



**CMS**

## **IOSEA Marine Turtles Memorandum of Understanding - National Report 2024**

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE NATIONAL REPORTING QUESTIONNAIRE:**

The main purpose of completing the National Reporting Questionnaire (NRQ) is to provide information on your country's implementation of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU, including its Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) and the IOSEA Work Programme adopted by the 8th Meeting of Signatory States. Please include activities undertaken by the government, non-governmental organizations, private sector and other relevant stakeholders.

The IOSEA Secretariat will analyze national reports and use the provided information to facilitate marine turtle conservation work using the resources at its disposal, as well as in fundraising efforts. The information will also be used to raise any issues, as mandated by IOSEA Signatories, at relevant political fora, such as CMS, CITES, or Regional Fisheries Management Organizations.

Most importantly, collecting information of relevance to marine turtle conservation in the NRQ can help national decision makers to plan marine turtle conservation activities within countries and sub-regions, and guide national and international project planners and donors.

The NRQ is structured to reflect progress in implementation of the six objectives of the CMP: There are two modalities of the NRQ: it can be accessed via the online reporting system (ORS) or filled out using an MS Word file. However, the Word version should be used only if using the online questionnaire is not possible for technical reasons (e.g. the internet connection is too unreliable).

Please answer all questions as fully and as accurately as possible. Wherever possible, please indicate the source of information used to answer the question, particularly if a published reference or report is available. Comprehensive responses to the questions posed in Section 1.4 should also satisfy many of the reporting requirements of the 2009 FAO Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality in Fishing Operations, thereby avoiding duplication of effort.

When working on the online version of the NRQ, save your information by clicking on the "Save all" button inside each section. An auto-save feature also saves any changed responses every 30 seconds, and whenever you move between sections. If additional information is available (e.g. published reports, maps) please attach it to this questionnaire. If working on an offline MS Word file, please submit the completed NRQ by email to the IOSEA Secretariat ([iosea@un.org](mailto:iosea@un.org)); with a copy to the Coordinator ([heidrun.frisch-nwakanma@un.org](mailto:heidrun.frisch-nwakanma@un.org)), as a Word attachment.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

Signatory State:

>>> United States of America

List any other agencies, institutions, or NGOs that have provided input:

>>> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Division of International Conservation and Ecological Service Offices)  
NOAA Fisheries' National Marine Fisheries Service

Memorandum in effect in Signatory State since (dd/mm/yyyy):

>>> 09/01/2001

This report was last modified: (dd/mm/yyyy):

>>> 19/01/2024

Designated Focal Point (and full contact details):

>>> Ann Marie Lauritsen

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, International Affairs  
5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church VA 22041

Email: AnnMarie\_Lauritsen@fws.gov

Phone Number: 571.547.3125

Other relevant contacts:

>>> Jared R. Milton

Office of Marine Conservation

U.S. Department of State

Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs

Cell: +1 (202) 664-3861 | MiltonJR@state.gov

Michael Liles

Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Conservation Division

Office of Protected Resources

NOAA Fisheries | U.S. Department of Commerce

Google Voice: +1 (301) 427-7805

# MARINE TURTLE SPECIES AND HABITATS

Provide sources of information supporting the responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources, and attach digital files if necessary.

## 0.1 Overview of marine turtles and their habitats in the IOSEA MOU Signatory States within the IOSEA region.

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

### a) Please list marine turtle species and genetic stocks in your country, give a general population estimate and trend for your country and indicate where they occur.

	Geographic area	Type of habitat (nesting, feeding developmental)?	Species, genetic stock	Number of egg clutches per year	Population trend (increase, decrease, stable, unknown)
	increase (nesting) unknown (foraging sites)	approximately 33	Central Western Pacific green turtle	nesting, feeding	Central West Pacific (CNMI-Saipan, Tinian and Rota))
	increase (nesting) unknown (foraging sites)	approximately 83	Central Western Pacific green turtle	nesting, feeding	Central West Pacific (Guam)
	decrease (nesting), unknown	previous nesting but no recent nesting events	hawksbill	nesting, feeding	Guam

### b) Do government agencies and/or scientific institutions submit data on the occurrence and population numbers of marine turtles to an international database?

YES

Name of database:

>>> The State of the World's Sea Turtles

### c) Does your country have index nesting beaches in the IOSEA region?

YES

### d) Does your country have an IOSEA Network site?

NO

# OBJECTIVE I: REDUCE DIRECT AND INDIRECT CAUSES OF MARINE TURTLE MORTALITY

## 1.1 BEST PRACTICE APPROACHES TO MINIMIZING THREATS

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

**1.1.1. Are there any best practice protocols relating to the protection of marine turtles and their habitats used in your country that you would like to share with other IOSEA Signatories? Please name the protocols and describe briefly, providing references or links to more detailed reports or online texts.**

If more rows are required, please contact the secretariat at [iosea@un.org](mailto:iosea@un.org)

