



# Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

*Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)*

## Report of the Conference on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia

**Convened by the Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)**

*Manila, 19-23 June 2001*

### BACKGROUND

The conference was convened as a follow-up to the first and second intergovernmental meetings held in Perth, Australia, from 19-22 October 1999 and in Kuantan, Pahang, Malaysia, from 11-14 July 2000, respectively, which had developed and adopted the text of the *Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia* under the aegis of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). The meeting had as its primary objective the further development and conclusion of the text of a Conservation and Management Plan (CMP), which would become an integral part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The meeting was attended by delegates from 21 States, as well as representatives of inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, as follows (list of participants at Annex 1):

States represented were: Australia, Cambodia, Comoros, France, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Maldives, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, and Viet Nam.

Inter-governmental organizations represented were: Secretariat for Eastern African Coastal Area Management (SEACAM); Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, Marine Fisheries Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD/SEAFDEC); and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Non-governmental organisations represented were: Smithsonian Institute, Conservation & Research Center; University of Wollongong, Center for Maritime Policy; World Wildlife Fund - United States; World Wide Fund for Nature - Philippines; and IUCN - The World Conservation Union.

### **Agenda Item 1: Welcoming remarks of the Host Government and Interim Secretariat**

The Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Hon. Mr. Heherson T. Alvarez, delivered the keynote address emphasizing the challenges of conserving a life form that had existed on earth for millions of years. The Deputy Executive Secretary of CMS, Mr. Douglas Hykle, highlighted the progress made in recent years and thanked the DENR for having undertaken to host the conference. He also expressed appreciation to the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom, whose financial contributions had facilitated the organization of the meeting.

## **Agenda Item 2: Adoption of the agenda and work programme**

The meeting was officiated by DENR Undersecretary Hon. Mr. Demetrio Ignacio. The provisional agenda and work programme (Annexes 2 and 3) proposed by the interim secretariat were adopted without amendment, apart from the addition of a new item of business concerning arrangements for the Advisory Committee.

## **Agenda Item 3: Reports from the sub-regions / Introductory statements**

Presentations covering an 'Overview of turtle species status, threats and trends' and 'Sea turtle conservation B cooperation and consensus' by invited resource persons and scientific advisors were used to highlight the current state of knowledge of marine turtle populations in the Indian Ocean / South-East Asian region and potential conservation approaches.

Delegates were invited to report on recent progress from a sub-regional perspective. The Malaysian representative highlighted the ASEAN/SEAFDEC meeting in Malaysia in 2000, at which a commitment was made to supply tags and training to ASEAN countries to promote research and monitoring efforts in that region. The representative of the United Arab Emirates reported on a regional workshop held in Abu Dhabi and Ras Al-Khaimah in November 2000 at which the MoU was promoted as being a valuable agreement to strengthen existing instruments within the region, and for the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats in general. The invited resource person, Dr. Kartik Shanker, described developments in the northern Indian Ocean since a workshop held there in 1997, including the publication of a newsletter on sea turtle conservation and management for the Indian sub-continent (*Kachhapa*). The representative of the Secretariat for Eastern African Coastal Area Management (SEACAM) described the work of that regional programme, especially in relation to coastal zone management and capacity-building, and its relevance to marine turtle conservation.

Several delegates made opening statements on behalf of their Governments in support of the development of the Memorandum of Understanding. The representative of Australia hoped the CMP would be ambitious and challenging, given the MoU's current non-legally binding status, and indicated that Australia intended to sign the Memorandum in Manila. Australia hoped the MoU would become a legally-binding instrument in the near future, and offered support for the development of the secretariat. The representative of the United States reiterated that country's continuing support of the MoU process and indicated it would provide technical and financial resources where possible to promote its implementation. The representative of Mauritius indicated its unwavering support for the MoU process and indicated his country would sign the MoU once the final documents had been reviewed by the appropriate government authorities. The representative of the United Kingdom highlighted that country's active participation in, and support for, the Convention on Migratory Species, noting that it had just signed a new CMS Agreement that aims to conserve albatrosses and petrels of the southern hemisphere. (The texts of the opening addresses and other statements are reproduced in Annex 4.)

The representatives of Mauritius and the United Kingdom also made the following statements. Mauritius recorded its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago. In response, the United Kingdom stated that it did not have any doubt of the United Kingdom's sovereignty over the British Indian Ocean Territory. Copies of all statements made by both delegations and the reservation made by Mauritius on the United Kingdom statement were provided to the meeting. Both delegations participated fully in the meeting in the development of the Memorandum of Understanding.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Report on official translations of the Memorandum of Understanding**

The interim Secretariat first drew attention to a correction to be made to paragraph 2 of the preamble of the English language version of the MoU, concerning the title of the *African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources*. This minor amendment was met with general agreement. The interim Secretariat also reported that, at the request of the French authorities, the signature of delegate who signed the Final Act of the Kuantan negotiation meeting would be removed, since the delegate had not been officially representing the Government of France.

The interim Secretariat reported that, as agreed at the Kuantan meeting, it had arranged for French and Arabic translations of the Memorandum of Understanding, with assistance from the delegations of France, Malaysia and the United Arab Emirates. After a final review by other participants at the meeting, the French version was considered accurate and acceptable as the official French text of the Memorandum of Understanding.

The Arabic-speaking participants indicated, after examination and incorporation of some amendments, that the Arabic version would need a final review by legal advisors. The representative of the United Arab Emirates offered to have this carried out by the end of July 2001, in consultation with the representative of Oman.

Following the adoption of the Conservation and Management Plan prior to the close of the meeting, the representative of France offered to arrange a French translation of the CMP within 2-3 months; and the representative of Oman undertook to prepare and circulate for comment an Arabic translation within 2-3 weeks.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Review and Finalization of the draft Conservation and Management Plan**

Three working groups were organized to develop the Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) through which the Memorandum of Understanding would be implemented. The three groups, each supported by two facilitators and a rapporteur, dealt with the following thematic areas: (1) reduction of mortality and habitat destruction; (2) research, monitoring and awareness; and (3) regional cooperation and implementation.

Following extensive working group and plenary session discussions, the delegates agreed by consensus the content and format of the CMP. The CMP conforms with a matrix format adopted by other CMS instruments, and contains six major objectives with 105 specific actions organized in 24 programmes. The Plan contains two columns, not yet filled in, that are intended to be used in future to prioritize actions and to track implementation progress to date.

In the course of deliberating the CMP, the issue of the legal status of the Memorandum of Understanding was revisited, in particular when discussing one of the actions that proposed developing a timetable for transforming the MoU into a legally-binding instrument. Several delegations indicated that they hoped the MoU would become a legally-binding document in the near future, while others indicated this might not be possible or welcomed by their Governments at this stage. It was agreed, finally, that the first meeting of signatory States would consider the development of a timetable for possible amendment of the legal character of the MoU.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Definition of sub-regional groupings**

With a view to promoting efficient implementation of the MoU and its CMP, discussions were held on the definition of sub-regional groupings that took into account geographical, political, linguistic and cultural criteria, and which might provide useful frameworks within which signatory States could work cooperatively to implement the provisions of the MoU. It was noted that some countries might wish to be associated with two different sub-regions. The meeting did not attempt to formally establish any such groupings (and no consideration was given to

placement of overseas territories), but rather identify which groupings might be appropriate, for further review and discussion in a subsequent meeting.

Australia intended to pursue a dialogue with Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, neither of which was represented at the present meeting, to consider avenues for cooperation among those three States. Discussions among delegates from ASEAN nations indicated that States in the ASEAN group concerned with marine turtle conservation (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam) wished to retain their current arrangement, based on an existing sub-regional accord, but would consider the option of including Australia and Papua New Guinea into a sub-regional grouping for the purposes of this MoU, pending consultation with the ASEAN Secretariat in Bangkok. The representative of Australia welcomed this approach and looked forward to working cooperatively with the ASEAN members.

Delegates from island and coastal States in the Western Indian Ocean region agreed in principle that a sub-regional grouping might include: Comores, Madagascar, Mauritius, France (Reunion), United Republic of Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, and possibly Djibouti, but noted the absence of representatives from the last six nations. It was suggested that the UNEP office in Nairobi could communicate this proposal to the missing Governments for further discussion, and possibly fulfill the role of sub-regional coordinator, since it provided the secretariat of the Nairobi Convention. The Secretariat for Eastern African Coastal Area Management (SEACAM) and the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) were also mentioned as possible facilitators for regional cooperation.

