

## Report of the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts

### Day 1, March 13<sup>th</sup>

1. The Sixth Meeting of the Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE) of the IAC took place via video conference, on March 13-15, 2013. This was the first time the modern technology of video conference was used with the intention of increasing the participation of the majority of the IAC Party countries while significantly reducing the costs for the countries as well as the Convention. The Department of State of the United States of American government facilitated the video conference.
2. The objectives of this meeting were to update the CCE Work Plan (2013-2014) for approval at COP, to provide final recommendations to the COP on the exceptions presented by Panama and Guatemala in their 2011 and 2012 annual reports, prepare a report on compliance with IAC resolutions to present at the COP and approve the technical document Guidelines for Preparing Sea Turtle Action Plans (Annex I, Agenda).
3. The meeting began at 12:00 noon Eastern Time on March 13<sup>th</sup> with welcome remarks by the CCE Chair, Mr. Paul Hoetjes and the IAC Secretary *Pro Tempore* Veronica Caceres Chamorro. The participating countries were Argentina, Brazil, Caribbean Netherlands, Chile, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Panama and United States of America (10 countries) as well as three members representing the scientific, NGO and productive sectors, the Chair of the Scientific Committee (SC) and the *Pro Tempore* (PT) Secretariat (Annex II, Participant List). The participant from Guatemala had to excuse himself.
4. Marydele Donnelly (NGO representative) volunteered to be the rapporteur with the help of the PT Secretariat.

### Summary of 5th Consultative Committee Meeting

5. The CCE Chair provided a brief summary of the 5<sup>th</sup> CCE meeting which was attended by five countries and was held in West Virginia, USA in June 2012. The main objectives of the meeting were to discuss the following: annual reports of the Parties, compliance with resolutions, exceptions, the CCE work plan for the next biennium, and recommendations to improve Eastern Pacific leatherback conservation. The documents for the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting were subsequently reviewed by the SC so that we could finalize them before next COP in 2013.

### Agenda

6. The agenda was approved with the following additions:
  - Argentina requested time for general comments/other business at the end of the third day;

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- Mexico requested time to update the CCE on the status of E. Pacific leatherbacks;
- A date and place for the next CCE meeting was requested.

Report on 2012 Activities of the Pro Tempore Secretariat

7. The PT Secretary summarized the activities listed in the report circulated beforehand (Annex III). The PT Secretary addressed concerns and questions of the participants.
8. Chile and Honduras requested more information on the IAC/WWF Sea Turtles and Climate Change webinar. The PT Secretariat will circulate more details via email to the CCE on the subject.
9. Hedely Guada (Scientific representative) mentioned Venezuela's support in celebrating World Sea Turtle Day and would like other IAC countries to think about offering their support in a similar way for the upcoming years.
10. Honduras noted that a presentation about the IAC objectives should be included on the CCAD (Central American Commission on Environment and Development) meeting agenda April 12-13 for Ministers of the Environment of Central America. This will be good for outreach to Nicaragua and El Salvador. The PT Secretariat asked if the Honduran Minister of Environment and the IAC Focal Point could raise this issue with CCAD Director. The IAC Secretariat will send a letter to CCAD Director asking if it is possible to be granted time in their agenda.
11. USA asked the Scientific Committee Chair that if the last three points mentioned in the report of the Secretariat referring to guidelines for applying gillnet bycatch forms, onboard management practices for handling sea turtles incidentally caught, and a model analysis of index beaches will be presented at the COP6 and, if so, will they be asking the COP for something. This would mean they need to be submitted 90 days before the COP6.
12. Jorge Zuzunaga, SC Chair, responded that in the case of Peru, they won't have enough time to analyze the results of their implementation of the bycatch forms since they will be implemented over the next few months. However, he believes it is very important to inform the COP on their progress. In regards to the last two points he mentioned that there is a Working Group in charge of them, the management practices for handling turtles will be looked at during the 10<sup>th</sup> SC meeting and the index model analysis will be presented at the COP for their decision on the use of index beaches for IAC annual reports.
13. USA reminds the SC Chair that if the COP will be asked to make any type of decision, for example to change their information in annual reports, this proposal must be presented 90 days before the COP, on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

Presentation of the Exceptions Working Group

14. Marydele Donnelly (NGO representative) provided a brief overview of the merge of the SC and CCE documents on Exceptions into one document (CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.3-Rev.1) for this meeting.
15. Alexis Gutierrez, COP Chair, noted that the CCE can recommend a resolution to the Parties for their consideration at the upcoming COP6; however, this resolution will have to be sent to the Parties by March 26<sup>th</sup> if it is to be considered. The CCE and SC have both commented twice on the Exceptions for Guatemala and Panama and reiterated that it is time for this information to be presented at the Conference of Parties.
16. USA agreed to prepare the first version of the draft resolution on exceptions to present tomorrow during its scheduled agenda time.

Presentation of Resolution Compliance Working Group

17. Joca Thome, CCE Vice Chair, provided participants with an update on the results of the resolution compliance WG, mentioning that the WG is still analyzing compliance and preparing graphs for the four IAC resolutions based on 2011 and 2012 annual reports and will have more information available tomorrow, but not all Parties have turned in their reports for both years and, therefore, some information is missing. The CCE Chair noted we should continue this discussion on Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup> and take the most relevant points to make recommendations to the COP.
18. Discussion of how to improve reporting for those countries that don't report ensued. It was agreed that the Focal Points should be directly contacted for their information, mentioning that it is necessary to remind Costa Rica and Belize to turn in their annual reports.
19. Costa Rica indicated that they are still working on their annual report from last year. They will try to turn in the report as soon as possible.

Review CCE Work Plan (2013-2014)

20. The meeting proceeded to work on document CIT-CCE6-2013-Doc.2, CCE Work Plan. Modifications were made to the document and it was agreed more goals and indicators are needed in the Work Plan. It was agreed the document would be circulated for additional comments and approved at the end of the meeting.

Eastern Pacific Leatherback

21. Mexico provided information on Eastern Pacific leatherbacks and hopes to cooperate with IAC members and non-members on issues mostly relating to fisheries interactions. The 2012-2013 nesting season was the worst ever nesting season with a total of 171 nests (from 400-500 in 2011-2012). In 2001-2 120 nests were reported. Mexico has been protecting 100% of its index beaches (85% of all beaches) for 10 years. Now they are following seasonal fisheries and trying to determine the movement of females away from beaches. Satellite tagging equipment came too late in 2012. In 2013, in Tierra Colorada researchers will put 5 tags on females to determine movements that very likely overlap with coastal fisheries. Fishermen report they interact with black turtles, not leatherbacks (there are so few leatherbacks now that an interaction is rare). Mexico wants to institute seasonal regulations for fishermen in Tierra Colorada. They have no reports from high seas interactions, but they want to collaborate with many countries fishing in the migratory areas.
22. It was recommended that government fisheries representatives should be included in the Leatherback Working Group.
23. Chile noted that they have an observer program that keeps records of leatherbacks caught in fisheries and four turtles have been reported dead over the past 10 years. They are going to start working with gillnets fisheries interactions in the south. Chile is in a good position to collaborate with Mexico.
24. The COP Chair asked if the CCE should recommend that the COP pass a resolution to encourage other countries to participate in reducing leatherback capture in fisheries.
25. Chile noted that the IAC should be able to work in the framework of its MOU with IATTC in order to encourage other countries (non IAC members) that are carrying out fisheries activities in international waters in the migration path of the EPO leatherback, to collaborate with the IAC to gather bycatch information for this population.
26. An update on the Eastern Pacific Action Plan being done by Bryan Wallace from “the Ocean Society” was given. The Plan provides a 10-year investment strategy to stabilize the population trend in the next 10 years (around 150-200 females per year by 2023), demonstrate an increasing population trend 20-30 years from now (significant increase between 2033-2043, or significantly above 150 females per year). To achieve these population recovery goals, the three strategies of Plan are: 1) Reduce mortality from fisheries bycatch, 2) Protect nesting beaches and increase hatchling production, and 3) Promote and strengthen implementation of regional actions through existing networks and instruments. This proposal being done in collaboration with Prodelphinus, IMARPE, EcOceanica, IFOP, WWF, among others.

27. Peru noted that it is working to identify jellyfish abundant areas to determine leatherback hot spots in the Pisco area, and is working with Bryan Wallace and fishermen on this task. They want to work with NGOs and hold local fishermen's workshops.

**Day 2, March 14<sup>th</sup>**

Review exceptions presented.

28. Delegates in attendance: Argentina, Brazil, Caribbean Netherlands, Costa Rica, Chile, Honduras, Panama, Peru, Mexico, USA, and three sectorial members, one from NGO, one from Scientific Community and one from productive sector. The delegate from Guatemala excused himself.
29. The CCE Chair began the session by referring to the document CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.3-Rev.1 document and gave the floor to the USA delegate, Alexis Gutierrez, to explain how this first draft of the exceptions resolution was created. Ms. Gutierrez merged all documents provided by both the CCE (CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.3-Rev.1) and SC (CIT-SC9-2012-Doc.2) highlighting any changes to the original text and providing the document with the necessary language to form a resolution. The document was circulated with all participants by email, it was then read aloud and approved paragraph by paragraph, making the necessary modifications along the way. The document was not completed during the allotted time and it was agreed that the document would be circulated with the latest modifications and continued tomorrow.

**Day 3, March 15<sup>th</sup>**

Review exceptions presented, cont.

