



**Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation
of Sea Turtles**
10th Conference of the Parties
June 15-17, 2022 - Panama

Resolution CIT-COP10-2022-R7

Reduction of the Adverse Impacts of Fisheries on Sea Turtles

RECOGNIZING that bycatch in fisheries is a considerable source of sea turtle mortality at sea, and the need for all IAC Parties to take and promote actions to reduce bycatch, including interactions and mortality, of these species in fishing operations;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that some Parties of the IAC Convention are also members of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), and the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), which have adopted measures to reduce the impact of fisheries on sea turtles, including the IATTC: Resolution (C-19-04) to Mitigate Impacts on Sea Turtles, noting also C-04-05 (Modified) of the year 2005, and C-04-07 of the year 2004; ICCAT: Recommendation on the Bycatch of Sea Turtles Amending Recommendation 10-09 (Rec. 13-11), Recommendation on the Bycatch of Sea Turtles in ICCAT Fisheries (Rec.10-09), and Resolution on Circle Hooks (Res. 05-08); WCPFC CCM 2018-04 Conservation and Management of Sea Turtles, and NAFO Resolution to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality in NAFO Fishing Operations (NAFO/FC Doc. 06/7);

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION that the above mentioned Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) report incidental capture of sea turtles and their mortality in fisheries;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the Fisheries Committee (COFI) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) endorsed the Technical Consultation on sea turtle conservation and fisheries during their 26th session held in Rome in 2005, and urged their members and the RFMOs to immediately apply the recommendations outlined in the document “Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality in Fishing Operations”;

CONSIDERING that IAC Parties have established the mandatory use of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) and other measures for shrimp trawling in their respective regulations and that the use of such devices and said measures has been effective in reducing incidental capture of sea turtles in trawl fisheries;

CONSIDERING that some of the Parties are carrying out experiments with circle hooks and baits in longline fisheries, that have shown to be effective in reducing incidental capture and mortality of sea turtles;

CONSIDERING that these actions are in line with the objective of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles;

CONSIDERING that in the IAC Annual Report, the Parties provide information on sea turtle bycatch in longline fleets operating in the IAC Area, with the goal of analyzing the impacts of longline bycatch, to inform the development of bycatch reduction recommendations to IAC Parties;

BEARING IN MIND the importance of non-Party States, especially those whose fishing fleets operate in the IAC area, to provide reliable and continuous data on sea turtle bycatch in their fisheries and recognizing the effort of the Secretariat of the Convention in obtaining this data.

THE 10TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES RESOLVES TO:

INCORPORATE the “Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality in Fishing Operations”, of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to reduce the mortality of sea turtles in fisheries operations, and consider, as appropriate, the recommendations of the Scientific and Consultative Committees of the Convention.

REITERATE the importance of the IAC Parties to provide the information required in the data collection forms approved by the Scientific Committee and the Consultative Committee of Experts, that are included in the IAC Annual Report, with the purpose of obtaining quantitative information that allows for the measurement of the interactions and impacts of fishing gear on sea turtles.

ENCOURAGE all IAC Parties whose fisheries have interactions with sea turtles prioritize the following actions to monitor and mitigate sea turtle bycatch:

- a. Systematically collect statistically robust data to estimate sea turtle bycatch in fishing operations.
- b. Implement systematic data collection on stranded sea turtles to provide supplementary information on mortality sources.

- c. Establish and/or strengthen fishery monitoring programs to collect information on sea turtle bycatch through, if appropriate, on board observers and/or electronic monitoring.
- d. Implement and increase at port and/or community surveys, compilation of fisheries reports, and capacity development for the data collectors, in order to augment the fisheries monitoring programs, taking into consideration the financial and practical feasibility.
- e. Make efforts to implement or improve the application of mitigation measures to reduce sea turtle incidental capture and mortality in fisheries, based on the best scientific information available in agreement with each country's regulations in place.
- f. Promote the establishment and evaluation of national programs for safe handling and release of bycaught sea turtles through capacity strengthening and training in the fishery sector based on the best practices to reduce the mortality of sea turtles.
- g. Promote research to identify new techniques and/or measures to reduce sea turtle bycatch and post-capture mortality of sea turtles in different fishing gears.
- h. Consider new research that evaluates post – capture mortality of sea turtles in different fishing gear.

REQUEST that the Scientific Committee and the Consultative Committee of Experts, in collaboration with the Secretariat and other IAC Parties, prepare standardized forms for data collection to be incorporated in the IAC Annual Report, define methodologies to measure the impacts of fisheries on sea turtles, and provide recommendations as appropriate on the implementation of the measures. The Scientific Committee will prepare a report every five (5) years with the fisheries information provided by IAC Parties in the Annual Report for consideration of the Parties.

URGE IAC Parties, and the Scientific Committee and Consultative Committee of Experts through the Secretariat, to work to identify opportunities for technical and financial collaboration to implement measures to help reduce the bycatch and mortality of sea turtles in fishing operations.

SUPPORT the Secretariat in commencing or continuing, with the participation of the Parties, discussions with regional fisheries management organizations, regional fishery bodies, international organizations, and other entities relevant to the work of the IAC, with the possibility of developing and signing Memoranda of Understanding.

This resolution repeals and replaces the IAC Resolution COP3/2006/R-2 Reduction of the adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles, in its entirety.