The delegates agreed, and the delegate from Brazil Mr. Thome expressed that the Convention was created for sea turtle conservation, rather than for sea turtle research. Hence priorities needed to be addressed first, considering the scarcity of human and financial resources available to the IAC to operate.

30. The delegate from Mexico, Mr. Vicente Guzman, stated that in the case those countries already have this information like in the case of Mexico, the monitoring in foraging areas should continue, since what happens in those areas has an impact in the recruitment of females that are observed in the nesting beaches. The delegate asked how to send information about this to the SC, it was stated that the information can be sent to the SC Chair, or through the Secretary *PT*.

31. **It was agreed that the Secretary *PT* will communicate the CCE inquiries to the Scientific Committee regarding clarification of the use and need for collecting sea turtle foraging areas information, to justify preparing a technical document, and requesting this information from IAC Parties every 5 years.**

c) Data collection procedures about climate change and sea turtles

32. The Scientific Committee agreed to request information every 5 years, to the IAC Parties that are collecting environmental data from their index beaches, regarding the Climate Change Resolution. The first request will be in 2018. This recommendation will be presented to the COP8, 2017.

33. Venezuela suggested using a specific format to request information the IAC Parties. The Secretary *PT* pointed out that the Scientific Committee has considered the need to do this as well.

34. The Scientific Sector delegate, Ms. Hedely Guada, stated the possibility that many countries might lose their nesting beaches due to climate change; therefore it is more important that countries report on the measures that they are taking to address mitigation or adaptation, rather than reporting on changes observed in particular beaches.

Potential activities under IAC-ACAP MOU

35. There was a request for suggestions on activities that could be carried out in the context of the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding between the IAC and ACAP.

36. Brazil congratulated the Secretary *PT* for the negotiations to sign this agreement and informed that Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina work together with ACAP scientists in the South Pacific. Protocols and data collection forms about birds and sea turtle bycatch have been developed and they can be shared. Chile also applauded the MoU, and pointed out that this will benefit the IAC, given how pleased Chile is with ACAP's high quality work. Chile suggested considering ACAP's experience with the online annual reports tool, and their internship programs. The United States added that it would be interesting to learn about ACAP work on regional fisheries management organizations (RFMO), observers training, and bycatch reduction. **It was agreed that Chile and Brazil will send suggestions for actions to carry out in the context of the MoU IAC-ACAP, to include in the work plan to be discussed at COP.**

Updating of the Consultative Committee Work Plan (2017-2018) CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.3

37. Activities that were already completed or not implemented were removed from the work plan. The CCE added the activities related to East Pacific Leatherback such as organization of national workshops, and the grant proposal submission to the MTCF. The delegate from Guatemala, Ms. Airam Lopez, suggested including under the item of annual reports that the Consultative Committee delegate will support each country Focal Point to complete and submit the IAC Annual Report. The CCE work plan 2017-2018 (CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.3) was adopted with the above modifications (Annex IV).

38. The delegate from Argentina, Mr. Antonio de Nichilo, presented their progress in the context of the MoU IAC-Ramsar, at *Samborombón* Bay and *Rio Negro*, mainly with regards to plastic/marine debris and sea turtle bycatch. Argentina pointed out that the training workshops for fisherman in Costa Rica are a good example for future activities that could be replicated in Argentina, to help sea turtles incidentally caught. The Secretary *PT* congratulated Argentina for

the progress collaborating with Ramsar Convention in the framework of the MoU since this strengthen IAC partnerships with other organizations, and exhorted other delegates to also support the implementation of the MoU. Summary of Argentina’s delegate presentation (Annex V).

Acknowledgment for their work on sea turtle conservation to the Members of Consultative Committee of Experts who passed in 2016-2017

39. The IAC family mourns the passing of two members of the Consultative Committee of Experts who actively participated since the Convention entered into force, Mr. Les Hudson, representative of the Industry Sector, and Mr. Isaías Majil, Belize Focal Point. The United States and Belize delegates shared remarks on the contribution of these delegates to sea turtle conservation. **The CCE agreed to include a special section for acknowledgment at the Conference of the Parties COP8, to honor their contribution to sea turtle conservation.**

40. The United States delegate expressed the following remarks about Mr. Les Hudson:

“Les belonged to the fisheries industry. For many years he was a fisherman working in Texas and even in the coasts of Nicaragua. He was a friend of sea turtles and invested much of his time and efforts to make sure that the United States fishing industry supported the Kemp’s Ridley Project at the main nesting beaches in Rancho Nuevo. Every year he was involved in searching for resources to support the sea turtle camp, and he personally helped at the camp making sure everything was fine, and that the equipment required was available. For 3 or 4 years he helped with the development of the bi-national team for the Kemp’s Ridley turtle recovery. He was always open to understanding what the real threats were and how to mitigate them. These were many years contributing to sea turtle conservation and it would be meaningful if we could recognize that. He was one heck of a nice guy!”

