

**Report of the 7th Meeting of the IAC Scientific Committee**

**1. Welcome remarks.**

The 7th Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) began with opening words from the IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Veronica Cáceres. This was followed by an inauguration of the meeting given by Ms. Marisel Morales, the General Director of Panama's Authority on Aquatic Resources (ARAP), highlighting the recent declaration of Marinera Beach as a protected area because of its importance as a *Lepidochelys olivacea* nesting site.

**2. Presentation of participants.**

Representatives from the fourteen countries Party to the Convention participated in the meeting in addition to representatives from two Intergovernmental Organizations (the Central American Organization of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector (OSPESCA) and the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS)) and six NGOs accredited by the IAC as observers. There were a total of 32 participants (Annex I).

**3. Elect Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur**

The Committee was aware that the former Chair, Dr. Jack Frazier, is no longer a part of the U.S. delegation and for that reason was not participating in the meeting. They therefore agreed that the Vice-Chair, Dr. René Márquez, representative from Mexico, would temporarily act as the Chair of the meeting. The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair for the next two year period was postponed until the end of the meeting. The representative of Costa Rica, Dr. Didiher Chacón, was elected as rapporteur.

**4. Adoption of the agenda.**

The Agenda was adopted with the observation made by Uruguay to allow for more time to discuss the topic of annual reports (Annex II).

**5. Summary of the 6th meeting of the Scientific Committee**

The Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee presented a summary of the most important issues and results obtained during the last Committee meeting that was held in San Jose, Costa Rica from October 21-23, 2009. The full report on this meeting was distributed as document CIT-CC6-2009-Doc.3.

**6. Informative presentations**

**I. Standardization workshop on data and annual reports (Andrés Domingo)**

The workshop was held in Guayaquil, Ecuador, from December 15-18, 2009, with the objective of supporting the work of the scientific committees of international instruments focused on sea turtle conservation and their habitats, especially the IAC and the Regional Program for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in the Southeast Pacific (of the Lima Convention). This workshop recommended consistently taking the following three variables as indicators of the conservation status of sea

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turtles: number of nests, hatching success and incidental capture in fisheries. The standardization of these variables should be based on existing protocols which are accepted both regionally and world-wide. It was also noted that the workshop recommended developing a database in order to store, organize, access and use the information received by the Secretariats of their respective instruments. Another recommendation was to seek help from those Parties that have made the most progress at a national level on this topic. The need to create a National Committee in each country was also discussed for the purpose of coordinating activities between different organizations, including the government, academia, public and productive sectors, among others, as a way of promoting synergies and make the most efficient use of personnel and limited resources.

After the results of the standardization workshop were presented, the Scientific Committee determined the following items to be the basis for the discussion on annual reports: A) Consider the recommendations and requests for submitting the information (basic information). B) Direct requests from the Scientific Committee to those providing the data in the reports. C) Seek institutional collaboration (databases, alliances, synergies, etc.). D) Additional tasks for the committee members: a. Standardization and b. Database. In regards to creating a database, it was recommended that three types of data be compiled as priority indicators: number of nests, hatching success and incidental capture in fisheries as a source of mortality. In addition, it was recommended that the database continue to be managed by the IAC Secretariat.

## **II. Eastern Pacific Hawksbill Initiative (ICAPO) Meeting (Didiher Chacón)**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> ICAPO workshop was held in Nicaragua in July of 2010 with the participation from members of the IAC Scientific Committee and the PT Secretariat, who presented during the meeting. Mr. Chacon presented the activities of the Hawksbill Project which began in 2007 with the objective of leading local and regional research efforts, promoting conservation and creating awareness of hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in the Eastern Pacific (EP). He mentioned that the ICAPO network is carrying out important research projects with hawksbills in the EP and that the participation of the IAC PT Secretariat in these meetings, such as in Nicaragua, is important to strengthen such cooperative efforts. It was also mentioned that this group has reported important levels of nesting of hawksbills on the Pacific coast of Nicaragua, especially within the Padre Ramos Estuary.

After the presentation, the Scientific Committee discussed the importance of following up on the ICAPO activities since six of the IAC countries form part of this initiative, and also the importance of the abundance of hawksbills in Ecuador. They also agreed that the recommendations of ICAPO should be taken into consideration to help guide national efforts.

## **III. WIDECAST Regional Meeting (Didiher Chacón)**

The results of the Annual WIDECAST meeting, which was held in Martinique from March 2-4, 2010, were presented. The agenda of this meeting included reports on national programs, regional issues and updates on research, conservation and management initiatives throughout the Caribbean region. Special sessions on climate change and on crime scene investigation of damaged coral reefs were held. WWF provided the training session on adaptation to climate change and presented a tool kit for monitoring sea level-related changes to nesting beaches. The PT Secretary participated in this

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meeting and presented the IAC to the participants emphasizing its interest in including more Caribbean nations as party countries. The Secretariat of the SPAW protocol also participated.

**IV. Update on the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico** (Jeff Seminoff and René Márquez)

Jeff Seminoff presented an update on the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, reporting that major efforts to resolve this problem have been made that are not being reflected in the media. He presented a summary on the spill, recovery of sea turtles, nest relocation and prevention of future impacts using satellite telemetry. There are an estimated 4000 oil platforms in the Gulf. Deepwater Horizon had been working over the Mississippi Canyon for the past 9 years. On April 22nd, the oil spill began at what was estimated at 100,000 barrels per day. A total of 4.9 M barrels of oil have been spilt, and 6.9 M liters of “dispersers” have been used. The spill had dispersed off the U.S. coasts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. One of the solutions has been to burn it off the surface thus eliminating it from the aquatic environment. He expressed that ocean current models were analyzed as well as the risk that the main current poses to disperse the oil outside of the Gulf all the way to Europe. Furthermore, a probability model on the threats of the impact of the oil was presented.