30. The meeting began where we left off with the draft resolution on exceptions. It was agreed that the additional recommendations pertaining to both countries would be included as an annex and modifications to some of these recommendations were made. The recommendation for a resolution on the Economic Subsistence Exceptions under Article IV (3 a and b) of the Text of the IAC Convention by Guatemala and Panama for *Lepidochelys olivacea* Egg Harvesting (CIT-COP6-2013-R1 Draft, Annex IV), was approved. The document will be presented to the COP6.

Guidelines for Preparing Sea Turtle Action Plans

31. The CCE Chair introduced the document (CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.05-Rev.1) and asked for comments. The document was approved after making minor changes. It will be presented at the COP6 in the form of a technical document.

Compliance with IAC Resolutions

32. The CCE Vice Chair, Joca Thome, presented the results on the analysis of resolution compliance for each resolution and by country for 2011 and 2012. However, he clarified that more information is still being incorporated and it will take the WG more time to present the summary that they are interested in providing to the COP with. The discussion continued on how best to present this information to the COP. It was agreed that the CCE will present a summary of the results along with the graphs and other tables presented in the form of an annex. The document will include a one page cover page calling attention to the countries as to what they should be talking about at the COP so they don't lose the opportunity to discuss compliance. It is important to also mention in the document that there is a lapse in time (2012) due to the deadlines for submitting annual reports. It was agreed that the PT Secretariat would continue to work with Brazil, Caribbean Netherlands and Mexico on this document. Brazil will send the analysis they are working on in the next few weeks. COP chair clarified that since this is not a resolution, but rather an informative document, this document can be submitted 60 days before the meeting. The proposed outline for the document was circulated with CCE members in order to facilitate discussion. The final document of the working group, CIT-COP6-2013-Inf.5 "Analysis of the Consultative Committee of Experts on the Compliance with the IAC Resolutions by the Party Countries Report to the 6th Conference of Parties" is attached as annex V.

Approval of CCE Work Plan (2013-2014)

33. The meeting proceeded to approve the pending CCE work plan. The PT Secretary read the new changes to the document and mentioned three points sent by the Scientific Community delegate, Hedelvy Guada. Ms. Guada explained her two suggestions: 1) workshop for hawksbill conservation since she found a weakness for this species in the WP, however, she later agreed that it would be better for the SC tackle this in their work plan, 2) promote national sea turtle committees/greater participation from communities as well as improved communication between IAC focal points and stakeholders so annual reports incorporate many points of view. Brazil stated that each country is responsible for the organization of their national committees and it would be hard for the CCE to implement. It was agreed that these points would be mentioned in the meeting report and/or presented in an informative document to the COP6. The CCE Chair commented on the difficulty of organizing workshops since we don't have anyone in particular to organize it and they are expensive, but it could be possible to find small amounts of funds for smaller groups or piggyback on other meetings or another alternative was presented in the form as a webinar. He further clarified that the SC is in charge of their own work plan, and that the CCE cannot tell them what to do. The USA delegate mentioned that although hawksbills are a priority in the Caribbean region, maybe it is not so much a priority for the CCE, but rather believes Eastern Pacific leatherback due to its critical situation should be our focus.

34. On the EP Leatherback activities in work plan, Brazil suggested that the name working group should be changed to task force due to the urgency of the matter. The leatherback task force agreed they are not ready to present a document with recommendations to the COP, however, it was agreed the group will hold a conference call the first week of April to determine a game plan and present it COP6. The CCE Chair reminded the group that the PT Secretariat has carried out successfully its tasks in regards to the activities in the work plan for 2013 for EP leatherback and that should be mentioned in the report to COP6. More members from the following countries joined the group: Chile, Mexico, USA, Peru Ecuador and sectorial representative B. Wallace. The final document of the working group, CIT-COP6-2013-Inf.5 “Report and Recommendations for Compliance with the Leatherback Resolution (CIT-COP2-2004-R1) from the Eastern Pacific Leatherback Task Force to the 6th IAC Conference of the Parties”, is attached as annex VI.
35. The PT Secretariat explained that she carried out visits to the diplomatic missions (embassies in Washington DC) of Chile, Peru, and Costa Rica as well as communicated with the IAC Focal Points in Mexico. The visits had the objective of discussing the critical situation of EP leatherback and to encourage countries in the range of this population to continue to comply with the IAC Resolution on Leatherback Conservation. The visits were very productive and resulted in Chile, Peru and Mexico sending reports to the IAC PT Secretariat on their compliance with the mentioned resolution. These reports were posted on the IAC web site as part of informative documents of this meeting. The PT Secretariat expressed her gratitude to the countries that sent their compliance report.
36. The CCE work plan (CIT-CCE6-2013-Doc.2, Annex VII) was approved with changes.

Other agenda items/ Other business

37. Countries commented on their experiences of holding the first video conference and mentioned ways to improve its efficiency. In general, the countries agreed that this is an important and very effective resource to have in case a meeting cannot be held and make the following suggestions/recommendations: the video conference was held for shorter hours, thus propagating a shorter agenda, not a full range of topics that might be discussed in a face to face meeting, rules of procedures could be made for video conferences, simultaneous translation instead of consecutive is better since it does not take up as much time, however, it is difficult to achieve with this technology, need a way to show presentations and documents must be circulated/presented on time for all meetings in the future.
38. It was agreed the next CCE meeting be held in March of 2014 and the PT Secretariat asks that proposals for locations for holding the meeting be sent in. It was requested that countries that wish to hold a meeting to please consider

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- including in kind support to lower meeting costs. The CCE Chair also suggested to the CCE delegates to communicate with the Focal Points with ample time the need to hold the next meeting in person and in this way, provide plenty of time for them to include their participation costs within the countries budget for next year.
39. The meeting was concluded by thanking the CCE Chair, the PT Secretariat and the State Department for the organization of successful meeting that was at very low cost or no cost to the participant countries and that was one of the meetings with most countries participating and in which all the objectives were met.

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ANNEX I

Video Conference CCE6 Agenda

DATE AND TIME	AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENTS
<b>March 13 2:00 -5:00 pm Eastern Time</b>		
	1. Opening Remarks - <i>CCE Chair Mr. Paul Hoetjes</i>	
	2. Summary of 5 <sup>th</sup> Consultative Committee Meeting <i>Mr. Paul Hoetjes</i>	CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.08
	3. Report on 2012 Activities of the <i>Pro Tempore</i> Secretariat <i>Ms. Veronica Caceres Ch- IAC PT Secretary</i>	
	4. Presentation of Exceptions Working Group Report Participants share their comments on documents provided (refer to documents on agenda item 8)	
	5. Presentation of Resolution Compliance Working Group Report <i>Coordinator Mr. Joca Thome CCE Vice Chair</i> Participants share their comments on documents provided (refer to documents on agenda item 10)	
	6. Review CCE Work Plan (2013-2014) Participants share their comments on draft document <a href="#">Result: Updated Work Plan for approval at COP</a>	CIT-CCE6-2013-Doc.2
	7. Presentation on Eastern Pacific Leatherbacks <a href="#">Ms. Laura Sarti provides an update on the current status of the Eastern Pacific Leatherbacks in Mexico.</a>	
<b>March 14 11:00 am-2:00 pm Eastern Time</b>		
	8. Review Exceptions Presented The meeting is invited to discuss the report from the 9th SC meeting with recommendations to CCE on exceptions presented by Panama and Guatemala in their annual report 2011 and 2012 <a href="#">Result: Prepare final recommendations to COP6 on the exceptions presented</a>	CIT- CCE5-2012-Doc.3 Rev.1 CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.03 CIT-SC9-2012-Doc.02 2011 2012Annual Report Panama and Guatemala
	9. Guidelines for Preparing a Sea Turtle Action Plans The meeting is invited to comment on document prepared by the 5 <sup>th</sup> CCE and that includes input from the Scientific Committee. <a href="#">Result: Guidelines document ready for approval at COP6</a>	CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.05.Rev1
<b>March 15: 11:00 am- 2:00 pm Eastern Time</b>		
	10. Compliance with IAC Resolution Analysis The meeting is invited to analyze the level of compliance with IAC Resolutions by the Parties, based on the 2011 and 2012 country reports –Coordinator of WG facilitates discussion <a href="#">Result: Recommendations to COP6 on Resolution Compliance.</a>	CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.2  Analysis Matrix (excel)
	11. Other business	
	12. Locations and preliminary dates for next meeting CCE7	