	Title of best practice protocol or approach	What does this approach/ protocol help to achieve	Has the effectiveness of this approach been evaluated? What was the result?	References and links
	Fisheries Bycatch Reduction- regulations and improvements in Turtle Excluder Devices for trawl nets	Yes	Reduce sea turtle bycatch	Use of Turtle Excluder Devices in Skimmer Trawl Rule
	Modified Fishing Gear such as large circle hooks used in long line fishing: <a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/bycatch/fishing-gear-pelagic-longlines#">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/bycatch/fishing-gear-pelagic-longlines#</a>	Yes	Reduce sea turtle bycatch	Bycatch Reduction
	Lighting Ordinances	Yes	Implementing local lighting ordinances to reduce misorientation of nesting females, disorientations of hatchlings	Nesting Beach Lighting Requirements
	<a href="https://myfwc.com/news/all-news/sea-turtle-622/">https://myfwc.com/news/all-news/sea-turtle-622/</a>	Yes	Public awareness to promote responsible behavior on nesting beaches	Help nesting sea turtles by respecting their nests
	<a href="https://www.fws.gov/project/green-sea-turtle-critical-habitat-pacific-islands#">https://www.fws.gov/project/green-sea-turtle-critical-habitat-pacific-islands#</a>	Yes	Minimize the modification of green turtle habitat	Proposed rule to designate critical habitat
	<a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-life-distress/sea-turtle-stranding-and-salvage-network">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-life-distress/sea-turtle-stranding-and-salvage-network</a>	Yes	Established measures in place to respond to sick or injured sea turtles	Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network
	<a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/safe-handling-release-and-identification-workshops">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/safe-handling-release-and-identification-workshops</a>	Yes	Safe Handling and Release	Safe Handling and Release Workshops

## 1.2 REDUCTION OF INCIDENTAL CAPTURE AND MORTALITY

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

**1.2.1 Indicate, and describe in more detail, the main fisheries occurring in the waters of your country (including territorial waters and the EEZ), as well as any high seas fisheries in which flag vessels of your country participate and interact with marine turtles within the IOSEA region.**

For each of the different fisheries listed below, please indicate whether the fishery is present and use the text box below to provide more detailed information. Please include information on what marine turtle species are affected and number of reported interactions, if known.

## 1) Bottoms trawls (including shrimp trawls)

### a) Fishing effort:

NONE

### Please provide the information below:

Number of vessels:

>>> This response is specific to Guam and CNMI

### b) Methods used by your country to minimise bycatch of marine turtles in this fishery

- Safe handling (as per existing protocols e.g., FAO guidelines) of incidentally caught turtles (e.g. resuscitation or release by fishers using equipment such as de-hooking, line cutting tools and scoop nets)
- Devices that allow the escape of marine turtles (e.g. turtle excluder devices (TEDs))
- Spatial and temporal control of fishing (e.g. seasonal closures of fishing activities)
- Effort management control
- Other

### c) Programmes to promote implementation of measures to minimise bycatch of turtles. Please tick the boxes that apply in your country and provide details in the text boxes below.

- Onboard observer programmes
- Vessel monitoring systems
- Inspections (i.e. at sea, in port, at landing sites)
- Training programmes / workshops to train fishers on the use of bycatch reduction methods
- Informative videos, brochures, printed guidelines etc.

### Onboard observer programmes

The measure is mandatory under the following regulation:

>>> [https://www.govregs.com/regulations/title50\\_chapterVI-i1\\_part679\\_subpartE\\_section679.51](https://www.govregs.com/regulations/title50_chapterVI-i1_part679_subpartE_section679.51)

### Vessel monitoring systems

The measure is mandatory under the following regulation:

>>> [https://www.govregs.com/regulations/title50\\_chapterVI-i1\\_part679\\_subpartE\\_section679.51](https://www.govregs.com/regulations/title50_chapterVI-i1_part679_subpartE_section679.51)

### Inspections (i.e. at sea, in port, at landing sites)

The measure is mandatory under the following regulation:

>>> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/rules-and-regulations>

### Training programmes / workshops to train fishers on the use of bycatch reduction methods

Details/future plans:

>>> [https://www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Final-Guam-MCP-09.08.2020-NOAA-NMFS-2020-0115-0003\\_content.pdf](https://www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Final-Guam-MCP-09.08.2020-NOAA-NMFS-2020-0115-0003_content.pdf)

### Informative videos, brochures, printed guidelines etc.

Details/future plans:

>>> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/safe-handling-release-and-identification-workshops>

## 2) Pelagic trawling

### a) Fishing effort:

NONE

## 4) Driftnet

**a) Fishing effort**

NONE

**5) Purse seine (with or without FADs)**

**a) Fishing effort**

NONE

**6) longline**

**a) Fishing effort**

NONE

**7) Artisanal fishing gear**

**a) Fishing effort**

NONE

**8) Other types of fisheries**

Type of description:

>>> In Guam and CNMI, there is small-scale troll fishing, bottom and reef fishing- . However, based on current ESA consultations, these fisheries are not expected to interact with any ESA listed sea turtles.

