CMS

IOSEA Marine Turtles Memorandum of Understanding - National Report 2024

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE NATIONAL REPORTING QUETIONNAIRE:

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); with a copy to the Coordinator (heidrun.frisch-nwakanma@un.org), as a Word attachment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Signatory State:

››› United Arab Emirates

List any other agencies, institutions, or NGOs that have provided input:
››› • Ministry of Climate Change and Environment
• Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi
• Dubai Municipality
• Environment and Protected Areas Authority - Sharjah
• Municipality and Planning Department -Ajman
• Umm Al Quwain Municipality
• Environment Protection and Development Authority – Ras Al Khaimah
• Fujairah Environment Authority
• Emirates Nature-WWF

Memorandum in effect in Signatory State since (dd/mm/yyyy):
››› 1/04/2007

This report was last modified: (dd/mm/yyyy):
››› 27th February 2024

Designated Focal Point (and full contact details):
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MARINE TURTLE SPECIES AND HABITATS

Provide sources of information supporting the responses, include reports (governmental, departamental, 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, departamental, 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)
	stable	Sporadic (only one nest recorded in Abu Dhabi in 2023. This is considered as an aberration since there have been no other confirmed instances of green turtle nesting in the area, and this nest did not have any hatchling emergence)	Green turtles (Chelonia mydas)	Occasional Nesting: Sandy beaches in the Arabian Gulf waters. Mostly on islands of Sharjah. They can be found feeding in the country, mainly in the waters off Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah, Umm Al Quwain , and feed in large aggregations in the Alqurm protected area in Khor Kalba.	NWIO
	unknown	480 average per year	Hawksbills (Eretmochelys imbricata)/ A recent population genetic study (Natoli et al. 2017) reported significant genetic differentiation between populations within the Gulf (northwestern Iran / southwestern Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE), suggesting limited movement between different areas of the Gulf. Furthermore, the study suggested possible differentiation between Dubai (mainland) and Sir Bu Na'air (offshore) nesting population as well as juveniles stranding in the winter months in Abu Dhabi and those stranding in Dubai, suggesting that juveniles in different areas come from different populations (Natoli et al. 2017).	In the UAE nesting primarily occurs on off-shore islands in Abu Dhabi and Sharjah, although nesting also currently occurs on the mainland coast at Jebel Ali, Dubai. There was a couple of cases of nesting in Khor Kalba. They are also known to feed in these areas.	NWIO
	Unknown	Unknown	Loggerhead sea turtle (Caretta caretta)	Very little is known about the species ecology. Stranding data suggests that this specie is mostly observed along the Gulf of Oman coast where it breeds , it feeds in nearshore waters in the Arabian gulf Most individuals observed are also adults.	NWIO
	unknown	Sporadic (only one nest recorded)	Olive Ridley sea turtle (Lepidochelys olivacea)	Very little is known about the species ecology. It is at most an occasional passage visitor to UAE territorial waters, with the eastern coast a transit corridor to nesting sites elsewhere. Stranding data suggests that this specie is mostly observed along the Gulf of Oman.	NWIO

b) Do government agencies and/or scientific institutions submit data on the occurrence and population numbers of marine turtles to an international database?
☑ NO

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

d) Does your country have an IOSEA Network site?

☑ YES

0.2 Site-specific information

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departamental, 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.
Please fill out the following section for index beaches and/or IOSEA Site Network Sites in your country. If there are no such beaches or sites in your country, please leave this section blank. **An index beach is defined as a marine turtle nesting beach, which has been monitored for at least five years using a standardized set of methods and which will continue to be monitored in the long term.** An index beach may be located in a remote area or close to human settlements with influence of anthropogenic activities.
Please complete a seperate section for each site.

Sites
Site 1

a) Provide the name, location and length of the site

Name of the site:
››› Bu Tinah Shoal

State/province:

››› Abu Dhabi

Latitude and longitude (middle of the beach or two from either end of the beach):
››› N24.629261 E053.048957

Length:

››› 1.5 km

b) Is this an index beach (An index beach is defined as a marine turtle nesting beach, which has been monitored for at least five years using a standardized set of methods and which will continue to be monitored in the long term)?
☑ YES

c) Is this an IOSEA Network Site?
☑ YES

d) Does this site have any other international or national status (e.g. protected area, Ramsar, UNESCO)?
☑ YES

Details:

››› Marawah Marine Biosphere Reserve (MMBR) under UNESCO

e) When did marine turtle monitoring start at this location (year) and how often is monitoring carried out?

››› 2001 till today (continuing)

f) Indicate the species present at this site, estimated number of nests per year for each species by inserting, in the appropriate boxes, one of the letters ‘ a ’ through ‘ h ’, corresponding to the following scale: a: 1 - 10 nests ; b: 11 - 100 nests ; c: 101 - 500 nests ; d: 501 - 1,000 nests ; e: 1,001 - 5,000 nests ; f: 5,001 - 10,000 nests ; g: 10,001 - 100,000 nests; h: more than 100,000 nests. If trend information is available, add “increasing”, “decreasing” or “stable”. If information on population and trend is not available, simply indicate which species are present at each location by inserting “yes” or “no” in the appropriate boxes.

	Species present at this location?	Number of clutches per year	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)					No
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)					No
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	Annually	2001	stable	a	Yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)					No
Green (Chelonia mydas)					No
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)					No

g) Please estimate the approximate area of adjacent in-water habitat for this site.
☑ 5-10 km2

Please describe the approximate area of the in-water habitat near the site and provide any references and links:
››› Shallow coastal waters with seagrass, corals, rocks and boulders and unconsolidated bottom.

h) Please fill out the following table for the in-water habitat of the site. Please include information on population number and trend, if available.

	Species present at this location	Are marine turtles monitored in water?	Population number	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)	No					No
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)	No					NO
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	Once/ 3 years	2004	Stable	200	Yes	Yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)	No					No
Green (Chelonia mydas)	Once/ 3 years	2004	Stable	1000	Yes	Yes
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)	No					No

i) Please describe the main threats to marine turtles at this site (both at the nesting beach and in the water).

	Unknown	None	Low (rare event)	Medium	High (common occurrence)

Other (type in)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Predation by domestic / feral animals (cats, dogs)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Natural threats, disease, predation of nests/nesting females or natural predation at sea	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Sand mining / removal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Vehicles	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Habitat degradation (e.g. coastal erosion, debris that obstructs nesting etc.)	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
Artificial lighting (on land or near shore)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Agricultural/urban/tourism development (e.g. construction that disrupts nesting activities)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Inshore oil pollution	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Industrial effluent	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Marine debris (e.g. plastics at sea, flotsam)	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
Boat strikes	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Incidental capture in coastal fisheries	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
Egg collection (i.e. direct harvest by humans)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Direct harvest of animals in coastal waters at or near the site	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Exploitation of nesting females (i.e. direct harvest on land)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

j) What assistance for conservation and management at this site would be useful, including through the IOSEA Capacity-building programme? Please choose from the list below:
☑ Training/ capacity building for researchers and field workers
☑ Training/ capacity building for authorities and/or managers
☑ Training/ capacity building for people from coastal communities
☑ Technical expertise to enhance conservation or management at the site

Please provide details:

››› Capacity building, education and awareness programs will help conservation and management of species via various target groups.

Sites
Site 2

a) Provide the name, location and length of the site

Name of the site:
››› Zirku

State/province:

››› Abu Dhabi

Latitude and longitude (middle of the beach or two from either end of the beach):
››› N 24.869176 E053.070152

Length:

››› 3 Km

b) Is this an index beach (An index beach is defined as a marine turtle nesting beach, which has been monitored for at least five years using a standardized set of methods and which will continue to be monitored in the long term)?
☑ YES

c) Is this an IOSEA Network Site?
☑ NO

d) Does this site have any other international or national status (e.g. protected area, Ramsar, UNESCO)?
☑ NO

e) When did marine turtle monitoring start at this location (year) and how often is monitoring carried out?
››› 2001 and continuous

f) Indicate the species present at this site, estimated number of nests per year for each species by inserting, in the appropriate boxes, one of the letters ‘ a ’ through ‘ h ’, corresponding to the following scale: a: 1 - 10 nests ; b: 11 - 100 nests ; c: 101 - 500 nests ; d: 501 - 1,000 nests ; e: 1,001 - 5,000 nests ; f: 5,001 - 10,000 nests ; g: 10,001 - 100,000 nests; h: more than 100,000 nests. If trend information is available, add “increasing”, “decreasing” or “stable”. If information on population and trend is not available, simply indicate which species are present at each location by inserting “yes” or “no” in the appropriate boxes.

