



Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles United States Annual Report 2016

IAC Annual Report General Instructions

Annex IV of the Convention text states that each Contracting Party shall hand in an Annual Report. To complete this Annual Report, Focal Points should consult with various stakeholders involved in sea turtle issues. If you have any questions regarding this Annual Report, please write to the PT Secretariat at secretario@iacseaturtle.org

Please note that the date to submit this Annual Report is **April 30, 2016**.

Part I (General Information)

Please fill out the following tables. Add additional rows if necessary.

a._ Focal Point

Institution	National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration/National Marine Fisheries Service
Name	Alexis T. Gutierrez
Date Annual Report submitted	19 July 2016

b._ Agency or Institution responsible for preparing this report

Name of Agency or Institution	National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration/National Marine Fisheries Service
Name of the person responsible for completing this report	Alexis T. Gutierrez
Address	1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Telephone(s)	301-427-8441
Fax	301-713-4060
E-mail	Alexis.gutierrez@noaa.gov

c._ Others who participated in the preparation of this report

Name	Agency or Institution	E-mail
Ann Marie Lauritsen	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	annmarie_lauritsen@fws.gov
Earl Possardt	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Earl_Possardt@fws.gov



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Part II (Policy and Management)

a. General description of activities carried out for the protection and conservation of sea turtles

In accordance with Articles IX and XVIII of the text of the Convention, each Party shall establish monitoring programs, policies and plans for implementation at a national level for the protection and conservation of sea turtles and their habitat.

As a result, the Party shall report on the action plans, management plan or other types of instruments, describing their location, the species considered and the actions implemented by governmental, non-governmental and private institutions related to sea turtles.

In addition to the above, please fill out the following tables and explain the level of progress in the comments column.

	YES/NO/ In Progress	Comments
Does your country have a national plan of action in accordance with Article XVIII?	Yes	All of the FWS/NMFS recovery plans for sea turtles can be found at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/recovery/plans.htm#turtles
Does your country have policies and programs at local and regional levels in accordance with Article XVIII?	Yes	
Does your country have monitoring programs in accordance with Article IX?	Yes	

b. National legislation and international instruments related to sea turtles adopted in the preceding year

Describe any national regulations, international agreements and other legal instruments adopted during the preceding year (April 30, 2015-April 30, 2016) related to sea turtles and/or relevant activities. Provide a reference and attach the digital file for the legislation and its corresponding number. The laws adopting the international legislation should be included, when they exist.



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The following regulatory actions have been put into place since April 30, 2015

December 24, 2015 – Annual Determination for Sea Turtle Observer Requirement for 2016

Through this regulation, NOAA Fisheries annually identifies, per the Endangered Species Act (ESA), commercial or recreational fisheries operating in state and/or Federal waters in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Pacific Ocean that would be required to take sea turtle observers upon our request in order to – learn more about sea turtle interactions in that fishery, evaluate existing measures to reduce or prevent prohibited sea turtle takes and to determine whether additional measures may be necessary to prevent sea turtle takes. The fisheries identified through the Annual Determination process will be required to carry sea turtle observers upon our request for a 5-year period. At the end of a 5-year period they may be relisted. More information can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/observers.htm>.

March 15, 2016 – Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for Sea Turtle Conservation and Recovery Actions and to Conduct Public Scoping Meetings

This notice of intent informs the public of the intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for proposed changes to the regulations for the shrimp fishery. One of the alternatives that is evaluated in this scoping document includes requiring the use of Turtle Excluder Devices in skimmer trawls. More information can be found at <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2016/03/15/2016-05769/notice-of-intent-to-prepare-an-environmental-impact-statement-for-sea-turtle-conservation-and#h-11>.

National Legislation		
Type and name of legal instrument (No.)	Description (Range of application)	Sanctions(s) Imposed
Endangered Species Act	Global	Prohibition of take of listed species unless exempted under Section 7 and Section 10 in U.S. waters
International Instruments		
Treaty, Convention, Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding		Year signed and/or ratified
InterAmerican Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles		2000
Indian Ocean Southeast Asian Marine Turtle MOU		2001



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Note: If this is the first time a country is submitting this information, please include all pertinent national legislation and international instruments currently in force.

c. Actions for compliance with national and international legislation

c.1 IAC Resolutions

Fill in the following tables for each of the IAC Resolutions listed below. In the case that a Resolution does not apply to your country, please mark the box RESOLUTION DOES NOT APPLY, and if a specific question does not apply, please mark the column DOES NOT APPLY. If you need more space to describe these actions, please attach additional pages and note the resolution and question number to which you are responding.