Preliminary discussions among delegates from island and coastal States in the Northern Indian Ocean region suggested that a further sub-regional grouping might include Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Pakistan, with sub-regional coordination possibly facilitated through the IUCN Marine Programme Office in Sri Lanka.

Delegates from Oman and the United Arab Emirates indicated that two possible sub-regional groupings for the Northwest Indian Ocean and the adjacent seas already existed and whose secretariats might be able to act as sub-regional coordinators. These were the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (PERSGA) which includes Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen; and the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) which includes Bahrain, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

#### **Agenda Item 7: Prioritization of key areas of work, and further development of initiatives at the sub-regional level**

As much of the meeting was taken up by the elaboration of the Conservation and Management Plan, insufficient time remained to begin to prioritize the 105 actions identified therein. The meeting recognized that this exercise needed to be done at an early stage, however, and agreed that the CMP should include a column for this purpose. This would serve also to highlight those activities of greatest importance and urgency for a given sub-region.

#### **Agenda Item 8: Secretariat Arrangements**

The meeting reviewed and endorsed the draft Terms of Reference for the permanent Secretariat of the Memorandum of Understanding (Annex 5). Concern was expressed by some delegates as to whether a two-person staff would be able to carry out all the duties set forth in the terms of reference. It was agreed that the secretariat might increase in size in the future, subject to the availability of resources.

A proposal (CMS/MT-IOSEA.2/Doc.7) was tabled by the representative of UNEP, offering to host the permanent Secretariat at the UNEP regional office (UNEP/ROAP) in Bangkok, Thailand. The UNEP representative indicated that technical and scientific links would be generated

between the MoU, CMS and UNEP which would be synergistic and mutually beneficial. The key points of the offer included the provision of office space and furnishings, direct office expenses and secretarial functions as needed. In addition, UNEP would support the Secretariat with a cash grant of USD 25,000 over three years. These arrangements would be subject to review after three years.

UNEP also indicated it would endeavour to source a second staff member through its Junior Professional Officer (JPO) programme to assist the Coordinator, as well as carrying out other duties for the UNEP/ROAP office, on a 60/40 time share basis. The representative of UNEP explained that this time-sharing arrangement would be more attractive to potential JPO donor countries (typically from Europe) who would wish to broaden the exposure of their JPOs; at the same time it would serve to justify the provision of secretarial support by UNEP/ROAP at no cost to the MoU Secretariat. In response to a concern that was raised, she confirmed that the MoU Co-ordinator would not be expected to carry out work on behalf of UNEP/ROAP. The proposal was amended to make more explicit the proposed arrangements for the JPO, and was re-circulated. The meeting agreed by consensus to accept the UNEP offer to co-locate the Secretariat in Bangkok under these terms (Annex 6).

The Government of Australia pledged funding support amounting to AUD 20,000 per annum for three years, subject to subsequent review after that period, to help defray the secretariat costs. The representative of the United States reiterated his Government's continued commitment to the development and implementation of the MoU, and indicated it would continue with funding and other technical support for the secretariat, the organization of meetings, and project assistance. He hoped the conclusion of the MoU would serve to attract further pledges of support, both financial and in-kind. The interim secretariat added that early confirmation of these pledges was a prerequisite for UNEP to be able to establish the Coordinator post, and noted that CMS might also be approached to provide some financial support, in case of need.

### **Agenda Item 9: Arrangements for the Advisory Committee**

A proposal was tabled by the delegation of the United States outlining suggested terms of reference for an Advisory Committee, as called for in the text of the MoU adopted in Kuantan. Given that the size, composition and terms of appointment of the Advisory Committee were intended to be agreed upon at the first meeting of the signatory States, the US delegation felt that an initial discussion in Manila of suggested terms of reference might help those deliberations. As the proposal called for nominations for members of the Advisory Committee to be made 60 days prior to the first meeting of the signatory States, it considered that a general agreement on the spirit of the proposed terms of reference might assist signatory States in identifying potential nominees prior to that meeting.

Several amendments to the draft proposal were suggested, including: strengthening of the role of the Advisory Committee in providing advice on legal issues in addition to scientific and technical issues, and ensuring equitable distribution of membership with regard to gender and sub-regional groupings. It was agreed that the Advisory Committee membership should be independent and remain small (up to 10 persons), but the Committee should seek outside expertise on an *ad hoc* basis in instances where particular expertise was required. Signatory States might also be invited to participate as observers at regular meetings of the Committee. All signatory States would be invited to submit nominations for Committee members, and a mechanism would be needed to select from among them to arrive at an appropriate number and a suitable balance of expertise. A revised text of the working document was re-circulated with a view to stimulating further reflection and comment before the first meeting of signatory States (Annex 7).

## **Agenda Item 10: Identification of potential project proposals and further sources of funding for implementation**

The meeting was informed of a number of marine turtle conservation projects in progress or under development, some of them described in detail in the documentation provided to the meeting. Delegates were made aware of:

- \$ a project in Sindh Province, Pakistan, valued at 5 million Rp. concerning turtle eggs and hatchling survival, and the development of legislation and management through establishment of education and research centres in that country;
- \$ a USD 10.5 million, GEF funded marine turtle biology and conservation project currently under development, focusing on Iran and Pakistan;
- \$ in India, a major Olive Ridley Conservation Project through UNDP (coming to an end in 2001), and a new PDF-B programme to be supported by GEF UNDP, as well as a UNDP coral reef project in the Andaman and Nicobar islands of relevance to marine turtles.

The Convention on Migratory species was co-sponsoring a national training workshop to be held in Viet Nam in July 2001 for Vietnamese and Cambodian experts; a final report was expected soon from a CMS-funded turtle tagging and by-catch project in Sri Lanka; and CMS was working with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre and Dr. Colin Limpus on the development of an Indian Ocean database and Web-based turtle resource.

The US delegation indicated that the National Marine Fisheries Service was concerned by long-line fishing by-catch and was looking for solutions, and greater international involvement. It intended to support a workshop to exchange information and heighten awareness internationally in the near future. The Deputy Executive Secretary reported that CMS had recently approved a contribution of up to USD30,000 towards the same initiative.

Dr. Colin Limpus offered the continuing support of the development and implementation of the MoU by the Queensland Department of Environment, which would allow him to continue his CMS Scientific Council advisory role in the process.

## **Agenda Item 11: Organization and provisional schedule of future activities**

The interim Secretariat introduced document CMS/MT-IOSEA.2/Doc.8, which included an indicative timeline of activities over the next 3-4 years. It was hoped that the MoU Secretariat could be established during the first quarter of 2002, in view of the fact that a number of delegations considered it important to hold the first meeting of signatory States in the second quarter of 2002. That meeting would pave the way for the establishment of the Advisory Committee.

Dr. Nicolas Pilcher drew attention to the international Sea Turtle Symposium, which would be held in Asia for the first time, in 2003, and invited proposals for workshops or meetings to carry forward the objectives of the MoU at that forum.

A revised provisional timetable appears at Annex 8.

## **Agenda Item 12: Any other business**

The meeting endorsed the text of a press release to communicate the results of the meeting to a wider audience (Annex 9).

### **Agenda Item 13: Official opening for signature of the Memorandum of Understanding**

At the close of the meeting, representatives of the following States<sup>1</sup> signed the Memorandum of Understanding: Australia, Comores, Islamic Republic of Iran, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, and United States of America. (The text of the Memorandum of Understanding, including the Conservation and Management Plan, is reproduced at Annex 10.)

The interim secretariat announced that, having secured these eight signatures, the Memorandum of Understanding would come into effect for those countries on 1 September 2001. Arrangements would be made to obtain further signatures in the coming months, in the offices of the UNEP/CMS Secretariat in Bonn (which acts as Depositary for the MoU), through individual arrangements with diplomatic missions in Germany, or the occasion of appropriate meetings taking place in the Indian Ocean / South-East Asia region or elsewhere.

### **Agenda Item 14: Closure of the meeting**

After closing statements and customary exchange of courtesies, the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Hon. Mr. Heherson T. Alvarez, declared the conference closed at 1700 on 23 June 2001.

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<sup>1</sup> The representative of Viet Nam, whose credentials were found to be in order, indicated that he had decided to arrange for the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed later by a higher authority, in order to emphasize the importance his country attached to the instrument. *Secretariat note*: Viet Nam signed the Memorandum of Understanding on 24 July 2001, becoming the ninth signatory State.



