



**Inter-American Convention for the
Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
Belize
2006 Annual Report**

Second Annual Report Form

Directory

Country	Belize
Agency or institution responsible for preparing this	Belize Fisheries Department
Name of the person in charge of this form	Isaias Majil
Address	Princess Margaret Drive, Belize City
P.O. Box	148
Telephone(s)	501-2244552/2232623
Fax	501-2232983
E-mail	species@btl.net
Website	

Others who participated in the preparation of this form

Name	Affiliation	Contribution/ Topic	Telephone	E-mail
Gales Point Wildlife Sanctuary Community	Community organisation	nests, ongoing monitoring		mcsweaney@hotmail.com
Bacalar Chico Marine Reserve	Government of Belize	nests, ongoing monitoring	501-2244552	bacalarchico-belize@hotmail.com
South Water Caye Marine Reserve	Government of Belize	nests, ongoing monitoring	501-2244552	nids21@hotmail.com
Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve	Government of Belize	nests, ongoing monitoring	501-2244552	pgboy2003@yahoo.com
WWF Belize	International NGO	ongoing projects	501-2237680	mcfield@wwf.org
Belize Audubon Society	Local NGO	nests, ongoing monitoring		

Focal Point

Institution: **Belize Fisheries Department**

Name: Isaias Majil

Signature: 02-may-06

Date:



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1. Biological Information

1.1. Species present

Species	Pacific Ocean	Atlantic Ocean	Caribbean Sea
	Phase(s)	Phase(s)	Phase(s)
<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>			
<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>			
<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>			m
<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>			m,r,f,
<i>Chelonia mydas</i>			m,f,r,
<i>Caretta caretta</i>			m,r,f,

Phases: R = Reproduction; F = Foraging; M = Migration; D = Phase Unknown

1.2. Important sites for sea turtle conservation

	Name of Site	Species (s)	Season	Geographic Location (Lat/Long)	Area (km or hectares, if applicable)	Protection Category	Observations*
Nesting Site	Bacalar Chico Marine Reserve	cm,ei,cc	May-September	Rocky Point Beach Begin: 16Q 0412444 UTM 2003869 End: 16Q 0412332 UTM 2003749/ Robles Beach Begin: 16Q 0410646 UTM 2002979 End: 16Q 0409925 UTM 2002537	4 km	National Park, 66ft. National zone	no type of extraction allowed
	Gales Point Manatee Bar	ei,cc	May-November		7 miles	Special Deveopment Area	Limited development allowed
	Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve	ei	May-September	16Q364290 1781198		Marine Reserve, 66 ft. National Zone	sea turtles are protected
Foraging Site	Belize Barrier Reef	ei,cm,cc	All year		185 miles	Species protected by law for no posesion	
Migratory Routes	Offshore atolls	Dc,cm,ei,cc	all year			species protected by law	



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2. Information regarding the use derived from sea turtles

	Types of use	Specie	Products	Ocean Basin	Origin*		Estimated annual quantity	Information source	Actions
					L	I			
Consumptive Use	cultural	cc,cm	meat	Caribbean Sea	x	x	unknown	fishermen anecdotal	press release, patrols
	subsistence	cc,cm	meat			x	unknown	fishermen anecdotal	patrols, information dissemination to fishermen
Non-consumptive	ornamental	ei	shell			x	unknown		patrols, information dissemination to fishermen

* L = legal, I = illegal

3. Main threats

3.1 Habitat and other threats

Threats	Specie(s) Affected	Size of Impact	Geographic Region(s) Affected	Information Source	Actions
beach erosion	ei,cc,cm	not available	nesting areas	annual reports	Reported the matter to the Department of the environment
construction and infrastructure on beaches	ei,cc,cm	not available	nesting areas	annual reports	National environmental Appraisal Comitte member highlighting mitigation measures in EIA
Artificial light	ei,cc,cm	not available	nesting areas		information dissemination to owners on effects of light
depredation of eggs by feral animals	ei,cc,cm	not available	Gales Point Manatee Bar	annual reports	special managemnet modifications
obstacles on the beach	ei,cc,cm	not available	nesting areas	annual reports	beach clean up with school kids periodically
waste in the ocean	ei,cc,cm,dc	not available	teritorial waters	annual reports	none
hurricanes	ei,cc,cm,dc	eggs	nesting beaches	annual reports	none