	Species present at this location?	Number of clutches per year	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)					No
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)					No
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	Annually\ once	2001	stable	b	Yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)					No
Green (Chelonia mydas)					No
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)					No

g) Please estimate the approximate area of adjacent in-water habitat for this site.
☑ 10-15 km2

Please describe the approximate area of the in-water habitat near the site and provide any references and links:
››› Shallow coastal waters with rocks, corals reefs and coral heads.

h) Please fill out the following table for the in-water habitat of the site. Please include information on population number and trend, if available.

	Species present at this location	Are marine turtles monitored in water?	Population number	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?

Flatback (Natator depressus)						
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)						
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	NA	NA	Stable	100-200	no	yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)						
Green (Chelonia mydas)						
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)						

Please provide any references and links:

››› NA anecdotal evidences

i) Please describe the main threats to marine turtles at this site (both at the nesting beach and in the water).

	Unknown	**None**	**Low (rare event)**	**Medium**	**High (common occurrence)**
Other (type in)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Predation by domestic / feral animals (cats, dogs)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Natural threats, disease, predation of nests/nesting females or natural predation at sea	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Sand mining / removal	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Vehicles	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Habitat degradation (e.g. coastal erosion, debris that obstructs nesting etc.)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Artificial lighting (on land or near shore)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Agricultural/urban/tourism development (e.g. construction that disrupts nesting activities)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Inshore oil pollution	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Industrial effluent	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Marine debris (e.g. plastics at sea, flotsam)	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
Boat strikes	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Incidental capture in coastal fisheries	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Egg collection (i.e. direct harvest by humans)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Direct harvest of animals in coastal waters at or near the site	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

Exploitation of nesting females (i.e. direct harvest on land)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

j) What assistance for conservation and management at this site would be useful, including through the IOSEA Capacity-building programme? Please choose from the list below:
☑ Training/ capacity building for researchers and field workers
☑ Training/ capacity building for authorities and/or managers
☑ Training/capacity building for project development, fundraising, execution, evaluation
☑ Technical expertise to enhance conservation or management at the site

Please provide details:

››› Capacity building and outreach programs required.

Sites
Site 3

a) Provide the name, location and length of the site

Name of the site:
››› Jarnain

State/province:

››› Abu Dhabi

Latitude and longitude (middle of the beach or two from either end of the beach):
››› N24.924277 E052.855471

Length:

››› 2 Km

b) Is this an index beach (An index beach is defined as a marine turtle nesting beach, which has been monitored for at least five years using a standardized set of methods and which will continue to be monitored in the long term)?
☑ YES

c) Is this an IOSEA Network Site?
☑ NO

d) Does this site have any other international or national status (e.g. protected area, Ramsar, UNESCO)?
☑ NO

Details:

››› Privately owned island.

e) When did marine turtle monitoring start at this location (year) and how often is monitoring carried out?
››› 2001 with annual monitoring

f) Indicate the species present at this site, estimated number of nests per year for each species by inserting, in the appropriate boxes, one of the letters ‘ a ’ through ‘ h ’, corresponding to the following scale: a: 1 - 10 nests ; b: 11 - 100 nests ; c: 101 - 500 nests ; d: 501 - 1,000 nests ; e: 1,001 - 5,000 nests ; f: 5,001 - 10,000 nests ; g: 10,001 - 100,000 nests; h: more than 100,000 nests. If trend information is available, add “increasing”, “decreasing” or “stable”. If information on population and trend is not available, simply indicate which species are present at each location by inserting “yes” or “no” in the appropriate boxes.

	Species present at this location?	Number of clutches per year	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)					
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)					
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	Annual	2001	increasing	b	yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)					
Green (Chelonia mydas)					
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)					

g) Please estimate the approximate area of adjacent in-water habitat for this site.
☑ 10-15 km2

Please describe the approximate area of the in-water habitat near the site and provide any references and links:
››› Rocky cliffs, rocky plates and rocks/boulders, coral reefs

h) Please fill out the following table for the in-water habitat of the site. Please include information on population number and trend, if available.

	Species present at this location	Are marine turtles monitored in water?	Population number	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)						
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)						
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NO	YES
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)						
Green (Chelonia mydas)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NO	YES
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)						

i) Please describe the main threats to marine turtles at this site (both at the nesting beach and in the water).

	Unknown	None	Low (rare event)	Medium	High (common occurrence)
Other (type in)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Predation by domestic / feral animals (cats, dogs)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Natural threats, disease, predation of nests/nesting females or natural predation at sea	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Sand mining / removal	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Vehicles	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐

Habitat degradation (e.g. coastal erosion, debris that obstructs nesting etc.)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Artificial lighting (on land or near shore)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Agricultural/urban/tourism development (e.g. construction that disrupts nesting activities)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Inshore oil pollution	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Industrial effluent	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Marine debris (e.g. plastics at sea, flotsam)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Boat strikes	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Incidental capture in coastal fisheries	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Egg collection (i.e. direct harvest by humans)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Direct harvest of animals in coastal waters at or near the site	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Exploitation of nesting females (i.e. direct harvest on land)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

j) What assistance for conservation and management at this site would be useful, including through the IOSEA Capacity-building programme? Please choose from the list below:
☑ Training/ capacity building for researchers and field workers
☑ Training/ capacity building for authorities and/or managers
☑ Technical expertise to enhance conservation or management at the site

Please provide details:

››› Capacity building and outreach programs

Sites
Site 4

a) Provide the name, location and length of the site

Name of the site:
››› Deyinnah

State/province:

››› Abu Dhabi

Latitude and longitude (middle of the beach or two from either end of the beach):
››› N24.955534 N052.403034

Length:

››› 3 Km

b) Is this an index beach (An index beach is defined as a marine turtle nesting beach, which has been monitored for at least five years using a standardized set of methods and which will continue to be monitored in the long term)?
☑ YES

c) Is this an IOSEA Network Site?
☑ NO

d) Does this site have any other international or national status (e.g. protected area, Ramsar, UNESCO)?
☑ NO

e) When did marine turtle monitoring start at this location (year) and how often is monitoring carried out?
››› 2004

f) Indicate the species present at this site, estimated number of nests per year for each species by inserting, in the appropriate boxes, one of the letters ‘ a ’ through ‘ h ’, corresponding to the following scale: a: 1 - 10 nests ; b: 11 - 100 nests ; c: 101 - 500 nests ; d: 501 - 1,000 nests ; e: 1,001 - 5,000 nests ; f: 5,001 - 10,000 nests ; g: 10,001 - 100,000 nests; h: more than 100,000 nests. If trend information is available, add “increasing”, “decreasing” or “stable”. If information on population and trend is not available, simply indicate which species are present at each location by inserting “yes” or “no” in the appropriate boxes.

	Species present at this location?	Number of clutches per year	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)					
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)					
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	annual	2004	increasing	b	yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)					
Green (Chelonia mydas)					
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)					

g) Please estimate the approximate area of adjacent in-water habitat for this site.
☑ 10-15 km2

Please describe the approximate area of the in-water habitat near the site and provide any references and links:
››› Rocky cliffs, rocky plates and rocks/boulders, coral reefs

h) Please fill out the following table for the in-water habitat of the site. Please include information on population number and trend, if available.

	Species present at this location	Are marine turtles monitored in water?	Population number	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)						
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)						
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	NA	NA	NA	NA	No	Yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)						
Green (Chelonia mydas)						
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)						

i) Please describe the main threats to marine turtles at this site (both at the nesting beach and in the water).