**a) Fishing effort**

PRESENT

**1.2.4 Has your country provided technical assistance (formally or informally) to other Signatory States of the IOSEA MOU to promote the activities to mitigate incidental catch of marine turtles in fisheries?**

YES

If yes, please give details of the information exchanges and/or technical assistance.

>>> The National Marine Fisheries Service has provided technical assistance/information exchanges regarding the use of large circle hooks in the shallow set longline fishery. Through the State Department's 609 program, the State Department and NOAA Fisheries provide technical assistance on the use of Turtle Excluder Devices in the shrimp trawl fishery.

Reference and links:

>>> <https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/msa-amended-2007.pdf>  
<https://www.state.gov/key-topics-office-of-marine-conservation/sea-turtles-shrimp-imports-and-section-609/>

**1.2.5 What legislative and practical measures has your country taken in support of UN General Assembly Resolution 46/215 concerning the moratorium on the use of large-scale driftnets?**

Details:

>>> The U.S. adopted the High Sea Driftnet Moratorium Protection Act to implement this UN GA resolution. NMFS reports annually to Congress on the implementation of this Act. This Act was amended by the 2006 Reauthorization of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation Act. These amendments gave NMFS broader scope to look across gear types (not just large scale drift gillnets), but all fisheries to identify countries for IUU or bycatch of protected living marine resources.

References and links:

>>> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/international-affairs/annual-driftnet-reports-congress>  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/international-affairs/identification-iuu-fishing-activities>

**1.2.6 Describe illegal unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing that is known to occur in the territorial waters of the exclusive economic zone of your country that may impact marine turtles. Does IUU fishing occur in your country?**

NO

c) Is there enforcement in place to deter these practices? Please indicate area covered and challenges.

Details:

>>> The U.S. fleet are required to use Vessel Monitoring Systems. More information can be found at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/enforcement/regional-vessel-monitoring-information>.

**1.3 ADDRESSING HARVEST OF, AND TRADE IN, MARINE TURTLES**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

**1.3.1 Are marine turtles and/or their eggs harvest in your country? Please indicate which species are harvested.**

NO

Details:

>>> It is prohibited under the Endangered Species Act, however, there are instances where nesting female and egg harvest has been reported on CNMI and Guam.

References and links:

>>> <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2017.00428/full>

**1.3.2 Which types of consumptive use of turtles are practiced in your country?**

Use the text boxes below each rating to explain or clarify your responses.

**a) Meat consumption**

NO

Details (e.g. species, estimated number taken per year, location, if known):

>>> It is prohibited under the Endangered Species Act, however, there are instances where nesting female and egg harvest has been reported on CNMI and Guam.

**b) Egg consumption**

NO

Details (e.g. species, estimated number taken per year, location, if known):

>>> It is prohibited under the Endangered Species Act, however, there are instances where nesting female and egg harvest has been reported on CNMI and Guam.

**c) Fat and oil consumption**

NO

**d) Traditional medicine**

NO

**e) Shell**

NO

**f) Making of tortoise shell products (bekko)**

NO

**h) Which type(s) of consumptive use of marine turtles are the most common in your country?**



c) Swimming/ snorkeling activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Details:

>>> Sea turtle walks are permitted with conditions in place to minimize disturbance to nesting turtles.

**1.3.10 Are there any standard and government-certified protocols to ensure that touristic activities do not harm turtles and/or hatchlings?**

YES

Please briefly describe the type of protocols used, references or links, if available.

Details:

>>> If you want to see a sea turtle, you can attend one of the permitted public turtle walks or a nest hatch success evaluation.

**1.3.11 Does your country have mechanisms in place to identify domestic and international illegal trade routes (for illegally traded marine turtles, eggs and derivatives)?**

Please provide references to any published reports (e.g. already prepared for CITES purposes) that give a more ample explanation.

YES

Details:

>>> Our law enforcement reports all marine turtle seizures.

**1.3.12 Please describe any activities/projects that aim(ed) to reduce illegal take of and/or trade in marine turtles in your country.**

If more rows are required, please contact the secretariat at [iosea@un.org](mailto:iosea@un.org)

	Title of the project/activity	Implemented by	Start year	End year (if completed)	How does the project involve local communities?	Lessons learned	Project website or other links with project description

**1.3.13 Has you country submitted the annual illegal trade report to CITES, including information relevant for marine turtles?**

Please provide a copy of this report or a link to the published report online, if possible.

YES

Details:

>>> The Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt Wildlife Trafficking Act (P.L. 114-231; 16 U.S.C. §§ 7601-7644) (the “END Act”) directs the Presidential Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking (“Task Force”) to submit an annual strategic review and assessment of its work that includes, among other things, a review and assessment of its implementation of the Act; a description of Task Force member agencies’ priorities and objectives; an accounting of U.S. funding for combating wildlife trafficking (CWT); and recommendations for improving U.S. and international efforts to prevent wildlife trafficking in the future.

