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**Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia**

**Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region**



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First meeting of the Western Indian Ocean Marine Turtle Task Force  
Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, 27-29 February 2008

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN -  
MARINE TURTLE TASK FORCE**

***Membership:***

Parties to the Nairobi Convention as well as current Signatory and non-Signatory States to the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU from the Western Indian Ocean region, selected international nongovernmental organizations, and observers from other relevant organizations contributing to or affecting marine turtle conservation.

***Objectives:***

The objective of the IOSEA Memorandum of Understanding is to protect, conserve, replenish and recover marine turtles and their habitats, based on the best scientific evidence, taking into account the environmental, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the signatory States.

The Nairobi Convention sets a framework in which UNEP, in close collaboration with the relevant components of the United Nations system assists Governments in formulating and implementing programmes for proper management and conservation of the resources of the region. It calls specifically on contracting parties to manage all forms of pollution impacting on marine and coastal environments, as well limiting damage to the coast through the proclaiming of protected areas, following EIA procedures and restricting engineering activities that can be harmful to the environment. Article 14 of the Convention further calls for scientific and technical cooperation through *inter alia* a regional network of national research centres and institutes.

The objectives of the Nairobi Convention and the IOSEA MoU are compatible and the Terms of Reference for the WIO Marine Turtle Task Force should therefore integrate both. The proposed objective of the Task Force is thus *to serve explicitly to facilitate implementation of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU (including its Conservation and Management Plan) in the sub-region, at the same time fulfilling the general programme of work of the Nairobi Convention within its broader scope of management of East Africa's coastal and marine environment.*

The WIO MTF is therefore a technical committee spanning both scientific and management expertise.

***Nomination and Appointment***

The WIO-IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU Task Force will be comprised of:

- Nominated country representatives, who can be the IOSEA Focal Point (where one has been appointed) or an alternate (otherwise), and officials from those countries that have yet to sign the IOSEA MoU;
- *Ex-officio* members from selected international nongovernmental organizations (e.g. IUCN, WIOMSA, WCS, WWF)
- Observers from other relevant organizations contributing to or affecting marine turtle conservation (e.g. ASCLME, IOTC, NEPAD, SWIOFC).

The Task Force will organise its own business and will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair on a three-year rotational basis. The Chair and Vice-Chair should be the principal point of contact between the Task Force, IOSEA Secretariat and the National Committees.

The Task Force members should serve for three years (i.e. through two regular Meetings of the Task Force and Signatory States), and should be eligible for re-nomination and reappointment at subsequent Meetings.

### *Meetings and communications*

To minimise costs, the Task Force should conduct as much of its activity as possible through electronic communication on a regular basis.

At least once a year the Task Force can meet in conjunction with the Meeting of IOSEA Signatory States to review progress, confirm funding and decide on a regional work plan. Where possible the task force may also meet in conjunction with the meeting of Nairobi Convention Focal Points, held every two years.

Meetings will be held in different venues and may be convened, as appropriate, with the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU, the Nairobi Convention, and other related instruments, such as CITES, EAME, NEPAD, SWIOFC and other regional and international networks.

The Chair and/or Vice Chair should endeavour to participate in the relevant meetings of the IOSEA Signatory States and the Nairobi Convention, and may also participate in the meetings of related and associated agreements and organisations. Wherever possible, the other members of the Task Force should also participate in the meetings of the IOSEA Signatory States and Nairobi Convention.

### *Mandate (priorities shown in bold, as identified by the Task Force)*

#### Strengthen regional cooperation and coordination

- **Serve as the WIO coordinating and advisory committee for marine turtle conservation in the sub-region.**
- **Develop linkages and dialogue between the conservation sector and other sectors and industries, such as development, tourism, planning, economy, fisheries, protected areas etc., and encourage National Committees to make these linkages.**
- Support the implementation of the goals of both the Nairobi Convention and the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU.
- Advocate and direct collaborative efforts for marine turtle conservation among stakeholders, including governments, management authorities, the private sector, coastal communities and non-governmental organisations.
- Ensure good relations are maintained among Governments, NGOs, regional, national and local groups and individuals interested in marine turtle conservation, by conveying information to support ideas, goals, achievements and lessons learned.

#### Review and Reporting

- **Develop and standardize protocols for data collection, management and data sharing for research and monitoring programmes.**

- Develop methods to regionally review the collective implementation of national commitments to the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU, making use of the standardised IOSEA National Report template.
- Review and recommend best practice principles for activities requiring the interaction with turtles such as monitoring, education facilities (aquaria) and hatcheries, filming and ecotourism ventures.
- Promote both biophysical and socio-economic monitoring and more effective coordination with regional and international monitoring programmes.

#### Planning, Conservation and Management

- **Collaborate with National Committees, NGO's, regional, national and local groups and individuals interested in marine turtle conservation to recommend coherent sub-regional priorities for marine turtle conservation, based on the IOSEA CMP.**
- Encourage signatories and non-signatories to the MoU to develop national marine turtle conservation action plans or strategies within the context of the regional framework of the Nairobi Convention and IOSEA CMP.
- Work with National Committees to ensure national planning is compatible with marine turtle conservation planning across the region.
- Obtain government and convention endorsement for a regional strategy.
- Collaborate with National Committees to prioritise future work for the implementation of the IOSEA MoU with individual respect given to each countries situation.
- Solicit funds for activities to be undertaken by the WIO-IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU Task Force and assist in fundraising for other marine turtle conservation activities/projects that will benefit the region and individual countries.
- Assist National Committees to solicit funding for national conservation activities.

