



Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
Twelfth Meeting of the Consultative Committee of Experts
March 13th, 2019 – Videoconference

CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.7

Report of the 12th Meeting of the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts

Opening Remarks

1. The twelfth meeting of the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE12) took place on Wednesday, February 13th, 2019 by videoconference from the IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretariat office at the US Fish and Wildlife Service headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia. The meeting began at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time when the CCE Chair, Mr. Paul Hoetjes (Caribbean Netherlands) welcomed this year's participants.

Agenda Adoption and Participants Introduction

2. Delegates from eleven (11) IAC Contracting Parties attended the meeting namely, Argentina, Brazil, Belize, Caribbean Netherlands, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and the United States. Representatives of the Scientific, Industry and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) sectors attended as well with a total of 40 participants. (List of participants CIT-CCE12-2019-Inf.1 Annex I.A)
3. The CCE12 adopted the agenda without changes. (CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.1 Annex I.B).

Summary of the 11th Meeting of the Consultative Committee of Experts

4. To maximize the time and due to the large number of items to discuss, the CCE Chair did not present a summary of the CCE 11th Meeting.

Draft Proposal on the Amendment of the Guidelines for Financing the Operation of the IAC
CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.2

5. By request of the Chair, the Secretary *PT*, Ms. Veronica Caceres, presented this item on behalf of the Argentinian delegation who were not present at the time, due to technical difficulties. A draft Resolution with the guidelines for the Convention Parties in-kind financial contributions accounting was presented. The proposal was adopted with modifications in the preamble. The second version was amended to say that in the past, the Parties have provided in-kind contributions. The finalized draft Resolution will be presented for the consideration of the 9th Conference of the Parties (COP9).

6. If adopted by the COP, this Resolution will amend Annex I of Resolution CIT-COPE1-2007-R2, explaining that the Financial Rules for the IAC Operation have been amended based on

the Resolution adopted during COP9. (Annex II – Draft Resolution adopted CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.2)

Discussion on Recommendations from the 15th IAC Scientific Committee (SC) meeting

7. The following items were presented by the CCE Chair while the Scientific Committee Chair, Mr. Diego Albareda, was trying to connect: a) Recommendations on Northwest Atlantic Leatherback., b) Recommendations on Green Turtles in Galapagos, and c) Proposal for a mechanism for third parties to request data from the IAC.

Recommendations on Northwest Atlantic Leatherbacks

8. The delegate from Costa Rica, Mr. Rotney Piedra, agreed with the recommendation from the Scientific Committee to alert the Parties on the signs of a decline of this Regional Management Unit (RMU) population through a Resolution presented for the consideration of the COP9. Accordingly, the delegate presented the text of a draft resolution to be considered by the Consultative Committee. The CCE agreed on preparing a Resolution for the COP and the delegate from Costa Rica offered to carry out this task. The draft resolution will be circulated for approval of the CCE on February 22 (February 28 for adoption).

9. Costa Rica considered that this should be an independent resolution from the Eastern Pacific Leatherback to avoid diluting what has already been achieved. On the other hand, to avoid repeating information in the Annual Report, Costa Rica proposed to enhance the information with items such as best practices on the management of sea turtles and technical justifications to declare marine protected areas.

10. Ms. Alexis Gutierrez, the delegate from the United States, pointed out that effective implementation of a Resolution on this RMU is challenging, given that the main countries where nesting occurs are non-members of the IAC. She also expressed that there is information already available to inform on the Atlantic leatherbacks situations and other topics that the United States is already working on that could be shared as well. The delegate stated the need to listen to the other countries to establish areas where the IAC could be more effective by identifying key issues and strategic actions in which the Parties can work together. She highlighted the importance of approaching countries such as Canada, that although it is a non-IAC member, it could collaborate. The delegate informed that her legal team needs to review the terms of the Resolution to agree on a text.

11. Mr. Jorge Azocar, the delegate from Chile, congratulated the proposal and proposed developing a verification method for the measures proposed, as well as an index of success or a way to follow up its implementation. The delegate suggested modifications in the sections regarding life history and demographic parameters as the recommendations are not explicit.

12. Costa Rica stated the importance of a delegate from the SC to be involved in the process, as the SC developed the recommendations in the document. Mr. Bryan Wallace, the delegate from the Scientific Sector and coauthor of WIDECAST original document explained that the process

began as an assessment of the Caribbean Leatherback status and the recommendations were conveyed to the IAC document under discussion.

13. Mr. Joca Thome, the delegate from Brazil, reminded the participants that the very first Leatherback Resolution was for both oceans and became specific for the EP Leatherback later. However, the current situation in the Atlantic is different, where several countries involved in the issue are non IAC members, in contrast to what happens in the Pacific. The delegate suggested a Resolution text that is very clear and concise to alert the COP9 so Countries can start taking measures.

14. Mr. Earl Possardt, the delegate from the United States mentioned that aiming to keep the attention on the Pacific Leatherback, actions regarding the Atlantic population could be implemented without a Resolution, warning the countries and monitoring the situation, and only if things become worse could a Resolution be developed, which Brazil agreed on.

15. The delegate Wallace pointed out that a process to approach non IAC member Countries has already begun and that all the doors are open for the Convention to join the process. One of these bodies is the Wider Caribbean Working Group that has included in its activities approaching Surinam and Guyana.