References and links:

>>> <https://www.state.gov/2021-end-wildlife-trafficking-strategic-review/>

**1.4. MINIMIZING MORTALITY THROUGH NESTING BEACH PROGRAMMES**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental,

departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

**1.4.1 Tick the boxes that apply to indicate whether your country has any of the following measures in place to minimise the mortality of eggs, hatchlings and/or nesting females.**

Please indicate if these measures are being implemented at the IOSEA Network sites and index beaches that you described in question 0.2.

**Measures**

**a) Nesting beach monitoring (eggs and nesting females)**

YES

Details:

>>> Guam [nesting]: Monitoring of green turtle nesting activity at 15 index beaches suggests that approximately 22 nesting females nest annually (Seminoff et al. 2015).

CNMI [nesting]: Monitoring of green turtle nesting activity at 15 index beaches (on Saipan, Tinian and Rota islands) suggests that approximately 12 females nest annually (Summers et al. 2017).

**b) Nesting beach protection (patrolling)**

YES

Details:

>>> Guam: Regular patrolling of important green turtle nesting beaches between April and August.

**c) Predator control**

YES

**d) Nest screening (placing wire screens over the buried nests)**

YES

**e) Vehicle access restrictions**

YES

**f) Regular removal of debris / clean-up programmes**

YES

**g) Has re-vegetation of dunes at nesting beaches been carried out, using native vegetation?**

YES

**h) Building location design regulations (coastal protection)**

YES

**i) Light pollution reduction (direct lights visible from the beach)**

YES

Details:

>>> This occurs to various extents throughout the nesting beaches in the United States. Federal property adjacent to the nesting beaches, are required to consult on sea turtle impacts such as artificial lighting. Through this Section 7 1 a consultation of the Endangered Species Act, light minimization measures are included to reduce impacts to nesting and hatchlings sea turtles. These measures include keeping the light light, shielded, and long wavelength of above 560nm.

**k) Are these measures in place in protected areas only, or also outside of established protected areas?**

In protected areas only (list the measures above e.g. a, b, c, etc.):

>>> Sea turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act both within protected areas and outside of protected areas.

Outside of protected areas (list the measures above e.g. a, b, c etc.):

>>> Sea turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act both within protected areas and outside of protected areas.

References and links:

>>> <https://www.fws.gov/law/endangered-species-act>

**1.4.2 To what extent is egg relocation practiced in your country (including relocation to hatcheries)?**

Egg relocation is practiced on less than 5% of nesting beaches.

Please provide the reasons:

>>> Nests are only authorized to be relocated if laid below the high tide line and expected to be overwashed daily. Nests remain where they are laid and we address the anthropogenic threat to allow for nests and hatchlings to be undisturbed.

**1.4.3 Has your country undertaken an evaluation of the effectiveness of its nesting beach management programmes in terms of maximizing the recruitment of marine turtle hatchlings?**

YES

Please indicate when the evaluation took place, and provide a reference or a copy of any published or unpublished reports describing any lessons learned.

Details:

>>> The action identified in our Sea Turtle Recovery Plans to further sea turtle conservation include a focus on addressing the anthropogenic threats and as little nest manipulation as possible.

## **OBJECTIVE II: PROTECT, CONSERVE AND RESTORE MARINE TURTLE HABITATS**

### **2.1 MEASURES TO PROTECT AND CONSERVE MARINE TURTLE HABITATS**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

#### **2.1.1 Please list Protected Areas (PAs), sanctuaries or temporary exclusion zones that were created to protect marine turtle habitat. Please provide the official name and date of establishment.**

Details:

>>> Guam National Wildlife Refuge, Tumon Bay Preserve, Marine Protected Area, Guam's Marine Preserves. CNMI: There are currently seven Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the CNMI. The three no-take MPAs surrounding Saipan are the Managaha Marine Conservation Area (established 2000), Bird Island Sanctuary (2001), and Forbidden Island Sanctuary (2001). Saipan also has two species-specific sanctuaries Laolao Bay Sea Cucumber Sanctuary (1996) and Lighthouse Reef Trochus Sanctuary (1996). The MPA adjoining Tinian, Tinian Marine Reserve (2007), is designated as no-take except for seasonal runs of fish. Finally, the Sasanhaya Bay Fish Reserve (1994) in Rota is also a no-take MPA. Fish, invertebrate, algae and habitat data has been collected within these MPAs by the Division of Fish and Wildlife and by the CRI Marine Monitoring Team for over a decade. The Division of Fish and Wildlife conducts enforcement patrols within and around these areas to report violations and enforce regulations

References and links:

>>> <https://www.guamcoralreefs.info/marine-preserves>  
<https://dcrm.gov.mp/our-programs/marine-monitoring-program/marine-protected-areas/>

#### **2.1.2 Has your country developed any incentives to encourage protection of marine turtle habitat outside of protected areas?**

Details:

>>> Yes, the endangered species act protect marine turtles and the habitat on which they depend outside of protected area.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries published a proposed rule designating critical habitat for occupied nesting habitat for the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*; July 19, 2023 (88 FR 46376). This includes the the Central West Pacific Distinct Population Segment (the Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

#### **2.1.3 Is marine water quality (including marine debris) monitored near turtle habitats? If yes, describe the nature of this monitoring and any remedial measures that may have been taken.**

YES

#### **2.1.4 Are measures in place to prohibit the use of poisonous chemicals and explosives in the marine environment?**

YES

### **2.2 RESTORATION OF DEGRADED MARINE TURTLE HABITATS**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

#### **2.2.1 What efforts are being made to recover degraded coral reef habitat? Give details (location, how long efforts have been carried out, effectiveness, lessons learned, future plans, etc).**

YES see below

Details/future plans:

>>> There are multiple initiatives to restore coral reefs to reduce runoff.

