

NEWS

BULLETIN NO. 35



INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES - IAC

APRIL—JUNE, 2019

The Dominican Republic, host of the Ninth Conference of Parties (COP9) of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles – IAC



IAC Delegates and Secretary *PT* at the 9th Conference of Parties (COP9)

The Dominican Republic hosted the IAC Ninth Conference of Parties (COP9) held in Santo Domingo on June 12-14, 2019. Ms. Ydalia Acevedo, Vice-minister of Coasts and Seas of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources welcomed the delegations from 12 IAC countries (Argentina, Brazil, the Caribbean Netherlands, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and the United States). Ms. Acevedo acknowledged and thanked Ms. Idelisa Bonelly de Calventi who is the pioneer in sea turtle conservation in the Dominican Republic. Ms. Acevedo also highlighted her country efforts in the conservation of the three species of sea turtles (leatherbacks, greens, and hawksbills) found in the country beaches and waters, the laws and regulations adopted by the government to ensure their protection, and the participation of several Universities, organizations, and volunteers working to reverse the threats that sea turtles face, and safeguard their survival.

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The COP9 adopted a new Resolution for the conservation of the Northwest Atlantic Leatherback, in response to the decreasing number of nests and females that have been reported in the last years ([CIT-COP9-2019-R2](#)). A Resolution to Access, Use and Request data compiled by the IAC was adopted too ([CIT-COP9-2019-R4](#)), providing the guidelines for third parties interested in the data collected by the Convention. Amendments to the Resolution on Guidelines for Financing the Operation of the IAC were adopted as well, specifying how in-kind contributions should be reported by the Parties. In addition, the COP approved the proposal to implement an online reporting system for the IAC Annual Reports.

The COP Chair Antonio de Nichilo proposed a mechanism to measure the implementation of the COP recommendations, to be used by the COP, the Scientific, and Consultative Committees Chairs. The IAC Eastern Pacific Leatherback Task Force Coordinator, presented a model on the impacts of conservation actions in the long and mid-term for East Pacific Leatherbacks, showing that this decade is critical to avoid this species extinction. The delegate from Panama presented positive results and progress in the implementation of the Resolution on Exception for subsistence harvesting of *Lepidochelys olivacea* eggs in his country.

Mr. Rotney Piedra, Costa Rica Focal Point, was elected as the new Chair of the Conference of Parties, replacing Mr. Antonio de Nichilo who did an excellent job during the last four years. Mr. Piedra will be the COP10 Chair in Panama, and as the next COP host, Panama will hold the position of Vice Chair.



Mr. Rotney Piedra - Elected IAC COP
Chair



Organizers of the meeting, Vice Minister, Ms. Ydalia Acevedo and the Dominican Republic Focal Point, Ms. Cristiana de la Rosa; with them the COP Outgoing Chair, Mr. Antonio de Nichilo; COP Elected Chair, Mr. Rotney Piedra and the Scientific Committee Chair, Mr. Diego Albareda. In the back, the delegate from Brazil, Mr. Alex Guimaraes and the delegate from Argentina, Nora Elizabeth Capello.

The Conference finished with the remarks of the Dominican Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs representative, Ms. Venecia Alvarez, who reminded the process for this country to accede the Convention in 2017, and that as hosts of its first COP, they were honored and pleased with the successful results from the meeting. In her closing remarks, The Vice ministry Ms. Acevedo thanked the participants and emphasized the willingness and commitment of the Dominican Republic to continue to comply with the IAC objectives for the regional benefit of sea turtles and their habitats.

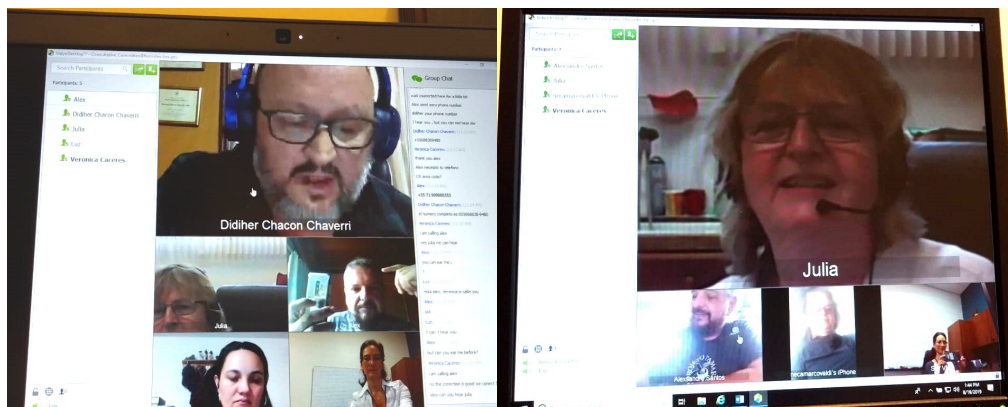
Working Group on Exceptions

At the end of the first five years of Exception in Panama and Guatemala, the IAC Scientific Committee Working Group on Exceptions formed by Costa Rica, the Caribbean Netherlands, and Brazil, met during the inter-sessions term to analyze the results of the five-year report presented by these countries.

As a result of the two videoconferences (August 13 and 19, 2019), the WG on Exceptions presented a proposal to amend Resolution CIT-COP6-2013-R1 - [Exceptions for Subsistence Harvesting of *L. olivacea* Eggs in Guatemala and Panama](#) - based on the information provided by

Panama and Guatemala, for the consideration of the 16th Scientific Committee Meeting.

The amendment included an explicit request for each of the countries to develop and implement a management plan for their Exception. This plan should provide quantitative data and include comparisons of nesting trends over time and between years, to support the sustainability of the olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) harvesting in these countries.



Working Group on Exceptions (Costa Rica, Caribbean Netherlands and Brazil) videoconferences - August 13 and 19 - Inter-sessions work before the SC16.

Working Group on Fisheries

In preparation for the 16th Meeting of the IAC Scientific Committee (SC16), the Working Group on Fisheries formed by Peru, Ecuador, Chile and Mexico, held a videoconference on August 26 to agree on the results to present at the SC16, according to their work plan.

The WG agreed on presenting the following for consideration of the SC16: a draft form to standardize strandings data collection; comments to the model proposed to report the EP leatherback status in the Parties within its range; an analysis on the compliance with the EP Leatherback Resolution [CIT-COP7-2005-R2](#), and presenting a proposal of items to collaborate with the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding IAC-ACAP.

World Sea Turtle Day - June 16



The Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) celebrated World Sea Turtle Day (June 16, 2019) with a post-card of the *Eastern Pacific Hawksbill Turtle* oil painting by CJ Green Hill Caldera.

Nicaraguan-American CJ Greenhill Caldera employs the “toxic butter” of oil paint to explore the in-between created by having a foot in two different cultures. Her work focuses on issues of great importance to the artist: ecology, immigration, and women’s contribution to our society. Growing up between Nicaragua and the United States, she honors the incredible wildlife she encountered in Nicaragua through series featuring the life cycles of endangered species. This work pays homage to the Hawksbill Turtle, the artist’s favorite. CJ’s most recent work dynamically portrays the characters and animals, both seen and unseen, in our multi-cultural domestic lives.

Contact Us

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

5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls
Church, Virginia 22041-3803,
USA 1 (703) 358-1828

contact@iacseaturtle.org

www.iacseaturtle.org



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