He mentioned that when carrying out ocean rescues they visited convergence zones where two bodies of water met, as these are the typical areas where small sea turtles reside to take advantage of the rich food supply. These are also areas where the surface oil accumulated. A wealth of organisms such as: sargassum, turtles, birds are found in these areas. Satellite imagery with MERIS and Radar technology was used to guide the boats to areas of accumulation. Marine life (sea turtles) was collected at these convergence zones. Sometimes up to 30 turtles per day were captured, all of them covered in oil. The majority of the carapaces measured between 25 and 45 cm long, the turtles were in their pelagic stage, only a few years old. Of the 458 turtles collected, only 5 were dead, another 3 of them died at the rehabilitation sites. At the time of the meeting, 123 turtles had been cleaned and released, with more expected. These turtles were released in areas outside of those areas posing the greatest risk of being affected. Some *Caretta caretta* nests were found on the beaches. If the nests were found in areas with a 10% chance of being affected, they were relocated from the internal part of the Gulf to the east coast of Florida. Of the 278 nests relocated, a total of 13,997 viable hatchlings were produced. Satellite tracking of *L. kempii* and *C. caretta* shows that they migrate very close to the coast; therefore, the contamination could cause problems with this type of coastal behavior. The geographical range of *L. kempii* could be a problem for their relocation. On the other hand, of the 22 loggerheads that were tagged in Florida, none of them turned up in the risk zone. He commented that a major stranding event occurred along the SE US coast just after the spill; virtually all of the turtles found on the beaches were dead (some 400 individuals).

Dr. Marquez gave a presentation on the impact that oil is having on sea turtles in Mexico. He mentioned that they haven't found any sea turtles with signs of death from contamination, indicating that it is likely that the impact is concentrated, at least for now, to the northern part of the Gulf of Mexico. However, he is afraid that because of the coastal behavior of *L. kempii* and the impact that the oil has had on the ecosystems where the ridleys feed, one can assume that there will be a delayed impact at the medium term. In addition to the fact that their feeding grounds are found next to the spill, there is also an unknown impact to the benthic zone and the shrimp, crabs, mollusks and fish found there, which is what these species feed on (*L. kempii* and *C. caretta*). As for nesting beaches, the oil spill did not affect the nests or hatchlings; however, it is believed that the oil will have a negative effect on those hatchlings that hatched when the spill occurred since many of the hatchlings

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drift with the ocean currents toward the affected areas. There is no proof that the decrease in nesting of kemp's ridleys this year is a result of the oil spill, but in the future this reduction will likely have an effect on the population, that will be seen within 10 to 15 years, when the production of surviving hatchlings from this class reach sexual maturity.

**V. 30th International Sea Turtle Symposium in Goa.** (Neca Marcovaldi)

Ms. Marcovaldi presented information on the Annual Symposium for Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, which was held early this year in Goa, India. Various thematic sessions were held, among them conservation and management, ecosystem function, freshwater turtles and more. 500 people from 60 countries participated in the symposium. Workshops were held on statistics, genetics, and satellite telemetry, among others. Regional meetings were also held for African, Indio-Asian, Mediterranean and Latin America regions. Seventeen people participated in the latter meeting, known as RETOMALA, and its main topic was Climate Change. Fisheries interactions is said to be the emphasis of RETOMALA's meeting at the next Symposium. The IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group met and discussed regional management units, preparing matrices for both their status and threats. One of the expected outcomes of this meeting is the creation of maps by species. Approximately 200 posters were presented during the Symposium, and the next one will be held in San Diego, California.

**VI. KOBE II Bycatch Workshop.** (Verónica Cáceres, IAC PT Secretary)

A summary of the participation of the IAC PT Secretary in the Kobe II Bycatch Workshop (K2B) that was held in Brisbane, Australia from June 23-25 was given, and the joint background paper that was prepared with the IOSEA was explained. The meeting was organized by the USA and the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and all of the tuna RFMOs as well as invited IGOs and observer NGOs participated in this workshop. The objective of the KOBE II was: to review the information available on bycatch species in tuna fisheries, advise the tuna RFMOs on best practices, methods and techniques to evaluate and reduce incidental mortality of non-target species of fisheries such as: birds, sea turtles, sharks, marine mammals and juvenile target species. In addition to developing and coordinating research and observer programs, and provide recommendations on mechanisms to improve the work of this topic within tuna RMFO working groups. The presentation included topics such as:

- a. Improvement of bycatch estimates in tuna RMFOs
- b. Adoption of minimum standards to prepare reports
- c. Increased observer programs
- d. Improved bycatch mitigation methods
- e. Improved coordination and collaboration among the RMFOs
- f. Creation of a permanent bycatch working group with a member from each RFMO.

During this workshop, the PT Secretary had the opportunity to converse with the different directors of the tuna RMFOs, such as the IATTC Director Guillermo Compean, to discuss possible synergies and increased collaboration between the IATTC and IAC through the signing of a memorandum of understanding.