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3.2 Capture (Intentional/incidental)

Threats	Specie(s) Affected	Size of Impact	Geographic Region(s) Affected	Information Source	Actions
Shrimp trawling	ei,cm,cc		Reef lagoon	trawler reports, Fisheries Department Report	Reduction in number of trawlers, mandatory TED use
Gill net fisheries	ei,cm,cc		coastal teritory	anecdotal;	new regulations as to area nets are allowed, length of nets, mandatory surveillance of nets
capture of sea turtles on beach	ei,cc,cm		nesting beaches	beach annual reports	beach surveillance by volunteers and officers
incidental capture for personal ornamental decoration	ei,cm,cc	unknown	Reef lagoon	arrest logs	prosecuted cases relating to sea turtle posesion

4. Legal Framework

4.1. International instruments

Treaty, Convention, Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding	Year signed and/or ratification
Convention on International Trade for endangered species	signed 19 August 1986, entry into force September 1981
Interamerican Convention for the Conservation and Protection of Seaturtles	signed December 21, 1998 ratified February 3, 2003
Convention on Biological Diversity	signed June 13, 1992 ratified December 30, 1993
Cartagena Convention	12-May-04
United Nations Law of the Sea	ratified August 13, 1983
Central American Biodiversity Convention	
Convention for the Conservation of Biodiversity and the Protection of Priority Areas in Central America	signed 1971
The Convention on wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitats RAMSAR	



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4.2. National legislation

Type and name of legal instrument (No.)	Description (Range of application)	Sanction(s) Imposed
Statutory Instrument No. 66 of 2002 section 13 of the Fisheries Act Chapter 210 Substantive Laws of Belize	National territory	\$1000 BZ per any seaturtle or its product or to a term of one year imprisonment or to both fine and imprisonment
		TED violation \$2000 Bz or one year imprisonment or to both fine and imprisonment
National Lands Act	National territory	Depends on infraction
Land Utilization Act	National territory	Depends on infraction
Environmental Protection Act	National territory	Depends on infraction

4.3. Indicate any legal instruments that are currently in the process of being approved. NONE

4.4. Public and private institutions involved in sea turtle conservation

Institution/ Entity	Responsibilities
Belize Fisheries Department	All legal responsibility over seaturtles
Belize Audubon Society	Monitoring
Sea Turtle Conservation Network	Advisory to policy formulation
Gales Point Wildlife Sanctuary Community Management Committee	Monitoring and protection
Wildlife Conservation Society	training and technical advice
World Wildlife Foundation	mapping
Protected Areas Conservation Trust	funding



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5. Exceptions

Under the present regulations extraction can only occur with a permit from the Fisheries Administrator for traditional and cultural use. However since 2002 no permit has been issued even though various applications have been received. A management plan has not been elaborated as yet for the sea turtle fishery thus none is legally occurring. A fishery management plan is presently in the process of elaboration for the fishing industry in general whereby it will incorporate the sea turtle as a sub section.

6. Conservation Efforts

6.1 General description of the sea turtle protection and conservation program

A Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plan for Belize was prepared by WIDECASST in 1992 and plans are underway for possible funding for its updating. This plan list the actions needed in the stress reduction of our sea turtle population and is the document used by the Fisheries Department in the management of the resource. Many sea turtle conservation programs are complimentary of other projects geared towards the sustainable management of our tourism and fishing industries. In its effort to control the illicit fishing of the lobster and conch fishery, the Fisheries Department embarks in consistently monitoring the activities within the territorial waters of Belize. These Conservation Compliance Unit patrols thus gear efforts in minimizing illegal sea turtle captures.