Earl Possardt

41. Belize delegates, Ms. Vanessa Figueroa and Ms. Kirah Forman expressed the following remarks regarding Mr. Isaías Majil:

“Mr. Isaías Majil was very active in sea turtles conservation; he had a great passion for it and was very committed to his obligations as Belize Focal Point”

Vanessa Figueroa

“Majil began as one of the first park rangers at Belize fisheries department many years ago and he was one of the first people working with sea turtles in Baccalar Chico nesting beach. Later he became the Focal Point for any activity related with sea turtles in Belize, any committee, or any job needed, and that love even permeated his personal life. His family remembers him for his passion for sea turtles. I remember he told me once –once you start working with sea turtles, you get hooked- and so it was. He conveyed that passion to many young marine biologists in the country”

Kirah Forman

Other Business

42. The Scientific Sector delegate, Ms. Hedelvy Guada, referred to the importance that the Secretary *PT* has a Twitter account, this is effective to connect the people working on sea turtle conservation with the IAC mission.

Adoption of recommendations for COP8 and agreements of the meeting

43. The recommendations were adopted and the delegates were requested to send additional comments for the meeting report (CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.4).

44. At 04:24 p.m. Eastern Time the IAC Secretary *PT* Veronica Caceres, thanked the participants for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Annex I.A CIT-CCE10-2017-Inf. 1 – List of Participants CCE10

Country	Name	Organization	E-mail
Consultative Committee of Experts – IAC Parties Delegates			
Argentina	Antonio De Nichilo Débora Winter Baldomero Castillo	Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sustentable de la Nación Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto	ajdnichilo@ambiente.gob.ar dwinter@ambiente.gob.ar
Belize	Kirah Forman Vanessa Figueroa	Belize Fisheries Department	kirahforman@yahoo.com figueroa@gmail.com
Brazil	Joao Thomé Luciana Melchert	ICMBIO/CCE Vice Chair Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	joao.thome@icmbio.gov.br luciana.melchert@itamaraty.gov.br
Chile	Jorge Azocar Patricia Zarate	Instituto de Fomento Pesquero (IFOP)	jorge.azocar@ifop.cl
Costa Rica	Rotney Piedra Marco Solano José M Carvajal	SINAC Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía INCOPECA	rotney.piedra@sinac.go.cr Jcarvajal@incopesca.go.cr
Guatemala	Airam Lopez	CONAP	aroulet@conap.gob.gt
Ecuador	Harry Reyes Alberto Proaño	Parque Nacional Galápagos	hreyes@galapagos.gob.ec
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Venezuela	Edis Solorzano Maxwell Mendoza	Ministerio del Poder Popular para Ecosocialismo y Aguas	edissolorzano@hotmail.com

NGO Sector			
Peru	Joanna Alfaro	Pro Delphinus	jas_26@yahoo.com
Uruguay	Alejandro Fallabrino	Karumbe	afalla7@gmail.com
Scientific Sector			
Venezuela	Hedelvy Guada	IZET-UCV, CICTMAR	hjpguada@gmail.com
Industry Sector			
México	Fernando Medrano Raul Díaz Isabel Reyes	Cámara Nacional de Industria Pesquera y Acuícola CONAPESCA	fmedrano@opmaritima.com.mx
IAC Secretariat PT			
	Verónica Cáceres	IAC Secretary PT	secretario@iacseaturtle.org
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	Cassandra Alles	Interpreter	cassandra.alles@yahoo.com

*37 participants

Annex I.B CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc. 1 – Agenda CCE10

