



Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
12th Conference of the Parties
June 30th-July 3rd, 2026-Lima, Peru

Resolution CIT-COP12-2026-R2

Terms of Reference for the IAC Subsidiary Bodies

The Convention establishes the Consultative Committee in Article VII and the Scientific Committee in Article VIII. After two decades in force, the roles of the Committees with respect to each other and to the Conference of Parties need to be clarified to ensure efficiency of operation and avoid duplication of effort. This resolution clarifies these matters and amends the selection process for the Sectorial Representatives of the Consultative Committee of Experts.

This resolution replaces in its entirety Resolution CIT-COP5-2011-R1.

The Scientific Committee is the sole subsidiary body of the Convention to provide scientific advice and the Consultative Committee of Experts guides the Conference of the Parties on implementation of the Convention. The Consultative Committee shall review the recommendations of the Scientific Committee and they shall be sent forth to the Conference of the Parties (COP) in a document that includes the comments as appropriate by the Consultative Committee.

The Consultative Committee shall prepare and /or review if appropriate, draft resolutions for the Conference of Parties to be addressed at their meetings.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS OF
THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND
CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES**

The functions of the Consultative Committee of Experts are established in Article VII (2) of the Convention.

Objective of the Consultative Committee of Experts

Advise and guide the Conference of the Parties on implementation of the Convention and the follow up and implementation of the Resolutions and other decisions adopted by the COP in order to promote the protection, conservation and recovery of sea turtle populations and of the habitats on which they depend, based on the best available scientific evidence, taking into account the environmental, socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of the Parties.

Functions of the Consultative Committee of Experts

The Consultative Committee of Experts will have, in addition to the duties established in Article VII (2) of the Convention the following functions:

1. Prepare and update the Committee's Work Plan, pursuant to the guidelines of the Convention, and resolutions of the Conferences of the Parties (COP's).
2. Present to the COP, through the Secretariat, opinions and recommendations that promote the objective of the Convention, on the following issues, inter alia:
 - a. On resolutions, amendments, creation of additional annexes and complementary protocols to the Convention;
 - b. On the actions of one or more Parties that in any way affect the objectives of the Convention;
 - c. On agenda items for the COP;
 - d. On measures to promote synergy and cooperation with international organizations, and conventions pertinent to the objectives of the Convention and;
 - e. On measures to promote mechanisms of cooperation with the private sector, scientific community, and nongovernmental organizations (NGO's).
3. Analyze the economic and social impacts of the different proposals and measures adopted to reduce incidental or directed capture and mortality of sea turtles, in order to recommend corresponding actions to the Parties.
4. Review and analyze the Annual Reports, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee, in particular for the purpose of compliance with the obligations of the Convention.
5. Support the Secretariat in creating and maintaining an up-to-date directory of scientists and/or experts in fields related to the Convention, which will be available to the Parties and for whoever else requests it.
6. Periodically evaluate, in collaboration with the Scientific Committee, the format of the Annual Report for the Parties, in accord with Annex IV of the Convention.
7. Support the Parties with specialized information relevant to the Convention.
8. Present to the Parties at the COP a report on its inter-sessional work since the last COP. This report must be approved by consensus of the Committee's members, and the Committee Chair will present it to the plenary of the COP. This report shall include the results of working groups, when applicable, as well as observations and recommendations, as appropriate, on any other measures, not specifically listed in the Convention, that the Parties deem appropriate to achieve the Convention's objective. In the event that consensus cannot be achieved, minority and majority reports should be presented to the Conference of the Parties.

In carrying out its work, the Consultative Committee of Experts will take into consideration the opinions and recommendations of the Scientific Committee, the expert groups created by the Parties pursuant to Article VII (4), and the opinions of its multi-sectorial representatives appointed pursuant to Article VII(1)(b).

Structure of the Consultative Committee of Experts

Procedure for Official Representatives

1. Pursuant to Article VII (1) (a) of the Convention, each Party may appoint one representative to the Consultative Committee, who may be accompanied at each meeting by advisors.
2. Each Party will notify the Secretariat, through diplomatic channels or via the designated focal point, the name of its official representative to the Consultative Committee. The Secretariat will circulate the list of official representatives to the Parties.
3. The term for official representatives to the Consultative Committee shall be 2 years. In the case that the official representative of a Party will not complete his or her term, the Party will immediately provide the Secretariat with the name of the new official representative who will complete the term. The Secretariat will then forward the name of the new official representative to the Parties.