**VII. Updates on the activities of the IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.** (Verónica Cáceres). The PT Secretary spoke on the main activities carried out between September of 2009 and September of 2010, among them:

**A. CITES COP15 Decision on Hawksbill Turtles**

A summary of the general activities and results of the Regional Workshop for the Hawksbill in the Wider Caribbean and Western Atlantic that was held in September of 2009 in Mexico was presented. Ms. Caceres then reported on the CITES COP that was held in Qatar in March, 2010 where a proposal was presented that took into consideration the results of the regional hawksbill workshop that encourage future collaboration between the Secretariats of CITES, IAC and the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region (SPA-W) of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean region. The CITES Parties approved this decision on joint collaboration.

**B. Support from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to the IAC**

The PT Secretariat presented a proposal based on 3 of the 4 project profiles (Direct take, genetics and strengthening of regional cooperation) prepared during the regional hawksbill workshop to the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund (MTCF) of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. In the end, one of these proposals was accepted, the one regarding strengthening regional cooperation through the IAC contacting countries in the Wider Caribbean with a focus on hawksbill turtle conservation or “Capacity Building for the IAC”.

**C. Increasing IAC Membership**

The Secretary reported that membership increased from 13 to 14 country Parties in 2010 and Argentina, which is currently in the process of presenting their ratification instruments to Venezuela, will be the 15<sup>th</sup>. A weakness in membership from Caribbean nations was noted. The topic of the membership of Nicaragua and Trinidad & Tobago was reiterated in order to provide follow up on their incorporation into the Convention. The PT Secretary met with different authorities within the Ministry of the Environment and Foreign Affairs in El Salvador for the purpose of integrating them into the IAC. The PT Secretary also met with the MAREA project that will help with the adhesion of Nicaragua and El Salvador to the IAC. Furthermore, the approval of the funds for the Project “Capacity Building for the IAC” of the MTCF will allow contact with those countries identified as priorities by the committees: Trinidad & Tobago, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and El Salvador. Following up on a recommendation made by the Consultative Committee, two draft Memorandums of Understanding were prepared, one with the IATTC (follow-up on Resolution COP3-2006-R1) and the other with WHMSI, for cooperative agreements.

A consultation was made to the Consultative Committee regarding the increase in IAC membership, which was later extended to the Scientific Committee, asking for their help and recommendations on this topic. The delegate of Ecuador recommended contacting Colombia and, once again, the importance of incorporating El Salvador into the IAC was reiterated. The representative of WWF recommended contacting Cuba and the Dominican Republic, in particular to evaluate the topic of hawksbill trade. The Vice-chair recommended contacting the Ministry of the Fisheries Industry and the Director of Fisheries Research in Cuba, to follow-up on this point.

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**D. IAC Website**

The PT Secretary reported on the updates made to the IAC website (<http://www.iacseaturtle.org>) and Informative Bulletin.

**E. 10th Anniversary of the IAC**

The IAC will soon celebrate 10 years. Information is needed to do a “situational” analysis of the progress made during this period, the challenges and what needs to be strengthened, while at the same time establishing future goals. It is important to develop informational material to promote this event. The U.S. delegate, Dr. Jeffrey Seminoff, recommended holding some type of celebration for the 10th Anniversary of the IAC during the 31st International Symposium on the Biology and Conservation of Sea Turtles that will be held in California in April of 2011.

**7. Summary of the 3rd Meeting of the Consultative Committee (Veronica Caceres)**

The PT Secretary summarized the 3rd Meeting of the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE) that was held in Belize City, Belize in March of 2010. The objectives of this meeting were to review pending issues from the 2nd CCE meeting held in 2006, reflect on the activities of the IAC over the past 10 years under the framework of its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2011 and determine the next steps for the Convention. Nine Parties countries participated in the meeting (Belize, Brazil, Netherlands Antilles, Guatemala, Panama, Honduras, Peru, United States and Mexico), as well as a representative from each of the 3 sectors (NGOs, Private Sector and Scientific Community) and OSPECA as an observer.

Some of the agreements and recommendations of the 3rd CCE meeting that are pertinent to the work of the SC are: that the SC review each exception reported and issue their opinion so that the CCE can make recommendations to the COP, review the implementation of the IAC resolutions and in order to celebrate the IAC's 10th Anniversary, they recommended that countries collaborate by submitting 100% of the annual reports and design a score card to be presented at the COP5, providing a reference to the status of sea turtles based on the information in the annual reports. The CCE recommended establishing an MOU with other associates in the region and formed a working group on fisheries interactions and TEDs. Furthermore, the CCE recommended holding an extraordinary meeting before the COP5 in order to review the documents prepared by the two subsidiary bodies and proposed the following topics to be added the COP5 agenda: a) To clarify the coordination mechanisms within the terms of reference of the subsidiary bodies, b) Review the activities and progress made after 10 years, and c) Review the procedures in the case of exceptions proposed by the CCE and their adoption.

After the presentation, the topic of the CCE meeting was open to discussion. The SC commented on some of the information received and recognized that the roles of the two Committees are unclear, observing some overlap in their tasks. One delegate commented on the possibility that the IAC participates in RMFO meetings as part of their collaborative efforts. The PT Secretary responded by mentioning that participation in RMFOs is very valuable to the work of the IAC. The delegate also pointed out that it is important that this meeting establishes their needs in order to comply with the objectives of the SC, through preparing a work plan with future goals. The PT Secretary responded by reminding the delegates that the SC has a work plan, which was not reviewed last year, and proposed

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updating it during this meeting. It was agreed that the document “2009-2010 Scientific Committee work plan” be circulated electronically in order to be reviewed by the participants of this meeting.

