



Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles United States Annual Report 2017

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 30th of 2017**.

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	25 April 2017

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
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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
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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 A plan for North Pacific loggerhead sea turtles is under-development.
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	



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***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.

April 21, 2015 – Final Rule – Alignment of Atlantic Sea Scallop Turtle Deflector Dredge

This action adjusts management for the Atlantic scallop fishery, including adjusting the season regulations for the sea turtle deflector dredge (TDD) and area regulations for the sea turtle chain mat to make them consistent by moving the chain mat requirement line to 71° W. longitude and changing the end of the TDD season from October to November. By making the area and season for these two gear modifications consistent, west of 71° W. longitude from May through November, the conservation benefit of the current chain mat and TDD requirements is maintained, while reducing the regulatory complexity of differing seasons and areas. Any reduction in the size of the area in which chain mats would be required is balanced by an extension of the season that TDDs would be required.

December 16, 2016 – Proposed Rule to Implement Turtle Exclude Devices in Non-Otter Trawl Shrimp Vessels

NOAA Fisheries proposed to withdraw the alternative tow time restriction and require all skimmer trawls, pusher-head trawls, and wing nets (butterfly trawls) rigged for fishing—with the exception of vessels participating in the Biscayne Bay wing net fishery prosecuted in Miami-Dade County, Florida—to use turtle excluder devices (TEDs) designed to exclude small turtles in their nets. The intent of this proposed rule is to reduce incidental bycatch and mortality of sea turtles in the southeastern U.S. shrimp fisheries, and to aid in the protection and recovery of listed sea turtle populations. We also are proposing to amend the definition of tow times to better clarify the intent and purpose of tow times to reduce sea turtle mortality, and to refine additional portions of the TED requirements to avoid potential confusion.



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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

***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.*



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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?	Y		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?	Y		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 <u>trialing illuminated gillnets in coastal fisheries (e.g., Peru and Chile).</u>	
2. Have you taken conservation measures to eliminate poaching of leatherback turtles?	Y		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 through the creation of a cross-agency task force to look at wildlife trafficking. Recently, this task force was authorized through the END Wildlife Trafficking Act.	
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			
4. Has your country adopted fishing techniques that reduce incidental capture and mortality of this species?			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.



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

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

RESOLUTION DOES NOT APPLY				
IS COMPLYING WITH THE FOLLOWING:	YES	NO	DESCRIBE ACTION (*)	DOES NOT APPLY
1. Are you strengthening monitoring of the illegal use and trade of hawksbill turtles and their products?	Y		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 through the creation of a cross-agency task force to look at wildlife trafficking. Recently, this task force was authorized through the END Wildlife Trafficking Act.	
2. Are you enforcing pertinent hawksbill legislation?	Y		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?	Y		U.S. enforcement officers work to stop illegal trade of hawksbill products.	
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.	Y		<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>	
			<p>Critical habitat has been designated for Caribbean hawksbill around Mona Island (Puerto Rico) since 1998.</p> <p>http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/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.



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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	Y			
Observer programs	Y		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	Y		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 .	
Information on non-Party vessels	Y		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.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/slider_stories/2017/01/2017biennialreport.pdf	
Cooperation with non-Party states to obtain information	Y		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/slider_stories/2017/01/2017biennialreport.pdf	
B. Mitigation measures for the following fisheries:				
Long-line	Y		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 .	
Gillnets	Y		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	
Trawling (e.g., 1. TEDs: specify legally approved TEDs, their	Y		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	



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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)			See reference above to proposed rule-making to expand the use to Turtle Excluder Device (TED) in non-otter trawl shrimp vessels.	
Other fishing gear (indicate which one(s))	Y		Poundnets and some dredges are also regulated to reduce sea turtle interactions. Please see http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/regulations.htm .	
Training programs for fisherman about best practices for safe handling and release of sea turtles incidentally caught	Y		Fishermen operating in the pelagic longline fisheries in the Atlantic or the Pacific must take captains training on safe-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				
Support socio-economic activities that help mitigate adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles		N		

(*) 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



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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 Sec 7 process, the United States works to mitigate the impact 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 Sec 7 process, the United States works to mitigate the impact 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</p>



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			<p>Point NWR.</p> <p>Through the Endangered Species Act regulations and the Section 7 process, the United States works to mitigate the impact of fisheries on sea turtles.</p>
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.</p> <p>Through the Endangered Species Act regulations and the 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 the 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</p>



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			<p>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> <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 the 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	Specie(s)(Lo, Lk, Cm, Ei, Cc, Dc)
<i>Tagging</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Migration</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Genetics</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.