Resolution CIT-COP7-2015-R2: Conservation of the Eastern Pacific Leatherback Turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*)

ACCORDING TO RESOLUTION CIT-COP7-2015-R2, REPORT WHETHER YOUR COUNTRY:

			RESOLUTION DOES NOT APPLY	
IS COMPLYING WITH THE FOLLOWING:	YES	NO	DESCRIBE ACTION (*)	DOES NOT APPLY
1a) Have you created conservation plans and long-term programs that can reverse the critical situation of the leatherback turtle in the Eastern Pacific?	Yes		Yes. We have a recovery plan for Pacific leatherbacks that includes Eastern Pacific leatherbacks. Further, we have recently launched the Spotlight Species initiative that highlights East Pacific Leatherbacks. In 2016, NOAA Fisheries released our five year action plan for Western and Eastern Pacific leatherbacks. More information on the Species in the Spotlight initiative can be found out at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2015/06/spotlight_pac_leatherback.html .	
1b) Are you implementing these conservation plans and monitoring programs?	Yes		Yes, the United States is taking action to minimize interactions with Leatherbacks in domestic fisheries by using gear modifications and, as necessary, time area closures. In addition, we are working closely with several countries in the ETP to try and reduce leatherback interactions trialing illuminated gillnets in coastal fisheries (e.g., Peru and Chile).	
2. Have you taken conservation measures to eliminate poaching of leatherback turtles?	Yes		Trade of sea turtles and their parts is illegal in the United States. The United States has also taken a very proactive approach to address wildlife trafficking for all species. In the spring of 2015, the Obama Administration released a plan to combat wildlife trafficking -- https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2015/02/11/launching-plan-combat-wildlife-trafficking	



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3. If your country has leatherback turtle nesting beaches in the Eastern Pacific: Have you taken conservation measures to protect the nesting sites and their associated habitats?	N/A		N/A
4. Has your country adopted fishing techniques that reduce incidental capture and mortality of this species?	Yes	With respect to Western Pacific Leatherbacks, the United States taken significant measures to reduce fishery bycatch. The Hawaii shallow-set fishery is managed through 100% observer monitoring and the fishery closes if the annual limit of interaction with leatherbacks is reached. U.S. fishermen are required to use large circle hooks with whole finfish baits in longline fisheries known to interact with Leatherbacks in the Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean, as well as the Gulf of Mexico. Fishers are also provided safe-handling gear to increase turtles' chances of survival post-release. The US has also declared Critical Habitat for leatherback turtles along the US West Coast that can help to further limits anthropogenic impacts to leatherback turtles in the region.	

(*) Specify actions implemented, name of the project or relevant document, location, objective(s), institutions responsible, contact, financial or other support (optional), results (both positive and negative) and duration.

Resolution CIT-COP3-2006 R-1: Hawksbill turtle conservation (*Eretmochelys imbricata*)

ACCORDING TO RESOLUTION CIT-COP3-2006-R1, REPORT WHETHER YOUR COUNTRY:

IS COMPLYING WITH THE FOLLOWING:	RESOLUTION DOES NOT APPLY		DESCRIBE ACTION (*)	DOES NOT APPLY
	YES	NO		
1. Are you strengthening monitoring of the illegal use and trade of hawksbill turtles and their products?	X		Trade of sea turtles and their parts is illegal in the United States. The United States has also taken a very proactive approach to address wildlife trafficking for all species. In the spring of 2015, the Obama Administration released a plan to combat wildlife trafficking -- https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2015/02/11/launching-plan-combat-wildlife-trafficking	
2. Are you enforcing pertinent hawksbill legislation?	X		Enforcement efforts at the state and national level are ongoing to enforce the ESA.	
3. Are activities being carried out in order to stop illegal trade of hawksbill products?			U.S. enforcement officers work to stop illegal trade of hawksbill products.	