	Unknown	None	Low (rare event)	Medium	High (common occurrence)
Other (type in)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Predation by domestic / feral animals (cats, dogs)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Natural threats, disease, predation of nests/nesting females or natural predation at sea	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Sand mining / removal	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Vehicles	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Habitat degradation (e.g. coastal erosion, debris that obstructs nesting etc.)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Artificial lighting (on land or near shore)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Agricultural/urban/tourism development (e.g. construction that disrupts nesting activities)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Inshore oil pollution	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Industrial effluent	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Marine debris (e.g. plastics at sea, flotsam)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Boat strikes	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Incidental capture in coastal fisheries	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Egg collection (i.e. direct harvest by humans)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Direct harvest of animals in coastal waters at or near the site	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Exploitation of nesting females (i.e. direct harvest on land)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

j) What assistance for conservation and management at this site would be useful, including through the IOSEA Capacity-building programme? Please choose from the list below:
☑ Training/ capacity building for researchers and field workers
☑ Training/ capacity building for authorities and/or managers
☑ Technical expertise to enhance conservation or management at the site

Please provide details:

››› Capacity building and outreach programs

Sites
Site 5

a) Provide the name, location and length of the site

Name of the site:
››› Arzanah

State/province:

››› Abu Dhabi

Latitude and longitude (middle of the beach or two from either end of the beach):
››› N24.793407 N052.568331

Length:

››› 2 Km

b) Is this an index beach (An index beach is defined as a marine turtle nesting beach, which has been monitored for at least five years using a standardized set of methods and which will continue to be monitored in the long term)?
☑ YES

c) Is this an IOSEA Network Site?
☑ NO

d) Does this site have any other international or national status (e.g. protected area, Ramsar, UNESCO)?
☑ NO

Details:

››› Critical infrastructure hence protected.

e) When did marine turtle monitoring start at this location (year) and how often is monitoring carried out?
››› 2001 with continued annual monitoring

f) Indicate the species present at this site, estimated number of nests per year for each species by inserting, in the appropriate boxes, one of the letters ‘ a ’ through ‘ h ’, corresponding to the following scale: a: 1 - 10 nests ; b: 11 - 100 nests ; c: 101 - 500 nests ; d: 501 - 1,000 nests ; e: 1,001 - 5,000 nests ; f: 5,001 - 10,000 nests ; g: 10,001 - 100,000 nests; h: more than 100,000 nests. If trend information is available, add “increasing”, “decreasing” or “stable”. If information on population and trend is not available, simply indicate which species are present at each location by inserting “yes” or “no” in the appropriate boxes.

	Species present at this location?	Number of clutches per year	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)					
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)					
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	Once a year/ Annual	2001	Stable	b	Yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)					
Green (Chelonia mydas)					
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)					

g) Please estimate the approximate area of adjacent in-water habitat for this site.
☑ 10-15 km2

Please describe the approximate area of the in-water habitat near the site and provide any references and

links:
››› Rocky cliffs, rocky plates and rocks/boulders, coral reefs

h) Please fill out the following table for the in-water habitat of the site. Please include information on population number and trend, if available.

	Species present at this location	Are marine turtles monitored in water?	Population number	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)						
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)						
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NO	YES
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)						
Green (Chelonia mydas)						
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)						

i) Please describe the main threats to marine turtles at this site (both at the nesting beach and in the water).

	Unknown	None	Low (rare event)	Medium	High (common occurrence)
Other (type in)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Predation by domestic / feral animals (cats, dogs)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Natural threats, disease, predation of nests/nesting females or natural predation at sea	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Sand mining / removal	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Vehicles	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Habitat degradation (e.g. coastal erosion, debris that obstructs nesting etc.)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Artificial lighting (on land or near shore)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Agricultural/urban/tourism development (e.g. construction that disrupts nesting activities)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Inshore oil pollution	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Industrial effluent	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Marine debris (e.g. plastics at sea, flotsam)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Boat strikes	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Incidental capture in coastal fisheries	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐

Egg collection (i.e. direct harvest by humans)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Direct harvest of animals in coastal waters at or near the site	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Exploitation of nesting females (i.e. direct harvest on land)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

j) What assistance for conservation and management at this site would be useful, including through the IOSEA Capacity-building programme? Please choose from the list below:
☑ Training/ capacity building for researchers and field workers
☑ Training/ capacity building for authorities and/or managers
☑ Technical expertise to enhance conservation or management at the site

Please provide details:

››› Capacity building and outreach programs

l) 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 attach digital files if necessary.
››› Government and NGO

Sites
Site 6

a) Provide the name, location and length of the site

Name of the site:
››› Sir Bu Naír Island

State/province:

››› Sharjah

Latitude and longitude (middle of the beach or two from either end of the beach):
››› 25°13'29.2"N 54°14'15.7"E - 25°14'48.5"N 54°13'50.0"E

Length:

››› 2.51 km (1.56 mi)

b) Is this an index beach (An index beach is defined as a marine turtle nesting beach, which has been monitored for at least five years using a standardized set of methods and which will continue to be monitored in the long term)?
☑ YES

c) Is this an IOSEA Network Site?
☑ YES

d) Does this site have any other international or national status (e.g. protected area, Ramsar, UNESCO)?
☑ YES

Details:

››› IOSEA, protected area, Ramsar, ISRA (Important Shark and Ray Area), IBA (Important Bird Area)

e) When did marine turtle monitoring start at this location (year) and how often is monitoring carried out?
››› Monitoring of sea turtle nesting is conducted annually since 2012.

f) Indicate the species present at this site, estimated number of nests per year for each species by inserting, in the appropriate boxes, one of the letters ‘ a ’ through ‘ h ’, corresponding to the following scale: a: 1 - 10 nests ; b: 11 - 100 nests ; c: 101 - 500 nests ; d: 501 - 1,000 nests ; e: 1,001 - 5,000 nests ; f: 5,001 - 10,000 nests ; g: 10,001 - 100,000 nests; h: more than 100,000 nests. If trend information is available, add “increasing”, “decreasing” or “stable”. If information on population and trend is not available, simply indicate which species are present at each location by inserting “yes” or “no” in the appropriate boxes.

	Species present at this location?	Number of clutches per year	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)					
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)				0	YES
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	Annually	2012	N\A	c	Yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)					
Green (Chelonia mydas)	Annually	2012	N\A	a	Yes
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)					

g) Please estimate the approximate area of adjacent in-water habitat for this site.
☑ 2-5 km2

h) Please fill out the following table for the in-water habitat of the site. Please include information on population number and trend, if available.

	Species present at this location	Are marine turtles monitored in water?	Population number	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)						No
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)					No	Yes
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)					No	Yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)						No
Green (Chelonia mydas)					No	Yes
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)					No	Unknown

i) Please describe the main threats to marine turtles at this site (both at the nesting beach and in the water).

	Unknown	None	Low (rare event)	Medium	High (common occurrence)
Other (type in)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Predation by domestic / feral animals (cats, dogs)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐

Natural threats, disease, predation of nests/nesting females or natural predation at sea	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Sand mining / removal	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Vehicles	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Habitat degradation (e.g. coastal erosion, debris that obstructs nesting etc.)	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Artificial lighting (on land or near shore)	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Agricultural/urban/tourism development (e.g. construction that disrupts nesting activities)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Inshore oil pollution	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Industrial effluent	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Marine debris (e.g. plastics at sea, flotsam)	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Boat strikes	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
Incidental capture in coastal fisheries	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Egg collection (i.e. direct harvest by humans)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Direct harvest of animals in coastal waters at or near the site	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Exploitation of nesting females (i.e. direct harvest on land)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

j) What assistance for conservation and management at this site would be useful, including through the IOSEA Capacity-building programme? Please choose from the list below:

☑ Training/ capacity building for researchers and field workers
☑ Training/ capacity building for authorities and/or managers
☑ Technical expertise to enhance conservation or management at the site

Please provide details:

››› There are currently some gaps in the current monitoring effort, particularly with respect to marine turtle monitoring at sea.

l) 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 attach digital files if necessary.

››› Yaghmour, F., Samara, F., Ghalayini, T., Kanan, S. M., Elsayed, Y., Al Bousi, M., & Al Naqbi, H. (2022). Junk food: Polymer composition of macroplastic marine debris ingested by green and loggerhead sea turtles from the Gulf of Oman. Science of The Total Environment, 828, 154373.
Yaghmour, F., Al Bousi, M., Al Naqbi, H., Whittington-Jones, B. and Rodríguez-Zarate, C.J., (2021). Junk food: Interspecific and intraspecific distinctions in marine debris ingestion by marine turtles. Marine Pollution Bulletin, 173, p.113009.
Yaghmour, F., Al Bousi, M., Al Naqbi, H., Samara, F. and Ghalayini, T., (2021). Junk food: A preliminary analysis of ingested marine debris by hawksbill Eretmochelys imbricata and olive ridley Lepidochelys olivacea sea turtles (Testudines: Cheloniidae) from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin, 173, p.113073.
Yaghmour, F. (2019). Are oil spills a key mortality factor for marine turtles from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates?. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 149. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2019.110624.