References and links:

>>> [https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/Guam-Coastal-Resilience-Assessment-Oct-2021\\_0.pdf](https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/Guam-Coastal-Resilience-Assessment-Oct-2021_0.pdf)  
<https://coralreef.noaa.gov/aboutcrcep/news/featuredstories/mar23/saipan-nursery.html>

**2.2.2 Are efforts being made to recover degraded mangrove habitats that are important for turtles?**

YES see below

References and links:

>>> <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/5.b-natural-infrastructure-cnmi.pdf>  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/improving-habitat-restoration-and-conservation-guams-manell-geus-habitat-focus-area>

**2.2.3 What efforts are being made to recover degraded seagrass habitats? Give details (location, duration, effectiveness, lessons learned, future plans etc.).**

YES, see below

Details/future plans:

>>> There are multiple initiatives in place to restore degraded seagrass habitat.

References and links:

>>> [https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/Guam-Coastal-Resilience-Assessment-Oct-2021\\_0.pdf](https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/Guam-Coastal-Resilience-Assessment-Oct-2021_0.pdf)



YES

### **3.1.4 Have the studies mentioned in 3.1.3 helped to identify foraging and migration areas of marine turtles in your country?**

YES

Details, examples:

>>> Collecting the most recent scientific information available for our five-year reviews on on all listed sea turtles species, allows the Services to evaluate trends. This regular review allows us to understand what other management actions and scientific research is needed.

References and links:

>>> Becker et al. 2019: (<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0214972>) Martin et al. 2016: (<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2015.00116/full>) Seminoff et al. 2015: (<https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/4922>) Summers et al. 2017: (<https://bioone.org/journals/pacific-science/volume-71/issue-3/71.3.3/Demography-of-Marine-Turtles-in-the-Nearshore-Environments-of-the-10.2984/71.3.3.full>) Summers et al. 2018: ([https://georgehbalazs.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Summers\\_Kelly\\_2018\\_Human-induced-trauma-in-CNMI.pdf](https://georgehbalazs.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Summers_Kelly_2018_Human-induced-trauma-in-CNMI.pdf))

### **3.1.5 Is the use of traditional ecological knowledge in research being promoted?**

YES

### **3.1.6 Give a list of relevant literature that includes information from studies carried out in your country on marine turtle populations and their habitats, sorting them by topic.**

#### **a) Bycatch mitigation measures**

Details (e.g. numbers and species of released turtles, type of fishery and gear used, method for monitoring survival, result):

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Final-CNMI-MCP-2023-NOAA-NMFS-2023-0058-0002\\_content.pdf](#) - Final CNMI Conservation Plan

[Final-Guam-MCP-09.08.2020-NOAA-NMFS-2020-0115-0003\\_content.pdf](#) - Final Guam Marine Conservation Plan

#### **g) Other**

Details (aim of study, results):

>>> Becker SL, Brainard RE, Van Houtan KS. 2019. Densities and drivers of sea turtle populations across Pacific coral reef ecosystems. Plos One 14:e0214972.

Dutra LXC, Haywood MDE, Singh S, Ferreira M, Johnson JE, Veitayaki J, Kininmonth S, Morris CW, Piovano S. 2021. Synergies between local and climate-driven impacts on coral reefs in the Tropical Pacific: A review of issues and adaptation opportunities. Marine Pollution Bulletin 164:111922.

Gaos A, Martin SL, Jones TT. 2020a. Sea turtle tagging in the Naval Base Guam area. Annual Report prepared for the U.S. Naval Base Guam, Apra Harbor, Guam by NOAA Fisheries, the Marine Turtle Biology and Assessment Group, Protected Species Division, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, under Interagency Agreement. 24 p.

Summers TM, Jones TT, Martin SL, Hapdei JR, Ruak JK, Lepczyk CA. 2017. Demography of Marine Turtles in the Nearshore Environments of the Northern Mariana Islands. Pacific Science 71:269-286. Summers TM, Martin SL, Hapdei JR, Ruak JK, Jones TT. 2018. Endangered Green Turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) of the Northern Mariana Islands: Nesting Ecology, Poaching, and Climate Concerns. Frontiers in Marine Science 4.