**8. Presentations of proposals and recommendations of the Scientific Committee working groups**

**I. Gillnet working group: Results of the field tests in Baja California and Peru.** (Yonat Swimmer – USA; Jorge Zuzunaga- Peru)

The objective of this group was to develop straight forward, useful forms to help characterize coastal gillnet fisheries and their interactions with sea turtles, using standardized technical terms so that they can later be compared. In order for the forms to be accepted they need to be: validated by the countries, approved by the Scientific Committee and approved by the COP. The forms were reviewed by the SC members intersessionally and modified when needed. In the end, three different forms were prepared (CIT-CC7-2010-Doc.4) with the purpose of:

1. Identifying the gillnet fisheries that interact with sea turtles.
2. Collecting information from the onboard observer. These results will be used to determine the interaction rate of the fisheries with sea turtles.
3. Collecting general information on the fleets participating in the survey.

The working group determined what terms would be taken into consideration on each form, eliminating any unnecessary information in order to simplify collecting the relevant information. After that was done and still during the intersessional term, a field test was done with different groups of fishermen in Baja California and Peru to receive their comments and adjust the forms as needed. Peru’s Ocean Institute (IMARPE) participated in the field tests carried out in Peru, having trained personal and 8 coastal laboratories available. The results of these field tests were presented along with the recommendations of the personnel that participated in them. The presentation also included a characterization of the gillnet fishery in Peru and its particular data obtained from national surveys. Information on size, number of vessels, zones, and target species, among others were presented. The field tests were carried out in 5 of the 8 zones proposed and was used in 27 cases. Some of the recommendations were:

- The instructions should assist in the correct use of the forms
- Include a unique code for each country
- Number each one of the forms
- Eliminate unnecessary spaces
- Create booklets for each one of the forms
- Condense the minimum number of forms
- Train onboard observers to identify the different species of sea turtles (instructional guides already exist from FAO and other institutions)
- Separate the date and time of the set to make it easier to fill out, as well as include information on Latitude and Longitude.

It was concluded that the particularities of each country make it difficult to create one form for the region.

## **II. Table on the Status of Knowledge of Gillnets and their Interactions with Sea Turtles**

In the recommendations of the 6th SC Meeting (CIT-CC6-2009-Doc.4) the need for the member countries to provide information on the status of knowledge on gillnet fisheries was identified. Therefore, it was agreed that the PT Secretariat would communicate with the Focal Points before the second week of November (2009) that the Scientific Committee concluded the need to summarize the Status of Knowledge of Gillnets and their Interactions with Sea Turtles, which required that each Party provide a summary of available information in the corresponding table (CIT-CC6-2009-Doc.5), which was then returned to the PT Secretariat by electronic mail no later than March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010. During the present meeting, the results obtained from these tables was presented, reminding the group that they must examine the information provided by the 5 countries that completed the Table, analyzing whether or not it fulfilled the objective that prompted the request of this information and make any pertinent recommendations.

## **III. Presentation-results from a survey of artisanal fisheries in Central America**

Ms. Vielka Morales, representative of OSPESCA, presented a survey that was done in 2009 with funds provided by Spain (AECID). A strategy was developed beforehand to inform the society being surveyed. The survey was tried out with trained personnel in order to standardize it. The objective of the survey was to update PRADEPESCA's information with an emphasis on artisanal fishing. The survey was structured using questionnaires that included general information on the country, community services and origin of product, among others. Demographic data received through the survey was shared. She emphasized that gillnets were the most important having more than 48,000 units in the region. However, data from Honduras was not included as it was not provided due to problems the country was facing at the time of the survey. More than 40% sell to receiving centers in the region.

## **IV. Final review of the proposed forms and preparation of recommendations.**

The PT Secretary explained that the forms (CIT-CC7-2010-Doc.4) prepared by the Gillnet working group, which were later used in Peru and Baja California, are not official, but rather a field test of the forms produced by the working group in order to see if they work and to enrich their discussion. She then consulted the participants on what steps need to be taken to implement these forms. Some of the representatives made note of the duplicity or confusion in this process since they believe the objective for using these forms is unclear and the information is not standardized. They mentioned that the results from the field test in Peru demonstrate that having one standard form for all countries within the IAC is apparently not possible due to the particularities of the fishing activities for each country, although the current forms do allow basic information to be collected.

The Chair of the meeting clarified that the objective of this document is to characterize the fishery and its effects and eventually help reduce bycatch mortality through analyzing the information provided in these forms. He agrees that it is difficult to standardize one format for the entire region. According to the working group, Form 1 should be used as a starting point to move forward on as it seems to be the most useful one to execute. It was also recognized that Form 2 is too complex and overlaps with Form 1. It is better to create a basic form that can be used during the first stage and later build something more appropriate.

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Some delegates maintained their view that there are many challenges to using the forms (CIT-CC7-2010-Doc.4) as well as severe limitations to systematize and analyze any information obtained. As a result, no further actions were determined as to how these forms can be used to collect data on gillnet fisheries.

The PT Secretary clarified some confusion regarding the difference between the forms (CIT-CC7-2010-Doc.4) that were prepared by the intersessional working group that was formed during the 6th SC meeting and the table on net fisheries (CIT-CC6-2009-Doc.5), which was prepared at the 6<sup>th</sup> SC meeting and included in its recommendations that the PT Secretary ask the Focal Points to provide additional basic information on the state of knowledge on net fisheries by filling out the table. Five countries (Peru, Ecuador, Netherlands Antilles, USA and Guatemala) filled out this table and the PT Secretary reminded the participants that this document needs to be analyzed during the current SC meeting.