**CONFERENCE ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF  
MARINE TURTLES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA**

*Manila (Philippines), 19 - 23 June 2001*

Annex 1

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**CONFERENCE ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF  
MARINE TURTLES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA**

*Manila (Philippines), 19 - 23 June 2001*

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Annex 2

**Agenda**

1. Welcoming remarks of the Host Government and Interim Secretariat
2. Adoption of the agenda and work programme
3. Reports from the sub-regions / Introductory statements
4. Report on official translations of the Memorandum of Understanding
5. Review and finalization of the draft Conservation and Management Plan
6. Definition of sub-regional groupings
7. Prioritization of key areas of work, and further development of initiatives at the sub-regional level
8. Secretariat arrangements
9. Arrangements for the Advisory Committee
10. Identification of potential project proposals and further sources of funding for implementation
11. Organization and provisional schedule of future activities
12. Any other business
13. Official opening for signature of the Memorandum of Understanding
14. Closure of the meeting



**CONFERENCE ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF  
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Annex 3

**Work Programme**

**Tuesday, 19 June 2001**

Arrival of delegates

Afternoon /Evening      Registration of delegates  
   Submission of contributions requiring photocopying

**Wednesday, 20 June 2001**

Morning

9.00-12.30      Agenda items 1, 2, 3, and 4  
   Agenda item 5 (introduction in plenary, establish thematic working groups)  
   Presentations: (resource persons)

Afternoon

14.00-17.30      Agenda item 5: Working groups on the Conservation and Management Plan (CMP)  
   (elaboration of programmes and detailed activities)

Evening              Available for films, informal consultations

**Thursday, 21 June 2001**

Morning

9.00-12.30      Agenda item 5: Reports of working groups on the Conservation and Management  
   Plan, plenary discussion  
   Agenda item 6: Definition of sub-regions

Afternoon

14.30\*-17.30      Agenda items 8 (Secretariat arrangements) and 9 (Funding sources)  
   Agenda item 5: Presentation in plenary of revised Conservation and Management Plan  
   Agenda items 7 and 5:  
   Review of implementation progress to date and prioritization of future activities  
   (in sub-regional working groups)

Evening              Continuation of working groups (as necessary)

**Friday, 22 June 2001**

Morning                    Excursion for delegates (work of secretariat to finalise the CMP)

Afternoon

14.00-17.30            Presentation and discussion (in plenary) of final Conservation and Management Plan  
Agenda item 9: Arrangements for the Advisory Committee

**Saturday, 23 June 2001**

Morning

9.00-12.30            Agenda item 9: Arrangements for the Advisory Committee  
Funding sources  
Agenda item 11: Future activities

Afternoon

14.00-                Review of draft report of the meeting  
Agenda item 12  
Agenda item 13

Closure of the meeting

*Lunch breaks: 12.30 - 14.00 (unless otherwise noted)*

*Coffee breaks: 10.30 - 11.00 and 15.30 - 16.00*



## Keynote Address

Honorable Heherson T. Alvarez  
Secretary  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Westin Philippine Plaza  
20 June 2001

Thank you so much Undersecretary Ignacio. In being introduced to you as if you could cast your votes here in the Philippines. At some future time perhaps you may come to witness our elections. We have rowdy political activities lately. But this convention indeed is a landmark convention. It sets us apart from many of the rowdy activities that we have had, including the Abu Sayaff affair in the South. And I feel proud that I am part of this. It is a way of getting away from the hurly burly of politics.

Mr. Douglas Hykle, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Convention on Migratory Species. Mr. Richard Hepburn of the United Kingdom, Mr. David Balton from the United States, Friends and leaders in the conservation movement. It is indeed a landmark effort. There are only 16 major nesting sites in the world for green turtles remaining. This lifeform has preceded us for millions of years, I believe, a hundred million years. They have survived the Jurassic era and have successfully waded through the process of evolution until we came into the scene.

Man began to threaten these beautiful creatures. We are now challenged to come up with some response to the threat to the lives of these great turtles. There are six species, I believe, which we seek to be able to conserve: the Loggerheads, the Olive ridley, Hawksbills, the Leatherbacks, Flatbacks and the Green turtles. But the challenge is so awesome because the habitats of these lifeforms is spread throughout hundreds if not thousands of kilometers of marine territory.

We have come to an initial understanding that has been helpful now that the Turtle Islands Heritage Protected Area has been worked out between Malaysia and ourselves. We have had some difficult politics with Malaysia but not for the issue of turtle conservation. We are gradually building the capacity, the sensitivity and intelligence to be able to track down the migratory paths and life cycles of these creatures. In this Conference on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia, we will strengthen our ability to continue to protect them.

Perhaps those who have preceded us on the face of the earth could be protected, in the same manner that we seek to protect our own species. I think that there are some devices and some technologies that have been developed to mark their migratory paths, nesting habitats, their movements from thousands of kilometers across great oceans. But what would be helpful in this undertaking is that we are making a statement that could be an enlightening approach on the manner of responding to our fragile earth.

We have a lot of problems conserving species. We have problems in cleaning our air, cleaning our rivers and in protecting our great forests. But, if in this conference we come up with a lucid and clear idea on how to be able to preserve these great turtles, we shall have made the statement that all our communities all over the world has shown itself to be more enlightened, more competent and more sensitive.

It would have shown its reverence for life. And if it cares for antedeluvian lives, then we do care and show our capacity to protect our own communities. Our political treaties are not as extensive. We are having some difficulties in the Kalayaan Islands and some other sparsely distributed islands in the South Seas. If scientists and conservationists show the way that we can sit down to agree to protect life, then we can sit down among politicians like myself, to protect our communities.

Thank you.

## Welcoming Address

Douglas Hykle  
Deputy Executive Secretary  
Convention on Migratory Species

Honourable Secretary Alvarez,  
Undersecretary Ignacio  
Director Bayabos, Mr. Balton, Mr. Hepburn  
Distinguished delegates,

I take great pleasure in the fact that this conference is being held in the Philippines, which has been a Party to the Convention on Migratory Species for many years. It is fitting that this conference, the third in a series, is being held in Manila, where a pioneering symposium on sea turtle conservation was organized some 8 years ago.

By some measures, efforts since then to conserve sea turtles have not advanced as far or as quickly as we would have liked: the threats are just as pervasive, and turtle numbers continue to decline. On the other hand, some innovative programmes have emerged in the region, government-NGO partnerships have been created, and above all there is an undeniable appreciation of the magnitude and scope of the problems facing sea turtles. Equally important, there has been a recognition, over the past three years at least, that these problems need to be addressed at all levels of integration, including at the regional level.

As those of you who have followed the process will know, Environment Australia hosted a first consultation for countries of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia in November 1999. This was followed by a second intergovernmental meeting in Malaysia last year, which resulted in agreement on the text of a practical Memorandum of Understanding among Range States and other concerned nations.

Having laid that important foundation stone, we can now turn our attention at this meeting to completing the unfinished business. That is to say, to finalise a workable Conservation Plan to accompany the MoU, specifying in more detail the programmes and activities that need to be undertaken in order to achieve the goal of conserving sea turtles and their habitats.

Fortunately, we are not starting from scratch. Far from it. Much of the groundwork has already been laid, through sub-regional workshops held around the Indian Ocean and in South-East Asia over the past five or six years. Indeed, later today we will be hearing about a fruitful workshop organized in the United Arab Emirates last November, the results of which will feed into the deliberations this week.

Moreover, this meeting is not being held in isolation, as regional activities are also being organized on a large scale in other parts of the world. The Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention has now entered into force in the Americas. Through the Convention on Migratory Species, under whose auspices the Indian Ocean-South-East Asian Memorandum of Understanding has been concluded, a similar instrument has been developed for the Atlantic Coast of Africa. Indeed, those of you who have studied the proposal for the Conservation Plan will see that its structure borrows heavily from the African model. (It is one, I might add, has been used successfully by CMS for other species groups for a number of years now.)

Certainly, we have a many important issues to consider this week: among other things, we hope to finalise the Conservation Plan, to agree on a arrangements for a secretariat to help coordinate activities under the MoU, to discuss prospects for securing longer-term financing of our activities, and last but not least, to open the MoU for signature by Governments willing to demonstrate to the world community their lasting commitment to sea turtle conservation.