February 15th, 2017 - 10:00 AM EST Time-Washington DC

- 10:00-11:00 Connection of participants to videoconference (Vidyo)
- 11:00-11:20 Opening Remarks
Consultative Committee Vice Chair, *Joao Thomé*
IAC Secretary Pro Tempore, Verónica Cáceres
- 11:20-11:40 Agenda adoption and introduction of participants - CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.1
- 11:40-12:00 Summary of the 9th Consultative Committee Meeting
Activities Report of the IAC Secretariat *PT 2016-2017*
IAC Secretary Pro Tempore, Verónica Cáceres
- 12:00-13:00 Recommendations from the Eastern Pacific Leatherback Task Force working group to the IAC Parties regarding urgent actions for the implementation of the Leatherback Resolution CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.2
Task Force Coordinator, Joanna Alfaro
- 13:00-13:40 Break
- 13:40-14:10 Recommendations from the 13th IAC Scientific Committee Meeting CIT-CC13-2016-Doc.6
Secretary Pro Tempore, Verónica Cáceres
- a) Progress in the implementation of the Resolution on Exception in Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Panama, and recommendations to exception presented by Honduras
 - b) IAC Annual Report modifications regarding sea turtle foraging areas
 - c) Data collection procedures about climate change and sea turtles
- 14:10-14:30 Discussion about possible activities under IAC-ACAP MOU
- 14:30-15:00 Update Consultative Committee Work Plan (2017-2018) CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.3
- 15:00-15:20 Presentation of cases received by the NGO sectorial members (this item is to be included only if there are cases to discuss)
- 15:20-15:40 Other Business
Acknowledgment and recognition of their work in sea turtle conservation for the Consultative Committee members who passed in 2016 – 2017
Mr. Les Hudgson – Productive Sector Member
Mr. Isaias Majil – Belize Focal Point
- 15:40-16:00 Adoption of recommendations for COP8 and agreements of the meeting
CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc.4

Annex II. Presentation Secretary *PT* Activities 2016-2017

Ms. Verónica Cáceres, Secretary *PT*, listed the meetings in which the Secretariat has participated during the last year including the Annual EP Leatherback Task Force Meeting (March 2016), 13th meeting IAC Scientific Committee, Belize (August 2016) and 10th meeting of the Consultative Committee of Experts. The 8th Conference of the Parties has been proposed for June 2017 in Buenos Aires, and the 14th meeting of the Scientific Committee will be held in Panama.

With regards to cooperation with international organizations, the Secretary *PT* highlighted the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Agreement for Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) signed in December 2016. There were collaborations with the Law of the Sea Convention, CITES, IOSEA and CBD concerning marine debris in aquatic ecosystems and trafficking of hawksbill turtles.

The Secretary *PT* supported capacity building to support IAC Resolutions implementation projects in Costa Rica, Belize, Panama, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru. On April 2016, under Costa Rica's Focal Point coordination and Consultative Committee delegate equipment (i.e dehookers) was provided to fishermen during the workshops on best practices to release sea turtle incidentally caught (Fisheries Resolution – COP3-2006-R2). On August 2016, the workshop on necropsies and first aid for stranded sea turtles was held in Belize.

The implementation of the Resolution on Exceptions (CIT-COP6-2013-R1) for Panama and Guatemala was also supported in Panama building capacity on alternative livelihoods in the Isla Cañas community in November 2016, with support of Panama Ministry of Environment and MTCF. In Guatemala, there were 2 workshops held on hatcheries management in Nov-December 2016. The funding was provided by Guatemala Government Agency CONAP, ARCAS and MTCF. Regarding the Leatherback Resolution (CIT-COP7-2015-R2) implementation, with the support of Mexico, Peru and the United States governments and MTCF, there was an exchange of experiences and awareness for Peruvian fishermen in the leatherback nesting beaches in Mexico, they visited Barra de la Cruz index nesting beach to learn the work of Mexico sea turtle conservation groups.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE IAC LEATHERBACK TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS
THE CURRENT THREATS TO THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN LEATHERBACK
TURTLE (*Dermochelys coriacea*)**

Considering the strategic actions included in Annex I of the Resolution for the Conservation of the Eastern Pacific Leatherback Turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) CIT-COP7-2015-R2, the Leatherback Task Force has prepared the following priority recommendations including the suggestions from the 13th IAC Scientific Committee meeting and the 10th IAC Consultative Committee of Experts meeting, for consideration by the IAC 8th Conference of the Parties.

1. Organize national technical workshops in the range countries of the EP Leatherback to prioritize specific mitigation measures addressing threats to EP Leatherbacks. It is suggested that for each technical meeting relevant government agencies, academic institutions, and civil society be invited in order to identify and agree upon potential actions set out in the EP Leatherback Resolution and in the Regional Action Plan to reverse the decline of the Eastern Pacific Leatherback Turtle (<http://savepacificleatherbacks.org>) that are feasible to implement, and discuss the convenience to establish temporal/spatial management measures in the high priority areas identified by the EP Leatherback Action Plan and the IAC Leatherback Task Force in 3 b i, ii, iii (see below), in order to reduce bycatch threats to the population while considering, social, economic, and political implications of its implementation.