16. The SC delegate from Mexico stated that the recommendations are not equitable if presented to non IAC parties and that more than a resolution, a work list on what is required to do and how it will be done should be developed. The United States agreed, and again offered to be the link to these non-IAC Parties but with a clear knowledge of what is intended to be proposed.

17. The CCE Chair expressed his concern regarding the WIDECAST report results, presented during the SC meetings. He clarified that the approach was to establish if a Resolution should be developed or not and to request the Parties to contact their neighbor countries involved. He added that the IAC is the only body that can give the necessary level of urgency and importance to the issue, and an informative document wouldn't transmit that to the COP or the non-member countries, the most efficient way to alert the Countries is through a Resolution.

18. The CCE Chair pointed out that the Resolution should be short and specific highlighting the gravity of the Caribbean Leatherback situation and sending an alert to the world, considering the fact that key nesting Countries are non-IAC members however they should be. He suggested adding the identification and invitation of non-IAC Parties such as Canada, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, to ratify the IAC or creating partnerships for the protection of the species. The Chair added that including this in a Resolution would provide the Secretary PT with the faculty to allocate resources towards approaching these countries and to communicate the concern of the Convention.

19. The CCE Chair suggested that the list of activities could be included as an Annex limiting the actual Resolution to only the first page, which should also include a paragraph stating the work to be done reaching out to other Countries to accede or to collaborate with the Convention.

20. The United States delegate agreed on establishing a procedure to draft the Resolution, send comments to the CCE Chair and produce a text to work on.
21. The United States delegate mentioned the value of generating an alert in the region and requested to consider that the way the message is conveyed will affect the way in which the IAC relates to other non-Party countries.
22. Brazil added that this case could be a good tool to work with other countries which are non-IAC members, and for the Secretary to have mechanisms to approach them.
23. Costa Rica agreed on taking immediate action developing a draft Resolution including the terms proposed by the CCE Chair, adding a text on urging non-member countries to participate. This Country will also begin a formal rapprochement with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).
24. It was reminded that the territories within the range of this species are Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana, Florida, and probably the Lesser Antilles. The population migrates throughout the Caribbean, the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico, with concentrations in Canada, the Gulf of Mexico and the North Atlantic.
25. **Agreement: The Working Group formed by the CCE Chair, Costa Rica, the United States, the Sectorial Delegate Bryan Wallace and Brazil will prepare a draft Resolution to be presented to the COP. The text should be submitted to the CCE not later than a week from the date of this meeting and the draft proposal should be ready by March 1st, 2019. (Annex III – Draft Resolution CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.3).**

Recommendations on the Galapagos Green Turtle

26. Sr. Jeffrey Seminoff, delegate from the United States to the SC, presented the content of the document CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc5 on the descending trend of the green turtle nesting population in the Southeast Pacific and requested observations on the recommendations therein. The CCE agreed on presenting these recommendations to the COP9 as part of the Scientific Committee report along with a short version of the document (1 page). The IAC Countries within the range of the species were also requested to consider these recommendations, and especially those about changes in monitoring effort in nesting beaches to establish if this could be the cause of the decreasing nesting numbers reported in the IAC Annual Report.
27. The delegate Seminoff added that the focus should be on three of the recommendations: 1) Changes on nest monitoring effort: assessing if Galapagos National Park keeps the same effort that the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS) did when it was in charge of monitoring; 2) Bycatch in foraging areas: preliminary data shows that there is a link between green turtle feeding in Peru and the Galapagos population. Likewise, decreasing numbers in Costa Rica could show that bycatch could be responsible [preliminary data from ongoing research] and 3) Food quality in

foraging areas: it has been observed that changes in the habitat can cause females to nest with less frequency, due to low productivity in the foraging area.

28. Ms. Patricia Zarate, a delegate from Chile, expressed her concern regarding nesting reduction in Quinta Playa and pointed out that from her experience when this reduction was observed in one beach the same was observed in the other four beaches studied. She added that there is additional information in Chile on natural depredation and fisheries that could be included in the document. The delegate also pointed out the importance of knowing if researchers in Galapagos are measuring tagged, observed or estimated numbers of nests.

29. Costa Rica expressed its willingness to collaborate with the report and pointed out the challenge of monitoring green turtles in the Country. It proposed to prioritize two or three activities to focus on. They also clarified that because data on interaction with fisheries regarding numbers or species are not available, it would not be proper to say this is a cause of the reduction. The Country suggested implementing onboard observers to have access to this information.

30. Mr. Eduardo Espinoza, the delegate from Ecuador to the Scientific Committee, clarified that for the last 10 years there have been changes regarding monitoring effort in Galapagos, and in comparison with CDRS, monitoring effort per night has changed. The delegate pointed out that it is required to assess the real impact of these changes, which should be discussed with the Scientific Committee given the great number of recommendations to be analyzed. He also expressed that monitoring effort should be analyzed regionally, including Costa Rica, Mexico, and Ecuador, and added that data on genetics should also be updated in the region. He mentioned that although nesting data from the last two years has not been reported, these seem to show a small increase in Galapagos nesting population. The delegate expressed the National Park's will to provide information required to improve the analysis.

31. Mr. Seminoff pointed out that it is necessary to be more aware that the green turtle monitoring efforts are the same and proposed a thorough work on the document covering each cause of the reduction in-depth, within the framework of the Scientific Committee, and prepare a technical document to bring it to the Consultative Committee next year. He expressed that it would be premature to take it to the COP9 at this moment.