The SC then reviewed the table and decided that the priority would be to characterize gillnet fisheries by using the existing table CIT-CC6-2009-Doc.5 (State of the Knowledge on Net Fisheries with Sea Turtle Interactions). However, because only five countries have submitted this information, the SC agreed to resend the request that the Focal Points submit this information to the PT Secretariat. Some members of the SC wished to make comments on the table (CIT-CC6-2009-Doc.5) and later met as a working group and presented their comments to the plenary session. Although the table was modified (CIT-CC6-2009-Doc.5 Rev.1), some items still need further clarification.

## **9. Annual Report Working Group**

### **I. Presentation on the document proposed by the group (Andres Domingo).**

The annual report working group presented their document. This group was formed during the 6th SC meeting and is made up of delegates from Belize, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela and Uruguay in coordination with the PT Secretariat. They met the day before the SC meeting to finish reviewing the current annual report format that must be submitted by the Parties and draft a new IAC annual report format (CIT-CC7-2010-Doc.5). The proposal was distributed by e-mail in order to be analyzed by the SC members and discussion was initiated on the topic.

### **II. Discuss the proposal of the new annual report format**

The changes proposed to the annual report format were analyzed, the idea was to simplify the way in which the countries report the information in order to achieve a higher level of compliance on behalf of the parties submitting their annual reports, and that the format coincides with the conclusions of the Standardization Workshop held in Guayaquil. He stressed that the proposal was based on the structure of the report established in Article IV of the text of the Convention. It was suggested that a working group review this draft document during the meeting and later be discussed in plenary in order to maximize time. In order to do this, various working groups were formed since the report is made up of different sections: one for the instructions of the new format, including the resolutions and one on formulating the tables to be annexed (nesting sites, threats and intentional/incidental capture). Also, in order to fulfill the current agenda of the present meeting, they decided to go ahead and form a working group to evaluate the exceptions document (CIT-CCE3-2010-Doc-006 Rev.1)

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prepared by the CCE. Groups' work began and they later presented their results in plenary for approval.

### III. Results of the working groups on the new annual report format

The proposed modifications to the instructions and tables were submitted to the plenary session for their consideration and discussion.

#### A. Instructions working group:

This group reviewed the wording of the instructions that are provided to the Parties in order to fill out the Annual Report. Because the group did not finish reviewing the entire document, they proposed presenting it as is to the plenary in order to reach consensus, especially on the section related to compliance with IAC Resolutions. Resolutions were included in Part I (Policy and Management), point c (Actions for compliance with national and international legislation) of the new proposal for the annual report, requiring each Party to report on any actions taken to comply with the four technical Resolutions of the IAC (Resolutions CIT-COP2-2004 R1, CIT-COP3-2006 R-1, CIT-COP3-2006 R-2 and CIT-COP4-2009 R-5), in addition to other national and international legislation. This group also proposed including a section for challenges or limitations as well as needs within Part I of the report. The section for reporting the legal framework was discussed and the SC decided that they are not responsible for analyzing these laws, however, the countries should only report on any changes made to national legislation, as needed. The information necessary to report on compliance with national and international legislation was discussed and later agreed to. It was also agreed that the Consultative Committee should be the one to evaluate the topic of Exceptions, and it is the obligation of the SC to include it as a part of the Annual Report so that the countries can report them. The need for the group to work on formulating tables to report the information requested in Part II (Research information) was discussed. However, it was mentioned that this information is basic and more detail information will be included in the modified tables that will be requested in the form of annexes. Although these tables will not be required within the new annual report format, they will provide the Committee with useful information to help them fulfill their obligation of providing recommendations to the COP.

#### B. Working group to formulate annexed tables:

This group reviewed the tables that will be used to provide information on the knowledge and conservation status of sea turtles in IAC countries and accommodated and/or modified them to include new information and presented them to the SC. Afterwards, they proceeded to create the instructions in order to fill out each of the new tables. In the table on incidental and intentional capture, the FAO standard codes were used for reporting species, types of fisheries and fishing gear. They agreed to divide table 1.2 (Important nesting sites for sea turtle conservation) by separating the information related to nesting sites from the columns compiling information on tagging, tissue samples and feeding grounds. The table on threats was discussed and agreed to during plenary. They agreed that a final revision and editing of the tables would be done via e-mail between sessions within the next 20 days.

#### C. Working group to evaluate the exceptions document:

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The results of this group can be found in section 11 of this report on “Exceptions”.

**10. Analyze the level of compliance with resolutions in the framework of the IAC’s 10th Anniversary.**

The information submitted in the annexes of the 2010 Annual Reports regarding resolutions was not analyzed due to insufficient time. The members agreed to form an inter-sessional working group to analyze this information before the COP5 with the objective of preparing recommendations based on their analysis to be presented at the COP5.

**11. Exceptions**

The Exceptions working group reviewed the document CIT-CCE3-2010-Doc-006 Rev. 1, Draft Procedures for Cases Where Exceptions Exist, prepared during the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the CCE. They clarified some characteristics regarding origin and measures of control particular to the “case of Ostional” in Costa Rica that may help guide future exceptions (registration of beneficiaries, administrator, etc.). It was agreed that the PT Secretariat would send the revised document with comments from the SC to the CCE as requested during their 3rd meeting. Furthermore, the CCE also requested during its 3rd meeting that the SC review each exception as reported in the annual reports and issue an opinion, using the document prepared by the CCE (CIT-CCE3-2010-Doc-006 Rev.1) as a reference. The CCE must review all cases of exceptions reported while taking into consideration the analysis done by the SC and prepare their recommendations for the COP5 if possible. The SC did not review the exceptions during this meeting because of the lack of an approved tool to do so, therefore, they worked on the recommendation made by the CCE to complete the document on reporting exceptions.