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ANNEX II

CCE6 Participant List

País/Country	Nombre/Name	Institución/Institution	Correo electrónico/Email
<b>Delegados/Delegates</b>			
Argentina	Antonio de Nichilo Maria Laura Tombesi Valeria González Posse Diego Albareda	Secretaría de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sustentable Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores Zoológico de Buenos Aires PRICTMA	ajdnichilo@ambiente.gob.ar mtombesi@ambiente.gob.ar vgp@mrecic.gov.ar dalbareda@zoobuenosaires.com.ar
Brasil	João Thomé	Analista ambiental –Coordinador Regional, Projeto Tamar-ICMBIO	joca@tamar.org.br
Costa Rica	Jenny Asch Jairo Sancho Antonio Porras	SINAC SINAC INCOPECA	jenny.asch@sinac.go.cr jairo.sancho@sinac.go.cr porrasantonio1@yahoo.com
Chile	Francisco Ponce Karin Mundnich	Unidad Biodiversidad y Patrimonio Acuático. División Administración Pesquera Subsecretaría de Pesca y Acuicultura	franciscoponce@subpesca.cl kmundnich@subpesca.cl
Estados Unidos/ USA	Earl Possardt  Marlene Menard  Alexis Gutierrez Barbara Schroeder	US-FWS Division of International Conservation Office of Marine Conservation (OES/OMC), U.S. Dept. State NOAA NOAA NMFS National Sea Turtle Coordinator	Earl_Possardt@fws.gov  MenardMM@state.gov  Alexis.Gutierrez@noaa.gov Barbara.Schroeder@noaa.gov
Honduras	Rafael Amaro García Carolina Montalván	Secretaria de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente (SERNA)/ DiBio	dibioserna@gmail.com rafaelamarog@gmail.com carolmontalvan1568@gmail.com
México	Laura Sarti	Comisión Nacional de las Áreas Naturales Protegidas	lsarti@conanp.gob.mx
Países Bajos/ The Caribbean Netherlands	Paul Hoetjes (Presidente CCE/CCE Chair)	Policy Coordinator Nature EL&I National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands	paul.hoetjes@rijksdienstcn.com
Perú	Nicolás Roncagliolo Alejandra Paz Javier Quiñones Jorge Zuzunaga (Presidente CC/SC Chair)	Dirección de Asuntos Marítimos Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores del Perú Instituto del Mar del Perú(IMARPE) IMARPE	nroncagliolo@rree.gob.pe apaz@rree.gob.pe jquinones@imarpe.gob.pe jzuzunaga@imarpe.gob.pe
Panamá	Marino Abrego	Autoridad de los Recursos Acuáticos de Panamá (ARAP)	meabrego0303@yahoo.es
<b>Miembros Sectoriales/Sectorial Members</b>			
<b>Comunidad Científica/Scientific Community</b>			

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Venezuela	Hedelvy Guada	Centro de investigación y conservación de tortugas marinas	hjpguada@gmail.com
Organizaciones No-Gubernamentales/Non-Governmental Organizations			
USA	Marydele Donnelly	Sea Turtle Conservancy	marydele@conserveturtles.org
Sector Privado y Productivo/Private Sector			
USA	Les Hodgson	Marco Sales, Inc.	MsShrimp@aol.com
Secretaría/Sekretariat			
USA	Verónica Cáceres	Secretaria PT/Secretary PT	secretario@iacseaturtle.org
Costa Rica	Belinda Dick	Secretaría/Sekretariat	leatherbacks@aol.com

### ANNEX III

#### Report of IAC PT Sekretariat Activities (June 2012- February 2013)

#### **Work to increase membership 2012**

**Colombia:** The PT Secretary received an invitation from the Government of Colombia to attend a meeting in July of 2012. The meeting took place with the participation of members of the Colombian Ministry of the Environment (Department of Marine-Coastal Affairs), Foreign Relations Ministry of Colombia and WWF-Colombia, following-up on the interest expressed by Colombia to promote the ratification of the IAC. The next steps to take within the Ministry of the Environment were defined during this meeting as well as coordination with other governmental entities. The Ministry of Environment will organize meetings with the indigenous communities in Colombia in order to have their consent to move forward with the countries' adherence to IAC. This is the first step in the process.

#### **Synergy with other Conventions and Similar Regional Organizations**

Signed an MoU with Ramsar Convention at the Regional meeting of the Americas during Ramsar's COP11 held in Bucarest, Romania on July 8 of 2012.

The PT Secretary participated in ICCAT's Standing Committee on Statistics (SCRS) meeting that took place from October 1-5 of 2012. Among the recommendations of the SCRS sub-committee on ecosystems for 2013, is to undertake an assessment of the impact of ICCAT fisheries on sea turtles and recommended collaborating with the IAC to collect data for this purpose. The SCRS recommended that the ICCAT Parties strengthen cooperation and data exchange with the IAC by means of an MoU between both organizations. Following up on these recommendations, ICCAT's bycatch coordinator requested the cooperation of IAC in recommending expert advisors that could help review the Ecosystem Risk Assessment (ERA) that they will be preparing. Dr. Bryan Wallace, CCE sectorial delegate has generously agreed to help with this task. The PT Sekretariat has circulated the first draft of the MoU between the IAC and ICCAT among IAC focal points and expects to present it at the COP6.

## **IAC Committee Meetings**

9th meeting of the Scientific Committee -Buenos Aires, Argentina, October 2012

Below are the results and agreements of the meeting:

- Final recommendations on the exceptions presented by Panama and Guatemala were given to be used by the CCE in their sixth meeting.
- The database for storing information from IAC annual reports was reviewed and approved.
- A list of the types of Turtle Excluder Devices currently being used by IAC Parties was prepared.
- Guidelines for applying the forms to collect field data on sea turtle interactions with gillnets were made.
- Agreed to compile information on onboard management practices for handling sea turtles incidentally caught in coastal fisheries.
- Agreed to prepare a model analysis of index beaches to be presented at the COP6.

## **Activities following-up on Consultative and Scientific Committee recommendations**

**Webinar on climate change and sea turtles:** during the CCE5 the Committee noted a low level of compliance with the climate change Resolution and recommended that the Parties take appropriate actions considering the possibility of available international resources and the work being done by organizations like WWF. To facilitate this, the PT Secretariat, with technical assistance from WWF, circulated an online survey on the topic among both IAC Committees. Based on their results, we are now preparing a webinar in order to help identify specific activities that can be carried out in collaboration with WWF and help guide Parties towards a better implementation of the Resolution on adaptation of sea turtle habitats to climate change. The webinar is scheduled to be held on March 18 and invitations have been sent out to members of both Committees.

**IAC Database:** the database for storing information from IAC annual reports is in its final stage of testing and we hope to present it at the COP6. We would like to recognize the hard work and support from our colleague, Alex Santos of TAMAR, in creating this database and would also like to thank Simona Ceriani a PhD candidate who is helping to enter data. The database will be used internally by the PT Secretariat in order to obtain systematized information on the reports and provide the IAC Committees and COP with feedback.

## **Follow-up on the CCE recommendation regarding the Eastern Pacific leatherback turtle:**

- Visit to the Costa Rican Embassy in Washington, D.C
- Visit to the Peruvian Embassy
- Visit to the Chilean Embassy
- Visit to the Nicaraguan Embassy

- Communications with Mexico Focal Point

These visits followed up on the CCE5 recommendation to disseminate the document “Eastern Pacific Leatherback Turtles: A Summary of Current Conservation Status, Challenges and Opportunities” and discuss the level of compliance with the leatherback resolution in countries that share this Eastern Pacific population. These visits were very beneficial in raising awareness as to the critical status of this species and establish opportunities for these countries to collaborate and support the recovery of this population. As a result some of the countries provided a summary of activities under their implementation of the leatherback resolution that are included as informative documents in the CCE6 meeting documents on the IAC website. Informative Doc.1

### **Fundraising**

**Success with new grant MTCF:** The PT Secretariat applied for its third grant to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Marine Turtle Conservation Fund, and it was recently approved. This grant entitled “Strengthening regional sea turtle conservation efforts by increasing participation of member countries in IAC meetings through support for the Sixth Conference of the Parties of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC)” hopes to increase the number of IAC Parties attending the COP6 by implementing Resolution CIT-COP5-2011-R6: Establishment of an IAC Delegate Travel Support Fund.

### **Coordination of working groups**

**WG on the Legal Framework of the Convention and IAC Permanent Secretariat:** The WG has held 6 conference calls and has worked on analyzing hosting proposals for the IAC Secretariat as well as to look for options to resolve the topic of the Secretariat’s legal personality. The WG is preparing its report for the COP6.

**Consultative Committee WG:** exceptions and compliance with resolutions. With the help of the WG coordinators, members of the WG have exchanged emails throughout the inter-sessional period as well as circulated the necessary information to perform the tasks assigned and to get ready for the 6th CCE meeting.

### **IAC outreach activities and new synergies**

**World Sea Turtle Day:** Venezuela joins the IAC in Celebrating World Sea Turtle Day. On Monday, June 4th, the Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Washington, DC organized a group of experts to discuss how “Sea Turtles Connect Us”. The invited speakers were Ms. Edis Solórzano, the Venezuelan delegate of the CCE, Mr. Earl Possardt of the USFWS and USA CCE delegate and the IAC PT Secretary. The Comisión Nacional de Áreas Protegidas-México, Projeto Tamar –Brazil, USFWS- USA, WIDECAS and Humane Society also collaborated in this event.

**Stetson University College of Environmental Law:** the IAC PT Secretary accepted an invitation by this university to participate in a series of biodiversity seminars that were held on February 20th with the intention of sharing the history of the IAC, its achievements, challenges and expectations for the future with its law students.

**33rd International Sea Turtle Symposium:** the PT Secretariat participated in this important international event that was held in February of 2013 in Baltimore, MD, USA where they presented the poster entitled “Making Connections: the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC)”.

#### ANNEX IV

CIT-COP6-2013-R1 Draft

#### DRAFT RESOLUTION ON ECONOMIC SUBSISTANCE EXCEPTIONS UNDER ARTICLE IV (3a and b) OF THE TEXT OF THE IAC CONVENTION BY GUATEMALA AND PANAMA FOR LEPIDOCHELYS OLIVACEA EGG HARVESTING

*Recalling* Article IV of the Convention, paragraph 2a which states that the Parties have prohibited the intentional capture, retention or killing of, and domestic trade in, sea turtles, their eggs, parts or products.

*Further recalling* Article IV, paragraph 3a which states that each Party may allow exceptions to satisfy economic subsistence needs of traditional communities, taking into account the recommendations of the Consultative Committee of Experts established pursuant to Article VII, provided that such exceptions do not undermine efforts to achieve the objective of this Convention.