32. The CCE Chair agreed to the proposal of sending an alert report to inform the Parties on the situation and the ongoing process within the Scientific Committee.

33. Mexico's CC delegate pointed out that given the priority stated in the document on nesting beaches it is better to count with the COP support this year, therefore, the countries can begin lobbying to carry out the research required. He also expressed that postponing for next year will mean having this same discussion in 2020.

34. Ecuador agreed on developing a data summary to present to the COP and stated that other technical evaluations are still required.

35. The delegate from the United States, Mr. Possardt, highlighted how this work in the Scientific and Consultative Committee reflects the IAC good performance. He also advised that

apart from the direct causes of the decline, secondary causes should be considered as well to clarify the whole issue.

36. Agreement: A week from the day of this meeting, Ecuador will send information on monitoring effort in Galapagos. Mr. Seminoff will prepare a one-page document for the COP9, and Costa Rica, Chile, and Ecuador will submit their data to complete the technical document. (Annex IV – Green Turtle Document CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc. 5)

Mechanism to request and use information from the IAC

37. The CCE Chair requested opinions on the document CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.6 and opened the floor raising the question on whether to establish a formal mechanism or not.

38. The SC United States delegate mentioned the existing concern regarding the data that is submitted to the IAC, making it necessary to develop a procedure to build the trust of small NGOs that generally produce them, as well as that of the IAC Parties.

39. The SC Mexico's delegate suggested including in the procedure that data requesters are institutions or persons endorsed by certified scientific institutions to ensure that data will be used for scientific purposes only. Ms. Airam Lopez, the delegate from Guatemala, agreed and added that the requester should include a permit provided by their Country relevant authority.

40. Mr. Eduardo Cuevas and Mr. Vicente Guzman, delegates from Mexico, added that although it is understood that the information received by the IAC is of the public domain, this open access could discourage the organizations to share unpublished or sensitive data for the Annual Report. The delegates requested clarification on who decides if the data can be shared or not and suggested that the information requested to the Parties has already been published to reduce the risk of information misuse.

41. Agreement: The CCE Chair, the Secretary *PT* and the United States delegate to the Scientific Committee, Jeffrey Seminoff, will adjust the procedure in document CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.6 to submit to the COP9 as a draft Resolution. The document will be circulated in the CCE a week after this meeting focusing on items 1 to 6 of the original proposal (Annex V – IAC Data Request Procedure CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc. 6).

Consultative Committee Work Plan Update (2019-2020)

42. The Workplan was adopted including in the COP9 agenda the Draft Proposal regarding the Resolution on Guidelines for Financing the Operation of the IAC; the draft Resolution on the Northwest Atlantic Leatherback; the draft Resolution on mechanisms to use and request data from the IAC, and the recommendations on green turtles. The potential participation in the next Cartagena Convention was also included, within the framework of collaboration with international organizations for lobbying countries such as France, Suriname, and Guyana on the Northwest Atlantic leatherback issue. The Caribbean Netherlands with the support of Holland offered to

facilitate a meeting with these delegations. (**Annex VI – CCE Work Plan 2019-2020 CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.4**).

Online System for the IAC Annual Report

43. The IAC Secretary *Pro Tempore* assistant, Ms. Luz Helena Rodríguez, presented a potential online system that could be used to streamline the IAC Parties submission of their Annual Reports called ORS.

44. The Online Reporting System (ORS) is a sophisticated web application which streamlines the environmental reporting process through a four-step procedure: 1) create the questionnaire, 2) distribute to Parties/users, 3) receive responses and 4) analyze and share data. This system was developed by the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre ([WCMC](#)) for intergovernmental conventions such as CMS, CITES, and RAMSAR, and most recently, it is being implemented for IOSEA.

45. The Secretary *Pro Tempore* requested an ORS proposal from WCMC including the outputs, advantages, timeline, and budget to implement the IAC ORS.

46. Using an ORS the IAC will be able to receive and collect information from reporting countries in one centralized and secure location; reporting countries will have a simple online tool to manage the completion of their national reports to the Convention, leading to more streamlined reporting and increased response rates; the IAC will have a centralized mechanism to manage and monitor the distribution of, and responses to, their online report; the IAC will be better placed to allow access to reported information on its own website and could extend this to cover other data collection activities.

47. Mechanisms such as a Memorandum of Understanding, or a contract per services can be used to implement the ORS. The timeline to develop the system is approximately six months, for a total budget of USD 15,917 (as of February 2019), and an annual fee to cover hosting and technical support of USD 1222 or less in the following years.

48. Mr. Alex Dos Santos, a delegate from Brazil, consulted on the multiple updates that are applied to the IAC Annual Report and Ms. Rodriguez stated that the questionnaire is easily modified, including tables and yes/no answers.

49. Chile highlighted how significant it is to progress to an online system for the Convention, and requested to include the transition period from one system to the other in the work plan.

50. The CC delegate from Mexico suggested assessing the cost-benefit of implementing this type of system, the United States delegate, Ms. Alexis Gutierrez, added that after assessing several mechanisms this was the best option for the Convention.

51. The CCE Chair pointed out the advantage of having a system that guarantees data safety. He also proposed as a potential source, that one or two Parties could fund the implementation.