**12. Review draft document: Best practices on Nesting Beaches. 2008.**

The document was not reviewed because it is a very extensive document and there was not enough time. It was agreed that the draft document *Best practices on Nesting Beaches* would be reviewed between sessions in order to obtain its approval by the SC.

**13. Work on recommendations and agreements of the 7th Scientific Committee Meeting**

The plenary worked on redacting the agreements and recommendations of the meeting and prepared a draft document that was circulated among the SC for its approval. The VII Meeting of the SC of the IAC made the following agreements and recommendations (CIT-CC7-2010-Doc. 3):

- 1) The new IAC annual report format and instructions (CIT-CC7-2010-Doc.5) was approved. This new format was prepared based on the proposal presented by the Annual Report working group to the Scientific Committee (SC). During this meeting, it was modified and follow-up to Resolution CIT-COP4-2009-R5 Adaptation of sea turtle habitats to climate change was included (Due to the lack of time the document CIT-CC7-2010-Doc.5 is awaiting final edits).
- 2) The data form on intentional/incidental capture and reporting matrices to follow-up on the Resolutions were adopted as part of the annual report. Because these still need to be edited, it was

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agreed to form two working groups to finalize their production in order to be included in the document CIT-CC7-2010-Doc.5. The members of the first group are: Andrés Domingo, Begoña Mora, Gil Sales, Neca Marcovaldi, Jeff Seminoff and Julia Horrocks. This group's objective is to finish the edits of the table on intentional/incidental capture to be annexed to the annual report. The members of the second group are: Jorge Zuzunaga, Fernando Felix (CPPS), Laura Sarti and Eduardo Espinoza. The objective of this group is to finish the reporting matrices to follow-up on the Resolutions which are included in the new annual report format. The working groups will have a maximum of 20 days to submit their results with their comments and suggestions to the PT Secretariat who will then circulate them to the rest of the SC for their adoption before the COP5. The group's members are the same delegates who worked on these working groups at the VII SC meeting.

- 3) Once the final edits to the document CIT-CC7-2010-Doc.5 are approved by the SC, the Committee recommends that the Parties use this format to replace the current one. To do this, they request that the PT Secretariat send this document to the Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE) for their information and request that the Focal Points include the topic of Annual Reports on the COP5 agenda.
- 4) It was agreed to ask the PT Secretariat to send the modified table CIT-CC6-2009-Doc.5 Rev.1 "State of Knowledge on Gillnet Fisheries with Sea Turtle Interactions", which was modified during the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SC, to the Focal Points of the countries that did not submit it when it was requested the first time, with the recommendation that they fill it out. For those countries that have already submitted their information (Ecuador, Guatemala, USA, Netherlands Antilles and Peru) it would be appreciated if they resent the updated information, using the new format.
- 5) It was agreed that the PT Secretariat will send the document CIT-CCE3-2010-Doc.006 Rev.1 Draft Procedures for Cases Where Exceptions Exist, which includes comments made by the SC, to the Consultative Committee of Experts per their request during their 3rd meeting. It should be clarified that the SC did not review the Exceptions presented by the Parties due to the lack of a detailed procedure to do so.
- 6) It was recommended that the Focal Points of those countries interested in developing a joint GEF proposal on Climate Change in order to support compliance with the Resolution CIT-COP4-2009-R5 Adaptation of sea turtle habitats to Climate Change, directly contact Ana Fonseca, WWF's Species Coordinator for Latin American and the Caribbean.
- 7) It was agreed to form a working group led by the elected Chair to work inter-sessionally on the Terms of Reference for the SC (Resolution COP2-2004-R2). The members of the group are: Francisco Ponce, Andrés Domingo, and René Márquez. The objective of this group is to make recommendations on any clarifications needed and request that the COP includes this topic on the COP5 agenda. The deadline for submitting the product of this working group to the Secretariat PT for its circulation within the SC is November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Ten days were assigned for sending in final comments on the document for its approval.
- 8) It was agreed to form a working group led by the elected Chair to work inter-sessionally with the objective of updating the 2011-2012 Work Plan of the Scientific Committee (CIT-COP4-2009-Doc.2). The members of the group are: Eduardo Espinoza, Begoña Mora, Marino Abrego, and Neca

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Marcovaldi (awaiting confirmation). The deadline for submitting the product of the group to the PT Secretariat for its circulation with the SC is November 10th, 2010. Ten days were assigned for sending in final comments on the document for its approval.