Sites
Site 7

a) Provide the name, location and length of the site

Name of the site:
››› Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary

State/province:

››› Dubai

Latitude and longitude (middle of the beach or two from either end of the beach):
››› 24°56'55"N 54°56'03"E

b) Is this an index beach (An index beach is defined as a marine turtle nesting beach, which has been monitored for at least five years using a standardized set of methods and which will continue to be monitored in the long term)?
☑ YES

c) Is this an IOSEA Network Site?
☑ NO

d) Does this site have any other international or national status (e.g. protected area, Ramsar, UNESCO)?
☑ YES

Details:

››› Ramsar sITE

e) When did marine turtle monitoring start at this location (year) and how often is monitoring carried out?
››› Jebel Ali Wetland Sanctuary monitoring started in 2006 and has continues for every year from March - August

f) Indicate the species present at this site, estimated number of nests per year for each species by inserting, in the appropriate boxes, one of the letters ‘ a ’ through ‘ h ’, corresponding to the following scale: a: 1 - 10 nests ; b: 11 - 100 nests ; c: 101 - 500 nests ; d: 501 - 1,000 nests ; e: 1,001 - 5,000 nests ; f: 5,001 - 10,000 nests ; g: 10,001 - 100,000 nests; h: more than 100,000 nests. If trend information is available, add “increasing”, “decreasing” or “stable”. If information on population and trend is not available, simply indicate which species are present at each location by inserting “yes” or “no” in the appropriate boxes.

	Species present at this location?	Number of clutches per year	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)					
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)					
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	Annually (March August)	2019	stable	b	Yes
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)					
Green (Chelonia mydas)					
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)					

g) Please estimate the approximate area of adjacent in-water habitat for this site.
☑ 15-100 km2

Please describe the approximate area of the in-water habitat near the site and provide any references and links:
››› JAWS reference: https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/2364
Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary located inside Jabal Ali Marine Sanctuary in the Emirate of Dubai, within a priority WWF Global 200 Ecoregion (Ecoregion 232, Arabian sea), the marine area is also recognized by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as an one of the Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) in the ArabianGulf. The coastal and marine area of Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary maintains a healthy and diverse wetland habitat that is a typical representative to the marine environment of the ArabianGulf, e.g coral reef, mangrove, shallow lagoons, seagrass, oyster beds and sandy shorelines. With its diverse habitats, Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary provides shelter for around 539 species of marine fauna and flora. A total of 34 species of corals are recorded in the site, 40% of them are threatened, like the endemic species Acropora arabensis, and other threatened taxa such as the two species of mammals Dugong (Dugong dugon) and Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin (Sousa chinensis), the area also considered important for fish as it provides shelter, feeding ground and a nursery for species such as, Orange-spotted grouper (Epinephelus coioides), Arabian carpet shark (Chiloscyllium arabicum), Whale shark (Chiloscyllium arabicum), Black-tipped reef shark (Carcharhinus melanopterus), all mentioned species are considered threatened by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). More important the area supports the survival of two other threatened species of marine reptiles, Green turtle (Chelonas mydas) and Hawksbill turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata), both species are using the area as a feeding ground. The sandy beaches of Jabal Ali are one of the main breeding sites for the critically endangered hawksbill turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata) in the UAE and the only one in Dubai Emirate.

h) Please fill out the following table for the in-water habitat of the site. Please include information on population number and trend, if available.

	Species present at this location	Are marine turtles monitored in water?	Population number	Trend (decreasing, increasing, stable)	Monitored since (year)	How often is this species monitored?
Flatback (Natator depressus)						
Olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea)						
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata)	Annual-from October of previous year to August of the following year	2006	N\A	Data insufficient	YES	YES
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)						
Green (Chelonia mydas)	Annual-from October of previous year to August of the following year	2006	N\A	Data insufficient	YES	YES
Loggerhead (Caretta caretta)	Annual-from October of previous year to August of the following year	2006	N\A	incidental	YES	YES

i) Please describe the main threats to marine turtles at this site (both at the nesting beach and in the water).

	Unknown	None	Low (rare event)	Medium	High (common occurrence)
Other (type in)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Predation by domestic / feral animals (cats, dogs)	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Natural threats, disease, predation of nests/nesting females or natural predation at sea	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Sand mining / removal	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

Vehicles	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Habitat degradation (e.g. coastal erosion, debris that obstructs nesting etc.)	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Artificial lighting (on land or near shore)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Agricultural/urban/tourism development (e.g. construction that disrupts nesting activities)	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Inshore oil pollution	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Industrial effluent	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Marine debris (e.g. plastics at sea, flotsam)	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Boat strikes	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Incidental capture in coastal fisheries	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Egg collection (i.e. direct harvest by humans)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Direct harvest of animals in coastal waters at or near the site	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Exploitation of nesting females (i.e. direct harvest on land)	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

j) What assistance for conservation and management at this site would be useful, including through the IOSEA Capacity-building programme? Please choose from the list below:

☑ Training/ capacity building for researchers and field workers
☑ Training/ capacity building for authorities and/or managers
☑ Training/capacity building for onboard observer programmes
☑ Training/capacity building for project development, fundraising, execution, evaluation
☑ Scientific equipment and/or technical support
☑ Technical expertise to enhance conservation or management at the site

Please provide details:

››› Capacity building should be conducted for all sectors that are having a stake in the sanctuary, both public and private. Trainings should both incorporate scientific and research approaches as well as policy and management development

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

1.1 BEST PRACTICE APPROACHES TO MINMIZING THREATS

Provide sources of information supporting the above responses, include reports (governmental, departamental, 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 secretarat at 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
		Yes, the effectiveness of this approach has been evaluated through ongoing monitoring and research initiatives. Results indicate a positive impact on marine turtle populations, with an increase in nesting activities in protected areas	The UAE National Plan for the Conservation of Marine Turtles is designed to address the main threats facing marine turtles in the United Arab Emirates, with a particular focus on reducing direct and indirect causes of marine turtle mortality. This comprehensive approach includes: • Habitat protection measures to safeguard nesting beaches and marine environments. • Implementation of fishing gear modifications to reduce bycatch. • Strengthening regulations and enforcement against illegal trade of turtles. • Public awareness campaigns to educate on the importance of marine turtle conservation. • Monitoring and research programs to better understand turtle populations and threats.	UAE National Plan for the Conservation of Marine Turtles
		The effectiveness of this approach is being systematically evaluated through comparative studies and field observations.	The implementation of circle hooks in shark fishing is a strategic approach aimed at reducing the incidental capture of sea turtles in commercial and recreational fisheries. This method specifically addresses and seeks to minimize bycatch, a primary indirect threat to marine turtle populations. By utilizing circle hooks, which are designed to catch in the mouth rather than the stomach or esophagus, the risk of serious injury or mortality to sea turtles accidentally caught is significantly lowered.	Implementation of Circle Hooks in Shark Fishing to Minimize Incidental Sea Turtle Captures
		The effectiveness of this approach is being systematically evaluated through comparative studies and field observations. Yes, the effectiveness of both strategies has been rigorously evaluated through several studies and field observations.	These protocols are aimed specifically at addressing and minimizing the threats posed to marine turtles by commercial fishing practices, namely bycatch, which is a significant indirect cause of marine turtle mortality.	Regulated Drift Net Fishing and Ban on Trawling
		Yes, the effectiveness of these cleanup initiatives has been evaluated, showing significant positive outcomes. Post-cleanup assessments often report: • A notable decrease in the amount of marine debris on beaches and underwater. • Increased community and stakeholder engagement in marine conservation efforts.	The protocol focuses on mitigating pollution and habitat destruction, two significant threats to marine turtles.	Beach Cleaning and Underwater Clean-ups