Procedure for Sectorial Representatives

4. Pursuant to Article VII (1)(b) of the Convention, the Parties shall also appoint, by consensus, three (3) representatives, and (1) alternate representative, with recognized expertise in matters pertaining to this Convention, from each of the following groups: a. The scientific community b. The private sector; and, c. Non-governmental organizations, for a total of nine (9) representatives, plus three (3) alternates. The representatives of the scientific community will represent their field of expertise in their personal capacity, while the representatives of the private sector and non-governmental organizations will represent the expertise of their sector.
5. The Secretariat, in coordination with the Parties, will issue a public call for nominations at least one hundred and sixty (160) days prior to the COP to receive nominations from the Parties. The Parties will then share the public call internally with the potential candidates to the three sectors. The Parties should send their nominations to the Secretariat within forty-five (45) days of the transmittal of the public call. The nominations shall include the following information, which will be provided in the working languages of the Conference of the Parties:
 - a. The sectorial group being nominated and the justification for this choice;
 - b. The name of the candidate;
 - c. The affiliation; and,
 - d. The *Curriculum vitae*, profile or other documentation of qualifications or recognized expertise in matters pertaining to this Convention.
6. The nominations received and compiled by the Secretariat, will be transmitted in writing to the Parties in at least ninety (90) days before the Conference of the Parties at which the appointments of those nominees will be considered.
7. For the designation of the Sectorial Representatives, the Parties will take into account the importance of the Consultative Committee including experts with knowledge and experience in matters pertaining to the Convention, as well as in the geographic areas of the hemisphere where the sea turtles occur.

8. The Sectorial Representatives shall be appointed to the Consultative Committee for a period of two (2) ordinary COP, and their term will start immediately after the conclusion of the COP in which they are designated. The appointment of any Sectorial Representative may be renewed with the consensus of the Parties.

9. At the COP, IAC Parties shall indicate their selection preferences for the initial slate of Sectorial Representatives. Only IAC Parties present at the COP may participate in this process to select the Sectorial Representatives.

10. The selection of the 9 Sectorial Representatives and the 3 alternates will be as follows:

a) The procedure will be carried out by the Heads of Delegation of the Parties or their designee. The Chair of the Conference of the Parties, as well as observers and experts do not participate in the selection;

b) For the selection for the initial slate of Sectorial Representatives, IAC Parties in attendance will receive a ballot/ list with the names of all candidates put forward. The COP Chair will ask the Parties to indicate their preference using a system with points (3-1) where 3 indicates higher preference and 1 lower preference;

c) The Chair of the COP will suggest to the Parties the selection of two members present to count / tabulate the Parties' preferences indicated in the ballot. They will be selected from the Parties or observers from Governments attending the COP;

d) The Heads of Delegation or their designee will indicate their preference in the ballot for (3) three candidates from each sector chosen by marking (3-1 points) in the correspondent field. The process will be considered valid when the ballot has (3) three chosen candidates. If the ballot results in the selection of fewer than 3 candidates chosen, the ballot counters (tabulators) will indicate the inconsistency to the delegation and confirm the selection is correct in order to ensure that their indication of preference is valid;

e) The initial slate of 9 Sectorial Representatives will be selected from the three (3) candidates with the highest number of points per each sector, the fourth (4) candidate with the highest number of points per each sector will be selected as alternate;

f) Should there be a tie among any of the three seats, all three will be selected for their sector. Should there be a tie that hinders a clear selection to determine the main seats or alternates, the Chair of the COP will ask the Parties to do a new indication of preference only involving the concerned candidates in the tie;

g) Tie breaking rounds will continue until there is a final slate of (3) three Sectorial Representatives and (1) alternate selected for each sector;

h) The Heads of Delegation or their designee will approve the final slate of Sectorial Representatives by consensus in accordance with Article VII (1)(b) of the Convention.

11. The selected Sectorial Representatives will be notified by the Secretariat at the conclusion of the COP meeting.

12. If a Sectorial Representative of the Consultative Committee position becomes permanently vacant, because of failure to participate in two (2) consecutive meetings of the Committee, resignation, death or incapacity, the alternate shall fill the position for the remainder of that position's term.