- 9) Based on the hawksbill resolution CIT-COP3-2006 R-1 and regional initiatives for this species (ICAPO), it was recommended that a working group be formed to work with the PT Secretariat and existing initiatives to prepare a multinational proposal for regional program, as well as including this topic as an agenda item for the next Scientific Committee meeting. The members of the group are: Eduardo Espinoza, Laura Sarti, Marino Abrego, and Jeff Seminoff. The first draft will be analyzed at the next SC meeting.
- 10) The SC agrees to send their comments on the document Manual for Sea Turtle Management and Conservation Techniques in Nesting Beaches in Central America (Basic Proposal) in 30 calendar days to the PT Secretariat for its final approval.
- 11) It was agreed to analyze the thirteen annual reports submitted in 2010 and prepare a report for the COP5. This analysis will be done by three working groups:
  - a. Important Nesting Sites: (Begoña Mora, Neca Marcovaldi, Eduardo Espinoza, Julia Horrocks)
  - b. Fisheries (Gilberto Sales, Andrés Domingo, Francisco Ponce)
  - c. Compliance with resolutions (Laura Sarti, Jeff Seminoff, Didiher Chacon, René Marquez).The groups will send their respective analyses to the PT Secretariat as well as the SC Chair on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010. The final report of the analysis of the 2010 annual reports to be presented at COP5 will be prepared for the SC Chair with the help of the leaders of each working group. This report will be circulated within the SC on January 6<sup>th</sup> 2011 and the final version with the approval of the SC will be submitted to the PT Secretariat to inform the Focal Points on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010.
- 12) Jorge Zuzunaga, delegate of Peru, was elected as the new Chair and René Marquez, delegate of Mexico, as Vice-chair. Possible sites for the 8<sup>th</sup> SC Meeting were agreed to: Mexico, Ecuador and Chile. The final site will be determined based on the cost of holding the meeting.
- 13) It was agreed that the elected Chair prepare a letter of appreciation for Dr. Jack Frazier for all his hard work and endeavors during his term as Chair. This letter will be circulated to the Committee members prior to sending it to him. This should be included in the report on the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the SC.
- 14) The plenary would like to thank the coordinators and participants of the inter-sessional working groups (gillnets and annual reports) for all their hard work since the past 6<sup>th</sup> SC Meeting.

#### **14. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

The next item on the agenda was to elect the Chair of the SC. Jorge Zuzunaga from Peru was nominated as Chair and accepted the position. Uruguay nominated Eduardo Espinoza (Ecuador) as Vice-chair and Laura Sarti (Mexico) also nominated Rene Marquez as Vice-chair. Because there were two nominations for Vice-chair and the decision must be unanimous, the delegate from Ecuador declined the nomination so that it does not interfere with the process; however, he offered his continued support of the Convention from his position as delegate. Dr. Márquez accepted his nomination as Vice-chair. The

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president elect offered his appreciation to the group for confiding in him to move forward with the tasks at hand.

**15. Closing Remarks**

The PT Secretary thanked the members for their participation and work during the meeting and especially Panama for all of their logistical and organizational support. The delegate of Panamá, Marino Abrego, gave the closing remarks and appreciation on behalf of Mr. Giovanni A. Lauri C, Director of Panamas Authority on Aquatic Resources (ARAP), Focal Point for Sea Turtles.

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**Annex I**  
**Participant List of the 7th SC Meeting**

Country	Name	Institution	E-mail
<b>Delegados/Delegates</b>			
Belize	Robin Coleman	Wildlife Conservation Society	rcoleman@wcs.org
Brazil	Neca Marcovaldi	ICMBio/Tamar	neca@tamar.org.br
Brazil (advisor)	Gilberto Sales	ICMBio/Tamar	gilsales@tamar.org.br
Chile	Francisco Ponce	Subsecretaría de Pesca	franciscoponce@subpesca.cl
Costa Rica	Didiher Chacón	WIDECAS	dchacon@widecast.org
Ecuador	Eduardo Espinoza	Servicio de Parque Nacional Galápagos	eespinoza@spng.org.ec
Ecuador (asesor)	Marco Herrera	Instituto Nacional de Pesca	mherrera@inp.gob.ec
Ecuador (asesora)	Dialhy Coello	Instituto Nacional de Pesca	dcoello@inp.gob.ec
Guatemala	José Martínez	Recursos Hidrobiológicos CONAP	josemartinezmencos@yahoo.com
Honduras	Fernando Sotelo	Secretaria de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente (SERNA)	fsm190951@yahoo.com.mx
México	René Márquez	Vicepresidente, Comité Científico CIT	lkempii@prodigy.net.mx
México (asesora)	Laura Sarti	Dirección de Especies Prioritarias para la Conservación, CONANP	lsarti@conanp.gob.mx
Netherlands Antilles	Julia Horrocks	UWI, Barbados	julia.horrocks@cavehill.uwi.edu
Panamá	Marino Eugenio Abrego	Autoridad de los Recursos Acuáticos de Panamá, ARAP	meabrego0303@yahoo.es
Panamá	Edgardo Muñoz	Universidad de Panamá, ARAP	edgardoabdiel@yahoo.com
Panamá	Angel Javier Vega	Universidad de Panamá, ARAP	angeljv@cwpanama.net
Perú	Jorge Zuzunga	Ministerio de la Producción	jzuzunaga@produce.gob.pe
USA	Jeffrey Seminoff	Marine Turtle Ecology and Assessment Program, NOAA-Southwest Fisheries Science Center NOAA	Jeffrey.seminoff@noaa.gov
USA (advisor)	Jana Beth Swimmer	NOAA, NMFS	yonat.swimmer@noaa.gov
USA (advisor)	Dan Foster	NOAA, NMFS	Daniel.G.Foster@noaa.gov
Uruguay	Andrés Domingo	DINARA	dimanchester@gmail.com
Venezuela	Begoña Mora	Oficina Nacional de Diversidad Biológica, Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Ambiente	bmora@minamb.gob.ve, moraceli@gail.com
<b>Observadores/Observers</b>			
Costa Rica	Emma Harrison	Sea Turtle Conservancy (Formerly CCC)	emma@conserveturtles.org
Panamá	Cristina Ordoñez	Sea Turtle Conservancy	crispino@yahoo.com
Costa Rica	Gladys Martínez	AIDA	gmartinez@aida-americas.org
Costa Rica	Ana Fonseca	WWF Latin America & the Caribbean	afonseca@wwfca.org
Costa Rica	Rodrigo Morera	Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de Ostional	adiotor@ice.co.cr