FY 2016 U.S. Capacity Building Funding in the IAC Region



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BARBADOS MT1615 Grant # F16AP00173 Monitoring hawksbill nesting and nesting beaches in a changing climate. In partnership with the University of the West Indies. The purpose of this project is to continue the successful longterm conservation programs at key hawksbill nesting beaches in Barbados, which is home to one of the three largest hawksbill nesting populations in the Caribbean. This project is intended to detect nesting population trends on a key hawksbill index beach for the Caribbean and protect hawksbill nests and nesting females from poaching incidents, and hatchlings from mortality due to light disorientation from coastal development. Specific activities include: (1) daily patrols and nest surveys on key hawksbill nesting beaches; (2) maintaining a 24-hour response call-in line to report and get assistance for disoriented hatchlings and other emergencies related to sea turtles; and (3) conducting outreach and education regarding sea turtle conservation issues with coastal property owners, developers, and managers. USFWS: \$31,000 Leveraged Funds: \$94,500

COSTA RICA MT1653 Grant # F16AP00623 Conservation and monitoring program of leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) sea turtle nesting in the North Pacific of Costa Rica. In partnership with FUNDECODES. The purpose of this project is to conduct surveys and nest protection in Las Baulas National Park and on adjacent beaches which host the most important East Pacific leatherback nesting population in Costa Rica. The main threats are poaching of nests. Activities include nighttime patrols throughout the nesting season and relocation of nests to hatcheries. The East Pacific leatherback is the most endangered leatherback population in the world. USFWS: \$29,498 Leveraged Funds: \$2,315

EL SALVADOR MT1632 Grant # F16AP00179 Advancing a multifaceted approach to recover hawksbills in the Eastern Pacific: Protecting major nesting beaches and reducing extensive bycatch at critical foraging grounds. In partnership with The Ocean Foundation. The purpose of this project is to conduct hawksbill conservation programs at Bahia de Jiquilisco Biosphere Reserve (Bahia), El Salvador. The project is intended to protect nests and nesting females from poaching, to reduce bycatch from lobster fisheries, and to reduce mortality of adult and juvenile hawksbills from illegal blast fishing. The Eastern Pacific hawksbill nesting population was until 2008 thought to have been extirpated and Bahia accounts for about 45 percent of all hawksbill nesting in the East Pacific. Specific activities include: (1) community-based patrols and relocation of nests to hatcheries; (2) outreach activities such as a Hawksbill Festival, Hawksbill Cup competition and “Day of the Hawksbill” events in schools to raise awareness about threats to hawksbills; (3) year-round fisheries bycatch monitoring with employed on-board observers; (4) Light emitting diodes (LED) light trials on lobster nets to determine deterrence effectiveness; and (5) engagement of local fishermen and local and national authorities in the creation of a Marine Protected Area. USFWS: \$99,200 Leveraged Funds: \$113,38



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GUATEMALA MT1654 Grant # F16AP00624 Strengthening sea turtle conservation, adapting to climate change, and assisting CONAP in meeting Guatemala's IAC Commitments. In partnership with Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Association (Asociación Rescate y Conservación de Vida Silvestre, or ARCAS). The purpose of this project is to continue a marine turtle conservation program along the Pacific coast of Guatemala including establishing six index beaches to monitor long-term nesting trends of olive ridleys, assist communities and private institutions to implement best management practices for hatcheries, and conduct education and outreach activities with local communities. The grantee will work closely with the Secretariat of the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention (IAC) and with government institutions to help Guatemala ensure its olive ridley egg harvest meets the criteria under the IAC exceptions clause. The grantee will also organize workshops to strengthen capacity and train community and government participants in survey methodologies, best practices for hatchery management, and climate change strategies on nesting beaches. USFWS: \$25,000 Leveraged Funds: \$10,000