## **3.2 COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND MONITORING**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

### **3.2.1 Does your country participate in any regional or sub-regional action plans that identify regional priorities in terms of research and monitoring needs?**

YES

Please specify:

If more rows are required, please contact the secretariat at [iosea@un.org](mailto:iosea@un.org)

	Regional or sub-regional action plan	Identified research and monitoring needs	Links
	<a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/recovery-plan-us-pacific-populations-green-turtle-chelonia-mydas">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/recovery-plan-us-pacific-populations-green-turtle-chelonia-mydas</a>	yes	Recovery Plan for U.S. Pacific Populations of the Green Turtle

**3.2.2 On which of the following themes have regional collaborative studies and monitoring been conducted? Use the text boxes to describe the nature of this international collaboration or to clarify your response. Answer 'NO' if the studies/monitoring undertaken do not involve international collaboration.**

Details (year when collaboration took place, project name, future plans):

>>> Status review of the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) under the Endangered Species Act

References and links:

>>> <https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/4922>

**c) Migratory and dispersal routes**

YES

Details (year when collaboration took place, project name, future plans):

>>> Recovery Plan for U.S. Pacific Populations of the Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*)

References and links:

>>> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/recovery-plan-us-pacific-populations-green-turtle-chelonia-mydas>

**d) Other biological and ecological aspects**

YES

Details (year when collaboration took place, project name, future plans):

>>> Prioritizes threats and recovery actions to reduce these threats in the Recovery Plan for U.S. Pacific Populations of the Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*)

References and links:

>>> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/recovery-plan-us-pacific-populations-green-turtle-chelonia-mydas>

**3.3 DATA ANALYSIS AND APPLIED RESEARCH**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

**3.3.1 Describe how research results are being applied to improve management practices and mitigation of threats.**

Details:

>>> Information on threats are prioritized and actions to reduce these threats in the Recovery Plan for U.S. Pacific Populations of the Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*). These actions are regularly accessed. New information on reducing threats from artificial lighting, coastal armoring, bycatch are incorporated into our consultations with measures minimize these threats.

References and links:

>>> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/recovery-plan-us-pacific-populations-green-turtle-chelonia-mydas>

**3.3.2 Is traditional knowledge on marine turtles and their habitats being used for conservation and management?**

YES

**3.4 INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

**3.4.1 Has your country undertaken any initiatives (nationally or through collaboration with other IOSEA Signatory States) to standardise methods of data collection?**

YES

**3.4.2 Has your country taken part in producing IUCN regional status reports for red list assessments?**

YES

**3.4.3 How often does your country share information on marine turtle populations of regional interest with other IOSEA Signatories?**

Once a year

**3.4.4 Since 2019, has your country taken part in any workshops or other events with participation of other countries, scientific institutions, non-governmental or international organisations in order to develop and implement best practice approaches for marine turtle conservation?**

YES

Details (name of the event, year, main objective of the event):

>>> International Sea Turtle Symposium.

# **OBJECTIVE IV: INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE THREATS TO MARINE TURTLES AND THEIR HABITATS, AND ENHANCE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES**

## **4.1 PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMMES**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

### **4.1.1 Are education/awareness programmes in place at/near nesting beaches?**

YES

Please indicate at which sites, described in question 0.2 these programmes are being implemented.

Details:

>>> The federal government, territories, non-government organization conduct several outreach events throughout the nesting season. This includes field trips and media events.

### **4.1.2 Describe the educational materials, including mass media information programmes that your country has collected, developed and/or disseminated.**

Details/future plans:

>>> U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service have websites with information on marine turtles as well as for all recovery plans.

There is a Kids' Times publications for sea turtles. This information can also be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/education/turtles.htm>.

The United States can contribute to the development of a web-based information resource for marine turtle conservation by providing data on marine turtle populations, nesting data, migration data and information on projects. The U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hold Sea Turtle Week to promote over social media the importance of sea turtles conservation.

### **4.1.3 Which of the following groups have been the targets of focused education or awareness programmes?**

- Policy makers
- Fishing industry
- Communities that interact with marine turtles and their habitats
- Local/Fishing communities
- Indigenous groups
- Tourists
- Media
- Teachers
- Students
- Military, Navy, Police
- Scientists
- NGOs
- Enforcement personnel

### **4.1.4 Have any community learning centres or information centres been established in your country?**

YES

Details/future plans:

>>> Community learning centers exist in many of the coastal states of the United States.

## **4.2 STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

### **4.2.1 Are there public participation programmes in place at nesting beaches to involve local stakeholders in activities to conserve marine turtles?**

YES

If yes, which stakeholders are being involved?

- Fishing industry
- Communities that interact with marine turtles and their habitats
- Local/Fishing communities
- Indigenous groups
- Tourists
- Media
- Teachers
- Students
- Military, Navy, Police
- Scientists
- NGOs

Please indicate at which sites, described in question 0.2 these programmes are being implemented.

Details/future plans:

>>> Tourists -- Wildlife Viewing Guidelines

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/marine-life-viewing-guidelines>

Teachers

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/educator-opportunity/teacher-sea>

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resources/educational-materials>

Students

<http://games.noaa.gov/seaturtle/welcome.html>

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resources/educational-materials>

#### **4.2.2. The role of local communities. Please answer the questions below, giving examples of activities that took place since 2019.**

a) Is traditional knowledge used in the development of education and awareness programmes in your country?