Before closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you, Secretary Alvarez, for lending the authority of your office to this important initiative and for taking time from your busy schedule to be with us today. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has assembled an impressive team to assist with the organization of our meeting. I wish to recognize also the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom, whose generous financial contributions have supplemented those of CMS and have made possible the holding of this conference. I look forward to working with you all this week, and to toasting our hard work and success on Saturday evening.

## **Opening Statement of Mauritius**

Mauritius fully supports the initiative to conserve and manage marine turtles and their habitats in the Indian Ocean and South-east Asia.

Mauritius will extend its collaboration in the implementation of efforts to conserve and manage marine turtles and their habitats at the sub regional level. It will decide to sign the Memorandum of Understanding after taking all its implications into consideration. In fact marine turtles are found in the waters of Mauritius which extends over an area of 1.9 million km<sup>2</sup> from the south of Mauritius to the north of the Chagos Archipelago and from east of Rodrigues Island to the west of Tromelin and Agalega Islands.

I am in this context submitting to this conference an official statement on the definition of the state of Mauritius as mentioned in our laws in the annexures (1 & 2) for reference.

## Opening Statement of the United States

Mr. Chairman, fellow delegates and observers, good morning.

The Government of the United States is pleased to be here in Manila for this vital meeting to develop a Conservation and Management Plan to be appended to the Memorandum of Understanding that we drafted last year in Kuantan, Malaysia.

On behalf of the U.S. Delegation, I would like to express my appreciation to the Government of the Philippines for hosting this meeting and for their tremendous efforts in making these wonderful facilities available to us. I would also like to commend the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species for their excellent preparations for this meeting. All these efforts will certainly help this Conference achieve its goals.

The U.S. Delegation recognizes that we do not come from this region. The United States has no territory in the Indian Ocean or Southeast Asia, nor do U.S. nationals carry out significant fisheries or other economic activities in the region that directly affect sea turtles. As we have said from the outset of the process to develop the MOU, we believe that it is ultimately up to the nations of the region to determine what type of regime should be created to conserve these endangered species.

Why are we here, then?

We are here because of our firm desire to see that sea turtles are saved from extinction in all oceans and regions. We know from our collaborative work with nations in the Inter-American region that effective conservation of these highly migratory species requires concerted multilateral action. No single nation, acting on its own, can hope to conserve sea turtles properly.

We are also here because we have some technical and financial resources to offer in the highly worthwhile effort to develop -- and to implement -- the MOU and Conservation and Management Plan for this region.

Finally, we are here because we have some experience to share in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement for sea turtle conservation. As many of you are undoubtedly aware, the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles entered into force last month. The United States actively participated in the negotiation of that Convention. Along with the other parties to that treaty, we are looking forward to using its innovative mechanisms to promote effective conservation of sea turtles throughout the Western Hemisphere.

We are aware, of course, that the Inter-American Convention cannot simply be transferred or copied in its entirety to become the multilateral regime for sea turtle conservation in this region. Each region is unique, with its own challenges and opportunities. Such diversity underscores our view that each region needs to decide for itself what type of regime it wants.

We are nevertheless gratified that some elements of the Inter-American Convention have found expression in the MOU developed last year in Kuantan. We hope that other elements of the Inter-American Convention will also find expression in the Conservation and Management Plan that we will consider this week, including:

- \$ Firm commitments to reduce sea turtle mortality in all fisheries, including through the mandatory use of turtle excluder devices in trawl fisheries;

- \$ An effective prohibition on the directed take of sea turtles and their eggs, with any exceptions to this prohibition limited to meet only pressing human needs;
- \$ Strong protections for sea turtle habitat;
- \$ Reinforcement of the prohibitions on international trade in sea turtles (and their eggs, parts and products) that arise under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora;
- \$ The use of the best available scientific information in making decisions under the MOU and its Conservation and Management Plan;
- \$ Active reliance on the Advisory Committee that is to be established pursuant to the MOU in making such decisions;
- \$ Coordination of efforts to implement the MOU at all levels of society, from grass-roots initiatives at the local level to government-to-government cooperation at the international level.

Even if all of these elements are incorporated into the Conservation and Management Plan, there of course will be at least one significant difference between the Inter-American Convention and the MOU. The former is a treaty under international law that creates legally binding obligations for the United States and the other parties to it. By contrast, the MOU, in accordance with the terms set by the Kuantan meeting, is non-binding, at least initially.

The United States would have preferred the MOU to have been developed as a binding agreement from the outset. In our view, a legally binding agreement would be the strongest framework ensuring the effective long-term conservation of marine turtles of this region. As it is, we hope that the period of time that the MOU will remain non-binding will be as short as possible. We therefore urge that, at some appropriate time in the near future **B** perhaps one year from the adoption of the Conservation and Management Plan **B** the signatories reconvene to consider the legal status of the MOU with a view to converting it into a legally binding agreement.

The United States looks forward to productive discussions this week. Let me assure you, Mr. Chairman, that you will have the full cooperation of my delegation as you guide us through these important deliberations.

## **Opening Statement of the United Kingdom**

WEDNESDAY, 20 JUNE 2001

On behalf of the UK Government and the UK Overseas Territory of the British Indian Ocean Territory, the new Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which was established on 8 June and its statutory nature conservation agency the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, are delighted to be represented here today at the Conference on the Conservation and management of marine turtles of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia. We would like to express our appreciation to Dr Reynaldo Bayabos for his welcoming remarks and to the Secretary of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources the Honourable Heherson Alvarez for his welcoming and inspiring keynote address this morning. We would also wish to thank the Government of the Philippines and the Convention's Secretariat for hosting this meeting and for all their work in preparing for it.

The UK Government is committed to the aims of the Convention and has sought to play an active part in a number of the individual species-related agreements concluded so far which affect the metropolitan UK including the European Bats, ASCOBANS and African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreements. Officials from the former Department of the Environment have Chaired a number of the Conferences of the Parties to CMS and last year in Bristol we chaired the third meetings of the Parties to both the Bats and ASCOBANS Agreements. For a period of 6 years the United Kingdom was Chair of the Convention's Standing Committee and Dr Galbraith from one of the Government's conservation agencies Scottish Natural Heritage currently Chairs the Convention's Scientific Committee.

Some of the United Kingdom's Overseas Territories are key sites for migratory species and the Government is determined to ensure that conservation measures and action is directed on both the national and international stage. In the UK all marine turtles are protected under UK legislation. In March this year the Government launched the Marine Conservation Society's Marine Turtle Conservation Programme which aims to deliver an Action Plan to protect turtles both in UK waters and the Overseas Territories.

Over recent years there has been a welcome growth in the Convention's membership. This has been accompanied by many positive developments on existing Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding. Further important progress has been made towards the conclusion of new initiatives on seabirds, cetaceans and, of course, marine turtles. We place great importance in participating as fully as we can in all international efforts and meetings which aim to protect migratory species found on our Overseas Territories. On this I am pleased to inform you that yesterday in Canberra, Australia the United Kingdom signed the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels which covers a number of its southern hemisphere Overseas Territories. This is a tribute to, and example of how close co-operation and determined efforts by Governments, wildlife Conventions and both national and international non-governmental bodies can all work together to reach an agreement for the benefit of migratory species.

The meeting here this week will hopefully be able to conclude the Memorandum and the Conservation and Management Plan. We recognise the Memorandum as a important framework through which all States can work together to conserve and replenish depleted marine turtle populations for which they share responsibility. I can assure you that the UK will hope to contribute constructively to all the discussions we will be holding over the next few days. We wish the Conference success.

I have also noted the opening statement by the delegate of Mauritius concerning the British Indian Ocean Territory. I will need to consult further on this and would like to seek your agreement to return to this later in the meeting.



**Statement of IUCN B the World Conservation Union  
Manila, 19-23 June, 2001**

On behalf of IUCN B the World Conservation Union, let me first of all state that taking part in the deliberations over the last few days has been very valuable and has provided an insight into all the valuable work that is being carried out by the States, organizations and dedicated individuals. The meeting has also been an important eye-opener in terms of what is still needed, and a further justification for the development of a Conservation Management Plan for Marine Turtles in this region.