Meetings of the Consultative Committee of Experts

1. The meetings of the Consultative Committee will be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Parties to the Convention, except when an additional specific rule for better operation of the Committee has been approved by the Conference of the Parties, pursuant to Rules 14.1 and 14.2.

2. The meetings of the Consultative Committee will take place preferably after the meetings of the Scientific Committee, and in accordance with Article VII (3) of the Convention, meeting at least once before each COP, taking into account funding available for this purpose in the Inter-American Convention Special Fund.

3. The Conference of the Parties may request that the Consultative Committee convene an extraordinary meeting.

4. The Consultative Committee, to perform its duties, may establish sub-committees or work groups, as appropriate.

5. In general, members of the Consultative Committee shall conduct their work between sessions through electronic communication, videoconferences, virtual fora and networks. The Secretariat shall facilitate these forms of communication, depending on the resources available for these purposes.

6. The Consultative Committee will elect, among the country representatives, the Chair and Vice-Chair at the end of its meeting, to act in that capacity for two meetings. The Chair and Vice-Chair may be re-elected. The Chair and the Vice-Chair will assume their positions immediately after being elected.

7. The functions of the Chair of the Consultative Committee are: a) To determine, upon consultation with the Secretariat, the draft provisional agenda; b) To open and adjourn each meeting; c) To preside over the meetings; d) To direct the meetings pursuant to the approved agenda; e) To guide the discussions, to submit issues for decision by the Committee and to announce any decisions; f) To yield the floor; g) To prepare a report on the implementation of the Committee work plan and present it to the Committee and the COP; h) To sign the report of each meeting prior to its distribution to the Parties and others as appropriate; i) To follow-up on the work plan adopted by the COP, in collaboration with the Secretariat; j) To carry out other functions as the Consultative Committee may assign.

8. When the Chair is temporarily unable to participate, the Vice-Chair will take on the functions of the Chair.

9. Should the Chair be unable to continue their duties, the Vice-Chair will take on the duties of the Chair until the Committee elects a new Chair.

10. The Chair of the Scientific Committee will be invited to participate in the meetings of the Consultative Committee. The Chair of the Consultative Committee will be invited to participate in the Conference of the Parties.

11. Observers and alternatives may participate in the meetings of the Consultative Committee, in accordance with Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Parties to the Convention.

Confidentiality of Information

Members of the Consultative Committee shall maintain as reserved all information that they may have obtained or had access to during their tenure, which is categorized by the Party that submitted the information as confidential. Likewise, they must abstain from using that information for objectives different or contrary to that established in the Convention.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES

The function given to the Scientific Committee is established in Article VIII (2) of the Convention text.

Objective

To provide technical and scientific advice to the Conference of the Parties (COP) in order to promote the protection, conservation and recovery of sea turtle populations and of the habitats on which they depend, based on the best available scientific evidence, taking into account the environmental, socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of the Parties.

Functions of the Scientific Committee

The Scientific Committee will have, in addition to the duties established in Article VIII (2) of the Convention, the following functions:

1. Prepare and update its Work Plan, pursuant to the guidelines of the Convention, and the resolutions of the Conferences of the Parties, establishing the priority of the issues to be addressed. The Work Plan must include the areas of research and their short-term and medium-term objectives with their respective activities and indicators as well as their products. The Scientific Committee must always present the budget requirements needed to develop these activities. The Work Plan shall be presented to the Contracting Parties for its approval.
2. Evaluate the status of sea turtle populations and their habitats, especially under those circumstances subject to exceptions as indicated in Article IV (3) (b), taking into consideration the scientific information provided in the Annual Reports of the Parties (Annex IV of the Convention), among others.
3. Recommend modifications to the format and content of the Annual Report of the Parties as deemed necessary.