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4. Indicate if your country is strengthening the protection of important nesting and foraging habitats by declaring protected areas and regulating anthropogenic activities that adversely impact these habitats.	a) Protection of nesting habitats	X	<p>Nesting beaches of the southeastern U.S. are a mixture of public and private lands. Public conservation lands include National Wildlife Refuges (NWR), National or State or County Parks, and military installations. In Florida, approximately 40% of nesting beaches have been identified as conservation lands; in Georgia, 71%; in South Carolina, 38%; in North Carolina, 47%; and in Alabama, 22%.</p> <p>The two major hawksbill nesting beaches in the U.S. Caribbean, Buck Island Reef National Monument, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Mona Island, Puerto Rico, are protected as a National Park and Commonwealth Protected Area, respectively.</p> <p>The most important leatherback nesting beaches in the U.S. Caribbean are Sandy Point, U.S. Virgin Islands (protected as a National Wildlife Refuge); Brava and Resaca Beaches, Culebra, Puerto Rico (protected as a Commonwealth Protected Area); Vieques Island, Puerto Rico (protected as a National Wildlife Refuge); Fajardo (Northeast Ecological Corridor) on the main island of Puerto Rico (mixed ownership, only partially protected); and Maunabo on the main island of Puerto Rico (beaches are in public domain, but uplands adjacent to the beaches are privately owned with the potential for future development).</p>	
	b) Protection of feeding habitats	X	<p>Critical habitat has been designated for Caribbean hawksbill around Mona Island (Puerto Rico) since 1998. http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/fr/fr63-46693.pdf http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/criticalhabitat/hawksbillturtle.pdf</p>	

(*). Specify actions implemented, name of the project or relevant document, location, objective(s), institutions responsible, contact, financial or other support (optional), results (both positive and negative) and duration.

Resolution CIT-COP3-2006-R2: Reduction of the adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles

ACCORDING TO RESOLUTION CIT-COP3-2006-R2, REPORT WHETHER YOUR COUNTRY:

IS COMPLYING WITH THE FOLLOWING:	YES	NO	DESCRIBE ACTION (*)	DOES NOT APPLY
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				
• Collect information by fishery	X			
• Observer programs	X		The National Marine Fisheries Service has National Observer Program that is composed of six regional observer programs. Each of the programs can be found at http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/programs/map/index	
• Research on sea turtle/fishery interactions	X		The United States has a very robust program to research bycatch reduction technologies. There are currently bycatch reduction technologies in place in the longline fisheries, otter trawl fisheries and some gillnet fisheries. A summary of some of the recent bycatch reduction projects that were funded can be found at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/fisheries_eco/bycatch/brep.html .	



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on non-Party vessels 	X	<p>The United States works through the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations to monitor non-Party vessels. More information on this work can be found at http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/msra_page/2015noaareptcongress.pdf</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation with non-Party states to obtain information 	X	<p>The United States works collaboratively with several countries to better understand fisheries interactions with sea turtles. More information on our annual efforts can be found in the following report to the U.S. Congress -- http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/msra_page/2015noaareptcongress.pdf</p>	
<p>B. Mitigation measures for the following fisheries:</p>			
<p>i. Long-line</p>	X	<p>The United States has sea turtle bycatch mitigation restrictions in all Federal pelagic and deep-set longline fisheries. These regulations can be found at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/regulations.htm.</p>	
<p>ii. Gillnets</p>	X	<p>The United States has sea turtle bycatch mitigation requirements in many Federally managed gillnet fisheries including the Mid-Atlantic and the California Drift gillnet. Some states have adopted bycatch mitigation reduction requirements in their state fisheries in order to comply with the Endangered Species Act as well. More information on these requirements can be found at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/regulations.htm http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/permits/permit16230_ncdmf.pdf</p>	
<p>iii. Trawling (e.g., 1. TEDs: specify legally approved TEDs, their dimensions, material, and target species for that fishery, 2. time-area closures: specify geographical area, time of closure and target species for that fishery, 3. tow times and/or 4. other measures)</p>	X	<p>The United States requires TEDs in shrimp otter trawls and summer flounder trawls in certain areas. https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2012/05/21/2012-12014/sea-turtle-conservation-shrimp-and-summer-flounder-trawling-requirements</p>	
<p>iv. Other fishing gear (indicate which one(s))</p>	X	<p>Poundnets and some dredges are also regulated to reduce sea turtle interactions. Please see http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/regulations.htm.</p>	
<p>v. Training programs for</p>	X	<p>Fishermen operating in the pelagic longline fisheries in the Atlantic or the Pacific must take captains training on safe-</p>	



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fisherman about best practices for safe handling and release of sea turtles incidentally caught			handling and release techniques. More information can be found at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/compliance/workshops/protected_species_workshop/index.html http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/SFD/SFD_psw_index.html	
C. Socio-economic considerations				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support socio-economic activities that help mitigate adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles 		X		

(* **Specify actions implemented, name of the project or relevant document, location, objective(s), institutions responsible, contact, financial or other support (optional), results (both positive and negative) and duration.**

c.2 National and International Mandates

List actions that are being carried out to comply with national and international mandates (Ex: inspections, confiscations, sanctions, etc.)