- YES

b) Do local communities participate in the development and implementation of conservation measures?

Details, examples:

>>> As part of creating a new regulation the United States government is required to notify the public. The public is notified via the Federal Register, the NMFS and FWS website, press releases, and emails to constituent listservs.

There are often public meetings held to get input and there is always a public comment period on the proposed regulation.

#### **4.2.3 Describe initiatives undertaken or planned since 2019 to involve and encourage the cooperation of Government institutions, NGOs and the private sector in marine turtle conservation programmes.**

Details/future plans:

>>> Development and revision of recovery plans as a practice involve state and Federal government representatives, NGO and key academics in the recovery plan with conservation/research tasks assigned to specific entities. The public reviews and comments on these plans.

# **OBJECTIVE V: ENHANCE NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

## **5.1 COOPERATION NEEDS**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

### **5.1.1 Please indicate, the extent to which the following local management issues require regional and/or international cooperation in order to achieve progress.**

In other words, how important is **regional/international** cooperation for addressing the issues listed below?

#### **a) Illegal fishing in territorial waters**

ESSENTIAL

#### **b) Incidental capture by foreign fleets in territorial waters**

ESSENTIAL

#### **c) Enforcement/patrolling of territorial waters**

ESSENTIAL

#### **d) Illegal fishing in EEZ**

ESSENTIAL

#### **e) Incidental capture by foreign fleets in EEZ**

ESSENTIAL

#### **f) Enforcement/patrolling of EEZ**

ESSENTIAL

#### **g) Harvest exploitation of turtles and eggs**

ESSENTIAL

#### **h) Illegal trade in turtle parts and products**

ESSENTIAL

#### **i) Development of gear technology to reduce bycatch of marine turtles**

ESSENTIAL

#### **j) Marine pollution, including oil spills and marine debris**

LIMITED

#### **k) Training / capacity-building**

ESSENTIAL

#### **l) Alternative livelihood development**

ESSENTIAL

#### **m) Characterisation of turtle populations/genetic stocks**

NOT AT ALL

#### **n) Identification of migration routes**

LIMITED

#### **o) Tagging / satellite tracking**

LIMITED

**p) Habitat studies**

NOT AT ALL

**q) Genetic studies**

NOT AT ALL

**5.2 COOPERATION AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

**5.2.1 Regional cooperation to enhance marine turtle conservation and management**

a) Which regional/bilateral agreements for marine turtle conservation and management does your country participate in?

Details:

>>> Here is a link to our international agreements:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2023-12/2023-International-Agreements-Book.pdf>

b) Please list the organizations that your country cooperates with to enhance regional collaboration on marine turtle conservation in your subregion.

Details:

>>> Please see the link with our international agreements:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2023-12/2023-International-Agreements-Book.pdf>

**c) Do these agreements and organizations have an associated action plan for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats? Please list the respective actions plans.**

If more rows are required, please contact the secretarat at [iosea@un.org](mailto:iosea@un.org)

	Name of the regional/sub-regional action plan (include web links to plan if available)	Species covered	Geographic coverage	Object ives	Threats addressed by the plan

**5.2.2 Has your country encouraged Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) in the Indian Ocean to adopt marine turtle conservation measures within Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and on the high seas? Please describe the interventions made by your country in this regard in the last 5 years, referring to specific RFMOs.**

Details/future plans:

>>> The United States participates as an observer of this Indian Ocean Tuna Commission.

References and links:

>>> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/international-affairs/international-and-regional-fisheries-management-organizations>

**5.2.3 Please describe any additional efforts of your country to enhance sub-regional turtle conservation.**

Details/future plans:

>>> Yes, we have recovery plans for each of the listed sea turtle species in the United States.

References and links:

>>> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/sea-turtles>

**5.3 CAPACITY-BUILDING**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental,

departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

### **5.3.1 Describe your country's needs in terms of human resources, knowledge and facilities, in order to build capacity to strengthen marine turtle conservation measures in the IOSEA region.**

Details:

>>> The United States has a large sea turtle conservation program composed of personnel at the Federal level from the USFWS and NMFS. In addition, many of the states have their own sea turtle program. The greatest challenge to all of these programs is and will continue to be consistent levels of funding.

### **5.3.2 Describe any training your country provided in marine turtle conservation and management in the last 5 years (e.g., workshops held, training manuals produced etc.), and indicate your plans for the coming year.**

Details/future plans:

>>> The United States has run the International TED program for almost twenty years. This program provides training on the use of Turtle Excluder Devices. In addition, the United States has been actively working with several countries to test circle hook technology in longline gear and modification of gillnets and pound nets to reduce sea turtle bycatch.