52. Mr. Antonio de Nichilo, delegate from Argentina, asked if while there is a decision on the proposal for an online report the Parties should continue using the Word form for their 2019 Annual Report. The CCE Chair affirmed this.

53. Agreement: the CCE approved the proposal for an online report and will recommend the COP the implementation of this system, requesting support from the Parties to fund this project. The CCE delegates are encouraged to propose their focal point if they would be interested in funding the system. This year the Annual Report remains in Word form and it is expected that the online report will be available for 2020.

Recommendations to the COP

54. Ms. Laura Sarti, a delegate from Mexico, informed the CCE about a model developed by the LaudOPO network and recommended presenting it to the COP9. Mr. Bryan Wallace added that this model assesses the population at different levels and conservation scenarios developing future projections and that is why it considers that the IAC is an appropriate setting to present this information.

55. Agreement: The CCE recommended adding the presentation of the recently developed model of the LaudOPO network as a COP9 agenda item, inviting the network to present it.

IAC Collaboration with International Organizations (IATTC and CITES) and preparation to participates in 2019 meetings

56. The CCE Chair highlighted the importance of the Secretary *PT* participation in the next meeting of the Cartagena Convention as a strategy to approach the countries within the range of the Northwest Atlantic Leatherback. The Caribbean Netherland delegation offered to facilitate a formal meeting with the countries involved.

Report on the implementation of a strategy to work with RFMOs

57. Dr. Bryan Wallace, coordinator of the IAC Eastern Pacific Leatherback Task Force presented the report on the meeting in which members of the group have participates (LaudOPO meetings). He also spoke about his participation as a representative of the IAC Task Force in the 8th Meeting of the IATTC Working Group on Bycatch in May, and the meeting of the Commission of this same RFMO in August 2018.

58. Dr. Wallace stated that for next year the IATTC Working Group on Bycatch plans to review the mitigation measures proposed to ensure a better understanding.

59. The CC delegate from Mexico, suggested approaching the Japanese contact representing this country in the tri-national treaty (Japan, Mexico, USA) for the conservation of the loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), for establishing a dialogue with Japan to develop experiments to reduce bycatch

in congruence with the current efforts and commitments and with the support of the Japanese government.

60. The Secretary *PT* requested support from the countries that have been successful in implementing effective measures to reduce bycatch and suggest that their cases should be presented by their delegates e.g. Costa Rica. The delegate from Costa Rica informed that he will bring the idea to his superiors in INCOPECSA to know their position, and added that INCOPECSA is doing as much as possible regarding best practices in their fishing fleet. The delegate would consult with WWF on the research about circle hooks and the possibility to present this information to RFMOs.

Report on collaboration with CITES on the assessment of sea turtle trade

61. The Secretary *PT* presented the IAC – CITES collaboration as a reviewer of the assessment carried out by CITES on sea turtle trade in Panama, Nicaragua, and Colombia.

62. Mr. Diego Amorocho, a sectorial delegate representing NGOs, added that the report was presented to CITES Secretary in January of this year, including the feedback provided by the IAC Scientific Committee and indicated that it is expected to have the final report in April.

63. The CCE Chair suggested presenting this report to the COP9 to inform the Parties. He also suggested that focal points approach CITES focal points to formulate suggestions to this report for CITES COP.

64. The United States delegate added on the approaches to CITES Secretary regarding this report and its presentation as CITES COP work document in 2019. She explained about CITES strict procedure and how the report has to be approved by CITES Standing Committee before going to the COP. Therefore CITES COP will not receive any suggestions this year.

65. Agreement: The CCE recommends notifying the COP9 on CITES final report on sea turtle trade, including the item in the agenda.

Resolution Proposals and Recommendations to the IAC COP9

66. The Consultative Committee agreed on presenting the following topics: 1) Proposal to amend the Resolution on Guidelines for Financing the Operation of the IAC from 2007; 2) Draft Resolution on the Northwest Pacific Leatherback; 3) Draft Resolution on the Procedure to Access, Use and Request data collected by the IAC; 4) Recommendations on the Southeast Pacific Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) nesting population; 5) Presentation of LaudOPO model on future projections and 6) Presentation of CITES document on sea turtle trade.

Other business and adoption of recommendations from the meeting

67. There was no other business to discuss. The recommendations were adopted over the course of the meeting and are included in bold according to the item in the report.

68. At 05:00 p.m. EST the Chair of the Consultative Committee thanked the participants and concluded the meeting.

Annex I.A CIT-CCE12-2018-Inf. 1

List of Participants 12th Meeting of the Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE12)

Country	Name	Institution	E-mail
Delegates by Country			
Argentina	Antonio De Nichilo Debora Winter Jorgelina Oddi Francisco López Achaval	Secretaría de Gobierno de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sustentable de la Nación Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto	ajdnichilo@ambiente.gob.ar dwinter@ambiente.gob.ar joddi@ambiente.gob.ar fzl@mrecic.gov.ar
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IAC Secretary Pro Tempore			
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	Ivana Zambrana	Interpreter	