The United States regularly carries out the mandates of the Endangered Species Act, which prohibits all taking of listed species, unless permitted under the ESA. Through the implementation of regulations we are working to reduce sea turtle incidental capture and mortality in fisheries. The United States regulations can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/regulations.htm>. Further, the United States evaluates all Federal actions that may affect sea turtles through the Section 7 process of the Endangered Species Act, as well as the environmental review process required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

Both NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have enforcement offices that monitor compliance with existing laws and develop cases against those violating the Endangered Species Act.

d. Application[submission] of exceptions established in the Convention

Describe in detail the exceptions allowed in accordance with article IV, item 3(a,b,d) and Annex IV of the text of the Convention, in accordance to the procedure established by the COP (Doc. CIT-COP5-2011-R2). Attach management program.

Not applicable to the United States



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Part III (Research information)

a. Threats

Indicate threats (*Coastal development, incidental capture, direct use, contamination and pathogens, and climate change*) by species, with information on the area and activities taken to control them in the following table. Lo = *Lepidochelys olivacea*; Lk = *Lepidochelys kempii*; Dc = *Dermochelys coriacea*; Ei = *Eretmochelys imbricata*; Cc = *Caretta caretta*; Cm = *Chelonia mydas*.

Species	Threat(s)	Actions	
Lo	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	Through the Endangered Species Act regulations and the Section 7 process, the United States works to mitigate the impact of fisheries on sea turtles.
Lk	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	Through the Endangered Species Act regulations and the Section 7 process, the United States works to mitigate the impact of fisheries on sea turtles.
Dc	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	<p>Coastal Development --</p> <p>Through permit conditions, most direct construction-related impacts are avoided by requiring that non-emergency activities be performed outside of the nesting and hatching season. However, indirect effects also result from the post-construction presence of structures on the beach, and these impacts can only be minimized to the maximum extent practicable. Light management plans have been successfully developed and implemented in most developed coastal counties and communities in Florida to minimize these impacts. Light management plans have also been developed at coastal military installations in Florida. Light pollution issues adjacent to the leatherback nesting beach at Sandy Point, USVI, are still problematic but some efforts have been undertaken to resolve them.</p> <p>Nest protection programs vary but include 100% nest screening at Canaveral National Seashore; raccoon trapping and removal at Merritt Island NWR, Hobe Sound National NWR, and Archie Carr NWR; feral hog control at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station; coyote control in the Florida Panhandle; and mongoose trapping at Sandy Point NWR.</p> <p>Through the Endangered Species Act regulations and</p>



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			Section 7 process, the United States works to mitigate the impact of fisheries on sea turtles.
Ei	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	<p>A fence has been constructed as a barrier to hogs at hawksbill nesting beaches on Mona Island, Puerto Rico. Rat control activities have been undertaken on Buck Island Reef National Monument in the USVI. Through the Endangered Species Act regulations and Section 7 process, the United States works to mitigate the impact of fisheries on sea turtles.</p>
Cm	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	<p>Through permit conditions, most direct construction-related impacts are avoided by requiring that non-emergency activities be performed outside of the nesting and hatching season. However, indirect effects also result from the post-construction presence of structures on the beach, and these impacts can only be minimized to the maximum extent practicable. Light management plans have been successfully developed and implemented in most developed coastal counties and communities in Florida to minimize these impacts. Light management plans have also been developed at coastal military installations in Florida.</p> <p>Nest protection programs vary but include 100% nest screening at Canaveral National Seashore; raccoon trapping and removal at Merritt Island NWR, Hobe Sound National NWR, and Archie Carr NWR; and feral hog control at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.</p> <p>Through the Endangered Species Act regulations and Section 7 process, the United States works to mitigate the impact of fisheries on sea turtles</p>
Cc	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coastal development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Incidental capture <input type="checkbox"/> Direct use	<input type="checkbox"/> Contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Pathogens <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change	<p>Through permit conditions, most direct construction-related impacts are avoided by requiring that non-emergency activities be performed outside of the nesting and hatching season. However, indirect effects also result from the post-construction presence of structures on the beach, and these impacts can only be minimized to the maximum extent practicable. Light management plans have been successfully developed and implemented in most developed coastal counties and communities in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina to minimize these impacts. Light management plans have also been developed at coastal military installations in Florida. The major nesting beach in South Carolina, Cape Romain NWR, is a barrier island without major light pollution issues. North Carolina has extensive areas of National Seashores that are protected from development.</p>