		Yes, the effectiveness of implementing EIAs for coastal development projects has been periodically evaluated	This protocol aims to proactively mitigate threats to sea turtle nesting and foraging habitats posed by developmental projects along the coastal areas of the UAE. Key objectives include: 1. Assessing the potential impacts of proposed development projects on marine turtle habitats and the wider marine environment. 2. Incorporating mitigation measures into the planning and permitting process to protect marine turtles and their habitats. These measures are designed to minimize habitat destruction, light pollution, and direct human disturbance to nesting beaches. 3. Ensuring sustainable development that balances economic growth with the conservation of marine biodiversity, particularly focusing on the preservation of critical sea turtle nesting and foraging areas. 4. Promoting stakeholder involvement in the environmental permitting process, including input from conservation NGOs, local communities, and marine scientists, to ensure comprehensive protection measures are implemented.	Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for Coastal Development
		This initiative has led to significant conservation outcomes, including the preservation of critical habitats, enhancement of marine biodiversity, and a stable environment for the growth and survival of marine turtles and other marine species	The UAE has established a representative network of Marine Protected Areas, including one with a UNESCO Man and Biosphere (MAB) designation and six marine Ramsar sites. These areas are critical for the protection and conservation of sea turtle habitats, ensuring the preservation of nesting beaches, foraging grounds, and migration pathways.	Establishment of a Network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
		The program has successfully rehabilitated and released numerous turtles, enhancing survival rates and contributing to the overall health of marine turtle populations.	The UAE hosts a dedicated facility for the rehabilitation of sick and injured turtles, part of a broader rescue, rehabilitation, and release program. This initiative provides necessary medical care, rehabilitation, and eventual release of turtles back into their natural habitat, contributing to the survival and recovery of endangered marine turtle populations.	Turtle Rehabilitation Facility
		Effective monitoring has provided essential data for conservation planning, early warning of potential threats, and measures to protect marine turtles, ensuring their long-term survival.	A comprehensive program has been developed to identify and monitor marine turtle threats continuously. This program focuses on tracking changes in marine turtle populations, habitat conditions, and emerging threats, enabling timely intervention and conservation measures.	Identification and monitoring program
		Strengthened international collaboration and adherence to best practices in marine turtle conservation, contributing to the global efforts to protect these species from extinction.	The UAE's commitment to international conventions, including the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), underscores its dedication to banning the hunting and trading of marine turtles. This commitment facilitates knowledge transfer, capacity building, and regional/international cooperation for the conservation of endangered species.	International Conventions Commitment

		Improved understanding of marine biodiversity and threats in Sharjah, enhanced public awareness, and effective response mechanisms for live strandings, contributing to the broader conservation efforts in the region.	The SSRP monitors marine strandings within the Emirate of Sharjah, aiming to determine the causes behind these occurrences. This program is pivotal in expanding knowledge on marine biodiversity, ecology, and threats, and supports the development of evidence-based conservation actions and policies. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in the response and rescue of live strandings	Sharjah Strandings Response Program (SSRP)

1.2 REDUCTION OF INCIDENTAL CAPTURE AND MORTALITY

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

☑ PRESENT

Please provide the information below:

Number of vessels:
››› 437 (as by Dec 2023)

Boat size (range or average):
››› 5-10 meters (fibreglass boats)

Number of trips per year:
››› 12874 (as of Dec 2023)

Mesh size used:
››› Net fishing has been banned since 2019.

Geographic distribution:
››› Arabian Gulf/Arabian Sea

If known, turtle species affected:
››› Green and Hawksbills

Number of bycaught turtles per year:
››› 40-50

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)
☑ Spatial and temporal control of fishing (e.g. seasonal closures of fishing activities)

Details:

››› For certain species of fish, sharks and rays especially during spawning season. That helps in fisheries bycatch.

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
☑ 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:
››› MMO in vessels/boats of oil/energy sector during regular operation and surveys.

The measure is voluntary:

››› : Release of entangled sea turtles and reporting of stranded turtles of different life stages

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

The measure is mandatory under the following regulation:
››› Daily monitoring of wildlife within the MPAs.

The measure is voluntary:

››› Reporting anecdotal and opportunistic sightings

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

Details/future plans:
››› trainings are regularly and annually conducted prior to nesting season and during winter season.

Informative videos, brochures, printed guidelines etc.

Details/future plans:
››› a number of documentaries and info-sheets have been developed

2) Pelagic trawling

a) Fishing effort:
☑ PRESENT

Please provide the information below:

Number of vessels:

››› 437 (as by Dec 2023)

Boat size (range or average):

››› 5-10 meters (fibreglass boats)

Number of trips per year:

››› 12874 (as of Dec 2023)

Mesh size used:

››› BANNED

Geographic distribution:
››› Arabian Gulf/Arabian Sea

Number of bycaught turtles per year:

››› 40-50

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)
☑ Spatial and temporal control of fishing (e.g. seasonal closures of fishing activities)

3) Set nets

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

Type and description:

››› Gargoor and beach seine

a) Fishing effort
☑ NONE

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

Details:

››› Fishermen will release turtles caught in beach seines without adhering to any specific protocol

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.

››› Through Sharjah International Conservation Forum for Arabian Biodiversity (SICFAB), the UAE have shared with other countries in the region its experience in establishing and managing marine turtle rehabilitation centres including technical assistance includes training in veterinary care, rehabilitation techniques, and successful release strategies.

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 United Arab Emirates (UAE) has aligned its national fisheries management policies with international conservation standards, including UN General Assembly Resolution 46/215, which calls for a moratorium on the use of large-scale driftnets. In response, the UAE has regulated its Drift net fishing in order to mitigates impacts on marine turtles through equipment specifications, seasonal bans on the use of drift nets, limiting drift nets use to specific areas.

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

1.3 ADDRESSING HARVEST OF, AND TRADE IN, MARINE TURTLES

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

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

b) Egg consumption

☑ NO

c) Fat and oil consumption

☑ NO

d) Traditional medicine

☑ NO

e) Shell

☑ NO

f) Making of tortoise shell products (bekko)

☑ NO

1.3.3 Does your country have active legislation to prohibit direct harvest and domestic trade in marine turtles, their eggs, parts and products?

☑ YES

If yes, please provide details (title/date) of the relevant legislation, as well as any exemptions (e.g. for traditional use) under that legislation and comment on effectiveness of the legislation in terms of enforcement.

If more rows are required, please contact the secretarat at iosea@un.org

	Legislation title	Legislation date	Is traditional use allowed under this legislation?	Is the legislation enforced?	What are the challenges?
		yes	no	1999	Federal Law No. (23) of year 1999 concerning Exploitation, Protection and Development of the Living Aquatic Resources in the waters of the state of the United Arab Emirates
		yes	no	1999	Federal Law No. (24) of year 1999 concerning protection and development of the environment

		yes	no	2002	Federal Law No. (11) of year 2002 concerning Regulating and Controlling the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora

1.3.6 Please describe the ILLEGAL harvest of marine turtles and eggs in your country by answering the questions below.

a) Does illegal harvest of marine turtles occur in your country?
☑ NO

1.3.7 Which of the following adverse economic incentives are encouraging illegal take of marine turtles in your country?
☑ Not Applicable

1.3.8 Has your country taken any measures to try to correct these adverse incentives?
☑ NOT APPLICABLE (no adverse economic incentives exist)

1.3.9 Are there touristic activities linked in marine turtles in your country?
☑ YES

If yes, please indicate which type:

	No	Yes
a) Nesting turtle observation	☐	☐
b) Hatching releases	☐	☑
c) Swimming/ snorkeling activities	☐	☑
Other (please describe)	☐	☐

1.3.10 Are there any standard and government-certified protocols to ensure that touristic activities do not harm turtles and/or hatchlings?
☑ NO

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:
››› The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has established comprehensive mechanisms to identify and curb domestic and international illegal trade routes involving marine turtles, their eggs, and derivatives. These mechanisms are part of the UAE's commitment to wildlife conservation and its obligations under international conventions like CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora).