*Noting* that at the fifth Conference of Parties that procedures for cases where exceptions exist was adopted (CIT-COP5-2011-R2)

*Considering* that *Lepidochelys olivacea* is classified as vulnerable, a status recently given to the species by the IUCN.

*Acknowledging* that all other species of sea turtles must be protected from any negative impacts resulting from an exception.

*Recognizing* that *Lepidochelys olivacea* on the beaches of the Eastern Pacific (Mexico to Panama) is the only turtle species that can tolerate a carefully controlled amount of egg harvesting, and only when the population to be harvested has demonstrated a status of “recovery or verifiable stability.”

*Considering* that these exceptions existed prior to Panama and Guatemala joining the IAC, and that today they remain operational under the control of the different relevant governmental organizations.

*Considering* that the review of the technical information presented by the IAC Scientific Committee in their 9<sup>th</sup> meeting and Consultative Committee of Experts in their 5<sup>th</sup> meeting revealed insufficient data to determine the sustainability of use of turtle eggs in these countries.

**PROTECTION MEASURES RECOMMENDED TO GUATEMALA AND PANAMA TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF ARTICLE IV (3) REGARDING EXCEPTIONS:**

- 1) The COP recommends that Panama and Guatemala apply the precautionary principle by implementing the Protection Measures below, in accordance with the national laws governing the exceptions, and to continue to consult with the IAC Committees while the countries gather the suggested technical information and implement actions in the recommendations below so that the exceptions meet the requirements of article IV (3) of the Convention.
- 2) The level of sea turtle eggs being harvested under an exception must be proven to be sustainable and therefore, monitoring protocols must be in place to assess the stability of the population in the long-term. These protocols must include nesting trends in order to support the sustainability of the harvesting proposed. The IAC Scientific and Consultative Committees can provide proper guidance on how to prepare or review a monitoring protocol, if requested by the Party.
- 3) Each country must continue to report on their exception in their annual reports as well as on the implementation of the measures described below. The Scientific and Consultative Committees will continue to review the progress of the implementation of this resolution and report to the Conference of Parties the progress of the implementation.
- 4) In addition to the recommendations below, specific to Guatemala and Panama, the CCE concurs with the guidance provided by the Scientific Committee to both countries contained in the Annex I.

**On the exception presented by Guatemala:**

- 1) Immediate Actions (1-2 Years)
  - a. The Government of Guatemala develops appropriate legislation to ensure that the harvesting of olive ridley sea turtle eggs (*L. olivacea*) is sustainable in the long term and conforms to the text of the Convention.

- b. In the interim, increasing the percentage of eggs that must be deposited in hatcheries to at least 30%, preferably 40%, until more detailed data on population size is available.
  - c. The Government of Guatemala must ensure that the harvesting of olive ridley (*L. olivacea*) eggs proposed in the exception does not impact other species, thus adopting appropriate legal measures and policy to avoid this.
- 2) Midterm Activities (1-5 Years): the government of Guatemala develops a management plan that contains, among other items, the following:
- a. The development of a program that could identify the level of sustainable harvesting and gradually reduce the current harvesting to this level. A protocol for long-term monitoring of the population should be established, with technical guidance from the IAC.
  - b. Considering that egg harvesting responds to an economic subsistence need of the coastal traditional communities, economic alternatives must be sought that address these subsistence needs in order to reduce the harvest to sustainable levels.
  - c. Gather additional technical information
    - i. Data should be included on monthly nesting activity, predation, and natural mortality and survivorship on the nesting beach.
    - ii. Information on the organizations participating in and the resources allocated to the management of the exception.
    - iii. Information should be provided on all hatcheries, with full descriptions of egg handling, nest density, and optimization of hatching.
    - iv. Additional information on the economic aspects of turtle egg harvesting in Guatemala is requested with a socio-economic study of the beneficiaries of the egg harvest and justification for traditional use.
    - v. Describe the effects of increased nearshore predation caused by hatchling release from hatcheries and ways to reduce this effect.
    - vi. It is recommended that the impact of illegal trade on the exception presented be evaluated.

**On the exception presented by Panama:**

- 1) Immediate Actions (1-2 Years)
  - a. Where hatcheries are established, increase the size of the “natural hatchery” stretch of beach and/or move it to encompass more of the

nesting while ensuring that this protected area fulfills the standard technical requirements of a hatchery.

- b. Increase and document the control and protection of clutches in the hatchery zone of Cañas Island.
  - c. Strengthen co-management of the harvest with the Cañas Island community, including training of participants.
  - d. Promote protection efforts, non-consumptive use and operation of hatcheries in communities surrounding Cañas Island.
  - e. Data on hatchlings contributed must specify whether they represent actual numbers of hatchlings released or estimated numbers of hatchlings from counting whole shells.
- 2) Midterm Activities (1-5 Years): the government of Panama develops a management plan.

### **Annex I**

#### **Additional guidance suggested for Guatemala and Panama**

- Ensure the use of published biological data to interpret abundance trends more accurately and to reduce the possibility that the change in numbers that is being attributed to hatchery rearing is being erroneously explained. The possibility that there might be mixing of animals with other nesting colonies in the Eastern Pacific region must also be taken into consideration.
- The management of nests must be maintained as close as possible to natural conditions.
- Handling of eggs must be avoided to the greatest extent possible and time outside of the sand minimized, since prolonged exposure to elements outside of their natural incubation environment (nest) significantly reduces the embryos' chance of survival. Therefore, eggs must be buried within the shortest time possible and with the least amount of handling. Eggs received as donations or confiscated eggs that might be contaminated must be reported and managed outside of any hatcheries.
- Recommend the use of existing technical manuals to those presenting the exception in order to implement the suggestions mentioned. This must be endorsed by a technical institution of the Party country. It is up to the Party country presenting the exception, if they wish that their manual be reviewed by the IAC SC.
- The country that presents the exception must establish the control, registration and management of hatcheries, which must include a full survey and identification of all the clutches collected.

- Develop and apply strict inspection, vigilance and control measures in order to ensure that all egg collectors comply with the required mandatory submission of eggs and try to get them to submit complete clutches instead of only a fraction of them.
- Establish spatial closures or seasonal closures on exploited beaches to protect the rest of the turtle species from exploitation.
- Ensure that the Government looks for partnerships with other organizations, institutions and NGOs in order to guarantee sea turtle conservation and research.
- Implement education campaigns in order to better manage and reduce egg consumption.
- Propose alternative livelihoods, including those that utilize sea turtles in a non-consumptive manner. Countries with exceptions should strive to present at least one model community where this is being done successfully and is technically appropriate.
- Urge Party countries to designate or allocate sufficient human resources and funds to allow them to succeed in correctly managing their exception.

## ANNEX V

### Analysis of the Consultative Committee of Experts on the Compliance with the IAC Resolutions by the Party Countries

#### Report to the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties

This report was compiled by the IAC Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE) to provide the IAC Parties with a succinct overview of progress made on implementing the Convention. According to the Terms of References for the IAC Consultative and Scientific Committees (CIT-COP5-2011-R1) it is the task of the Consultative Committee to review and analyze the annual reports, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee, for the purpose of compliance with the obligations of the Convention.

This report was prepared using the information provided by the IAC Parties in their 2011 and 2012 Annual Reports; specifically using the data reported in Part II (c.1) on the IAC Resolutions. Information on Costa Rica (2011, 2012) and Belize (2012) is not included in this analysis since they did not submit their Annual Report for those years.

#### **Overall compliance with IAC Resolutions**

The CCE calculated the percentage of IAC Parties complying with each specific action as well as their overall compliance for all four IAC technical resolutions.

Below is a table representing the overall compliance per resolution, combining the 2011 and 2012 IAC annual reports. The excel spreadsheets used to calculate this information can be found in Annex I.

IAC Resolution	% yes	% no	% Did not answer (ND)	% Does not apply (NA)
CIT-COP2-2004-R1 Leatherback Turtle Conservation	35	32	7	26
CIT-COP3-2006-R1 Hawksbill Turtle Conservation	42	24	15	19
CIT-COP3-2006 R-2 Reduction of the adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles	45	41	6	8
CIT-COP4-2009-R5 Adaptation of Sea Turtle Habitats to Climate Change	41	58	1	-

**Table. 1 Overall compliance by IAC Parties with IAC Resolutions (2011 and 2012 combined)**

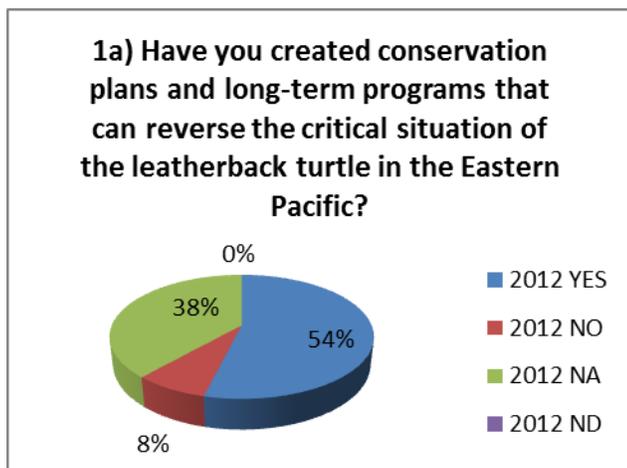
### Compliance with specific actions of the IAC Resolutions

The CCE highlights below the specific actions with the highest compliance (>50%) for both 2011 and 2012 and least compliance for each IAC Resolution, which remained consistent in both the 2011 and 2012 IAC Annual Reports. Graphs break down the percent compliance for a specific action as reported in the 2012 Annual Reports.