The meeting in Perth brought suggested that non-state parties, such as non-governmental and international organisations also be considered signatories to the MOU. IUCN was specifically suggested in this respect. The Union has already supported marine turtle conservation initiatives in the region. This relates to specific technical support in a variety of turtle-related activities, mainly through the active support by the IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group (MTSG). The work carried out by MTSG is also reflected in the technical support and substantial advice provided by group members. A number of these individuals also work in some of IUCN's membership organizations, comprising States, governments and non-governmental organisations. The dedicated efforts and the recognition of the MTSG at the global level suggest that it might be a good candidate for consideration as a component of the Advisory Committee to support the MOU and Conservation Management Plan.

At the national level, IUCN has functioned as Secretariat and has worked in close collaboration with the Department of Wildlife Conservation and stakeholders in the development of the National Marine Turtle Action Plan in Sri Lanka. Similarly, a recent project involving IUCN, WWF and TRAFFIC will be launched in July in Viet Nam. It will focus on the development of a National Marine Turtle Action Plan for Viet Nam and will further strengthen the support and capacity for implementation of the MOU through the development of technical and policy capacity.

In the East African region, IUCN has been instrumental in the development of a strategy for marine turtle conservation in the Western Indian Ocean, and the Union is also involved in a progress review after the Sodwana Declaration. We hope that these experiences may prove valuable to other countries in the region.

IUCN has been working extensively with the Global Environmental Facility in a number of projects. In Sri Lanka, an integrated collaborative management project with a substantial marine turtle *in situ* conservation programme has been approved recently. It will be implemented through the Coast Conservation Department, and will be implemented in the near future. In Viet Nam, the Ministry of Fisheries in collaboration with the Khanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee and IUCN launched the first Marine Protected Area in the country this month. GEF/WB and Danida support this effort.

As you may know, IUCN is not a funding body *per se*, but would be in a position to leverage funding from bilateral and multilateral donors for specific activities identified in the MOU, and building on existing initiatives. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the committee which discussed the Northern Indian Ocean sub-regional grouping for proposing IUCN in Sri Lanka and the Marine Programme for taking on a sub-regional secretariat function, an opportunity we will be looking into in consultation with the countries of South Asia, and provided that adequate resources are available to undertake this function. So, although I cannot commit specific funding at this point, I would like to reaffirm IUCN's commitment to a continuation of technical advisory capacity as well as country and regional secretariat support to ensure that the Conservation and Management Plan of the MoU is successfully implemented.

Thank you.

## Closing Statement of the United States

Mr. Chairman, fellow delegates and observers:

The Government of the United States welcomes the effort made by this Conference to develop a Conservation and Management Plan for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Your leadership, Mr. Chairman, contributed manifestly in this undertaking. We are also grateful to the CMS Secretariat, and to the other delegations and the advisors, whose spirit of cooperation and hard work have brought us to this point.

The United States is also pleased to have been among those States to sign the MOU at the close of this Conference. We encourage all States in the region, as well as others States that may be in a position to contribute resources or expertise that may promote the implementation of the MOU, to sign the MOU as soon as possible.

At the same time, Mr. Chairman, we must recognize that the development and signing of the MOU is not the end of the endeavor. Like the marine turtles that have been the focus of our work, the MOU must now embark on a long journey. The MOU is merely a document, a non-binding one at that. By itself, the MOU cannot save marine turtles from extinction. Only through its effective implementation can the MOU contribute to this goal. That, in turn, requires concerted action by States, organizations and individuals to change the status quo.

For the status quo, as we know all too well, has not been good for marine turtles. The status quo has caused precipitous declines in the populations of marine turtle species in this region. Things need to change in the water and on nesting beaches in order to improve prospects for these endangered species. For example, we continue to question the reluctance of some States in the region to take measures that will obviously help marine turtles, such as requiring the use of turtle excluder devices by trawl fishing vessels or even to include a direct reference to TEDs in the Conservation and Management Plan.

We must also recognize that, even as the implementation effort moves forward, the MOU cannot be regarded as a final document. This is true in at least two respects. First, as many delegations have noted, the Conservation and Management Plan is a rolling document that is to be revised, updated and improved at meetings of the signatory States in light of advances in research, experience and technology related to the conservation of marine turtles. Among other things, we hope that the signatory States will soon agree to include in the Conservation and Management Plan a specific requirement for trawl fishing vessels to use TEDs.

Second, it is the view of the United States that the MOU is not satisfactory as a non-binding instrument. Some other delegations appear to share our view on this vital matter. We therefore renew our proposal that at an appropriate time in the near future perhaps one year from now the signatory States reconvene to consider the legal status of the MOU with a view to converting it into a legally binding agreement.

For these reasons, Mr. Chairman, we regard the negotiations on the MOU as on-going. We believe that this Conference has made a very positive contribution in this regard and that all participants can take a large measure of pride in this accomplishment. For our part, we intend to follow up our signature of the MOU with continued technical and financial support in the enduring effort to conserve marine turtles in this region of the world.

In closing, the U.S. Delegation would like to offer its sincere thanks to the Government of the Philippines for its hospitality and extraordinarily fine performance as the host of this Conference.



**CONFERENCE ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF  
MARINE TURTLES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA**

*Manila (Philippines), 19 - 23 June 2001*

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Annex 5

**Terms of Reference for the MoU Secretariat**

**1. Facilitate and promote implementation of co-operative activities by the Signatory States**

- plan and organize Meetings of the Signatory States;
- provide secretariat services to the Advisory Committee and any further subsidiary working groups, and assist them in the performance of their duties;
- give effect to the policy decisions of the Meeting of the Signatory States by developing and integrating strategic objectives into an annual secretariat work programme and medium-term plan;
- act upon recommendations adopted by the Advisory Committee;
- draw attention of the Signatory States to matters relating to implementation;
- formulate and give effect to proposals to improve implementation of the Memorandum, as well as seeking support for national and international marine turtle conservation-related projects;
- identify and negotiate potential external funding from Governments, development aid agencies, foundations and other sources;
- advise on and facilitate the eventual transformation of the Memorandum into a legally-binding instrument, if/when requested by the Signatory States.

**2. Ensure essential co-ordination with other sub-regional bodies that serve to implement the specific provisions of the Conservation and Management Plan**

- promote and facilitate, to extent possible within available resources, the establishment of sub regional co-ordination mechanisms where these do not already exist;
- transmit, as appropriate, to the Governments and bodies responsible for sub-regional coordination, notifications, reports and other information relevant to the implementation of the Memorandum and Conservation and Management Plan (CMP);
- identify areas of complementarity and possible synergy among the sub-regions, and recommend appropriate collaborative actions.

**3. Coordinate the activities of the Memorandum and CMP with the work of other intergovernmental bodies and with the activities of relevant non-governmental organizations**

- exchange information, correspond and interact regularly with IGOs and NGOs working on issues related to the conservation of marine turtles and the habitats on which they depend;
- catalyse and support the development by other organizations of project activities that serve to further the aims of the Memorandum;
- represent the Memorandum of Understanding at international, regional and national meetings in order to promote its objectives in wider fora.

4. **Establish working relationships with the secretariats of the UNEP Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans that encompass the waters of the Memorandum of Understanding; and the secretariats of global biodiversity-related conventions administered by UNEP**
  
5. **Encourage non-member States to become signatories to the Memorandum or to cooperate in its activities and foster closer cooperation with distant water fishing nations**
  
6. **Communicate the progress made in implementing the Memorandum**
  - prepare reports on the work of the secretariat for submission to the Meeting of the Signatory States and the Advisory Committee;
  - distribute copies of the national reports received pursuant to the Memorandum;
  - arrange for the preparation of periodic overviews of progress in implementation.
  
7. **Undertake public awareness-raising through the media, both nationally and internationally**
  - oversee the development of a range of information materials suitable for distribution to a wider audience, reflecting the aims and spirit of the Memorandum;
  - ensure the appropriate compilation and dissemination of information materials prepared by Governments and other organizations, in order to maximize the benefits of experience-sharing;
  - develop and consult proposals for special international events aimed at promoting marine turtle conservation.
  