*40 participants

Annex I.B - CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.1

Agenda CCE12

February 13th, 2019 - 10:00 AM EST Time-Washington DC

- 10:00-11:00 Connection of participants to videoconference (Vidyo)
- 11:00-11:10 Opening Remarks
Consultative Committee of Experts Chair, *Paul C. Hoetjes*
- 11:10-11:30 Adoption of the agenda and introduction of participants - [CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.1](#)
- 11:30-12:00 Report on the 11th Consultative Committee Meeting - CIT-CCE11-2018-Doc.5.
- 12:00-12:30 Resolution Proposal on Amendment of the Guidelines for Financing the Operation of the IAC - [CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.2](#)
Working Group Member
- 12:30-13:30 Recommendations from the 15th IAC Scientific Committee– CIT-CC15-2018-Doc.7.
Scientific Committee Chair / *Diego Albareda*
- a) Recommendations on Northwest Atlantic Leatherback. [CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.3](#)
 - b) Recommendations on the decline of nesting populations of Green Turtles in Galápagos. [CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.5](#)
 - c) Proposal for a mechanism for third parties to request data from the IAC. [CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.6](#)
- 13:30-14:15 Lunch Break
- 14:15-15:00 Consultative Committee Work Plan Update (2018-2019) - [CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.4](#)
- 15:00-15:30 Discussion on IAC Annual Report Online System – [CIT-CCE12-2019-Inf.1](#)
IAC Secretariat PT, Luz Rodríguez
- 15:30-16:00 Proposal of Resolutions and Recommendations to COP9. We invite the CCE to include additional proposals as needed.
- 16:00-16:30 Collaboration with International Organizations and preparation for participation in 2019 meetings.
- a) Report on the implementation of the strategy to work with RFMOs 2018.
 - b) Report on collaboration with CITES on marine turtle trade study / *IAC Secretary PT, Veronica Caceres*
- 16:30-17:00 Other Business and adoption of recommendations

Documents of the Meeting

Type of Document	Name	Number
Work Documents (in blue in the agenda)	Agenda	CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.1
	Proposal of amendment to the Resolution on guidelines for the IAC financial operation	CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.2
	Recommendations from the Scientific Committee on Northwest Atlantic Leatherback Turtles.	CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.3
	Consultative Committee of Experts Work Plan	CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.4
	Recommendations on the decline of nesting populations of Green Turtles in Galápagos.	CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.5
	Proposal for a mechanism for third parties to request data from the IAC.	CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.6
	Proposal to use Online System for IAC Annual Report	CIT-CCE12-2019-Inf.1
Reference Documents	Report 11 th CCE meeting http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/comite-consultivo/11reunion/CIT_CCE11_2018_Doc%20%20REPORT_Adopted_ENG_05.15.18.pdf	CIT-CCE11-2018-Doc.5
	Report of the 15 th Meeting IAC Scientific Committee : http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/comite-cientifico/SC15%20Final%20Report_CIT-CC15-2018-Doc.7_ENG_WebV2.pdf	CIT-CC15-2018-Doc.7
	Resolution on Guidelines for Financing the Operation of the IAC http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/resolucionesCOPE1CIT/CIT-COPE1-2007-R2-Eng.pdf	CIT-COPE1-2007-R2

Annex II - CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.2

Draft Resolution_ Amendment of the Guidelines for the Financing of the Operation of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles

Recognizing that Resolution CIT-COPE1-2007-R2 on the Guidelines for Financing the Operation of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles urges Parties to make “in-kind” contributions in addition to voluntary contributions;

CONSIDERING that no further guidance is provided regarding the mentioned “in-kind” contributions;

CONSIDERING that Parties have in the past provided in-kind contributions;

CONSIDERING that amendments to the IAC’s Financial Rules that relate to in-kind contributions can help to ensure sufficient operating funds for the Convention;

THE NINTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES:

DECIDES to amend the Guidelines for Financing the Operation of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles as approved by the 1st Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Parties and appended as Annex I of this resolution, by inserting the following two new paragraphs after Rule 18 of the Financial Rules, and renumbering the subsequent paragraphs accordingly:

19. In-kind contributions should not be made towards settling arrears or in lieu of contributions pursuant to the indicative scale referred to in paragraph 2 (a) above unless approved by the Conference of the Parties and the Secretariat on a case-by-case basis. To aid the Conference of the Parties in its deliberations on such a matter, the Secretariat shall advise the Conference of the Parties on whether the use of in-kind contributions would undermine the Special Fund of the Inter-American Convention (SFIC) as the operating funds of the Convention. This approval can occur at a meeting of the Conference of Parties or inter-sessionally.

20. In-kind contributions may include, *inter alia*, the hosting of in-country workshops and meetings of the Convention, the provision of consulting services for projects carried out under the Convention, or the hiring of researchers and other qualified technical personnel for projects carried out under the Convention.