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			<p>Nest protection programs vary but include 100% nest screening at Canaveral National Seashore; raccoon trapping and removal at Merritt Island NWR, Hobe Sound National NWR, and Archie Carr NWR; feral hog control at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station and at problem areas in Georgia; and coyote control in the Florida Panhandle.</p> <p>Through the Endangered Species Act regulations and Section 7 process, the United States works to mitigate the impact of fisheries on sea turtles.</p>
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b. Research

Describe scientific research that is being carried out in the country relating to sea turtle population assessments including tagging, migration, and genetic studies, as well as those relating to conservation issues including habitat monitoring, fisheries interactions, disease, etc. Provide a list of references for the information used in this report and note how to obtain them when needed.

In addition to the above, please fill out the following table on the types of research being carried out in the country and with what specie(s).

Research	Species (Lo, Lk, Cm, Ei, Cc, Dc)
<i>Genetics</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Tagging</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Migration</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Habitat monitoring</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Fisheries interactions</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Disease</i>	<i>All</i>

c. Other activities

Include information on: environmental education activities, programs to establish and manage protected areas, and cooperative activities with other Party countries.

From April 30, 2015- April 30, 2016, the United States government engaged in the following cooperative projects with other Party countries –

- **CHILE**

Pacifico Laud working with local fishers in central and northern Chile, the contractor shall continue work initiated in 2013, working with NMFS, to design/refine experiments that will test mid-frequency (10 kHz) pingers in the large mesh gillnet fishery targeting swordfish (experimental nets) and compare these with



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traditional nets (control nets). Using a paired testing methodology, the contractor will test whether the experimental nets reduce marine mammal catch rates. Similarly, the contractor will test use of LEDs in the fishery to determine whether the experimental nets reduce leatherback (and other sea turtle) catch rates. NMFS: \$43, 250

- **COSTA RICA**

Conservation and research project of leatherback sea turtle nesting at the North Pacific of Costa Rica: Langosta, Nombre de Jesus, Zapotilla, Onda and Real Beaches. In partnership with FUNDECODES, the purpose of this project is to continue to implement a long-term research and conservation project for the leatherback sea turtle at Playa Langosta, Las Baulas National Park, and extend nesting surveys and nest protection activities for leatherbacks to the secondary nesting sites of Playa Nombre de Jesus, Zapotilla, Onda, and Real. The project aims to reduce threats to turtles and nests from poaching. Specific project activities include 1) training of local and international research assistants and volunteers to help conduct nesting surveys and nest protection activities, 2) improving camp infrastructure, 3) hatchery construction and operation, 4) data collection and analysis, and 5) environmental education and outreach, including local school field trips and a turtle festival. USFWS: \$27,615 Leveraged Funds: \$2,734

- **ECUADOR**

Conserving East Pacific green turtles nesting in the Galapagos Archipelago. In partnership with the Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands, the purpose of this project is to conduct standardized nesting surveys and threats assessments at Quinta Playa and Las Bachas, as well as conduct a community outreach program and field education programs with local school children. The project aims to assess potential threats to green sea turtles. Specific activities will include the Darwin Foundation working closely with Galapagos National Park to develop the capacity of the Park to assume greater responsibility for the expansion of the sea turtle conservation program at the Park. USFWS: \$26,180 Leveraged Funds: \$63,356

- **GUATEMALA**

Strengthening sea turtle conservation, adapting to climate change, and assisting CONAP in meeting its IAC commitments in Guatemala. In partnership with Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Association (ARCAS), the purpose of this project is to conduct nest monitoring surveys at eight beaches in Guatemala as well as enhance a variety of sea turtle conservation efforts. The project aims to reduce threats to turtles and their nests from poaching. Specific activities will include strengthening hatchery management through capacity building workshops and work with the National Commission on Natural Protected Areas and the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) to develop a sustainable management plan for olive



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ridley egg harvest to meet IAC exceptions requirements. USFWS: \$25,000 Leveraged Funds: \$25,725