2. The IAC Secretary *Pro Tempore* together with a small delegation of the Consultative and/or Scientific committees members, and local experts, will visit relevant authorities (Secretariats/Ministries/ Directors of environmental and fisheries agencies) from countries within the range of distribution of the EP Leatherback. The purpose of the visits will be to communicate the EP Leatherback critical status, the IAC experts urgent recommendations, and those resulting from the national technical workshops, stressing the mitigation measures of threats to this species, to urge these agencies to collaborate and take action implementing these measures and specific priority actions moving forward to minimize the threats against the EP Leatherback survival.

3. Based on the results of the technical workshops, urge the Parties to implement the corresponding mitigation measures to avoid EP Leatherbacks bycatch and mortality, in the beach as well as at sea. Among other, these measures could include:

- a. Maintain and increase conservation efforts on EP Leatherback nesting beaches by supporting sea turtle monitoring projects specifically those in Mexico and Costa Rica, including index beaches and secondary beaches. To promote that other non - member signatory countries like Nicaragua also undertake similar efforts.
- b. Strengthen the work in feeding grounds, especially capacity building focused on best practices for safe handling and release of turtles incidentally caught and ways to reduce

bycatch in priority areas identified in the EP Leatherback Action Plan (<http://savepacificleatherbacks.org>) cited in the IAC Resolution.

Below are areas identified as important, however other areas could also be identified:

- i. Ecuador: Crucita, Santa Rosa and Manta
 - ii. Perú: Tumbes, San José, Salaverry, Chimbote, Lima, Pampa Melchorita-Jahuay-Tambo de Mora-San Andrés
 - iii. Chile: Arica, Iquique, Antofagasta, Caldera, Coquimbo, Quintero, San Antonio and Lebu
- c. Work in coordination with local experts of IAC Parties and the IAC Scientific Committee especially in Mexico and Central America to broaden the knowledge about the impact of fisheries and mitigation measures for EP Leatherbacks in the region
 - d. Develop a mechanism to share successful experiences.
4. Create synergies to increase the EP Leatherback Conservation efforts along with other international agencies (e.g. CBD (Sustainable Oceans Initiative) CPPS, CMS, IATTC, OSPESCA, OLDEPESCA, and other RFMOs) and relevant groups.

Annex IV. CIT-CCE10-2017-Doc. 3 – CCE Work Plan 2017-2018

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Timeframe
Consultative Committee of Experts	Exceptions	1) Monitoring the progress of Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Panama exceptions, and other cases presented.	1) Report to COP about the monitoring on Costa Rica, Panama and Guatemala exceptions (if needed).	2017, 2018
Consultative Committee of Experts, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	IAC's Website & Newsletter	Parties will send to Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i> relevant news on a monthly basis for the IAC's Newsletter.	IAC website updated with the IAC's Newsletter and other documents of interest.	Ongoing
Eastern Pacific Leatherback Working Group	Eastern Pacific Leatherback Working Group	1) Follow up on the implementation of the new Eastern Pacific Leatherback Resolution (CIT-COP7-2015-R2). 2) To carry out annual meetings of the Leatherback Task Force. 3) The Leatherback task force will prepare a report with recommendations on urgent conservation actions to be presented at the COP8 (2017). 4) Support the Secretary <i>PT</i> in the organization of national technical workshops according to the Leatherback TF recommendations. 5) Support the Secretary <i>PT</i> in the development of a project proposal to obtain funding for the visits to the relevant governmental agencies of the countries within the species range, to communicate the national technical workshops results.	1) Report presented at COP8 with recommendations on urgent conservation actions. 2) National technical workshops with recommendations to mitigate the threats to the EP Leatherback population, carried out in priority countries within the range of distribution of the species. 3) Project proposal to fund meetings with relevant authorities in each country submitted to the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund (April 1st, 2017)	2017, 2018