Annex III - CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.3

Resolution Proposal for the Conservation of the Northwest Atlantic Leatherback Turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*)

CONSIDERING that the study *Northwest Atlantic Leatherback Turtle (Dermochelys coriacea) Status Assessment*, reported declining annual nest/female counts in the NWA Regional Management Unit (RMU) from 1990 to present;

CONSIDERING that the above-mentioned study contains conservation recommendations as to how the declining trends taking place since 1990 to the present can be addressed;

RECOGNIZING that foraging grounds used by these nesting leatherbacks include the North Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico, and implementing conservation measures, either on nesting beaches and/or on foraging grounds, therefore involves multiple IAC Parties;

CONSIDERING that important habitats for the Northwest Atlantic Leatherback are located in countries that are not IAC Parties, such as the major nesting grounds in French Guyana, Guyana, Surinam, Trinidad and foraging grounds in Canada;

RECOGNIZING some of the recommendations are already being implemented by IAC Parties; and that it is important to convey these recommendations to non-member states that play key roles in the ecology of NWA Leatherbacks (Canada, Trinidad & Tobago, France [French Guiana], Guyana and Surinam);

RECOGNIZING that to implement effective conservation of the Northwest Atlantic Leatherback population international collaboration between all the countries of its range of distribution is essential;

THE NINTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES RESOLVES TO:

URGE the IAC Parties and the Secretariat *Pro Tempore* to reach out to those non IAC countries that are in the range of the Northwest Atlantic Leatherback such as Canada, Guyana, French Guyana, Trinidad and Surinam to inform them on the situation of the population, and to encourage them to ratify the IAC, and/or form partnerships with IAC member States to develop the activities that have been identified as priorities for the conservation of NWA Leatherbacks and are listed in Annex I.

REQUIRE the IAC Parties:

- 1) In the case they have fishing fleets in the Northwest Atlantic, to report in their Annual Report information on interactions of leatherbacks with fisheries collected using onboard observers, interviews, fisheries reports and stranding data, including number of interactions, distribution, and seasonality.
- 2) In the case that bycatch occurs in the above-mentioned area it is necessary to strengthen the data collection on the fishing gear that is interacting.
- 3) Promote programs for best practices for safe handling and release of turtles incidentally caught in those fisheries that interact with NWA Leatherbacks.
- 4) To work through the Secretary *Pro Tempore* towards establishing formal cooperation with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) to encourage its members operating in the NWA Leatherback range to report in their log books leatherback bycatch.
- 5) To increase their efforts on enforcement of regulations and protection of marine protected areas.
- 6) To analyze the potential of implementing and establishing new protected areas, and urge non-member States to do likewise, especially in areas with key nesting beaches (e.g., Guyanas, Trinidad).
- 7) To continue working to monitor, remove or prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU), encouraging non-member States to do likewise (e.g., for French Guyana see IFREMER 2012).
- 8) To increase and strengthen their protection action in NWA Leatherback nesting beaches to protect the eggs from poaching and other threats, encouraging non-member States to collaborate on providing information on conservation measures in leatherback nesting beaches to the IAC.
- 9) To increase and strengthen their monitoring actions and any tagging programs to increase identification of nesting females.

URGE the IAC Parties to implement as appropriate and to the extent possible, the priority conservation actions as listed in ANNEX I of this Resolution.

Recommendations on priority actions for conservation, for the Northwest Atlantic Leatherback

1. Anthropogenic threats

- Characterize the distribution and density of fixed gear and turtles in shelf waters using aerial surveys, mapping of primary coastal fishing grounds or the most feasible methods.
- Investigate and monitor the potential impact and effects of ocean plastic and other toxic debris, as well as aberrant coastal infestations of (typically pelagic) *Sargassum* weed.
- Explore opportunities to leverage efforts to reduce interactions between right whales and vertical lines that could also benefit leatherbacks in northern foraging areas.
- Define and implement mechanisms to ensure continued work to monitor leatherback foraging populations and fisheries interactions in the Gulf of Mexico, New England, and Nova Scotia
- Investigate and document the potential magnitude and types of effects from fossil fuel exploration and extraction, as well as from oil spills in marine and coastal ecosystems.

2. Habitat Loss

- Implement the voluntary form to report environmental parameters in nesting beaches. (This could characterize the behavioral response of nesting leatherbacks to beach erosion, and document if there is nest translocation in different beaches.
- Encourage and implement females and nests monitoring programs in nesting beaches (Involve resource managers to include conservation of turtle nesting habitat viability when deciding on projects to mine sand, fortify coastlines [e.g., beach armoring], and other coastal development activities).
- Define and implement buffer zones for nesting beaches and establish guidelines for best practices on infrastructure and other activities. (This could help prioritize retaining/enhancing resilience in coastal ecosystems, particularly as it relates to residential and tourism infrastructure development in an era of climate change and sea level rise).
- Verify that other parameters important for incubation in beaches (e.g. temperature, humidity, organic matter) are present on the nesting beaches within normal ranges of variability.

3. Life history and demographic parameters

- Prioritize collaborative data collection and analysis of existing data
- Select and implement suitable standardized models and execute capture-recapture data analyses to determine regional patterns in remigration intervals, clutch frequency, and survivorship of tagged reproductive females

(Tagging data exist but data from high volume nesting sites are generally maintained by site-level organizations that rarely share this information – while data from smaller nesting sites (<100 gravid females/yr) tend to be archived with WIDECAST’s Regional Marine Turtle Tagging Centre (University of the West Indies-Cave Hill, Barbados), so there is a need to promote broader sharing of tag return data and enhanced tagging across nesting sites (cf. Meylan 1999; Horrocks et al. 2011). It is recommended that current efforts and information are unified in a regulated regional database easy to access.)

- Implement the standardized methods at the legal level and execute analyses to determine patterns and biological indicators of incubation and hatchling success across the region

(Hatching success data exist for many sites, can be analyzed across months within nesting seasons and across years, in relation to handling and treatment of nests, temperature, and other effects.

Implement a standardized collection of *in situ* temperatures (beaches and nests).