8. **Provide specific advisory/support services to related organizations (in exchange for financial or other assistance during the initial phase of the MoU secretariat's operation)**



## United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署  
 PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE  
 ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

Rev. 22.06.01

### **Proposal for Secretariat Arrangements for the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia, concluded under the auspices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)**

The Secretariat of the CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia (hereafter referred to as the CMS/MoU Secretariat) will be established in accordance with the following terms of reference:

#### Co-location arrangements

1. The CMS/MoU Secretariat will be co-located with the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (UNEP/ROAP) and the East Asian Seas Regional Co-ordinating Unit (EAS/RCU) in Bangkok, Thailand. The relationship between the three organizations will foster reciprocal technical, scientific and other assistance, while respecting the separate identity and functional responsibilities of each entity.
2. The CMS/MoU Secretariat is expected to comprise, initially, a Co-ordinator remunerated through the voluntary contributions of the signatory States and, if necessary, other funding sources. In addition, UNEP and CMS will endeavour to secure for a period of at least two years a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) through UNEP's JPO programme. Part of the JPO's time (about 40%) would be allocated to tasks not directly related to the MoU, in exchange for provision by UNEP/ROAP of general administrative support to the MoU Secretariat. However, provision of some administrative assistance to the Co-ordinator is not contingent on the prior recruitment of a JPO.
3. For the first three years of the CMS/MoU Secretariat's operation, UNEP will provide adequate office space and furnishings required for the operation of the CMS/MoU Secretariat, as well as any maintenance or other costs related to the premises. In addition, UNEP will absorb the direct office-related expenses of the Secretariat. The terms of this arrangement will be concluded under a separate, internal agreement between CMS and UNEP.
4. All other costs of the CMS/MoU Secretariat agreed in the budget of the MoU are expected to be borne by the signatory States or covered by other sources. However, to help defray these costs, UNEP will provide a cash grant of USD 25,000 towards the cost of running the Secretariat, spread over the first three years of its operation (\$10,000 a year in the first two years and \$5,000 in the final year).

#### Personnel arrangements

5. The Coordinator will be primarily responsible to the Meeting of the Signatory States and the Advisory Committee established under the Memorandum of Understanding for all substantive matters concerning implementation of the MoU. For day-to-day administrative matters and communication with UNON/UNEP, the Co-ordinator (and through him/her, the staff of the CMS/MoU Secretariat) will report to the Director of

UNEP/ROAP. The Executive Secretary of UNEP/CMS will act as second reporting officer, for administrative purposes.

6. Recruitment of all MoU Secretariat staff members, including the classification of posts, will be carried out by UNON/UNEP on the basis of job descriptions prepared under the direction of the UNEP/CMS Executive Secretary.
7. Primary screening of candidates for the post of Coordinator will be conducted by a panel of at least three, selected by the Director of UNEP/ROAP (Manager of the panel) in accordance with standard UNON/UNEP recruitment procedures. The panel shall include the UNEP/CMS Executive Secretary, the Chair of the Advisory Committee set up under the MoU (if such a committee exists at the time of the recruitment procedure) and at least one senior officer from UNEP/ROAP, EAS/RCU or UNEP/DEC. Screening of Junior Professional Officer (and, eventually, any general service staff) applications and interviews will be conducted by the Coordinator and other United Nations Bangkok-based staff, in consultation with the Director of UNEP/ROAP. Recommendations of short-listed candidates for all CMS/MoU Secretariat posts will be submitted to UNON/UNEP through the Director of UNEP/ROAP.

#### Financial arrangements

8. There being no financial provisions in the Memorandum of Understanding binding the signatory States to payment of fixed contributions<sup>1</sup>, the establishment of the Secretariat will depend on there being sufficient voluntary contributions from signatory States, UNEP/DEC and other sources<sup>2</sup> to cover the remuneration of the staff of the CMS/MoU Secretariat and its operating expenses (mainly related to meeting organization and travel) for an initial period of at least three years. Such voluntary contributions will be received into a Trust Fund for the MoU to be established by the Executive Director of UNEP
9. In the event of insufficient funds for salaries of CMS/MoU Secretariat staff, the Executive Director of UNEP will be authorised, through a provision in the terms of reference of the CMS Trust Fund, to make special provision to cover these salaries on a reimbursable basis from the CMS Trust Fund if its resources allow. UNON/UNEP will liaise with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat on such temporary transfer of funds from the parent Convention to the Memorandum of Understanding. Any such movements, however temporary, will be communicated to the competent bodies of the Convention and the MoU, and reported upon at the next session of the Conference of the Parties/Signatory States.
10. Before the end of the first three years of the CMS/MoU Secretariat's operation, this arrangement will be reviewed and amended, as necessary, to take account of circumstances prevailing at that time.

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<sup>1</sup>The eventual development of a legally-binding instrument, presumably providing also for financial arrangements, is foreseen by the Memorandum of Understanding.

<sup>2</sup>In addition to the pledges from Governments already communicated at the time of the intergovernmental meeting to conclude the text of the Memorandum of Understanding, additional resources for the CMS/MoU Secretariat will be sought by UNEP and CMS.

**DRAFT**  
**Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee**  
**Established Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and**  
**Management of Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia<sup>1</sup>**

**U.S. Proposal**  
**23 June 2001**

### **Nomination and Appointment**

Each signatory State may nominate one or more individuals to serve as members of the Advisory Committee. Subregional groups may also make such nominations. Nominations should be provided in writing to the Secretariat at least 60 days in advance of the first meeting of signatory States. The Secretariat should circulate such nominations to all signatory States. At their first meeting, the signatory States should appoint the Advisory Committee from among the individuals nominated.

If there are more nominees than necessary to constitute the Advisory Committee, the signatory States shall make every effort to appoint members by consensus following close consultation. If every effort to appoint members of the Advisory Committee by consensus fails, the signatory States shall appoint members of the Advisory Committee by election (voting).

Advisory Committee members should serve for 2 years and should be eligible for reappointment at subsequent meetings of signatory States.

### **Size and Composition**

The Advisory Committee should have 10 members. In appointing the Advisory Committee, signatory States should strive to achieve a balance among the areas of expertise set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding (marine turtle biology, marine resource management, coastal development, socio-economics, law, fisheries technology, and other relevant disciplines), as well as an equitable representation of subregions and genders.

The Advisory Committee should select a chair, who should be the principal point of contact between the Advisory Committee and the Secretariat.

### **Meetings**

To minimize costs, the Advisory Committee should conduct as much of its activity as possible through electronic communication. Regular meetings of the Advisory Committee should occur immediately prior to the regular meetings of the signatory States, also to minimize travel and meeting costs.<sup>2</sup> At the direction of the signatory States, the Advisory Committee may hold additional meetings.

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<sup>1</sup> States participating in the Conference on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles in the Indian Ocean and South East Asia, held 19-23 June 2001 in Manila, discussed these terms of reference in a preliminary way. This proposal seeks to take into account views expressed during that discussion.

<sup>2</sup> One additional suggestion is to permit the signatory States to participate as observers at regular meetings of the Advisory Committee.

## **Mandate and Tasks**

The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to serve and assist the signatory States in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. Members of the Advisory Committee serve in their individual capacities, rather than as representatives of governments or organizations with which they also may be affiliated.<sup>3</sup>

The Secretariat should serve as a clearinghouse of requests from the signatory States for advice from the Advisory Committee.

As set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding, the mandate of the Advisory Committee is to “provide scientific, technical and legal advice to the signatory States, individually and collectively, on the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats in the Region.” In particular, the Advisory Committee should:

- Evaluate and provide advice, at the request of any signatory State, upon any conservation and management programme proposed or implemented within the State.
- Provide advice to the meetings of signatory States on the adoption of additional conservation and management actions and on revisions to the Conservation and Management Plan.
- Evaluate, at the request of any signatory State, the efficiency of different measures proposed or implemented to reduce the capture and incidental mortality of marine turtles in fishing operations.
- Promote the use of standardized marine turtle research techniques, monitoring programme data collection, and data storage and reporting.
- Review scientific reports, annual reports of the signatory States, and other appropriate documents to assist the Secretariat in assessing progress in the implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan.
- Bring to the attention of the signatory States significant new information relating to the conservation and management of marine turtles.
- Respond to requests for advice from signatory States in the fields of socio-economics and law related to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Seek input from other individuals and bodies, as appropriate, in responding to requests for advice, *e.g.*, from the Marine Turtle Specialist Group of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), etc.
- Provide a report on its activities, prior to scheduled meetings of the signatory States.
- Provide such other scientific, technical and legal advice relating to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding as the signatory States may request, individually or collectively.

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<sup>3</sup> Some believe that the second sentence of this paragraph should be deleted and that members of the Advisory Committee should not serve in their individual capacities, but rather as representatives of the governments or organizations with which they may also be affiliated.