• MEXICO

- Mexico/U.S. population restoration project for Kemp's ridley sea turtle on the coast of Tamaulipas, Mexico. In partnership with the Gladys Porter Zoo, the purpose of this project is to assist with the Mexico-US Binational Kemp's Ridley project. The project aims to reduce poaching and predation on sea turtles and their nests. Specific activities include providing ATVs, field personnel, camp coordinators, fuel, and supplies to assist the Mexico field team with patrolling of Kemp's ridley main nesting beaches in the State of Tamaulipas, Mexico. USFWS: \$100,000 Leveraged Funds: \$100,000
- Transition from egg corals back to the nesting beach: evaluation of sex ratios, survival, and predation of hatchling Kemp's ridley sea turtles from arribadas at Rancho Nuevo, Mexico. In partnership with the University of Alabama, this project will answer a variety of research questions at Rancho Nuevo nesting beach. The project will assess predation and best management practices for Kemp's ridley sea turtles. As part of the research, beach and nest temperatures in hatcheries and in situ will be monitored, compared, and evaluated, as well hatchling sex ratios, predation from nests, the type and abundance of predators, emergence rates and survival rates to sea, and hatchling emergence times. USFWS: \$19,996 Leveraged Funds: \$21,394 Research
- Long-term sea turtle conservation: A key tool for adaptive management and decision making. In partnership with Pronatura Peninsula de Yucatan, A.C., the purpose of this project is to support a variety of sea turtle conservation initiatives along 81 km of nesting beaches at Celestun, El Cuyo, and Holbox. The project aims to reduce poaching and predation of sea turtles and their nests. Specific activities include conducting night patrols to survey and protect nesting sea turtles as well as outreach and education activities with local communities. USFWS: \$22,000 Leveraged Funds: \$22,745
- Conservation of the leatherback turtle in the Mexican Pacific 2015-2016. In partnership with Kutzari Asociación Para El Estudio y Conservación De Las Tortugas Marinas, the purpose of this project is to maintain and operate four turtle camps on four primary leatherback nesting beaches. The project aims to reduce poaching of sea turtles and their nests. Specific activities include nightly patrolling and protection of nesting females and nests, working with local communities to develop support for sea turtle conservation programs, and providing technical and logistical support for secondary leatherback nesting beaches. USFWS: \$64,791 Leveraged Funds: \$265,128 MT1567



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- Conservation of Japanese nesting loggerhead turtle: Mortality assessment and conservation outreach at the BCS Mexico juvenile foraging area. In partnership with The Ocean Foundation, the purpose of this project is to conduct stranding surveys along the 45 km Playa San Lazaro. The project aims to assess bycatch mortality from near-shore fisheries. Specific activities include conducting daily surveys from May to September and twice weekly from October through April. USFWS: \$25,000 Leveraged Funds: \$27,600

- **PANAMA**
Hawksbill and leatherback turtle research and population recovery in Panama. In partnership with Sea Turtle Conservancy, the purpose of this project is to conduct intensive monitoring and protection of hawksbill and leatherback nesting beaches at six sites in the Bocas del Toro Province using standardized protocols and local community monitors. The project will address threats from poaching, development, and nest depredation by dogs. Specific activities will include six community environmental outreach activities and the development of two informational signs about dog nest depredation. USFWS: \$52,000 Leveraged Funds: \$220,975

- **MULTIPLE COUNTRIES – EL SALVADOR, ECUADOR, AND NICARAGUA** support for hawksbills in the eastern Pacific Ocean; Year II of conservation at four toptier nesting beaches. In partnership with The Ocean Foundation, the purpose of this project is to implement community-based nesting beach conservation projects at hawksbill nesting beaches in Los Cobanos and El Maculis, El Salvador, Machalilla, Ecuador, and Aserradores, Nicaragua. The project aims to reduce poaching of sea turtles and their nests. Specific activities include working in close partnership with local staff to implement nest monitoring, hatchery construction, nest incubation, tagging of female turtles, and data collection. USFWS: \$47,930 Leveraged Funds: \$146,019

- **MULTIPLE COUNTRIES – MEXICO AND PERU – Gillnet Fishery Bycatch Mitigation**
Coastal gillnet fisheries are one of the most common forms of fishing throughout the world and have high rates of bycatch of multiple species including sea turtles and non-target finfish (Peckham et al., 2007; Alfaro-Shigueto et al., 2011; Shester and Micheli, 2011). Despite the ubiquitous nature of gillnets and their associated levels of bycatch, there are few bycatch reduction technologies (BRTs) available. In 2011, NOAA Pacific Islands Region and Fisheries Science Center joined ongoing efforts of gear technology experts to support research to examine visual-based strategies to reduce sea turtle interactions with gillnet fisheries. To date, experimental trails have been