Execute relevant analyses of existing satellite tracking data of reproductive females to identify migratory paths, and spatial and/or temporal shifts in post-nesting or foraging destination behavior.)

Annex IV - CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.5

The following document will be presented to the COP, and a Technical Document is in preparation.

Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) index nesting beaches status in the Southeastern Pacific

Executive Summary

In 2018, the Scientific Committee of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) developed the technical document [CIT-CC15-2018-Tec.14](#) “IAC Index Nesting Beach Data Analysis (2009-2018)”. This is an update to an earlier nesting beach report that provided data from 2009-2013 (CIT-CC11-2014-Tec.7). Whereas green turtle nesting in Pacific Mexico is robust and increasing, we found a predominantly decreasing trend at the index beach of Quinta Playa in the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, and similar but less-dramatic declines in green turtle nesting in northwest Costa Rica. The reason(s) for the disparity in nesting trends between Pacific Mexico and the southeastern Pacific (Costa Rica, Ecuador) are unclear. However, in response to the apparent declining trends in the southeastern Pacific Ocean, the IAC Scientific Committee (via a Working Group of representatives from Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and United States) developed an IAC Technical Document (In Preparation) that summarizes nesting trends at three regions in the eastern Pacific (Mexico, Costa Rica, Galapagos) and elaborates on 10 potential reasons for the observed declining trends in the southeastern Pacific.

The completion of this document was not possible prior to the IAC Conference of Parties, and for the Galapagos green turtle nesting beaches we are currently determining if a) the declining trend is due to changes in monitoring effort, b) the declines are only due to natural annual nesting abundance variations, as observed for this species in previous years, and/or c) the declines are due to anthropogenic impacts in the southeastern Pacific Ocean. Also, as part of this analysis, the IAC Scientific Committee is considering literature and datasets relating to bycatch rates in continental coastal waters of Ecuador and Peru, illegal green turtle consumption rates in Peru, and potential climate change effects on foraging habitat quality. Although the reasons for the declining trend is unclear, the IAC Scientific Committee believes it is appropriate to give greater attention to green turtle conservation in the southeastern Pacific Ocean.

We, therefore, recommend the following:

1. Characterize historic monitoring effort (e.g. start date/finish date/survey hours) for all nesting seasons and all beaches in the Galapagos. It is also important to clarify the number of monitoring staff and length of nesting beach monitored.
2. Maintain robust monitoring efforts at the primary index beaches in the Galapagos and Costa Rica over the course of the entire green turtle nesting season.
3. Maximize nest success and hatching production in the Galapagos. Strategies to achieve this may include predator abatement and nest protection.

4. Conduct national and local efforts to develop programs that quantify sea turtle bycatch and mortality in artisanal fisheries of the eastern Pacific.
5. Implement mitigation measures to reduce sea turtle bycatch mortality in artisanal fisheries of the eastern Pacific.
6. Develop and implement local regulations and enforcement to reduce sea turtle consumption by humans near the main foraging areas in the eastern Pacific.
7. Develop research on green turtle genetics in foraging areas to establish their nesting beaches

Annex V - CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.6

DRAFT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE FOR THE ACCESS TO, USE AND REQUEST OF DATA COMPILED BY THE IAC

Considering proper management of the data submitted to the IAC by the IAC Parties, governments, private and non-governmental organizations;

Considering that some of the information submitted to the IAC requires a certain level of confidentiality;

Recognizing the need for confidentiality in some of the data submitted by the Parties through the IAC Annual Report;

Emphasizing that the IAC Scientific and Consultative Committee are committed to transparency about data use;

THE NINTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES

Agrees to adopt the following:

PROCEDURE TO REQUEST AND USE DATA COMPILED BY THE IAC

The procedure to request and use data compiled by the IAC has been developed for third parties to access such data. In the case of individuals or NGOs, it is required to be an IAC accredited observer. The procedure will be as follows:

1. The applicant shall submit a physical letter addressed to the IAC Secretary *Pro Tempore* and a digital copy to the e-mail address secretario@iacseaturtle.org
2. The content of the letter of data request or data use must include:
 - a. What data or datasets are requested and explicit details about how the data will be used, and any subsequent products. (i.e. peer-review paper, IUCN Red List status review, etc.).
 - b. The rationale of the request.
 - c. Name of the research project for which the data will be used.
 - d. Expected output.

The data can only be used for one research project at a time, a new request shall be submitted if the information is required for a different project. The data cannot be used for commercial purposes and all authorship must be recognized for each individual, private or non-governmental organization that has provided information.

3. The IAC Secretary *Pro Tempore* will submit the request to the IAC Consultative and Scientific Committee Chair who will delegate a joint working group formed primarily by the delegates for each country whose data is included in the request, although others can also participate. This working group will consider the request as well as verify if the data have already been approved for sharing or if further approval is required.
4. Data use permission must be granted by the specific country/countries that provided the data under request. For example, if a fisheries bycatch dataset that includes data from countries A, B, and C is requested, then all three countries must approve the data request for the dataset to be provided to the requester. If any one country does not grant approval, then a truncated dataset will be provided that includes only the data from the countries that approved the request.
5. Once permission has been granted, the working group will organize the data in the most efficient format available to be sent to the requester.
6. The applicant will receive an electronic confirmation of approval from the IAC Secretary *Pro Tempore* along with the data requested in the most efficient format available.
7. As stated before the requester may only use the data for the purposes initially declared in the request. Any additional use of datasets will require additional approval by the Consultative and Scientific Committees. Any infringement of this procedure will result in the applicant being banned from requesting data in the future and as an IAC accredited observer. Legal procedures against infringement of intellectual property rights may also be initiated.
8. The entity, Organization or individuals requesting data shall provide a report of the results of the research project as well as any published products that use the data to the IAC Secretariat *Pro Tempore* for subsequent forwarding to the sources of the data.