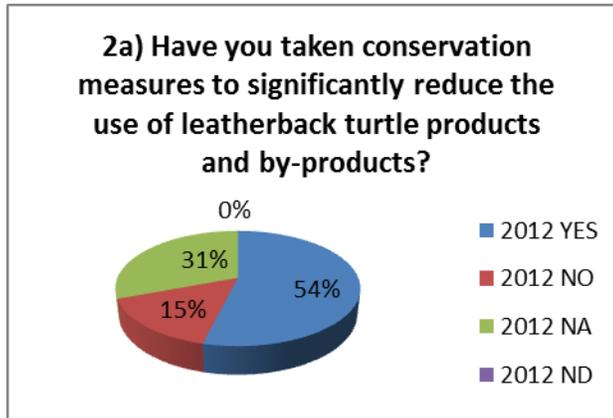
#### a. CIT-COP2-2004-R1 Leatherback Turtle Conservation

##### Specific actions reporting highest compliance

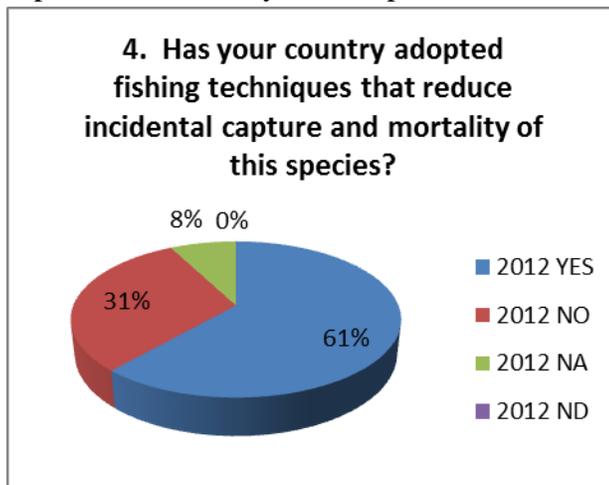
- Action 1a: Have you created conservation plans and long-term programs that can reverse the critical situation of the EP leatherback?



- Action 2a: Have you taken any conservation measures to significantly reduce the use of Leatherbacks?



- Action 4: Has your country adopted fishing techniques that reduce incidental capture and mortality of this species?

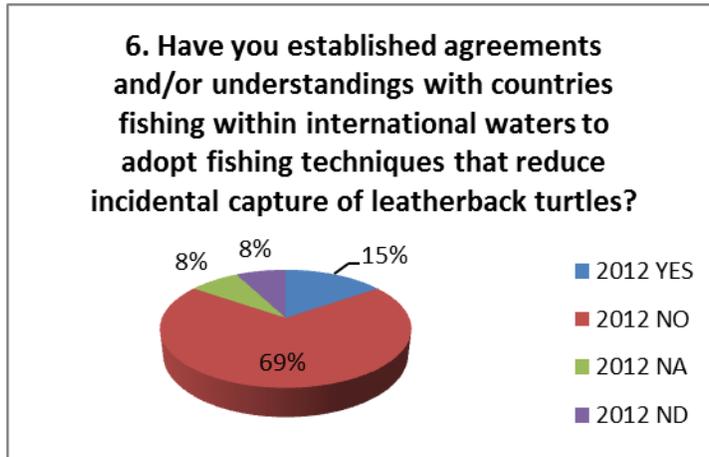


- Action 8: Have any cooperative agreements or alliances been established with pertinent organizations?

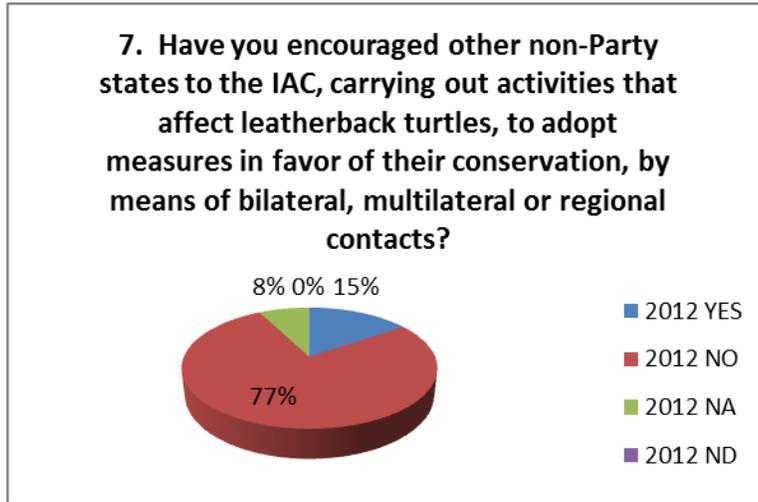


Specific actions reporting lowest compliance

- Action 6: Have you established agreements and/or understandings with countries fishing within international waters to adopt fishing techniques that reduce incidental capture of leatherback turtles?



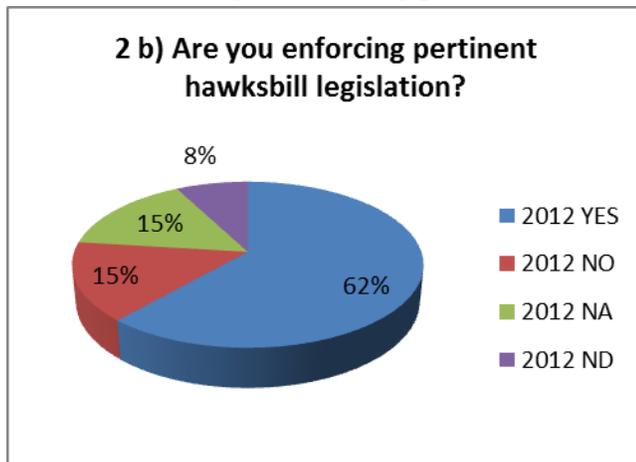
- Action 7: Have you encouraged other non-Party states to the IAC, carrying out activities that affect leatherback turtles, to adopt measures in favor of their conservation, by means of bilateral, multilateral or regional contacts?



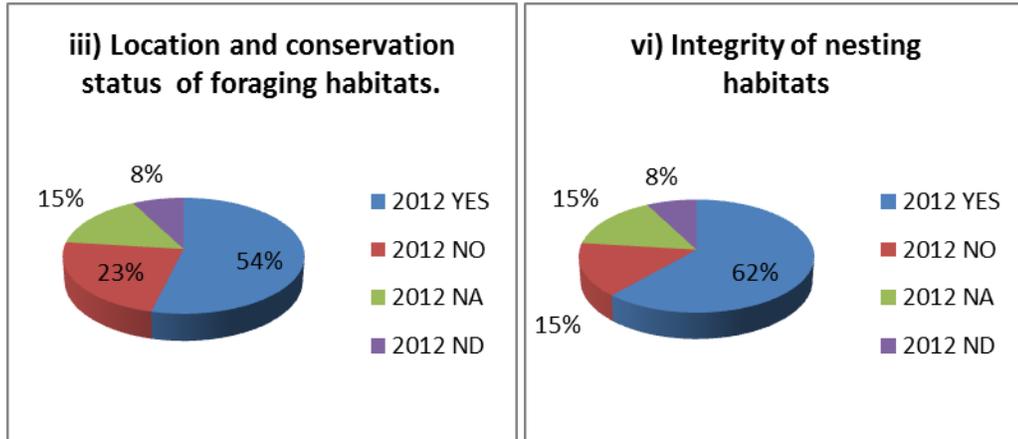
**b. CIT-COP3-2006-R1 Hawksbill Turtle Conservation**

*Specific actions reporting highest compliance*

- Action 2 (b): Are you enforcing pertinent hawksbill legislation?

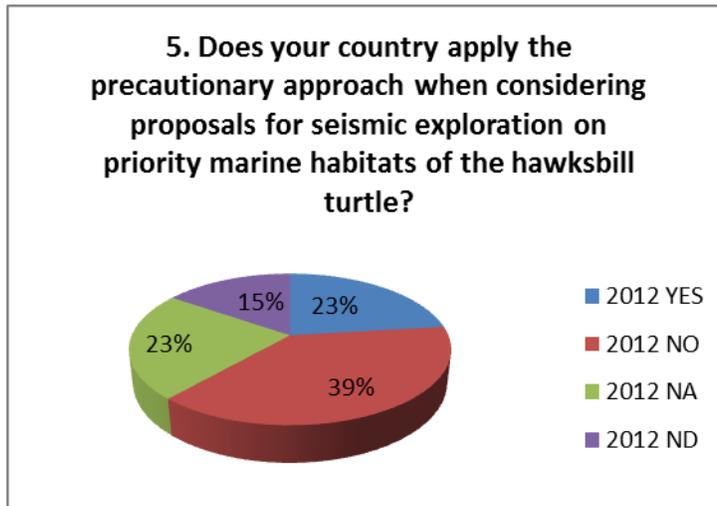


- Action 3 (iii and vi): Does your country support and strengthen the research and monitoring activities required to improve the scientific basis of conservation measures for the hawksbill turtle?