4. To periodically evaluate, in collaboration with the Consultative Committee, the format of the Annual Report for the Parties, in accord with Annex IV of the Convention.
5. Support the Secretariat in creating and maintaining an up-to-date directory of scientists and/or experts in fields related to the Convention, which will be available to the Parties and for whoever else requests it.
6. Analyze, as requested by the Parties, the scientific research (including sociological and economic aspects), projects and initiatives conducted by Parties or other relevant organizations or entities, and make recommendations on how to improve those actions that will help achieve the objective of the Convention.
7. Contribute to the development of bilateral, regional and multilateral management plans. This can be done through requesting outside help from experts or specialists and by forming ad-hoc working groups.
8. Develop and improve methodologies for the evaluation of environmental, socioeconomic and cultural impacts resulting from the measures adopted within the framework of the Convention.
9. Support actions directed towards development, use, training and transfer of socially and ecologically sustainable technologies.
10. Present the report on the ordinary meeting each year to the Consultative Committee of Experts, through the Secretariat.
11. Present annually to the Parties, through the Secretariat, a report on its inter-sessional work since the last COP. This report must be approved by consensus of the Committee's members and the Committee Chair will present it to the plenary of the COP. This report shall include the results of working groups, when applicable, as well as observations and recommendations on measures not specifically listed in the Convention, that the Parties deem appropriate to achieve its objective. In the event that consensus cannot be achieved a minority and majority report should be presented to the Conference of the Parties.

Structure of the Scientific Committee

Procedure for representatives designated unilaterally by the Parties

1. Each Party may designate one representative to the Scientific Committee, who should have an academic degree and/or recognized expertise in any of the relevant thematic areas. The Party will notify the Secretariat, through diplomatic channels or via its designated focal point, the name of this representative. The Secretariat will circulate the list of these representatives to all the Parties.
2. Each representative to the Scientific Committee may be accompanied by up to three advisors. Before each meeting, the Party will provide the Secretariat, through diplomatic channels or via its designated focal point, with a list of its delegation.
3. The term for representatives designated by the Parties shall be 2 years, at the end of which the Party may renew the designation. In case the designated representative of a Party cannot complete this term or must be absent from a meeting, the Party shall immediately provide the Secretariat

with the name of the representative who will complete it. The Secretariat shall inform all the Parties the name of the new representative.

Meetings of the Scientific Committee

1. The meetings of the Scientific Committee will be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Parties to the Convention (Resolution COP1CIT004), except when an additional specific rule for better operation of the Committee has been approved by the Conference of the Parties, pursuant to Rules 14.1 and 14.2.
2. The meetings of the Scientific Committee will take place at least once a year, preferably prior to the meetings of the Consultative Committee and taking into account, among other things, the financial resources available for this purpose in the Inter-American Convention Special Fund.
3. In general, members of the Scientific Committee shall conduct their work between sessions through electronic communication, tele/videoconferences, virtual fora and networks. The Secretariat shall facilitate these forms of communication, depending on the resources available for these purposes.
4. The Conference of Parties may request through the Secretariat, that the Scientific Committee convene an extraordinary meeting.
5. The Scientific Committee, to perform its tasks, may establish sub-committees or working groups, as appropriate.
6. The Scientific Committee will elect among the country representatives, the Chair and Vice-Chair at the end of their meeting, to act in that capacity for two meetings. The Chair and Vice-Chair may be re-elected. The Chair and the Vice-Chair will assume their positions immediately after being elected.
7. The functions of the Chair of the Scientific Committee are: a) To determine, upon consultation with the Secretariat, the draft provisional agenda; b) To open and adjourn each meeting; c) To preside the meetings; d) To direct the meetings pursuant to the approved agenda; e) To guide the discussions, to submit issues for decision by the Committee and to announce any decisions; f) To yield the floor; g) To prepare a report on the implementation of the Committee work plan and present to the Committee and the COP; h) To sign the report of each meeting prior to its distribution to the Parties and others as appropriate; i) To follow-up on the work plan adopted by the Conference of the Parties, in collaboration with the Secretariat; j) To carry out other functions as the Scientific Committee may assign.
8. When the Chair is temporarily unable to participate, the Vice-Chair will take on the functions of the Chair.
9. Should the Chair be unable to continue their duties, the Vice-Chair will take on the duties of the Chair until the Committee elects a new Chair.

10. The Chair and/or Rapporteur of the Consultative Committee will be invited to participate in the meetings of the Scientific Committee. The Chair of the Scientific Committee will be invited to participate in the Conference of the Parties.

11. The Scientific Committee may invite to its meetings any scientific institution or individual experts on matters pertaining to the objective of the Convention subject to available resources.

12. Observers may participate in the meetings of the Scientific Committee, in accordance with Rule 11 of Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Parties to the Convention (Resolution COP1CIT-004).

Confidentiality of Information

Members of the Scientific Committee shall maintain as reserved all information that they may have obtained or had access to during their tenure, which is categorized by the Party that submitted the information as confidential. Likewise, they must abstain from using that information for objectives different or contrary to that established in the Convention.