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:
››› Data is held by CITES

1.3.14 Are there any compliance and/or trade issues (either domestic or international) that your country would like to raise at the upcoming IOSEA MOS or otherwise through the IOSEA Secretariat?
☑ NO

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:

››› there is regular monitoring of nesting areas

Implemented at the sites described in question 0.2 (name the sites, where this applies):
››› Sir Bu Nair Island and Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary

b) Nesting beach protection (patrolling)

☑ YES

Details:

››› In general all nesting areas are relatively off limits to the public, so accessibility is limited and regulated

Implemented at the sites described in question 0.2 (name the sites, where this applies):
››› this is applicable to all sites mentioned in 0.2

c) Predator control

☑ YES

Details:

››› Fox traps are deployed every nesting season and are observed to be effective.

Implemented at the sites described in question 0.2 (name the sites, where this applies):

››› Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary

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

Details:

››› Garghours are placed on top of nests to prevent poaching from foxes.

Implemented at the sites described in question 0.2 (name the sites, where this applies):
››› Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary

e) Vehicle access restrictions

☑ YES

Details:

››› Sir Bu Nair Island has regulations pertaining to driving over nesting beaches
Accessibility along the beaches of Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary are regulated and are not open to the public

Implemented at the sites described in question 0.2 (name the sites, where this applies):
››› Sir Bu Nair Island and Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary

f) Regular removal of debris / clean-up programmes
☑ YES

List recent clean-up programmes/references and links:
››› Physical removal of debris from nesting beaches is regularly conducted prior to the nesting season.

Implemented at the sites described in question 0.2 (name the sites, where this applies):
››› Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary

g) Has re-vegetation of dunes at nesting beaches been carried out, using native vegetation?
☑ NO

h) Building location design regulations (coastal protection)

☑ YES

Details:
››› As part of a variety of mitigation measures, regulations have been developed including set-back lines, which have been imposed on various coastal development projects to mitigate impact on turtle nesting activity

Implemented at the sites described in question 0.2 (name the sites, where this applies):
››› ALL

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

Details:

››› As part of a variety of mitigation measures, regulations have been developed to mitigate the impact of lighting on turtle nesting activity.

Implemented at the sites described in question 0.2 (name the sites, where this applies):
››› ALL

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.):
››› Nesting beaches within the country are all mostly within protected areas, for areas that do not fall within the boundaries of protected area have strict regulations applied to ensure the protection of these areas.

1.4.2 To what extent is egg relocation practiced in your country (including relocation to hatcheries)?
☑ Egg relocation is practiced on 5-49% of nesting beaches

Please provide the reasons:
››› There is egg relocation in some areas as a measures to minimize the mortality and protection of eggs. The relocation of eggs only happens to nests that are going to be inundated due to them being in the lower part of the beach or nests on beaches that are to be reclaimed.

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?
☑ NO

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:
››› Whilst a comprehensive national monitoring program for turtle nesting beaches is in place, it does not independently assess the nest and beach management regulations

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:
››› Marawah Marine Biosphere Reserve (MMBR) established in 2001
Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary established in 1998
Sir Bu Naír Island established in 1999
Alqurm Protected Area (Khor Kalba) established in 2012

References and links:

››› Sir Bu Naír Island - https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/2191
Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary - https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/2364
Alqurm Protected Area (Khor Kalba) - https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/2364

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

Details:

››› The country has a regular and long term monitoring of coastal water quality program. There is also the Sharjah Strandings Response Program, that implement continuous monitoring for the levels of marine debris ingestion and entanglement by sea turtles. See References:

References and links:

››› Yaghmour, F., Samara, F., Ghalayini, T., Kanan, S. M., Elsayed, Y., Al Bousi, M., & Al Naqbi, H. (2022). Junk food: Polymer composition of macroplastic marine debris ingested by green and loggerhead sea turtles from the Gulf of Oman. Science of The Total Environment, 828, 154373.
Yaghmour, F., Al Bousi, M., Al Naqbi, H., Whittington-Jones, B. and Rodríguez-Zarate, C.J., (2021). Junk food: Interspecific and intraspecific distinctions in marine debris ingestion by marine turtles. Marine Pollution Bulletin, 173, p.113009.
Yaghmour, F., Al Bousi, M., Al Naqbi, H., Samara, F. and Ghalayini, T., (2021). Junk food: A preliminary analysis of ingested marine debris by hawksbill Eretmochelys imbricata and olive ridley Lepidochelys olivacea sea turtles (Testudines: Cheloniidae) from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin, 173, p.113073.
Yaghmour, F., Pereira, J., Whittington-Jones, B., Bousi, M., García-Nuñez, S., & Budd, J. (2018). Marine debris ingestion of green sea turtles, Chelonia mydas, (Linnaeus, 1758) from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 135. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2018.07.013
Yaghmour, F., (2020). Anthropogenic mortality and morbidity of marine turtles resulting from marine debris entanglement and boat strikes along the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine pollution bulletin, 153(153), p.111031.
Yaghmour, F., Bousi, M., Whittington-Jones, B., Pereira, J., García-Nuñez, S & Budd, J. (2018). Impacts of the traditional baited basket fishing trap “gargoor” on green sea turtles Chelonia mydas (Testudines: Cheloniidae) Linnaeus, 1758 from two case reports in the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 135. 521-524. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2018.07.059.

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

☑ YES

Use the text box to elaborate on your response.

Details:
››› Federal Law No. (23) of year 1999 concerning Exploitation, Protection and Development of the Living Aquatic Resources in the waters of the state of the United Arab Emirates, Federal Law No. (24) of year 1999 concerning protection and development of the environment. Toxins and their levels in marine fauna are monitored in the tissues of stranded marine fauna through the Sharjah Strandings Response Program

References and links:

››› Yaghmour, F. (2019). Are oil spills a key mortality factor for marine turtles from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates?. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 149. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2019.110624.
Yaghmour, F., Samara, F., Torres, C.A.N., Gulland, F., Budd, J., Koedooder, M., Wilson, C. and Natoli, A., 2023. Analysis of persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals in mysticetes from the United Arab Emirates. Regional Studies in Marine Science, p.103276.
Yaghmour, F., Els, J., Maio, E., Whittington-Jones, B., Samara, F., El Sayed, Y., ... & Mupandawana, M. (2022). Oil spill causes mass mortality of sea snakes in the Gulf of Oman. Science of The Total Environment, 825, 154072.
Samara, F., Alam, I.A. and Yaghmour, F., (2021). Combined d-SPE-QuECHERS-Cold Bath Extraction and GC/MS for the Determination of 24 Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons in Stranded Green Sea Turtles, Chelonia Mydas (Linnaeus, 1758). Polycyclic Aromatic Compounds, pp.1-14.
Yaghmour, F., Samara, F., and Alam, I. (2020). Analysis of polychlorinated biphenyls, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and organochlorine pesticides in the tissues of green sea turtles, Chelonia mydas, (Linnaeus, 1758) from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin, 160, p.111574.

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:

››› • Coral reefs restoration programs using the micro fragmentation techniques.
• Developing the artificial Caves
• Relocation of corals
• Coral gardening at some water front infrastructures
• Restoration of seagrass meadows has been launched (2024) as a pilot study to develop a guideline for long-term and large-scale restoration program.

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

☑ YES see below

If yes, give details (location, duration, effectiveness, lessons learned, future plans etc.)

Details/future plans:
››› There are programs to rehabilitate mangroves in general. In executing these programs coordination is done to ensure that nesting beaches are not compromised. Efforts have focused on mangrove sapling plantation primarily in coastal areas of the mainland. Mangroves in the UAE includes natural as well as planted mangrove, represented by one species, Avicennia marina, where variety of wildlife use mangroves and the associated back waters. Mangroves appear to have increased in the last 30- 40 years due to plantation and increased public awareness and conservation efforts. Mangroves area cover in UAE more than 180.0 km2.

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 have been programs to recover degraded sea grass habitats carried out by the private sector and other authorities in UAE. there is also a long-term and large scale seagrass restoration program being planned.