MEXICO MT1607

Grant # F16AP00187 Recovery of black sea turtle population in Michoacan, Mexico. In partnership with Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolas de Hidalgo. The purpose of this project is to implement nesting beach conservation programs on the two most important black turtle nesting beaches in Mexico, which host about 80 percent of the black sea turtle (also known as the East Pacific green turtle) nesting in Mexico. The intention of the project is to address the threat of poaching to nesting females and nests and nest depredation by village dogs and pigs. Activities include: (1) community-based night patrols and relocation of nests vulnerable to poaching, tidal inundation, or dog depredation (about 10 percent of nests) to a hatchery on Colola and Maruata beaches; and (3) dog control measures in coordination with local communities. USFWS: \$11,000 Leveraged Funds: \$29,000

MT1613 Grant # F16AP00191 Continuation of a successful long-term sea turtle conservation program in the Yucatan Peninsula and its influence on adaptive management and decision-making in the region. In partnership with Pronatura Peninsula de Yucatan, A.C. The purpose of this project is to conduct nesting beach conservation programs for three key hawksbill nesting sites, which account for 40 9 percent of hawksbill nesting in the Yucatan Peninsula. The Yucatan Peninsula accounts for about 25 percent of all Caribbean nesting and provides critical hawksbill foraging grounds. The intention of this project is to protect nests and nesting hawksbills from poaching. Activities include: (1) daily patrols along 80 km of nesting beaches at three locations to deter poachers and protect nests from predation; and (2) outreach and education



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programs with local communities and schools. USFWS: \$22,000 Leveraged Funds: \$24,282

MT1622 Grant # F16AP00101 Evaluation of the reproductive biology of the Kemp's ridley sea turtle at Rancho Nuevo, Mexico: Implications for conservation and ecology. In partnership with the University of Alabama, and in collaboration with CONANP, SEDUMA, CDEN, the Gladys Porter Zoo, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The purpose of this project is to continue and expand a long-term collaborative project on the Kemp's ridley sea turtle with an emphasis on evaluating the reproductive output of nesting females at Rancho Nuevo as a method of determining factors affecting the recent decline in this population, and the long-term impact of global climate change on sex ratios and nesting phenology at Rando Nuevo. The research conducted for this project will include: (1) ultrasound and hormone analyses of nesting females in order to evaluate potential changes in clutch frequency and fecundity associated with environmental or demographic factors, such as the Deepwater Horizon oil spill; (2) an evaluation of fundamental changes in nesting phenology and hatchling sex ratios associated with global climate change over more than three decades; and (3) studies to address the ecology of the Kemp's ridley, including abundance and habitat use of turtles in near-shore waters using unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technology throughout the nesting season, and the timing of emergence in both corral and in situ nests. USFWS: \$20,2282 Leveraged Funds: \$27,742

MT1634 Grant # F16AP00286 Conservation of the Japanese-nesting loggerhead turtle: Mortality assessment and conservation outreach at the Baja California Sur (BCS) México juvenile foraging area. In partnership with The Ocean Foundation. The purpose of this project is to support conservation programs for the loggerhead foraging population in Baja California Sur, Mexico. The project is intended to collect stranding data to support bycatch reduction from gill net fisheries on this key foraging ground. Specific activities include: (1) assessment of loggerhead bycatch mortality through continued daily shoreline surveys along 34 km of Playa San Lazaro; (2) educational enrichment and outreach programs for students in elementary schools in the Bahía Magdalena region for more than 200 students and 15 teachers. USFWS: \$28,850 Leveraged Funds: \$32,400

MT1636 Grant # F16AP00245 Mexico / United States of America population restoration project for the Kemp's ridley sea turtle, *Lepidochelys kempii*, on the coasts of Tamaulipas, Mexico (the Kemp's ridley binational project). In partnership with the Gladys Porter Zoo. The purpose of this project is to support the Mexico-US Binational Kemp's ridley conservation project in Mexico. The intent of the project is to address the threats to nests from poaching, nest depredation, and tidal inundation on the six main nesting beaches in the State of Tamaulipas. Activities include: (1) daily patrols and nest



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relocation to hatcheries; and (2) assisting the Mexico Commission of Protected Areas with outreach and education activities with local communities. USFWS: \$40,000
Leveraged Funds: \$517,000