#### Capacity Building

- **Support the development of local capacity in research, management and governance by identifying capacity needs, implementing exchange programmes or (where possible) seeking resources to conduct research and monitoring programmes.**
- Facilitate the creation or strengthening of National Committees in all countries.
- Encourage National Governments to recognise local issues and establish national legislation or enforcement to further protect marine turtles.

#### Facilitate Communication

- **Provide and facilitate access to technical advice. Act as a reference body and provide advice on proposals for marine turtle conservation projects in the region. Encourage proposals to have a regional perspective and provide linkages between local, national and regional networks where possible.**
- **Facilitate linkages and collaboration with regional organisations such as IUCN, WIOMSA, WCS, WWF, SWIOFC, and IOTC.**

- Facilitate communication and the dissemination of information for the purposes of scientific and public awareness.
- Facilitate and support communication at the national level and serve as a platform to coordinate local initiatives (where required in the absence of national committees).
- Encourage active participation in sub-/regional meetings by institutions and relevant parties in order to raise awareness about priority and emerging issues concerning marine turtles.

Considering the current level of implementation, it is clear that the sub-region has very limited resources for implementation. It is therefore expected that the responsibilities and activities should not be reliant on many additional resources from governments. All of the WIO-MTTF activities will take place in consultation with the IOSEA and Nairobi Convention Secretariats, and will seek additional resources, opportunities and frameworks.

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***Annex: Work Programme of the WIO - Marine Turtle Task Force, March 2008 – February 2011***

## **Annex: Work Programme of the Western Indian Ocean – Marine Turtle Task Force: March 2008 – February 2011**

*Adopted by the First Meeting of the Task Force  
(Dar es Salaam, 27 - 29 February 2008)*

### IMPLEMENTATION PREREQUISITES

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Lead / Responsible</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
<b>1a.</b> Task Force members should establish working relationships with their respective IOSEA Focal Points;	TF Members	Immediate
<b>1b.</b> Provide suggestions to, and assist their respective national Focal Points on strengthening national committees, networks, working groups or other national arrangements, as appropriate;	TF Members	Ongoing
<b>1c.</b> Assist respective Focal Points with the updating of IOSEA national reports, including identification of specific resource needs.	TF Members	Within 3 months (before IOSEA SS5)

### SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES (Social Aspects)

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Lead / Responsible</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
<b>2:</b> Develop a proposal for a compilation of available, relevant information on social aspects of marine turtle conservation in the region, including a literature review as a form of policy brief, perhaps to be funded and made available by WWF or WIOMSA, in preparation for a symposium/workshop.	TF Chair	2 months

### ECONOMIC USES OF MARINE TURTLES

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Lead / Responsible</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
<b>3.</b> Request the support of WIOMSA and other regional funding bodies to conduct a regional workshop to assess the social-economic values of marine turtles and socio-economic conservation approaches (concept to be drafted by J. Frazier for review by the Task Force).	TF Chair; IOSEA, Nairobi, Jack Frazier	12 months
<b>4.</b> From the workshop, produce an annotated bibliography, socio-economic study guidelines and analysis of conservation approaches from the region.	(To be decided at workshop)	

## FISHERIES-INTERACTIONS

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Lead / Responsible</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
<b>5.</b> Task Force members are encouraged to work directly with IOSEA Focal Points and relevant stakeholders to complete and improve the quality of data in national reports in relation to fisheries and fisheries interactions, in particular.	TF Members	Immediate and ongoing
<b>6.</b> Engage RFMOs and other bodies not yet participating in the Task Force, including IOTC, ASLME, IOC, SWIOFP etc	IOSEA, Nairobi	Immediate and ongoing
<b>7.</b> Liaise with the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and SWIOFC for data on marine turtle by-catch in purse seining and long lining, including the impact of the use of FADs, and other non-tuna fisheries.	IOSEA, Nairobi	Immediate and ongoing
<b>8.</b> Compile information on the status of on-board observer programmes and the status of marine turtle bycatch recording within those observer programmes in Western Indian Ocean region.	TF Members	3 months
<b>9.</b> Explore opportunities for applying market incentives (eco-labelling, certification etc) and role of international bodies and instruments (EU, FAO, CMS, SWIOFC) to enhance compliance in use of bycatch reduction measures.	TF Chair, TF Members, IOSEA	3 months

## MONITORING / MITIGATION / RESEARCH

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Lead / Responsible</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
<b>10.</b> Compile information on existing monitoring protocols and needs within region and submit to IOSEA Secretariat in preparation for a regional training workshop.	TF Chair, TF Members	6 months
<b>11.</b> Develop a proposal for a WIO regional technical training workshop(s) to develop minimum standardized protocols for monitoring, for submission to interested donor bodies.	TF Chair; IOSEA, Nairobi	12 months
<b>12.</b> Maintain a record of genetic studies conducted in the region and submit the information to IOSEA for posting on the IOSEA website.	S. Ciccione (TF Vice-Chair), TF Members, IOSEA	3 months
<b>13.</b> Provide up-to-date lists of flipper tag series used in the countries for inclusion in the existing IOSEA online database of tag series.	TF Members, IOSEA	3 months
<b>14.</b> Submit information on satellite tracking studies in WIO countries to TF Chair, who will compile a record of regional activities for sharing on the IOSEA website.	TF Members, TF Chair, IOSEA	3 months

## PROGRESS EVALUATION

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Lead / Responsible</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
<b>15.</b> Review the status of implementation of recommendations made at the first MTTF meeting (Dar es Salaam, Feb 2008)	IOSEA, Nairobi, TF Chair	12 months

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*Explanation of abbreviations used in the text:*

IOSEA: Secretariat, IOSEA Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding

Nairobi: Secretariat, Nairobi Convention