OBJECTIVE III: IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF MARINE TURTLE ECOLOGY AND POPULATIONS THROUGH RESEARCH, MONITORING AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE

3.1 STUDIES ON MARINE TURTLES AND THEIR 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.

3.1.1 Please list monitoring programmes that are currently in place or are being planned in your country.

Please enter details in the following table. If more rows are required, please contact the secretarat at iosea@un.org

	Site geographical name (refer to questions 0.1 and 0.2)	Species genetic stock	Start year	Duration of the monitoring programme	Nature of monitoring	Population trend	Is this a protected area?
	Yes	Stable	Field survey	One season (March to August)	2001	Hawksbill	Bu Tinah
		Stable	Field survey	One season (March to August)	2001	Hawksbill	Zirku
		Increasing	Field survey	One season (March to August)	2001	Hawksbill	Jarnain
		Increasing	Field survey	One season (March to August)One season (March to August)	2004	Hawksbill	Deyinnah
		Stable	Field survey	One season (March to August)	2001	Hawksbill	Arzanah
	This is implemented throughout Sharjah waters	unknown	Monitoring of live and dead standings to gain insight on threats and species ecology	continuous	2015	All species of sea turtle within Sharjah Waters	Sharjah Emirate waters
	Yes	unknown	Annual flipper tagging, blood biochemistry, disease screening, ecotoxicology, external evaluation, morphometrics and DNA sampling,	continuous	2018	Green sea turtles	Khor Kalba
	Yes	-	Reconnaissance and habitat (seagrass) monitoring and surveys	-	-	Green and Hawksbill	Jabal Ali Wetland Sanctuary

3.1.2 Has you country undertaken an evaluation of its marine turtle monitoring programmes?

☑ YES

Please indicate when the evaluation took place and describe lessons learned.

Details:
››› Internal review done. Surveys made more frequently and relocation of nests in lower zones were undertaken within 12 hours of nesting.

3.1.3 Which of the following methods have been or are being used to identify migration routes of turtles?

Use the text boxes to provide details

a) Tagging (flipper)

☑ YES

Details (e.g., list species, duration of programme, start and end year):

››› Hawksbill and Green turtle.

b) Satellite tracking

☑ Yes

References and links:

››› Whittington-Jones, B., Rodríguez-Zarate, C.J., Yaghmour, F., Budd, J. and Pereira, J., 2023. Juvenile Green Turtle (Chelonia mydas) Migration from Kalba, UAE, to Masirah, Oman. Marine Turtle Newsletter, (166), pp.20-24.

c) Genetic studies

☑ YES

Details (e.g. species, genetic stock):

››› Green and Hawksbill

d) Other (list and provide details)

Details (e.g. species, genetic stock):
››› Stranding research, mostly relating to threats

References and links:

››› Yaghmour, F., Samara, F., and Alam, I. (2020). Analysis of polychlorinated biphenyls, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and organochlorine pesticides in the tissues of green sea turtles, Chelonia mydas, (Linnaeus, 1758) from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin, 160, p.111574.
Yaghmour, F., (2020). Anthropogenic mortality and morbidity of marine turtles resulting from marine debris entanglement and boat strikes along the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine pollution bulletin, 153(153), p.111031.
Yaghmour, F. and Al Naqbi, H., (2020). First record of Columbus crab Planes minutus (Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura: Grapsidae) Linnaeus, 1758 for the northwestern Indian Ocean. Marine Biodiversity Records, 13(1), pp.1-4.
Yaghmour, F. and Jarwan, M., (2020). Rare Observation of Hawksbill Turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata) Nesting Activity in Khor Fakkan, Eastern Coast of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. Marine Turtle Newsletter, 161, pp.31-32.
Yaghmour, F. (2019). Strandings of Olive Ridley Sea Turtle, Lepidochelys olivacea Eschscholtz, 1829 from the Coastal Waters of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Turtle Newsletter. 158. 27-29.
Yaghmour, F. (2019). Are oil spills a key mortality factor for marine turtles from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates?. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 149. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2019.110624.
Yaghmour, F., Pereira, J., Whittington-Jones, B., Bousi, M., García-Nuñez, S., & Budd, J. (2018). Marine debris ingestion of green sea turtles, Chelonia mydas, (Linnaeus, 1758) from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 135. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2018.07.013.
Yaghmour, F., Bousi, M., Whittington-Jones, B., Pereira, J., García-Nuñez, S & Budd, J. (2018). Impacts of the traditional baited basket fishing trap “gargoor” on green sea turtles Chelonia mydas (Testudines: Cheloniidae) Linnaeus, 1758 from two case reports in the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 135. 521-524. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2018.07.059.

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:
››› The satellite tagging program affirms areas that implicates habitats which could lead to further studies. Such understanding then would imply management approaches.

References and links:

››› Whittington-Jones, B., Rodríguez-Zarate, C.J., Yaghmour, F., Budd, J. and Pereira, J., 2023. Juvenile Green Turtle (Chelonia mydas) Migration from Kalba, UAE, to Masirah, Oman. Marine Turtle Newsletter, (166), pp.20-24.

3.1.5 Is the use of traditional ecologial knowledge in research being promoted?
☑ UNSURE

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.

g) Other

Details (aim of study, results):
››› • National action plan for the conservation of marine turtle
• Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) turtle monitoring reports including aerial surveys data.
• Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI) Blue Carbon Report
• Emirates Nature/Worldwide Fund for Nature (EN/WWF) Satellite Tagging Programme report and two scientific publications:
• Annual Report of the Environmental Protection Authority of Sharjah (EPAA)
• Emirates Marine Environmental Group (EMEG) Technical Reports
• Research by Dubai turtle rehabilitation center

References and links:
››› • Pilcher, N. J., Antonopoulou, M., Perry, L., Abdel-Moati, M. A., Al Abdessalaam, T. Z., Albeldawi, M., … Willson, A. (2014). Identification of important sea turtle areas (ITAs) for hawksbill turtles in the Arabian region. Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology, 460, 89–99. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jembe.2014.06.009
• Pilcher, N. J., Perry, L., Antonopoulou, M., Abdel-Moati, M. A., Al Abdessalaam, T. Z., Albeldawi, M., … Willson, A. (2014). Short-term behavioural responses to thermal stress by hawksbill turtles in the Arabian region. Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology, 457, 190–198. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JEMBE.2014.04.002
• Natoli, A., Phillips, K. P., Richardson, D. S., & Jabado, R. W. (2017). Low genetic diversity after a bottleneck in a population of a critically endangered migratory marine turtle species. Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology, 491, 9–18. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jembe.2017.01.009
• Robinson, D. P., Jabado, R. W., Rohner, C. A., Pierce, S. J., Hyland, K. P., & Baverstock, W. R. (2017). Satellite tagging of rehabilitated green sea turtles Chelonia mydas from the United Arab Emirates, including the longest tracked journey for the species. PLoS ONE, 12(9), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0184286
• Yaghmour, F., Al, M., Whittington-jones, B., Pereira, J., García-nuñez, S., & Budd, J. (2018). Marine debris ingestion of green sea turtles , Chelonia mydas , (Linnaeus , 1758) from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin, 135(July), 55–61. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2018.07.013
• Ross, J.P. and Barwani, M.A. 1982. Review of sea turtles in the Arabian area. In: Bjorndal, K.A. ed. Biology and conservation of Sea Turtles. Washington, D.C. Smithsonian Institute Press, pp. 373-382.
• Al-Ghais, S.M. 2009. Nesting of Hawksbill Turtles (Eretmochelys imbricata) on the islands of the Arabian Gulf. Zoology in the Middle East. Online. 48 pp. 43-48. [Accessed 8 July 2017]. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09397140.2009.10638365
• Pilcher, N.J.1999. The hawksbill turtle Eretmochelys imbricata in the Arabian Gulf. Chelonian Conservation Biology. 3(2) 312-317.
• Yaghmour, F., Samara, F., and Alam, I. (2020). Analysis of polychlorinated biphenyls, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and organochlorine pesticides in the tissues of green sea turtles, Chelonia mydas, (Linnaeus, 1758) from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin, 160, p.111574.
• Yaghmour, F., (2020). Anthropogenic mortality and morbidity of marine turtles resulting from marine debris entanglement and boat strikes along the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine pollution bulletin, 153(153), p.111031.
• Yaghmour, F. and Al Naqbi, H., (2020). First record of Columbus crab Planes minutus (Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura: Grapsidae) Linnaeus, 1758 for the northwestern Indian Ocean. Marine Biodiversity Records, 13(1), pp.1-4.
• Yaghmour, F. and Jarwan, M., (2020). Rare Observation of Hawksbill Turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata) Nesting Activity in Khor Fakkan, Eastern Coast of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. Marine Turtle Newsletter, 161, pp.31-

32.
• Yaghmour, F. (2019). Strandings of Olive Ridley Sea Turtle, Lepidochelys olivacea Eschscholtz, 1829 from the Coastal Waters of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Turtle Newsletter. 158. 27-29.
• Yaghmour, F. (2019). Are oil spills a key mortality factor for marine turtles from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates?. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 149. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2019.110624.
• Yaghmour, F., Pereira, J., Whittington-Jones, B., Bousi, M., García-Nuñez, S., & Budd, J. (2018). Marine debris ingestion of green sea turtles, Chelonia mydas, (Linnaeus, 1758) from the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 135. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2018.07.013.
• Yaghmour, F., Bousi, M., Whittington-Jones, B., Pereira, J., García-Nuñez, S & Budd, J. (2018). Impacts of the traditional baited basket fishing trap “gargoor” on green sea turtles Chelonia mydas (Testudines: Cheloniidae) Linnaeus, 1758 from two case reports in the United Arab Emirates. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 135. 521-524. 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2018.07.059.
• Whittington-Jones, B., Rodríguez-Zarate, C.J., Yaghmour, F., Budd, J. and Pereira, J., 2023. Juvenile Green Turtle (Chelonia mydas) Migration from Kalba, UAE, to Masirah, Oman. Marine Turtle Newsletter, (166), pp.20-24.