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Timeframe
Consultative Committee of Experts	IAC Annual Report	The CCE delegate supports the focal point development of the Annual Report.	Annual report submitted on April 30	2017, 2018
Resolution Compliance Working Group	IAC Annual Report and Compliance of Resolutions	Prepare a report on Resolution compliance and recommendations for COP8.	Report presented at COP8 (2017)	2017
Resolution Compliance Working Group	IAC Annual Report and Compliance of Resolutions	Assess current Annual Report format.	Recommendations for changes to the format of the annual report as required.	2017
Consultative Committee of Experts	Work plan	Update CCE work plan following the recommendations of the Parties.	CCE bi-annual work plan updated with activities, timetable and responsible.	Permanent
Consultative Committee of Experts	Collaboration with international organizations	The CCE delegates from Chile and Brazil will send suggestions of joint activities under the MoU with ACAP to the Secretary PT.	Report the activities proposed to the ACAP Secretary and the IAC COP8, with the purpose of deciding which could be included in the IAC Committees work plans.	2017
Consultative Committee of Experts	Consultative Committee of Experts, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	Collaboration with international organizations	Develop and review MoU drafts with relevant organizations. Documents presented to COP for consideration	2017, 2018
Consultative Committee of Experts, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	Drafting Resolutions and Recommendations to COP	Address COP requests and draft resolutions and recommendations accordingly.	Resolutions and recommendations draft presented to COP as needed.	2017, 2018

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Timeframe
Consultative Committee of Experts	IAC Technical Documents	Develop technical documents as needed.	Technical documents available on IAC website and shared with IAC Parties.	2017
Consultative Committee of Experts, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	IAC Experts Directory	Review and update the IAC experts directory	IAC Website directory updated	2017

Annex V. Argentina activities within the framework of IAC- RAMSAR Memorandum of Understanding

Meeting Minutes

Fisheries and Aquaculture Direction

Fisheries Provincial Direction

February 13th, 2017

La Plata, Buenos Aires

The goal of the meeting was to discuss links within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Convention on Wetlands Secretariat (Ramsar, Iran 1971) and the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) Secretariat *PT*.

Three governmental agencies are involved in addressing this matter: the Provincial Body for Sustainable Development Natural Protected Areas Direction (OPDS) as Ramsar Site manager, Fisheries Provincial Direction as fisheries manager and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development as the authority implementing Ramsar Convention and IAC Focal Point.

Other participants were the Director and Sub-director of Fisheries Provincial Direction a Ms. María Cecilia Paris and Mr. Gustavo Berasain, the Chief of the Aquaculture Technology and Development Department Mr. Esteban Barchiesi and Ms. María Pía Heras. From the Provincial Body for Sustainable Development the Director of Natural Resources, Ms. Adriana Ricci and Mr. Guillermo Muñoz; y from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development Water and Aquatic Resources Environmental Management Direction the representative of Aquatic Resources Area Mr. Antonio De Nichilo and Ms. Débora Winter.

Among the objectives was establishing lines of action within this framework and jointly implemented.

In due course, the Ministry of Environment developed a document presenting potential actions to be implemented within the context of execution of this MoU at Samborombón Bay:

- Actions within the Samborombón Bay Protected Areas Management Plan, which is being developed, led and coordinated by the Sustainable Development Provincial Body (increase control on tourism, use, and extraction of resources from the swamp in sensitive areas of the bay; increase manpower to carry out this control, training, etc.)
- Develop brochures about waste and distribute them at Samborombón Bay Municipalities (*Partidos de Magdalena, Punta de Indio, Chascomús, Castelli, Tordillo, General Lavalle*

and *Municipio Urbano de la Costa*) in nearby beaches, such as *San Clemente del Tuyú*. Include posters with the same objective.

- Establishing outreach boots, this will inform about Samborombón Bay swamp and sea turtles. The procedures to follow in case of finding a sea turtle stranded on the beach can be shared here as well.
- Provide training to fishermen from “*Variado costero*” fleet so they know what to do in case of finding a sea turtle incidentally caught during their activities. Also, species ID booklets and procedure manuals to handle sea turtles on board fishing vessels could be designed.

Regarding the actions mentioned above, the following was proposed during the meeting:

- Deliver brochures during sport fishing events, oceanarium, Chascomús Hydrobiological Station, red tide coastal campaigns, among other.
- Collect information on sea turtles from fishermen and the Prefecture. *Surveys* could be an effective tool.
- Train fishermen aiming to create awareness on the conservation of these species and to implement an on-board procedures manual (to be developed)
- Extend the use of the OPDS *Marine Fauna Rescue Official Network* to lifeguards and staff from the Prefecture.
- Publicize information and data from the *Coastal Census* carried out during the workshop “Workshop on Educational Strategies and Outreach to reduce marine debris at el *Rio de la Plata* and Buenos Aires Coast” in May 2016.
- Contact environmental authorities from coastal municipalities to plan joint strategies and meet the objectives above.
- Analyze expanding an awareness campaign agreed with schools from coastal areas.

A second meeting was proposed with the same governmental agencies and the OPDS Natural Protected Areas Direction.