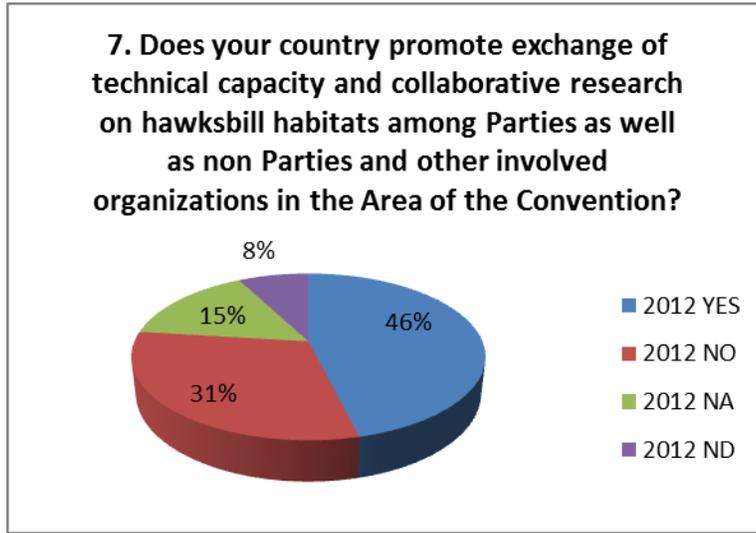


Specific actions reporting lowest compliance

- Action 5: Does your country apply the precautionary approach when considering proposals for seismic exploration on priority marine habitats of the hawksbill turtle?



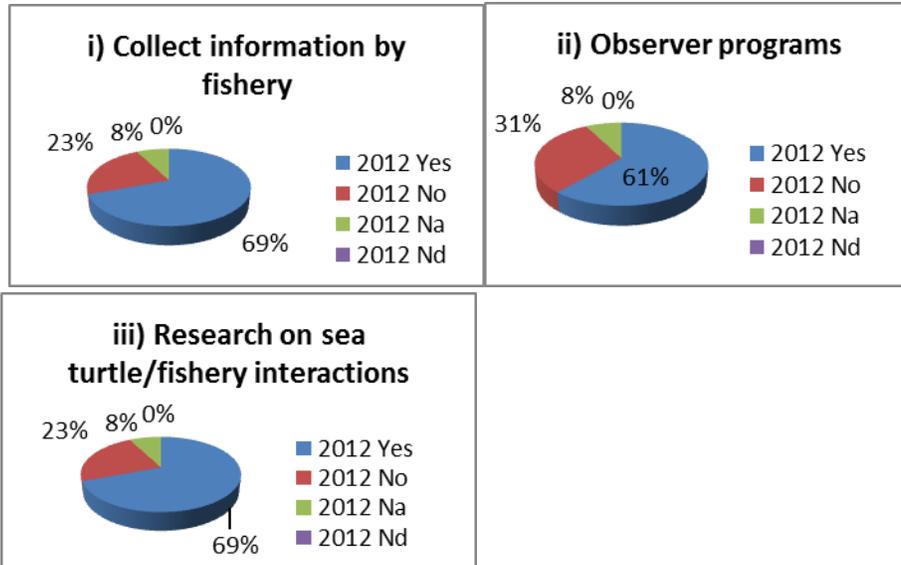
- Action 7: Does your country promote exchange of technical capacity and collaborative research on hawksbill habitats among Parties as well as non Parties and other involved organizations in the Area of the Convention?



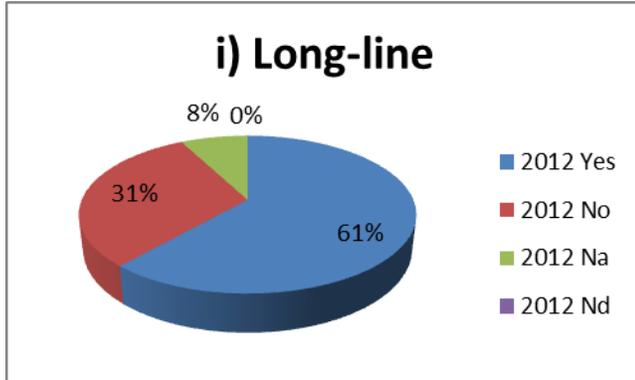
**c. CIT-COP3-2006 R-2 Reduction of the adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles**

*Specific actions reporting highest compliance*

- Action 1 a (i, ii, and iii) and b (i): Adopted the “Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality induced by fisheries operations”, of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), including:
  - A) Research and monitoring of adverse impact of fisheries on sea turtles:

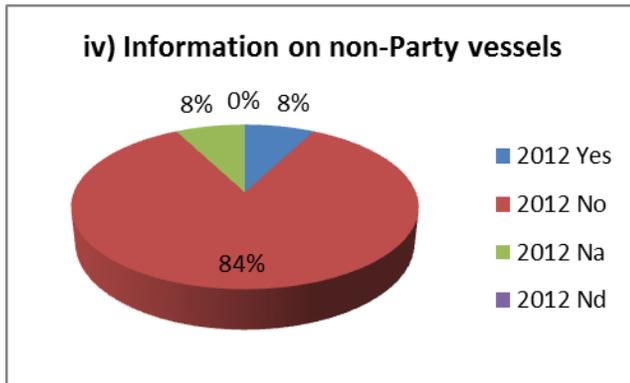


B) Mitigation measures for the following fisheries:

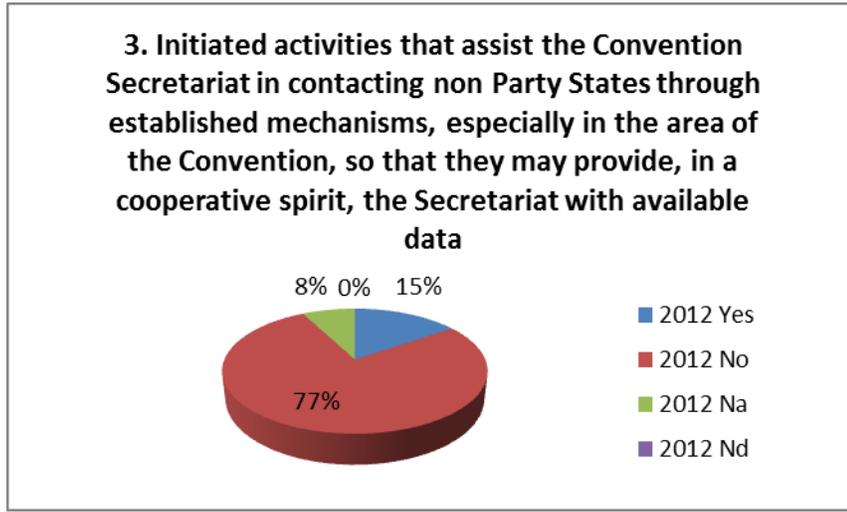


Specific actions reporting lowest compliance

- Action 1 a (iv): Adopted the “Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality induced by fisheries operations”, of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), including:  
A) Research and monitoring of adverse impact of fisheries on sea turtles:



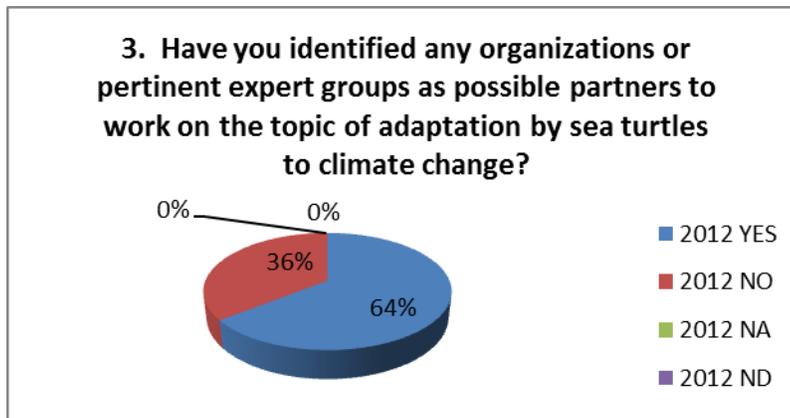
- Action 3: Initiated activities that assist the Convention Secretariat in contacting non-Party States through established mechanisms, especially in the area of the Convention, so that they may provide, in a cooperative spirit, the Secretariat with available data.



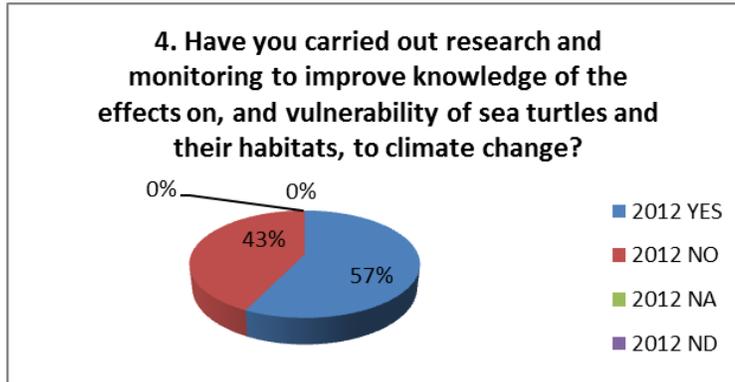
**d. CIT-COP4-2009-R5 Adaptation of Sea Turtle Habitats to Climate Change**

*Specific actions reporting highest compliance*

- Action 3: Have you identified any organizations or pertinent expert groups as possible partners to work on the topic of adaptation by sea turtles to climate change?