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promising with illuminated gillnets (via colored lightsticks) resulting in significant reduction of sea turtle captures between 40-60%, with no significant difference in mean CPUE of target catch or market value, including corresponding reduction in some elasmobranch species. Future plans include continuing experimental trials (e.g., acoustic deterrents) at two sites in Baja California, Mexico that have become valuable research platforms working collaboratively with fishermen, and working to transfer bycatch reduction technology to other relevant internationally-based gillnet fisheries. This collaborative work has resulted in numerous peer reviewed scientific publications and bycatch reduction technologies are now being exported and trialed in operating commercial fisheries in Chile, Peru and Indonesia – fisheries of which are reporting significant reductions in bycatch in gillnet gear trials. *Grants (FY12-16) awarded to Ocean Discovery Institute; Grants (FY13-16) awarded to ProDelphinus in Peru.*

Part IV: Annexes

Table 1: Species Present

*Place an X in the box when the species listed is present in the oceanographic basins of your country as established in Article III of the text of the Convention. Lo = *Lepidochelys olivacea*; Lk = *Lepidochelys kempii*; Dc = *Dermochelys coriacea*; Ei = *Eretmochelys imbricata*; Cm = *Chelonia mydas*; Cc = *Caretta caretta*.*

Species	Pacific Ocean	Atlantic Ocean	Caribbean Sea
Lo	X	X	
Lk		X	
Dc	X	X	X
Ei	X	X	X
Cm	X	X	X
Cc	X	X	X

Table 2: Index nesting sites or beaches for sea turtle conservation

- a. *This table is intended to report information on index nesting sites or beaches for each species. For beaches that have multiple species nesting, enter that beach under the list for the primary nesting species. When entering information on nesting site or beaches, information is to be entered for each species independently. Indicate the names of index nesting sites. On a separate sheet of paper, indicate the selection criteria used for identifying the index beach, for example, because it hosts a*



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- significant proportion of the overall nesting population within a region or other defined unit or genetic importance.*
- b. Nesting season: Indicate the starting and finishing date of the nesting season.*
 - c. Monitoring period: Indicate the starting and finishing date of monitoring efforts.*
 - d. Survey frequency: Indicate the frequency with which the surveys are done (daily, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, among others).*
 - e. Geographic location: Specify latitude and longitude in decimal degrees.*
 - f. Extension of beach monitored: Provide the total length (in Kilometers) of the nesting beach.*
 - g. Declared protection area: Indicate (yes or no) if the area is declared as some type of protected area.*
 - h. Annual nesting abundance: Provide information on the total number of females and/or clutches or nests deposited at the nesting site or beach in real numbers. Provide the exact count of females based on tagged or uniquely identified individuals. If the exact number of clutches is unknown provide total number of nests.*
 - i. Information from tagging program: Indicate if there have been any tagging activities at the nesting beach by using the letters of the type of tagging being done: flipper tagging (FT), passive integrated transponder (PIT) tagging, and satellite telemetry (ST) programs. If possible, on a separate sheet or as attached reference provide greater detail about the type of tagging efforts conducted. Also provide satellite telemetry maps or flipper tag recovery information if available.*
 - j. Tissue sampling: Indicate if there has been tissue sampling conducted at this site. This includes skin, blood, and other body tissues. On a separate sheet, or as attached references, describe these tissue sampling programs in greater detail. For example, were samples collected for genetic, contaminant, and/or stable isotope studies?*
 - k. Indicate what organization or entity is providing the data.*
 - l. When inserting new rows, please copy and paste the drop down menus when applicable.*



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Spp	Name of Index Nesting Site or Beach	Nesting season		Monitoring period		Survey Frequency	Geographic Location (Lat/Long) in Decimal Degrees				Extension of beach monitored (km)	Declared Protected Area (Yes/No)	Annual Nesting Abundance			Tagging Program (FT, ST, PIT)	Tissue Sampling (Yes/No)	Organization or entity providing data
		Start	Finish	Start	Finish		Latitude	Longitude	Female's Exact Count	Clutches Exact Count			Number of Nests					
Lo								°		°		Choose an item.				Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
								°		°		Choose an item.				Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Lk	Texas* (North Padre Island and South Padre Island)	April 1	October 31	April 1	October 31	Daily		°		°	112.6	No			103	All of Above	Yes	NPS
								°		°		Choose an item.				Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Dc	Culebra Island, Puerto Rico	April 1	July 31	April 1	July 31	Daily		°		°	2.25	Yes			112	FT	No	PR DRNA
	Vieques Island, Puerto Rico	April 1	July 31	April 1	July 31	Daily		°		°	29.11	Yes			73	None	No	PR DRNA
Dc	Mainland Puerto Rico (Dorado,	April 1	July 31	April 1	July 31	Daily					28.26	No			1,225	None	No	PR DRNA