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Panamá	Jairo Carrasco	Centro de Incidencia Ambiental (CIAM-Panamá)	bahiahonda@ciampanama.org
Panamá	Washington Lum	Centro de Incidencia Ambiental (CIAM-Panamá)	wlum@ciampanama.org
Panamá	Argelis Ruiz	WIDECAST	ruiza@si.edu
Ecuador	Fernando Felix	Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur	cpps_pse@cpps-int.org
Panamá	Vielka Morales	OSPESCA	ospescapa@gmail.com
<b>Secretaría/Secretariat</b>			
	Verónica Cáceres	IAC Secretary PT/ Secretaria PT CIT	secretario@iacseaturtle.org
	Belinda Dick	IAC Secretariat/Secretaria CIT	contact@iacseaturtle.org
	Richard Cockrum	IAC Secretariat/Secretaria CIT	rcockrum@gmail.com

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**Annex II**

**Agenda of the 7th Meeting of the IAC Scientific Committee (SC)**

**Objectives:**

- 1.) Follow up on recommendations from the 6<sup>th</sup> SC Meeting
- 2.) Analyze proposals from the annual report and gillnet working group
- 3.) Analyze 2010 annual reports, special attention to compliance with the Resolutions in the framework of the IAC 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary.
- 4.) Work on recommendations from the Consultative Committee in their 3rd meeting
- 5.) To prepare for the next COP

**Day 1**

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda Item</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
8:30	Welcome remarks	Panama's Authority on Aquatic Resources (ARAP) and IAC Focal Point from Panama.
9:00	Presentation of Participants	
9:10	Elect Chair and Rapporteur for the 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting	Verónica Cáceres, IAC PT Secretary
9:20	Adopt the Agenda	Chair SC
9:30	Summary of the 6th Meeting of the Scientific Committee	Dr. René Márquez Vice-Chair of the 6th Meeting of the SC
<i>Informative presentations on recent meetings and events relevant to the IAC</i>		
9:45 – 10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standardization workshop on data and annual reports</li> <li>- Eastern Pacific Hawksbill Initiative (ICAPO) Meeting</li> <li>- WIDECAST Regional Meeting</li> </ul>	Lic. Andrés Domingo Lic. Didiher Chacón
<b>10:30 Coffee Break</b>		
10:45 – 12:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 30<sup>th</sup> Sea Turtle Symposium</li> <li>- Update on the oil spill in the Gulf of México</li> <li>- KOBE II Bycatch Workshop</li> <li>- Update on IAC activities:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CITES COP15 Decision on Hawksbill turtles.</li> <li>● USFWS Support</li> <li>● Increasing IAC Membership</li> <li>● IAC Website</li> <li>● 10th Anniversary of the IAC</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Dr. Neca Marcovaldi Dr. Jeff Seminoff and Dr. René Márquez PT Secretariat
12:15	Summary of the 3rd Meeting of the Consultative Committee (March 2010, Belize)	Verónica Cáceres, IAC PT Secretary
<b>12:30 Lunch</b>		
<i>Presentations of proposals and recommendations of the Scientific Committee working groups</i>		
2:00-3:45	Gillnet working group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Results of the field tests in Peru and Baja California.</li> <li>- Database</li> </ul>	Yonat Swimmer (NOAA) Jorge Zuzunaga

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation-results from survey of artisanal fishery in CA</li> <li>- Final reviews of the forms proposed by the group and prepare recommendations.</li> </ul>	OSPESCA Chair /plenary
<b>3:45 Coffee Break</b>	
4:00-5:30 Annual Report working group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation on the document proposed by the group.</li> <li>- Discuss the proposal.</li> <li>- Prepare recommendations on activities to be done and presented to the COP5.</li> </ul>	Member of the working group  Chair /plenary
5:30 Conclude session	

**Day 2**

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda Item</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
8:30	Continue discussion on the annual report proposal and recommendations	Chair SC
<i>Work on 2010 Annual Reports</i>		
10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analyze the level of compliance with the resolutions in the framework of the IAC 10th Anniversary.</li> <li>- Discuss the regional strengths and weaknesses to identify activities that can be recommended at a regional level.</li> </ul>	Delegates of the SC present their comments for each country
<b>10:30 Coffee Break</b>		
10:45	Continue working on 2010 IAC annual reports	Chair
<b>12:30 Lunch</b>		
<i>Exceptions</i>		
2:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work on the document for exceptions recommended by the Consultative Committee in their 3rd meeting.</li> <li>- Prepare recommendations.</li> </ul>	Chair /plenary
<b>3:30 Coffee Break</b>		
3:45	Continue with analysis	
5:30	Conclude session	

**Day 3**

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda Item</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
8:30	Review draft document: Best practices on Nesting Beaches. 2008.	Chair /plenary
<b>10:00 Coffee Break</b>		
10:15	Final redaction of recommendations of the 7th Meeting of the Scientific Committee	
<b>12:30 Lunch</b>		
2:00	Continue recommendations of the SC meeting.	
4:45	Elect Chair, Vice-chair and venue for the 8 <sup>th</sup> Meeting	SC Chair
5:00	Closing Remarks	PT Secretary and SC Chair