Public Domain data shall be available to any persons for (a) downloading from the Convention's website and/or (b) release by the Convention on request.

The website should contain a statement describing the conditions associated with the viewing or downloading of public domain data (for example, that the source of the data must be acknowledged).

Annex VI – Consultative Committee Work Plan (2018-2019) – CIT-CCE12-2019-Doc.4

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Timeframe
Consultative Committee of Experts	Exceptions	1) Follow up on the progress of Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Panama exceptions, and other cases presented. 2) The Consultative Committee of Experts will prepare a report to the COP on the use of sea turtles or their products by the Parties Exceptions (when new exceptions are presented).	1) Report to COP on the progress of Costa Rica, Panama and Guatemala exceptions (if needed). 2) Report on exceptions presented for COP consideration.	2019, 2020 Permanent
Consultative Committee of Experts, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	IAC's Website & Newsletter	1) Parties will send to Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i> relevant news on a monthly basis for the IAC's Newsletter.	1) IAC website updated with the IAC's Newsletter and other documents of interest.	Permanent
Eastern Pacific Leatherback Working Group	Eastern Pacific Leatherback Working Group	1) Follow up on the implementation of the Eastern Pacific Leatherback Resolution (CIT-COP7-2015-R2). 2) 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 to COP9.	1) Report presented at COP with recommendations on urgent conservation actions. 2) Present Laud OPO results from East Pacific Leatherback model to COP9.	2019, 2020
Consultative Committee of Experts	North West Atlantic Leatherback	1) The working group (Costa Rica, United States, Brazil, CCE Chair and Sectorial member), prepare draft Resolution on NWA Leatherback based on the recommendations from IAC Scientific Committee.	1) Draft Resolution on NWA Leatherback presented to COP9.	2019

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Timeframe
Consultative Committee of Experts	IAC Annual Report	1) CCE delegate from each country will provide support to the Focal Point to prepare the IAC Annual Report.	1) IAC Annual Report submitted annually	Permanent
Resolution Compliance Working Group	IAC Annual Report and Compliance of Resolutions	1) Assess current Annual Report format. 2) Evaluate Annual Report Online System proposal.	1) Recommendations for changes to the format of the Annual Report as required. 2) Proposal on IAC Annual Report Online System presented to COP9.	2019
Consultative Committee of Experts	Work plan	1) Update CCE work plan following the recommendations of the Parties.	1) CCE bi-annual work plan updated with activities, timetable and responsible.	Permanent
Consultative Committee of Experts - Working Group (USA)	Collaboration with International Organizations	1) Create a working group to follow up on the implementation of existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).	1) The United States will propose ideas to work with the organizations with which the IAC has MoU.	2019
Consultative Committee of Experts	Collaboration with International Organizations	1) Recommend and promote alliances and synergies with other international organizations to accomplish the IAC objectives.	1) Identification of synergies with similar organizations to share information (SPAW, CIAT, CPPS, WIDECAS, ACAP, ICCAT, OSPESCA, OLDEPESCA, RAMSAR, SWOT, ICAPO, ASO, WWF, CBD, CMS). 2) Participation of IAC representative at Cartagena Convention COP in 2019 to discuss NWA leatherback recommendations with no-IAC countries. Caribbean Netherlands will facilitate the discussion.	2019, 2020
Consultative Committee of Experts	Collaboration with International Organizations	1) Develop and review MoU drafts with relevant identified organizations.	1) Documents presented to COP for consideration.	2019

Actor	Topic	Proposed Action	Expected Result	Timeframe
Consultative Committee of Experts, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	Drafting Resolutions and Recommendations to COP	1) Address COP requests and draft Resolutions and recommendations accordingly.	1) Resolutions and draft recommendations presented to COP as needed. 2) Draft Resolution on changes to guidelines for financing the IAC presented to COP9. 3) Draft Resolution NWA Leatherback presented to COP9. 4) Draft Resolution on data use to be presented to COP9. 5) Recommendations on green turtle nesting in Galapagos presented to COP9. 6) Recommendation on IAC Annual Report Online System proposal presented to COP9. 7) Laud OPO East Pacific Leatherback Model report presented to COP9.	2019
Consultative Committee of Experts	IAC Technical Documents	1) Develop technical documents as needed.	1) Technical documents available on the IAC website and shared with IAC Parties.	Permanent
Consultative Committee of Experts, Secretariat <i>Pro Tempore</i>	IAC Experts Directory	1) Review and update the IAC Experts Directory.	1) Updated directory available on IAC's Website.	Permanent
Consultative Committee, Resolution Compliance WG	Resolution compliance	The Consultative Committee of Experts will prepare a report to the COP on the compliance of the Parties with the IAC resolutions and agreements made by the COPs, when necessary.	Report on resolution compliance presented at COP when necessary.	Permanent