## **5.4 STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

### **5.4.1 Development of a national action plan**

#### **a) Is there a national action plan for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats in your country?**

YES

Details:

title of the document, year, link:

>>> Yes, we have recovery plans for each of the listed sea turtle species in the United States.  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/sea-turtles>

#### **c) List the genetic stocks (marine turtle populations) identified as priorities in the national action plan or in other action plans for conservation of biodiversity in your country.**

Details/future plans:

>>> Pacific green turtle populations

References and links:

>>> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/recovery-plan-us-pacific-populations-green-turtle-chelonia-mydas>

### **5.4.3 Has your country conducted a review of policies and laws to address any inconsistencies in relation to the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats?**

YES

Details, future plans:

>>> During our marine turtle five-year reviews, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries assess an inadequate regulation mechanisms.

### **5.4.4 Which of the threats to marine turtles are not currently addressed by any policy or law in your country?**

Details:

>>> The Endangered Species Act is the main statute to protect sea turtles in the United States.  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/laws-policies#endangered-species-act>. This statute has generally been very effective in protecting sea turtles

### **5.4.5 Does your country have legislation that explicitly requires marine and coastal**

**development projects and natural resource extraction projects to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in relation to marine turtles and their habitats?**

YES

a) If yes, please provide references to legal texts, date of adoption and briefly describe such legislation.

Details:

>>> The Endangered Species Act is the main statute to protect sea turtles in the United States.

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/laws-policies#endangered-species-act>. This statute has generally been very effective in protecting sea turtles.

b) Which measures are in place to ensure compliance with this regulation?

References and links:

>>> At times the United States Federal government, has had inter-agency coordination issues on enforcement issues as well as coordination issues with state and territory partners. In general, these issues are resolved quickly.

## **OBJECTIVE VI: PROMOTE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOU, INCLUDING THE CMP**

### **6.1 IOSEA MARINE TURTLE MOU MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

#### **6.1.1 What has your country already done in the past 5 years to encourage other States to sign the IOSEA MOU?**

Details/future plans:

>>> The US provides financial support for the Secretariat and encourages regular outreach to countries within the geographic range of the IOSEA to promote and support sea turtle conservation.

#### **6.1.2 Is your country currently favourable, in principle, to amending the MOU to make it a legally binding instrument?**

YES

### **6.2 RESOURCES TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOU**

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

#### **6.2.1 What programmes has your country funded for domestic implementation of marine turtle conservation activities related to the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU?**

Please refer to the IOSEA CMP and IOSEA Work Programme.

Name of the funded programme, corresponding CMP activity or IOSEA Work Programme measure:

>>> Identify and document the threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries (Services) have completed Recovery Plans for green turtles as required by the Endangered Species Act. The Pacific Green turtle recovery plan identifies threats and prioritizes activities to address this threat. The Services also completed a Green turtle status review which further delineated and assessed the threat for each green turtle population.

References and links:

>>> Recovery plan for U.S. Pacific populations of the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*):  
<https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/15970>

#### **6.2.2 In the last 5 years, what funding sources have been available for your country to support marine turtle conservation?**

YES

Details: (national, other governments, international organisations, donor organisations, industry, private sector, foundations)

>>> Federal, other governmental organizations, NGOs, academia.

#### **6.2.3 In accordance with CITES decisions on marine turtles, has your country attempted to raise funds for the activities listed below through CITES?**

YES

a) If yes, please indicate the number of the activity (or activities) in the text box below. Was this effort successful?

1. Training and capacity building and training on the implementation and enforcement of national and international regulations that apply to marine turtles, and on identification, monitoring, reporting and wildlife enforcement capability;
2. raise awareness on conservation status and compliance with national legislation and cites in relation to marine turtles;
3. research into the socioeconomics of harvest of marine turtles, its effect on conservation and sustainability of alternative livelihoods;
4. cooperative international/regional research to establish population estimates to evaluate the impact of illegal trade;
5. research into the impact of fisheries on marine turtles and its linkages to illegal trade.

>>> The United States often provides funding and or personnel for CITES training programmes. The United States is particularly concerned about illegal trafficking of sea turtle parts. We are working to improve law

enforcement training in the region.

### 6.3 COORDINATION AMONG GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departmental, university, NGO, etc.) as well as published articles (scientific or online articles); also include appropriate links to these information sources and/or attach documents to this report.

#### 6.3.1 List government agencies that play a role in the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats in your country. Please indicate their responsibilities in relation to protecting marine turtles and their habitats.

If more rows are required, please contact the secretariat at [iosea@un.org](mailto:iosea@un.org)

	Name of the agency	Role in the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats
	Under the Endangered Species Act, Recovery and protection of sea turtles on the nesting beach	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
	Under the Endangered Species Act, Recovery and protection of sea turtles in the water	NOAA Fisheries National Marine Fisheries Service

#### 6.3.2 What are the main limitations of enforcing the laws in relation to marine turtles and their habitats across and between jurisdictions?

Details:

>>> The United States encourages cooperation between other natio

## OTHER REMARKS

**Please provide any comments/suggestions to improve the present reporting format.**

>>> We recommend shortening this report template so that only the information needed for each objective of the MOU. We recommend questions be specific and succinct so that responses can be concise and clear. Any specific data requested should include information on how that information will be used to further the activities in the Work Plan.