The Fisheries Department also declared 8 marine reserves which have as objective the conservation and protection of the areas biodiversity which incorporates the sea turtles. All programs under this component involve sea turtles. Programs under this component are but not limited to enforcement of reserve and Fisheries regulations, monitoring of the biodiversity and environmental education to local communities and stakeholders. These areas are strategically all along the Belize Barrier Reef, 185 miles long, creating an enforcement presence throughout the Belize territorial waters and atolls.

A working group named the Sea turtle Conservation Network meets every two months to discuss issues in regards to the reptile and recommends actions to the Fisheries Department. Also it updates all members on the recent developments in the effort to conserve and protect the sea turtles.

Local NGO's approached the Fisheries Department to help in the monitoring and conservation of the sea turtles habitat and nesting beaches. This is reflected in the community participation of Gales Point Manatee Bar, one of the most important nesting areas for the hawksbill in Belize. Another example is the Belize Audubon Society who posses responsibility for the monitoring of a nesting beach at one of the atolls.



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6.2 Relevant Projects and Activities

Project/Activities	General objective	Results obtained	Duration	
			From	Until
Bacalar Chico Marine Reserve	sea turtle monitoring and conservation, protection	secured 35 cm,cc nest	May	September
Gales Point Manatee Bar	sea turtle monitoring and conservation, protection	secured 65 ei nest	May	September
Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve	sea turtle monitoring and conservation, protection	secured 26 ei nests	May	September
Belize Audubon Society	sea turtle monitoring and conservation, protection	secured 6 nest ei, cc	June	September
South Water Caye Marine Reserve	sea turtle monitoring and conservation, protection	secured 6 ei nests	May	September

7. International Cooperation

Wildlife Conservation Society

Collaboration in staff training and technical support. Has listed the hawksbill turtle as an indicator species in a project to be implemented at the Glover's Reef Atoll in the Glovers reef Marine Reserve.

GAP Challenge

A UK based volunteer organization that provides human resource support to the nesting areas for day and night beach patrols. These are done on a free base with limited investment from the supported agency.

EARTH Watch

Assisted financially to the Gales Point Wildlife Sanctuary Community Management Committee for the 2004 nesting monitoring. Support was offered for the 2005 season in the form of volunteers.

El Colegio de la Frontera Sur ECOSUR

Quintana Roo, Mexico based academic institution support with technical advise to the agencies involved in sea turtle conservation.

WIDECAST

Updated information as to opportunities and technical assistance available.



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8. National Directory

Name	Institutional affiliation	Line of work / Specialty	Telephone	Fax	E-mail	Website
Melanie McField	WWF	Marine Biologist	501-2237680	501-2237681	mcfield@wwf.org	
Roberto Pott	Belize Audubon Society	Marine Protected Areas Coordinator	501-2234988	501-2234985		
Lincoln Mcsweaney	Gales Point Wildlife Sanctuary Community Management Committee	Director	501-2277466			
Linda Searle	Independent Researcher	marine biologist	501-2235505	5012237007	info@seasportsbelize.com	
Janet Gibson	Wildlife Conservation Society	WIDECAST	501-610-2090	501-223-3005	jgibson@btl.net	
Alicia Eck	Bacalar Chico Marine Reserve	manager	501-6082704		bacalarchicomr@gmail.com	
Addiel Perez	SouthWater Caye Marine Reserve	Manager	501-2244552		swcmr@yahoo.com	
Jason Guy	Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve	Manager	501-7222660		scmr_fisheries@yahoo.com	

9. Sources of Information

Bacalar Chico Marine Reserve Annual Report 2005
 Sapodilla Caye Marine Reserve Annual Report 2005
 South Water Caye Marine Reserve Annual Report 2005
 Gales Point Sea turtle data 2005
 CITES web page
 Convention on Biodiversity web page
 Fishermen Anecdotal information
 WWF Belize
 WCS Belize
 Smith, Gregory W., Karen L. Eckert, and Janet P Gibson. 1992. WIDECAST Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plan for Belize 1992 (Karen L Eckert, Editor). CEP Technical report 18. UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme, Kingston Jamaica. 86p.

10. Annexes