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	Luquillo-Fajardo & Maunabo beaches)																
Dc	Buck Island Reef National Monument, U.S. Virgin Islands Rico	July 1	October 31	July 1	October 31	Daily				1.5	Yes			3	FT and PIT	Yes	NPS
Dc	Sandy Point NWR, U.S. Virgin Islands	February 1	July 31	February 1	July 31	Daily				3	Yes			356	FT and PIT	Yes	NWR
Dc	Florida Index Beaches	March 1	July 31	March 1	July 31	Daily				1327	No			1,604	FT and PIT (in some areas)	Yes (2 beaches)	FWRI
Ei	Vieques Island, Puerto Rico	April 1	July 31	April 1	July 31	Daily		o		29.11	Yes			148	None	No	PR DRNA
	Mona Island, Puerto Rico	August 1	December 1	August 1	December 31	Daily		o		7	Yes			1,626	None	No	PR DRNA
Ei	Sandy Point NWR, U.S. Virgin	February 1	July 31	February 1	July 31	Daily				3	Yes			87	FT and PIT	Yes	NWR



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	Islands																
Ei	Hawaii (MHI)	May 1	October 31	May 1	October 31	Daily				14.4	No			57	None	No	FWS-PIFO
Cm	Vieques Island, Puerto Rico	April 1	July 31	April 1	July 31	Daily	°	°		29.11	Yes			275	None	No	PR-DRNA
	Buck Island Reef National Monument, U.S. Virgin Islands	July 1	October 31	July 1	October 31	Daily	°	°		1.5	Yes			49	FT & PIT	Yes	National Park
Cm	Sandy Point NWR, U.S. Virgin Islands	June 1	October 31	June 1	October 31	Daily				3	Yes			577	FT and PIT	No	NWR
Cm	Florida Index Beaches	June 1	September 30	June 1	September 30	Daily				1318	No			5,895	All of above	No	FWRI
Cm	French Frigate Shoals (HI)	May 1	October 31	May 1	October 31	Survey of East Island				29	Yes			1,778	None	No	NMFS PIFSC
Cc	Florida Index	May 1	August 31	May 1	August 31	Daily	°	°		1318	No			86,870	All of Above	No	FWRI



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Cc	Beaches																
	Georgia Index Beaches	May 1	August 31	May 1	August 31	Daily	o	o	164	No			1,201	FT	Yes	GA DNR	
	South Carolina Index Beaches	May 1	August 31	May 1	August 31	Daily			303	No			2,086	None	No	SC DNR	
	North Carolina Index Beaches	May 1	August 31	May 1	August 31	Daily			531	No			546	None	No	NC WC	

*Total number of nests in all Texas = 119



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Table 3: Important foraging sites for sea turtle conservation

- a. *This table is intended to contain information for foraging sites being studied for each species. For marine habitats that have multiple species present, enter the specific site under the heading for the priority species at that site.*
- b. *Name and geographic location: Provide the name of the site and geographic location in decimal degrees in Lat/Long (one reference point).*
- c. *Area: Indicate the size of the study site (en Kilometers²).*
- d. *Declared protection area: Indicate if the area is declared as some type of protected area.*
- e. *Life stage: Indicate the life stage or stages found in the study area (juvenile, subadult or adult).*
- f. *Information from tagging program: Indicate if there have been any tagging activities at the in-water site by using the letters of the type of tagging being done: flipper tagging (FT), passive integrated transponder (PIT) tagging, and satellite telemetry (ST) programs. If possible, on a separate sheet, or as attached reference provide greater detail about the type of tagging efforts conducted. Also provide satellite telemetry maps or flipper tag recovery information if available.*
- g. *Tissue sampling: Indicate if there has been tissue sampling conducted at this site. This includes skin, blood, and other body tissues. On a separate sheet, or as attached references describe these tissue sampling programs in greater detail. For example, were samples collected for genetic, contaminant, and/or stable isotope studies?*
- h. *Indicate the organization or entity providing the data.*
- i. *When adding new rows, please copy and paste the drop down menus when applicable.*



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Species	Name of the Study Site	Geographic Location (Lat/Long) in Decimal Degrees			Area (Km ²)	Declared Protection Area (Yes/No)	Life Stages (Juvenile, Sub-adult, Adult)	Tagging Program (FT, ST, PIT)	Tissue Sampling (Yes/No)	Organization or entity providing data
		Latitude	Longitude							
Lo			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Lk			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Dc			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Ei			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Cm			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Cc			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
			°	°		Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	