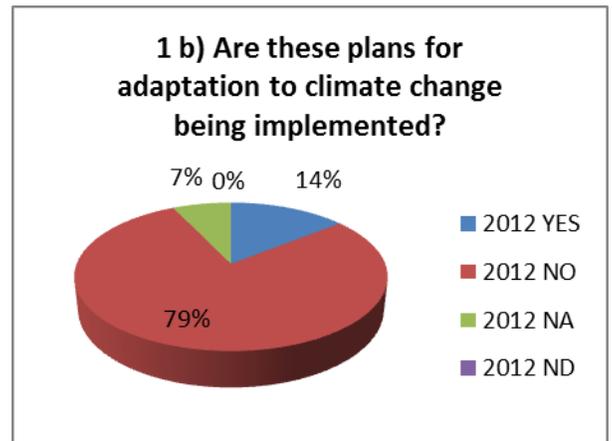
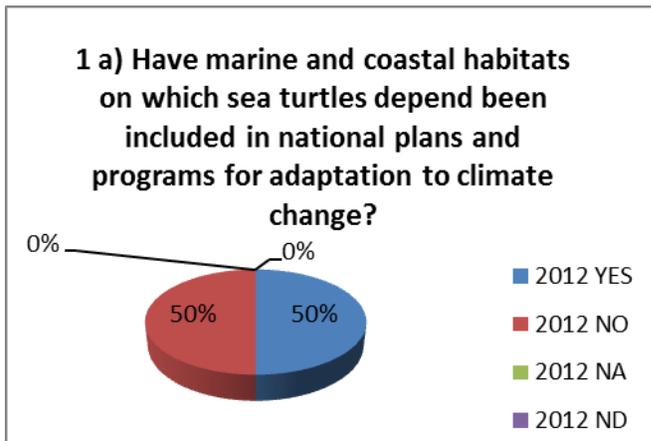


- Action 4: Have you carried out research and monitoring to improve knowledge of the effects on, and vulnerability of sea turtles and their habitats, to climate change?

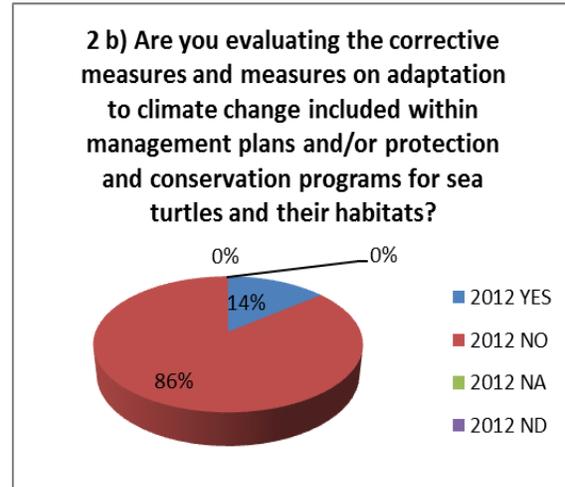
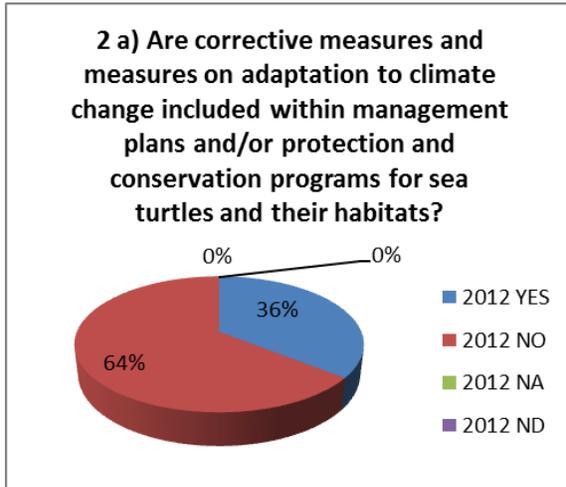


*Specific actions reporting lowest compliance*

- Action 1a and b: A) Have marine and coastal habitats on which sea turtles depend been included in national plans and programs for adaptation to climate change? B): Are these plans for adaptation to climate change being implemented?



- Action 2 a and b: A) are corrective measures and measures on adaptation to climate change included within management plans and/or protection and conservation programs for sea turtles and their habitats? B) Are you evaluating the corrective measures and measures on adaptation to climate change included within management plans and/or protection and conservation programs for sea turtles and their habitats?



### **General Recommendation on Compliance with the IAC Resolutions**

The CCE recommends that the IAC Parties review the informative document presented and its Annex in order to guide their efforts to improve implementation of IAC Resolutions, taking into special consideration the IAC resolutions with the lowest compliance. Furthermore, the CCE requests that the IAC Parties not leave any answers in the resolutions tables of the Annual Report in blank, since this affects the final result of the compliance analysis.

We believe that some countries understood that the IAC leatherback resolution applies only to the Pacific Coast and as a consequence many answers in the Annual Reports were NA (does not apply). We would like to clarify that the Resolution applies to all countries where leatherbacks are found and the oceans where they are reported.

The idea is to keep this material online on the IAC website so that we can better monitor the compliance with the Resolution by the IAC Committee and by the IAC Parties.

### **Annex I: Tables on Compliance with IAC Resolutions –See File Excel attached**

ANNEX VI

Report and Recommendations for Compliance with the Leatherback Resolution (CIT-COP2-2004-R1) from the Eastern Pacific Leatherback Task Force to the 6<sup>th</sup> IAC  
Conference of the Parties

Background:

After the Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE) analyzed the level of compliance by the IAC Parties with the Leatherback Resolution CIT-COP2-2004-R1 during its 5th meeting held in West Virginia in May of 2012, and took into consideration the critical state of this species, the CCE decided to form a Task Force of Experts made up of members from the Scientific and Consultative Committees, which will operate inter-sessionally. The objectives of this Task Force are to monitor the implementation of the Leatherback Resolution and to advise the Parties in those areas they feel the need to improve its implementation with recommendations on priority actions in favor of the recovery of this population.

The work plan and activities of this group can be found in the 5<sup>th</sup> CCE meeting report (CIT-CCE4-2012-Doc.08), which was updated during the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CCE held in March of 2013. The Task Force will take into consideration the priority actions described in the *Regional Action Plan for Reversing the Decline of the Pacific Leatherback* that was prepared by regional experts of the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) Marine Turtle Specialist Group.

This report to the COP6 includes a summary of the activities the Task Force has been carrying out since 2012 in order to fulfill its work plan, activities included in its 2013-2014 work plan and recommendations for priority actions to the Parties.

The Task Force is comprised of the following members: Bryan Wallace (USA), Laura Sarti (Mexico), Earl Possardt (USA), Jorge Zuzunaga (Peru), Francisco Ponce (Chile) and Eduardo Espinoza (Ecuador).

**Activities carried out from June 2012 -April 2013:**

1) Preparation of the Technical Document CIT-CCE5-2012-Tec.3:

The technical document “*Eastern Pacific Leatherback Turtles (Dermochelys coriacea): a Summary of Current Conservation Status, Challenges and Opportunities*” was prepared during the Consultative Committee’s 5<sup>th</sup> meeting in 2012. The purpose of this document was for it to be used in an outreach strategy among IAC Party and non-Party countries regarding the critical state of the EPO leatherback population and to serve as a tool to

raise awareness on the concern for the recovery of this species and the need for regional collaboration especially among those countries within the distribution range of this species. The document was circulated with the IAC Scientific Committee for its review and their comments were included. The final version of the document can be found on the IAC website and is available for use by the general public at the following link:

<http://www.iacseaturtle.org/eng-docs/tecnicos/CIT-CCE5-2012-Tec.3 EPO Leatherbacks ENG aug 15 Final.pdf>

2) *Outreach and dissemination strategy on the current situation of the EPO leatherbacks to be implemented by the Pro Tempore Secretariat. Visits to Diplomatic Missions in Washington DC:*

In February of 2013, the *Pro Tempore* Secretary visited the following diplomatic missions: Embassy of Peru, Chilean Embassy, Costa Rican Embassy and the Nicaraguan Embassy. Letters were also sent to Mexico's IAC Focal Point. Those diplomatic missions were selected by the Task Force because those are the countries where most of the nesting and feeding occur.

The visits were made to follow-up on the recommendation of the CCE5 to raise awareness on the technical document "*Eastern Pacific Leatherback Turtles (Dermochelys coriacea): a Summary of Current Conservation Status, Challenges and Opportunities*" and talk about the level of compliance with the IAC Leatherback Resolution in those countries sharing the Eastern Pacific population. The visits were very successful at raising awareness on the critical status of this species and at establishing opportunities for collaboration among these countries to aid in the recovery of this population. As a result of these activities, Chile, Peru and Mexico submitted information regarding their compliance with this resolution, which was included as informative documents during the 6th meeting of the CCE.

3) *Evaluation of Compliance with the Leatherback Resolution based on the IAC Annual Reports*

After an analysis of the Leatherback Resolution in the 2011 and 2012 Annual Reports, the following observations were made:

Overall compliance:

From the 15th IAC Parties, only Caribbean Netherlands reported that the Resolution does not apply to their territory. Costa Rica (2011 and 2012) and Belize (2012) are not included in the analysis since they did not turn in their annual report on those years. The table below shows the level of compliance with the Resolution in percentages.

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Resolution Compliance (%)	Number of Countries	
	2011	2012
≥ 90%	3	2
75 a 89.9%	3	4
30 a 50%	3	2
≤ 29.9%	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>

In general the average compliance of countries for all activities sin the Resolution for 2011 was 54.1% and for 2012 54.2%.

Due to the status of the EPO Leatherback it is considered to be relevant that countries y that has obtained values below 50.9% during the last two years, to increment compliance in actions in the Resolution so that they increase to 75% compliance or higher.

**2013-2014 Task Force Work Plan:**

Activity 1: Evaluate compliance with the Leatherback Resolution based on the IAC 2013 and 2014 Annual Reports. Prepare a report for the Consultative Committee (CCE7).