MT1646 Grant # F16AP00614 Population recovery of the black turtle of Michoacan, Mexico. In partnership with Universidad Michoacan. The purpose of this project is to conduct community-based nesting beach conservation programs on the two most important black turtle nesting beaches in Mexico, which host 70 percent of black turtle nesting in Mexico and two important East Pacific leatherback nesting beaches in the State of Michoacan. Nests and nesting females are threatened by poaching. Activities include nighttime patrols throughout the nesting season and relocation of nests to beach hatcheries. USFWS: \$32,000 Leveraged Funds: \$30,000
MT1647 Grant # F16AP00620 Conservation of the leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) in the Mexican Pacific – 2016- 2017. In partnership with Kutzari. The purpose of this project is to conduct nesting beach conservation including preventing threats from poaching of nesting females and nests, at the four primary leatherback nesting beaches in Mexico, which account for over 40 percent of leatherback nesting in Pacific Mexico.. The grantee will operate turtle camps at the four main nesting beaches of Cahuitan, Tierra Colorada, Mexiquillo, and Barra de la Cruz, conduct daily and nightly patrols, and relocate nests to hatcheries along these beaches to protect nests from poaching, depredation, and tidal inundation. USFWS: \$76,716 Leveraged Funds: \$246,002

NICARAGUA

MT1620 Grant # F16AP00175 Strengthening conservation of critically endangered leatherback and hawksbill marine turtles on Nicaragua's Pacific Coast. In partnership with Fauna and Flora International. The purpose of this project is to conduct nesting beach conservation programs for one of the three most important East Pacific leatherback nesting populations in the East Pacific, and to support an Eastern Pacific hawksbill conservation program at two recently discovered nesting sites at Estero Padre Ramos and Aserradores. The East Pacific leatherback population is less than one percent of its historical levels and the most endangered leatherback population in the world, and these hawksbill nesting sites account for 40-50 percent of all known East Pacific hawksbill nesting. This project is intended to protect leatherback and hawksbill nests and nesting females from poaching. Activities include: (1) conducting daily community-based patrols to count and protect nests and nesting females and to relocate eggs from nests to hatcheries; (2) providing training workshops for the survey teams; and (3) conducting environmental education and outreach activities with local communities including a "Day of the Turtle" event in schools and the annual Hawksbill Cup competition with the hawksbill project in El Salvador.



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MT1669 Grant # F16AP00630 Vital support for hawksbills in the Eastern Pacific Ocean: Year III of conservation at five toptier nesting beaches. In partnership with The Ocean Foundation. The purpose of this project is to conduct nesting beach conservation projects for Eastern Pacific hawksbills at five secondary nesting beaches in Los Cobanos and Punta Amapala, El Salvador; Machalilla and El Pelado, Ecuador; and Aserradores, Nicaragua . These beaches account for 32 percent of all known nesting of the Eastern Pacific hawksbill, which is one of the most endangered hawksbill populations globally with fewer than 500 nests per year. Nests are threatened by poaching and project activities include night patrols throughout the nesting season and relocation of nests to safe in situ sites or hatcheries, as well as community outreach and education activities. USFWS: \$45,000 Leveraged Funds: \$121,785

PANAMA MT1621 Grant # F16AP00176 Leatherback and hawksbill turtle research and population recovery in Panama. In partnership with the Sea Turtle Conservancy. The purpose of this project is to restore the Chiriqui Beach, Panama nesting population of hawksbill turtles, once the largest in the Caribbean, in partnership with the local Nogbe Indian communities. The project also supports monitoring and protection of the largest leatherback nesting population in the Western Caribbean. The project is intended to protect nests and nesting female hawksbills from poaching and dog depredation. Specific activities include: (1) community-based patrols and development of a nest protection methodology to prevent dog depredation of nests; (2) extensive outreach and education activities with local communities and schools; and (3) work with stakeholder groups to develop sea turtle ecotourism opportunities for local community residents. USFWS: \$52,000 Leveraged Funds: \$210,975

PERU NOAA FISHERIES PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL OFFICE GRANT -- \$55,000 to Pro-Delphinus to: (1) raise awareness and promote action among gillnet fishermen, local and regional government officials, and Ecuador and Chile partners regarding the conservation of leatherback turtles and mitigation options, (2) to conduct sea turtle bycatch mitigation trials (net illumination, net patrolling, net bycatch alert) with small-scale gillnet fisheries, and (3) to expand our understanding of bycatch using vessel monitoring systems and the barriers to mitigation through socio-economic studies and at-sea testing.