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?

☑ NO

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.

a) Reproductive biology (including any of the following: nesting data, hatchling survival, nest protection, recruitment, etc.)

☑ NO

b) Genetic characterization

☑ NO

c) Migratory and dispersal routes

☑ YES

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

››› Satellite tagging program conducted in THE ARABIAN GULF REGION BY EN/WWF

d) Other biological and ecological aspects

☑ YES

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

››› Feeding ecology and epibiota being investigated by Environment and Protected Area Authority in Sharjah.

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:
››› Data on important turtle habitats helps motivate for the designation and expannsion of protected areas.

Research pertaining to threats prompts mitigation action such as beach cleaning and regulating single use plastic products and zoning out marine vessels

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?

☑ NO

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

☑ YES

Details (year when more recent collaboration took place, project name, links):

››› In 2019 the country conducted The UAE National Red List project which aimed to study and evaluate the status of living species in the country, including mammals, birds, herpetofauna, bony fish, cartilaginous fish, corals, and vascular plants, in addition to calculating the red list index (RLI) for these categories by 2021 according to IUCN methodology. The UAE national red list project evaluated the risk of extinction for 1,167 species in the country and identifies endangered species. The reports can be accessed via the following link: https://www.moccae.gov.ae/en/knowledge-and-statistics/knowledge-details.aspx?q=eyJjIjoiMTk3IiwibSI6InJlcCIsInAiOiJCaW9kaXZlcnNpdHkiLCJiYyI6ImsiLCJtaSI6MzA4fQ==#page=1

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

☑ every 5 years

Details:

››› During IOSEA MoS.

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):

››› Within the country, meetings with stakeholders conducted as part of knowledge share, rescue and rehabilitation support and awareness prior to nesting season (involving citizen science and community).

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:
››› Beach clean-ups, awareness programs. Sign boards on nesting beaches informing on the importance of marine turtle habitats. The Sir Bu Nair festival, for example, is held annually and does also include public education on marine turtles

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

Details/future plans:
››› - Brochures and posters specific to various stakeholders such as students, general public and fishermen.
- Marine school programs visit to sea turtle foraging habitats.
- Regular media interactions and reports.
- Annual turtle release program (rescued and rehabilitated) by Dubai Rehabilitation centre.
- Information is shared through Social media channels of relevant organization working on conservation of turtles in the UAE.

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

☑ Policy makers
☑ Fishing industry
☑ Local/Fishing communities
☑ Tourists
☑ Media
☑ Teachers
☑ Students
☑ Military, Navy, Police
☑ Scientists

4.14 Have any community learning centres or information centres been established in your country?

☑ YES

Details/future plans:

››› Khor Kalba Mangrove Centre educates the public on marine turtles, marine turtle habitats and also include marine turtle rehabilitation pond.

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
☑ Tourists
☑ Media
☑ Teachers
☑ Students
☑ Scientists
☑ NGOs
☑ Enforcement personnel

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

Details, examples:

››› using traditional anecdotes on interactions with sea turtles

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

Details, examples:
››› Yes, In rescue and transfer of stranded turtles, reporting incidences and nesting

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:
››› : Yes, developers, corporates, NGOs (EN-WWF). EPAA/Emirates Nature collaboration on sea turtle tracking project in 2019.

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 c**ooperation for addressing the issues listed below?

a) Illegal fishing in territorial waters

☑ LIMITED

b) Incidental capture by foreign fleets in territorial waters

☑ LIMITED

c) Enforcement/patrolling of territorial waters

☑ IMPORTANT

d) Illegal fishing in EEZ

☑ LIMITED

e) Incidental capture by foreign fleets in EEZ

☑ LIMITED

f) Enforcement/patrolling of EEZ

☑ LIMITED

g) Harvest exploitation of turtles and eggs

☑ LIMITED

h) Illegal trade in turtle parts and products

☑ LIMITED

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

☑ ESSENTIAL

j) Marine pollution, including oil spills and marine debris

☑ ESSENTIAL

k) Training / capacity-building

☑ ESSENTIAL

l) Alternative livelihood development

☑ NOT AT ALL

m) Characterisation of turtle populations/genetic stocks

☑ IMPORTANT

n) Identification of migration routes

☑ ESSENTIAL

o) Tagging / satellite tracking

☑ IMPORTANT

p) Habitat studies
☑ ESSENTIAL

q) Genetic studies

☑ IMPORTANT

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:
››› • Biology and ecology of marine turtles.
• Assessment and monitoring methods for marine turtles.
• Management plan development.
• Education and awareness development.
• Marine Turtle by-catch assessment.

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:
››› 2024 Sharjah International Conservation Forum for Arabian Biodiversity workshop included presentations and training workshop on handling sea turtle strandings.

5.3.3 Specifically in relation to capacity-building for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats, describe any partnerships with universities, research institutions, training bodies and other relevant organisations, national, regional, and/or international.

Details/future plans:
››› There is currently ongoing collaborations between EPAA with American University of Sharjah on researching toxic loads in sea turtle strandings.

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:
››› https://u.ae/-/media/Information-and-services/Env-and-energy/NPOA-for-the-conservation-of-marine-turtle-FINAL.pdf

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:
››› Detailed in the action plan https://u.ae/-/media/Information-and-services/Env-and-energy/NPOA-for-the-conservation-of-marine-turtle-FINAL.pdf

References and links:

››› Detailed in the action plan https://u.ae/-/media/Information-and-services/Env-and-energy/NPOA-for-the-conservation-of-marine-turtle-FINAL.pdf

5.4.2 Which are the main threats to marine turtles in your country per species and the most urgent management activites to address them?

Please list up to 5 corresponding activities from the IOSEA Conservation and Management Plan (**CMP**).
››› Detailed in the action plan https://u.ae/-/media/Information-and-services/Env-and-energy/NPOA-for-the-conservation-of-marine-turtle-FINAL.pdf

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:

››› regular review of policies and laws is a standard practice in the UAE

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

Details:
››› none

5.4.5 Does your country have legislation that explicity 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:
››› An EIA is required for developments likely to impact the environment, however, there are no specifications pertaining to sea turtles and sea turtle habitats

References and links:

››› Federal Law 24 of 1999

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 UAE advocates non-signatory states to encourage joining the IOSEA MOU.

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

☑ NO

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.

6.2.2 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)
››› national funding including governmental and private sector as part of their CSR activites

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?

☑ NO

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 secretarat at iosea@un.org

	Name of the agency	Role in the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats
	Research, conservation and restoration of sea turtle habitats.	Environmental Agency – Abu Dhabi
	Research, conservation, designation of protected areas and restoration of sea turtle habitats.	Dubai Municipality
	Designation of protected areas, regulation of fisheries and trespassing in protected area boundaries, provide guidance to reduce negative impacts of coastal developments on marine habitats and research, monitoring, public education, rescue rehabilitation and release of sea turtles	Environment and Protected Areas Authority - Sharjah
	Research, conservation and as well as provide guidance on marine habitats and research restoration of sea turtle habitats.	Emirates Nature WWF

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:
››› Not applicable