Activity 2:

- a) Provide technical support by reviewing project proposals for donors that might be prepared by Governmental and Non-Governmental entities of IAC Party countries that take into consideration the priority actions for leatherback recovery.
- b) The Task Force will provide feedback on these proposals.
- c) The Task Force will ask the IAC Secretariat to prepare letters of support to these entities when necessary. Support will also be provided by helping establish the necessary connections within the government entities in favor of these proposals when appropriate.

Activity 3: Prepare Project proposals for a regional characterization of fisheries interacting with this species in order to evaluate incidental capture in IAC Party countries.

Activity 4: Data sharing, analysis and identify priority areas for bycatch monitoring with relevant organizations that the IAC has MOUs with (ex. IATTC, CPPS). Identify activities to be carried out with existing MOUs for EPO Leatherbacks.

## **Recommendations**

The Task Force recognizes that the actions for recovering this population must occur at two levels, at nesting beaches and at sea. However, it is important to recognize that measures directed towards protecting nests and females on the primary nesting beaches have been carried out quite successfully for over 15 years in both Costa Rica and Mexico, where the majority of the nesting occurs and in Nicaragua more recently where a smaller but significant nesting population occurs. In addition, these successful nesting beach programs are improved each year to increase hatchling production. The Task Force believes these actions taken at nesting beaches are critical to continue for the foreseeable future.

Despite these protection activities, however, the population continues to decline and it is clear that the greatest gaps for conservation of this population lie with bycatch reduction from industrial and artisanal fisheries throughout the East Pacific. It is for this reason that the Leatherback Task Force draws attention to the following priority actions drawn from the “Regional Action Plan for Reversing the Decline of the East Pacific Leatherback.” for the Parties urgent attention.

### *1) Reduce bycatch in artisanal and industrial fisheries already identified as high bycatch*

1.1. Continue assessments of bycatch at ports and/or on-board observers (when possible).

1.2 Expand a radio communication program on vessels as a way to promote best practices for handling turtles caught and reporting bycatch.

1.3 Promote best practices to ensure safe handling and release of sea turtles and hold workshops to disseminate this information.

1.4 Promote exchanges between fishermen to share experiences on how to reduce bycatch with low cost mitigation measures.

### *2) Identify other areas of high bycatch or important for leatherback survival*

2.1 Increase efforts for monitoring bycatch (through surveys, observers and radio communication) at new ports throughout the region and ensure that the information is collected in a standardized way so that it is comparable at the regional level.

2.2 Determine distribution of juvenile leatherbacks with respect to oceanographic conditions in the region.

2.3 Perform an analysis of the distribution of jellyfish and leatherback bycatch along with oceanographic conditions in order to identify possible areas of high leatherback concentrations.

*3) Promote coordination of activities between different stakeholders and implement policy action at a regional level.*

3.1 Develop and/or maintain national and international networks to facilitate information exchange and sharing experiences.

3.2 Perform regional assessment of artisanal and industrial fleets by country, characterizing the types of fishing gear and its relation to bycatch.

3.3 IAC Parties encourage/promote actions through existing MoU between the IATTC and IAC to strengthen agreements between the IAC Parties and create alliances with foreign fisheries.

3.4 Identify a Focal Point in each country involved with the fisheries sector who can act as the liaison for IAC with other stakeholders within the country to promote collaboration.

The Task Force recommends that the IAC Conference of the Parties, specifically those Parties that are found within the distribution range of this species review and consider which actions beyond the current and ongoing nesting beach and other actions their country can commit to implementing during the next year in order to promote the recovery of the Eastern Pacific Ocean leatherback turtle. We also reiterate that ongoing levels and improvements of nesting beach programs in Mexico, Costa Rica and Nicaragua are critical to maintain for the recovery of these population.

ANNEX VII

Consultative Committee 2013-2014 Work Plan

**2.4- STRATEGIC: ACTIONS OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

**Strategic Objectives to Accomplish:**

Objective 1: To inform and to create awareness in the countries of the region concerning migrations of sea turtles and the problems affecting them, for promoting their hemispheric conservation by means of the coordination between the Parties and the adherence to the Convention of all the states in the Americas.

Objective 2: To establish strategic alliances with international conventions, regional fisheries regulating bodies, NGOs and other pertinent civil society organizations, for facilitating the search for solutions for the protection and conservation of sea turtles and their habitat.

Objective 3: To strengthen the ability of the national and local institutions of the Party States for achieving the protection and conservation of sea turtles and their habitats by supporting national programs and fostering joint actions between national authorities responsible for the Convention, other governmental bodies and civil society.

Objective 4: To consolidate the operative, technical and legal capacities of the Convention through actions that favors their financial strengthening, the efficient operation of their subsidiary bodies and the timely adoption of decisions between the Parties favoring the conservation and protection of sea turtles.

Objective 5: To facilitate and support the exchange of information between the Parties concerning the legal aspects of conservation in each country, thus contributing to harmonize legal provisions at a regional level that support the achievement of the Convention's objectives.

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STRATEGIC PLANNING	WORK PLAN GOALS – SCOPE – REQUIREMENTS					
Activities	Verifiable Goals Products	Indicators	Year 1 (2013)	Year 2 (2014)	Responsible	Not Financed
2.4.1 To elaborate and update the CCE Work Plan following IAC Guidelines, agreements and resolutions of the Conference of the Parties (COP's).	a. Prepare biennial Consultative Committee work plan with actions to be performed, timeline, responsible entity and funding requirements.	2013-2015 Work Plan submitted	1. Review and update work plan with 2013-2014 Consultative Committee activities and goals.	1. Review and update work plan with 2015 Consultative Committee activities and goals.	Consultative Committee	
2.4.2 To work with the Secretariat to promote IAC objectives by submitting recommendations, draft resolutions, and advice to the COP.	a. Present the report to the Conference of the Parties.	Report with recommendations and/or draft resolutions presented at the COP6	1. Present Draft Resolutions to the COP6 on necessary topics.	1. Present Draft Resolutions to the COP7 on necessary topics.	Consultative Committee	
	b. Review Annual Reports specifically regarding compliance with resolutions.	Number of documents presented to the COP	1. Review Parties' compliance according to information provided in 2012. Resolutions working group will work inter sessionally before CCE6 to analyze the 2012 annual reports. This report will be presented to the COP.	1. Review Parties' compliance according to information provided in 2013. Resolutions working group will work inter sessionally before CCE7 to analyze the 2013 annual reports.	Consultative Committee and Secretariat	

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<p>2.4.3 To work with the Scientific Committee to promote IAC objectives.</p>	<p>Report on status of sea turtles</p>	<p>1. Develop indicators for each activity.</p>	<p>1. Review and evaluate the results of sea turtle conservation with the actions/activities carried out, recommended by the COP and prepare recommendations to help improve progress and compliance with IAC objective [as necessary].</p> <p>2. Submit the guidelines for Sea Turtle National Conservation plans (Action Plans) to the COP6 for their approval.</p>			
<p>2.4.4 To analyze the exceptions submitted by the Parties.</p>	<p>a. Make recommendations to the COP6 based on the Annual Reports and/or the requests sent by the Parties, previously analyzed by the Scientific Committee.</p>	<p>Report to the COP6</p>	<p>1. Provide recommendations to COP6 and relevant Party</p>	<p>1. Review exceptions currently in place and provide recommendations to COP7 and relevant Party.</p>	<p>Consultative Committee</p>	

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<p>2.4.5 To facilitate outreach to non-member countries and promote alliances and synergies with other international organizations related to IAC objectives.</p>	<p>a. Make recommendations for promoting synergies and coordination mechanisms with entities associated to the IAC.</p>	<p>Number of international organizations identified</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify organizations, draft MOUs and assist Secretariat with outreach to: ICCAT, CRFM, CARICOM, COFI- FAO.</li> <li>2. Brazil will assist the Secretariat in outreach efforts with ICCAT and CBD to draft an MOU.</li> <li>3. Honduras will assist with outreach to CCAD for an MOU.</li> <li>4. Identify activities to increase collaboration with current MOUs.</li> <li>5. Promote non-Party accession to IAC.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify activities to increase collaboration with current MOUs.</li> <li>2. Promote non-Party accession to IAC.</li> </ol>	<p>Consultative Committee and Secretariat</p>	
<p>2.4.6 To establish a working group/task force to promote the recovery of Eastern Pacific Ocean Leatherbacks in accordance with document CIT-CCE5-2012-Doc.04.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. WG/task force will prepare a technical document and outreach strategy to raise awareness on the problems facing EPO leatherbacks.</li> <li>b. Regional characterization of fisheries interacting with this species.</li> <li>c. Report of the working group to COP6.</li> </ol>	<p>Technical document and outreach strategy produced.</p> <p>Number of visits to embassies and outreach</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visit embassies and other relevant groups with the information to raise awareness on the problems facing EPO leatherbacks.</li> <li>2. Prepare an outline of the activities the WG will do over the next two years and present it at the COP6.</li> <li>3. Data sharing and</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The WG/task force will present progress made on preparing or implementing (depending on which one it is) on the Project proposal for a characterization of regional fisheries that interact with this species.</li> <li>2. Continue with 2013 activities.</li> </ol>	<p>Consultative &amp; Scientific Committee, Secretariat</p>	

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		<p>activities.</p> <p>Working group report.</p>	<p>analysis and identify priority areas for bycatch monitoring and reduction with relevant organizations that the IAC has MOUs with (ex. IATTC, CPPS).</p> <p>4. Identify activities to be carried out with existing MOUs for EPO Leatherbacks.</p> <p>5. Prepare a project proposal for regional characterization of fisheries interacting with this species.</p>	<p>3. Prepare a report on the WG activities to be presented at the next COP.</p>		
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