PERU NOAA FISHERIES WEST COAST REGION

Support to Acorema for outreach/education in Peru on identifying sources of Dc bycatch and educating fishermen on safe handling/release of Dc and other sea turtles.

MT1671 Grant # F16AP00631 Capacity building for fishermen to create awareness and promote conservation of East Pacific leatherback turtles. In partnership with National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. The purpose of this project is to raise awareness and support of governments and fishermen from South American Pacific coast countries to



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address leatherback fisheries bycatch mortality where threats to East Pacific leatherbacks are greatest on foraging grounds and migration routes. Activities include bringing key government officials from fisheries agencies and key fisherman leaders to the East Pacific nesting beaches in Mexico or Costa Rica to learn about the nesting beach conservation programs and to experience leatherback nesting. A workshop on safe handling and release techniques will also be conducted. USFWS: \$16,81811 Leveraged Funds: \$5,640

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 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.



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- 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	Females 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	Padre Island National Seashore, Texas	April 1	October 31	April 1	October 31	Daily		°		°	112.6	No			101	All of Above	Yes	NPS
								°		°		Choose an item.				Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Dc	Culebra Island, Puerto Rico	April 1	July 31	April	July 31	Daily		°		°	2.25	Yes			43	FT	No	PR DRNA
	Vieques Island, Puerto Rico	April 1	July 31	April 1	July 31	Daily		°		°	29.11	Yes			70	None	No	PR DRNA
Dc	Buck Island Reef National Monument	July 1	October 31	July 1	October 31	Daily					1.5	Yes			3	FT and PIT	Yes	NPS
Dc	Mainland Puerto Rico (Dorado, Luquillo-Fajardo & Maunabo)	April 1	July 31	April 1	July 31	Daily					28.26	No			1,171	None	No	PR DRNA



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Dc	Sandy Point NWR, U.S. Virgin Islands	February 1	July 31	February 1	July 31	Daily				3	Yes			383	FT and PIT	Yes	NWR
Dc	Florida Index Beaches	March 1	July 31	March 1	July 31	Daily				1327	No			1,493	FT and PIT (in some areas)	Yes (2 beaches)	FWRI
Ei	Vieques Island, Puerto Rico	April 1	July 31	April 1	July 31	Daily	°	°		29.11	Yes			101	None	No	PR DRNA
	Mona Island, Puerto Rico	August 1	December 1	August 1	December 1	Daily	°	°		7	Yes			1,328	None	No	PR DRNA
Ei	Sandy Point NWR, U.S. Virgin Islands	February 1	July 31	February 1	July 31	Daily				3	Yes			26	FT and PIT	Yes	NWR
Ei	Main Hawaiian Islands (Āpua Point, Halapē, Kamehame, Pōhue Bay, Kahakahakea, and Punalu'u)	May 1	October 31	May 1	October 31	Daily				14.4	No			67	None	No	FWS-NMFS
Cm	Vieques Island, PR	April 1	July 31	April 1	July 31	Daily	°	°		29.11	Yes			121	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			93	FT & PIT	Yes	NPS
Cm	Sandy Point NWR, U.S. Virgin Islands	June 1	October 31	June 1	October 31	Daily				3	Yes			586	FT & PIT	No	NWR



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Cm	Florida Index Beaches	May 1	October 31	May 1	October 31	Daily					1318	No			37,341	All of above	No	FWRI
Cm	French Frigate Shoals, Hawaii	May 1	October 31	May 1	October 31	Survey of East Island					29	No			~2,400	None	No	NMFS-PIFSC
Cc	Florida Index beaches	May 1	August 31	May 1	August 31	Daily		°	°		1318	No			89,295	All of Above	No	FWRI
	Georgia Index Beaches	May 1	August 31	May 1	August 31	Daily		°	°		164	No			2,325	FT	Yes	GA DNR
Cc	South Carolina Index Beaches	May 1	August 31	May 1	August 31	Daily					303	No			5,106	None	No	SC DNR
Cc	North Carolina Index Beaches	May 1	August 31	May 1	August 31	Daily					531	No			1,255	None	No	NC WC