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

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We invite you to send us  
news of research,  
courses and other  
activities related to sea  
turtles and their  
conservation.

Send your article in a  
Word file and photograph  
in JPG format.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IAC Conference of the Parties

The Seventh Meeting of the IAC Conference of the Parties (COP7) was held in Mexico City, from 24 to 26 of June, 2015.

The meeting was attended by delegates from 11 countries (Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, United States, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Caribbean Netherlands, Peru and Uruguay), and accredited observers from local and international NGOs.

Three important resolutions were approved that deal with the conservation of the Eastern Pacific leatherback turtle, conservation of the loggerhead turtle and the exception presented by Costa Rica under Article IV (3a and 3b) for subsistence harvesting of *Lepidochelys olivacea* eggs.

Argentina was elected the next COP Chair and Brazil Vice -chair. The next Conference of the Parties (COP8) will be held in Argentina in 2017.

COP7 was sponsored by the Government of Mexico through the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP), the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) and the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund – USFWS.



Group photo 7<sup>th</sup> IAC Conference of the Parties © Carlos Salas



COP7 Delegates left-right: Mexico, Ecuador, Chile and Argentina. © Carlos Salas

## National Strategy for Management and Conservation of Sea Turtles of Guatemala

In March, the National Council of Protected Areas of Guatemala (CONAP) published the *National Strategy for Management and Conservation of the Sea Turtles of Guatemala* (Technical Document 02-2015). This document is an update of the document prepared in 2002, taking into account changes in the political, legal, socioeconomic environment of the country, and also includes the growing influence in tourism on nesting beaches, nest sponsorship programs, and the consolidation of CONAP as regulatory body governing the activities of sea turtle conservation.

Download the complete document here:

[http://www.iacseaturtle.org/docs/planes/estrategia\\_nacional\\_tortuga\\_marina\\_digital\\_Guatemala.pdf](http://www.iacseaturtle.org/docs/planes/estrategia_nacional_tortuga_marina_digital_Guatemala.pdf)

## Workshop on Sea Turtle Protection and Conservation in Panama

As part of the awareness campaigns in coastal marine issues, to sensitize the public about the importance and preservation of the environment, locals from the communities of Ailigandí, San Ignacio de Tupile and Playón Chico located in Caribbean side of the country received a training workshop on the protection, conservation and research of biodiversity in coastal marine ecosystems, with topics in the biology, importance, and major threats of local species.

Taking advantage that the workshop was held at the Isle of Masargandub in Guna Yala, important nesting site for the hawksbill turtle, the participants were trained in research, management, monitoring, rescue and rehabilitation of sea turtles.

Marino Abrego, IAC's Scientific Committee delegate for Panama, clarified concepts regarding the development of skills and attitudes needed for a harmonious coexistence between humans, culture and their environment.

Read the full story at the following link: <http://miambiente.gob.pa/index.php/site-map/1178-pobladores-de-masargandub-se-capacitan-en-proteccion-y-conservacion-de-tortugas-en-guna-yala>



Marino Abrego, Panama delegate of the IAC's Scientific Committee, talking to the workshop participants. Workshop attendees made a practice of nest digging and data collection © Marino Abrego

## IAC Countries Celebrate World Sea Turtle Day

World Sea Turtle Day is celebrated on June 16 in honor of Dr. Archie Carr's birthday, the "Father of the biology of sea turtles". Dr. Carr's research brought the attention to the threats that sea turtles face, helping to create the movement and the community who fight for the conservation of sea turtles worldwide.

Each year, NOAA-Fisheries celebrate the “Sea Turtle Week” to honor Sea Turtle Day, displaying on its website [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2015/06/seaturtles\\_2015.html](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2015/06/seaturtles_2015.html) information of the seven species of sea turtles that inhabit our planet, and providing links on their study and conservation.

This year in Ecuador, the Sea Turtle Day was celebrated with children activities in the province of Esmeraldas and presentations at the Galapagos Islands for visitors. The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Ecuador promoted these activities.



Eduardo Espinoza, Ecuador delegate of IAC Scientific Committee gives a talk about sea turtles in Galapagos. Children participating in the activities of the Sea Turtle Day in the province of Esmeraldas. ©Eduardo Espinoza

## Video Release on Nesting Beach Protection in Barbados

As part of the project “Protecting Critical Hawksbill Nesting Habitat in Barbados”, and with the financial support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Barbados Sea Turtle Project and the University of West Indies made an awareness video on the protection need of hawksbill nesting beaches, the threats they face in areas where tourism and coastal development exist, and alternatives to minimize impacts and ensure that nesting habitats are optimal for their survival.

The 10 minute video titled “Protecting beaches: Turning the Tide for Sea Turtles” was made to increase awareness of the need to give nesting beaches greater protection, and to inform property owners and beaches



Hawksbill turtle crawling back to the sea, Barbados ©Carla Daniel

Watch the video at this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/thebstp/videos/vb.175369839188386/966422283416467/?type=2&theater>

## Upcoming Events

- II Course on Biology, Conservation and Management of Sea Turtles and Cetaceans. It will be held at Mata Oscura beach and Rusia de Quebro, in the province of Veraguas, Panama from 16 to 20 September 2015. For more information, contact [info@fundat.org](mailto:info@fundat.org)
- 12<sup>th</sup> IAC Scientific Committee Meeting will be held from 27 to 29 of October 2015 in Viña del Mar, Chile. Soon more information in our website.

## Recent Publications

### **Sea turtle nesting in the northwestern sector of Morrocoy National Park, Falcon, Venezuela**

Maria Fernanda González-Rivero, Hedelvy J. Guada, Maria de los Angeles Rondon and Luis Gonzalo Morales  
Revista Anartia.

<http://izt.ciens.ucv.ve/izet/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/anartia25-Gonzalez-et alTM.pdf>

The objective of this study was to evaluate the reproductive activity of sea turtles in the northwestern sector of Morrocoy National Park (Falcon estate). In 2008, the coastal towns of Varadero, Mayorquina, Cayo Borracho and Cayo Sal, were patrolled documenting the nesting activity, as well as poaching. The study showed that Varadero, Mayorquina and Cayo Borracho remain being active nesting sites. Hawksbill and leatherback nesting that had been previously reported was verified and it was confirmed green sea turtle nesting for the first time. Factors affecting reproductive activity are the development of tourism activities, artisanal fisheries, nest poaching and capture of adults, which confirms the need of keeping the zoning established in the Management Plan and Use Regulations of the Morrocoy National Park (1995).

For more information:

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### **One size does not fit all: Importance of adjusting conservation practices for endangered hawksbill turtles to address local nesting habitat needs in the eastern Pacific Ocean**

Michael Liles, Larkus Peterson, Jeffrey Seminoff, Eduardo Altamirano, Ana Henriquez, Alexander Gaos, Velkiss Gadea, Jose Urteaga, Perla Torres, Bryan Wallace and Tarla Peterson  
Biological Conservation

<http://www.hawksbill.org/media-center/research-findings/>

The paper highlights the differences that eastern Pacific hawksbill population (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) has with the Caribbean and Indo-Pacific populations, regarding the nesting site selection. In El Salvador and Nicaragua, where > 80% of eastern Pacific hawksbill population nests, was found that the turtles prefer nesting sites with abundant vegetation on the beaches of mangrove estuaries, also exhibiting local adaptations.