## Conference on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia

19 to 23 June 2001, Manila, Philippines

### Press release

**June 23, 2001**

Delegates from 21 countries agreed on a comprehensive plan for conserving marine turtles in the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia during a meeting in Manila from 19 –23 June, 2001. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and was hosted by the Government of the Philippines.

In opening the meeting, the Honourable Heherson T. Alvarez, Secretary of the Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said, *“We are challenged to come up with responses to the threat posed to these species of turtles. The challenge is awesome, and we are building the capacity, the sensitivity and the intelligence to strengthen our ability to protect marine turtles and their habitats ”*

Secretary Alvarez encouraged the delegates to conclude the best possible conservation and management plan to achieve the objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia, building on the progress of previous meetings held in Perth, Australia (October, 1999) and Kuantan, Malaysia (July, 2000).

Many marine turtle populations have declined dramatically. Once plentiful, the six species of marine turtles found in the region have been affected by excessive exploitation, destruction of nesting and feeding habitats, and incidental mortality in fisheries operations.

In Manila, Government representatives agreed on the terms of a region-wide plan aimed at reversing the decline of marine turtle populations. At the conclusion of the meeting, Douglas Hykle, Deputy Executive Secretary of CMS said, *“The delegates have succeeded in laying out an ambitious programme of activities aimed at addressing the root causes of the problems facing marine turtles. The plan stresses the involvement of non-governmental organizations and local communities in planning and implementation.”*

Eight countries signed the Memorandum of Understanding, which will come into effect for the signatory States on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001 and others are expected to sign after review by the responsible government authorities. The United Nations Environment Programme will host the MoU secretariat at its regional office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok.

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The eight countries having signed the Memorandum of Understanding are: Australia, Comoros, Islamic Republic of Iran, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, and the United States.

For more information contact the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species, Martin-Luther-King-Str. 8, 53175 Bonn, Germany; Tel: +49 228 815 2401; Fax +49 228 815 2449; E-mail: [cms@unep.de](mailto:cms@unep.de); Website: [www.wcmc.org.uk/cms](http://www.wcmc.org.uk/cms)

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE CONSERVATION AND  
MANAGEMENT OF MARINE TURTLES AND THEIR HABITATS  
OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA**

THE SIGNATORY STATES,

*Aware* that the populations of the six species of marine turtles of the Region are listed as vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered on the IUCN - The World Conservation Union Red List of Threatened Species;

*Noting* that marine turtles have a priority for conservation action through their listing in the respective texts or appendices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, and the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region and related protocols;

*Recognising* that the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats is specifically addressed in the Memorandum of Understanding on ASEAN Sea Turtle Conservation and Protection and the Memorandum of Agreement on the Turtle Islands Heritage Protected Area (TIHPA);

*Recognising* that other international instruments, including the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), are relevant to the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats;

*Aware* that existing regional organisations, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Regional Organisation for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA), and the Regional Organisation for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) operate programmes relevant to the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats;

*Recognising* that marine turtles migrate and disperse over vast distances, which makes their survival dependent on their conservation over a wide area and in a wide range of marine and coastal habitats;

*Acknowledging* that human activities that may threaten marine turtle populations directly or indirectly include harvesting of eggs and turtles, inappropriate hatchery operations, destruction or modification of habitats, coastal development, pollution, fishing activities, mariculture and tourism;

*Recognising* the importance of integrating actions to conserve marine turtles and their habitats with activities related to the socio-economic development of the signatory States, including coastal development and maritime activities;

*Acknowledging* their shared responsibility for the conservation and management of marine turtle populations and their habitats;

*Recognising* the importance of involving all the States in the Region, as well as relevant inter-governmental, non-governmental and private sector organisations, in co-operative conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats;

*Noting* the desirability of involving other States whose nationals or vessels conduct activities that may affect marine turtles of the Region, as well as States that may be in a position to contribute resources or expertise that may promote the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding;

*Recognising* that concerted and coordinated action must be taken immediately to address the threats posed to marine turtle populations and their habitats;

*Desiring* to establish through this Memorandum of Understanding co-operative measures for the protection, conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats throughout the Region;

AGREE to pursue the actions set forth in this Memorandum of Understanding, individually and collectively, to improve the conservation status of marine turtles and their habitats.

## DEFINITIONS

1. Marine turtles means any of the species listed below:

<u>Common name</u>	<u>Species</u>
Loggerhead turtle	<i>Caretta caretta</i>
Olive ridley turtle	<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>
Green turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>
Hawksbill turtle	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>
Leatherback turtle	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>
Flatback turtle	<i>Natator depressus</i>

2. Habitats means all those aquatic and terrestrial environments which marine turtles use at any stage of their life cycles.
3. Region means all of the waters and coastal States of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia and adjacent seas, extending eastwards to the Torres Strait.
4. Conservation status of marine turtles means the sum of the influences acting on a marine turtle species that may affect its long-term distribution and abundance.
5. Conservation status will be taken as favourable when:
  - a) population dynamics data indicate that the marine turtle species is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its ecosystems;
  - b) the range of the marine turtle species is neither currently being reduced, nor is likely to be reduced, on a long-term basis;
  - c) there is, and will be in the foreseeable future, sufficient habitat to maintain the population of the marine turtle species on a long-term basis; and
  - d) the distribution and abundance of the marine turtle species approach historic coverage and levels to the extent that potentially suitable ecosystems exist and to the extent consistent with wise wildlife management.

## OBJECTIVE

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

## ACTIONS

To achieve the objective of the Memorandum of Understanding, in a spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation, the signatory States will:

1. Co-operate closely in order to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for marine turtles and the habitats on which they depend.
2. Implement, subject to availability of necessary resources, the provisions of the Conservation and Management Plan which shall be annexed to this Memorandum of Understanding. The Conservation and Management Plan shall address: marine turtle habitat protection; management of direct harvesting and trade; reduction of threats, including fisheries bycatch; research and education; information exchange; and capacity building.
3. As necessary, review, formulate, revise and harmonise national legislation relevant to the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats, and make every effort to effectively implement such legislation.
4. Consider ratifying or acceding to those international instruments most relevant to the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats in order to enhance the legal protection of these species in the Region.
5. Establish a Secretariat which will assist communication, encourage reporting and facilitate activities between and among signatory States, sub-regional institutions and other interested States and organisations. The Secretariat shall transmit to all of the signatory States and to each of the sub-regional institutions created pursuant to paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Basic Principles, all of the national reports it receives, prepare a periodic overview of progress in implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan, and perform such other functions as may be assigned by the signatory States. The Secretariat shall be based in the office of an appropriate national, regional or international organisation, as agreed by consensus of the signatory States at their first meeting, after consideration of all offers received.
6. Establish an Advisory Committee to provide scientific, technical and legal advice to the signatory States, individually and collectively, on the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats in the Region. The signatory States may nominate for membership on the Committee individuals with expertise in the fields of marine turtle biology, marine resource management, coastal development, socio-economics, law, fisheries technology, and other relevant disciplines. The size, composition and terms of appointment of the Advisory Committee shall be determined by the signatory States at their first meeting.
7. Designate a competent national Authority to serve as a focal point for communication between signatory States and activities under this Memorandum of Understanding, and communicate the complete contact details of this Authority (and any changes thereto) to the Secretariat.
8. Provide to the Secretariat a regular report on their implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding, the periodicity of which will be determined at the first meeting of the signatory States.

9. Assess at their first meeting, the extent of the need for and possibilities of obtaining financial resources, including the establishment of a special fund for purposes such as:
  - a) meeting the expenses required for the operation of the Secretariat, the Advisory Committee and activities carried out under this Memorandum of Understanding; and
  - b) assisting the signatory States to carry out their responsibilities under this Memorandum of Understanding.

## BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. This Memorandum of Understanding shall be considered an agreement under Article IV, paragraph 4, of the CMS. It shall take effect on the first day of the third month following its signature by the second State. It shall remain open for signature indefinitely for subsequent States, and will come into effect for those States on the first day of the third month after their signature.
2. Each signatory State will implement, within the limits of its jurisdiction, the Memorandum of Understanding with respect to:
  - a) its land territory in the Region;
  - b) marine areas in the Region under its national jurisdiction; and
  - c) vessels operating in the Region under its flag.
3. Implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding, including the Conservation and Management Plan, shall be assessed at regular meetings to be attended by representatives of each of the signatory States and persons or organisations technically qualified in, or relevant to, the conservation of marine turtles. Such meetings shall be convened by the Secretariat and shall be hosted by, and organised in collaboration with, one of the signatory States. Such meetings should be held annually, at least initially. The periodicity of these meetings may be reviewed and revised by consensus of the signatory States at any of their regular meetings.
4. This Memorandum of Understanding, including the Conservation and Management Plan, may be amended by consensus of the signatory States. When appropriate, the signatory States will consider amending this Memorandum of Understanding to make it legally binding.
5. Signatory States may establish, by mutual agreement, bilateral, sub-regional or regional management plans that are consistent with this Memorandum of Understanding.
6. Actions under this Memorandum of Understanding will be coordinated with signatory States, as well as with sub-regional institutions in the Region.
7. The original text of this Memorandum of Understanding, in the Arabic, English and French languages shall be deposited with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat which shall be the Depository. In the event of any discrepancies, the English version will be considered definitive.
8. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall preclude signatory States from implementing stronger national measures than those specified in the Conservation and Management Plan, in accordance with international law.
9. This Memorandum of Understanding shall remain in effect indefinitely, subject to the right of any signatory State to terminate its participation by providing one year's notice to the Depository.

## CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

### Objective 1. Reduce direct and indirect causes of marine turtle mortality

Programme	Activity	Priority	Implementation progress to date
1.1 Identify and document the threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Collate and organise existing data on threats to marine turtle populations</li> <li>b) Establish baseline data collection and monitoring programmes to gather information on the nature and magnitude of threats</li> <li>c) Determine those populations affected by traditional and direct harvest, incidental capture in fisheries, and other sources of mortality</li> </ul>		
1.2 Determine and apply best practice approaches to minimising those threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Identify and document best practice protocols for conserving and managing marine turtle populations within the region</li> <li>b) Adapt and adopt the best conservation and management practices for marine turtle populations</li> </ul>		
1.3 Implement programmes to correct adverse economic incentives that threaten marine turtle populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conduct socio-economic studies among communities that interact with marine turtles and their habitats</li> <li>b) Identify desired modifications to the economic incentives in order to reduce threats and mortality, and develop programmes to implement the modifications</li> <li>c) Identify resources and sources of funding for the programmes</li> </ul>		
1.4 Reduce to the greatest extent practicable the incidental capture and mortality of marine turtles in the course of fishing activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Develop and use gear, devices and techniques to minimise incidental capture of marine turtles in fisheries, such as devices that effectively allow the escape of marine turtles, and spatial and seasonal closures</li> <li>b) Develop procedures and training programmes to promote implementation of these measures, such as vessel monitoring systems and inspections at sea, in port and at landing sites, and national on-board observer programmes</li> <li>c) Exchange information and, upon request, provide technical assistance to other signatory States to promote these activities</li> <li>d) Liaise and coordinate with fisheries industries and fisheries management organisations to develop and implement incidental capture mitigation mechanisms in national waters and on the high seas</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) Support the UN General Assembly resolution 46/215 concerning the moratorium on the use of large-scale driftnets on the high seas</li> <li>f) Develop and implement net retention and recycling schemes to minimise the disposal of fishing gear at sea and on beaches</li> <li>g) Provide and ensure the use of port facilities for the disposal of ship-borne waste</li> </ul>		
<p>1.5 Prohibit the direct harvest (capture or killing) of, and domestic trade in, marine turtles, their eggs, parts or products, whilst allowing exceptions for traditional harvest by communities within each jurisdiction provided that: such harvest does not undermine efforts to protect, conserve and recover marine turtle populations and their habitats; and the marine turtle populations in question are able to sustain the harvest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Enact, where not already in place, legislation to prohibit direct harvest and domestic trade</li> <li>b) Assess the level and impact of traditional harvest on marine turtles and their eggs</li> <li>c) Establish management programmes that may include limits on levels of intentional harvest</li> <li>d) Determine the cultural and traditional values and economic uses of marine turtles (both consumptive and non-consumptive)</li> <li>e) Negotiate, where appropriate, management agreements on the sustainable level of traditional harvest, in consultation with other concerned States, to ensure that such harvest does not undermine conservation efforts</li> </ul>		
<p>1.6 Develop nesting beach management programmes to maximize hatchling recruitment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Evaluate the effectiveness of nest and beach management programmes</li> <li>b) Reduce the mortality of eggs and hatchlings to maximise hatchling recruitment and survival, preferably using conservation techniques that emphasize natural processes wherever possible</li> <li>c) Minimise the mortality of eggs, hatchlings and nesting female turtles caused by feral and domestic animals</li> </ul>		



## Objective 2. Protect, conserve and rehabilitate marine turtle habitats

Programme	Activity	Priority	Implementation progress to date
2.1 Establish necessary measures to protect and conserve marine turtle habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Identify areas of critical habitat such as migratory corridors, nesting beaches, inter-nesting and feeding areas</li> <li>b) Designate and manage protected/conservation areas, sanctuaries or temporary exclusion zones in areas of critical habitat, or take other measures (e.g. modification of fishing gear, restrictions on vessel traffic) to remove threats to such areas</li> <li>c) Develop incentives for adequate protection of areas of critical habitat outside protected areas</li> <li>d) Undertake assessments of the environmental impact of marine and coastal development and other human activities that may affect marine turtle populations and their habitats</li> <li>e) Manage and regulate within each jurisdiction the use of beaches and coastal dunes, for example location and design of buildings, use of artificial lighting, and transit of vehicles in nesting areas</li> <li>f) Monitor and promote the protection of water quality from land-based and maritime pollution, including marine debris, that may adversely affect marine turtles</li> <li>g) Strengthen the application of existing bans on the use of poisonous chemicals and explosives in the exploitation of marine resources</li> </ul>		
2.2 Rehabilitate degraded marine turtle habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Re-vegetate, where appropriate, frontal dunes at nesting beaches, with indigenous flora as far as possible, in order to provide visual barriers to coastal development and to restore appropriate beach temperature regimes</li> <li>b) Remove debris that impedes turtle nesting and hatchling production</li> <li>c) Enhance recovery of degraded coral reefs</li> <li>d) Enhance recovery of degraded mangrove and seagrass habitats</li> </ul>		

### Objective 3. Improve understanding of marine turtle ecology and populations through research, monitoring and information exchange

Programme	Activity	Priority	Implementation progress to date
3.1 Conduct studies on marine turtles and their habitats targeted to their conservation and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conduct baseline studies or gather secondary information on marine turtle populations and their habitats</li> <li>b) Initiate and/or continue long-term monitoring of priority marine turtle populations in order to assess conservation status</li> <li>c) Characterise genetic identity of marine turtle populations</li> <li>d) Identify migratory routes through the use of tagging, genetic studies and/or satellite tracking</li> <li>e) Carry out studies on marine turtle population dynamics and survival rates</li> <li>f) Conduct research on the frequency and pathology of diseases of marine turtles</li> <li>g) Promote the use of traditional ecological knowledge in research studies</li> <li>h) Review periodically and evaluate research and monitoring activities</li> </ul>		
3.2 Conduct collaborative research and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Identify and include priority research and monitoring needs in regional and sub-regional action plans</li> <li>b) Conduct collaborative studies and monitoring on genetic identity, conservation status, migrations, and other biological and ecological aspects of marine turtles</li> </ul>		
3.3 Analyse data to support mitigation of threats and to assess and improve conservation policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Prioritise populations for conservation actions</li> <li>b) Identify population trends</li> <li>c) Use research results to improve management, mitigate threats and assess the efficacy of conservation activities (e.g. hatchery management practices, habitat loss, etc.)</li> </ul>		
3.4 Exchange information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Standardise methods and levels of data collection and adopt or develop an agreed set of protocols for <i>inter alia</i> monitoring of nesting beaches, feeding ground studies, genetic sampling, and collection of mortality data</li> <li>b) Determine the most appropriate methods for information dissemination</li> <li>c) Exchange at regular intervals scientific and technical information and expertise among nations, scientific institutions, non-governmental and international organisations, in order to develop and implement best practice approaches to conservation of marine turtles and their habitats</li> <li>d) Disseminate traditional knowledge on marine turtles and their habitats for conservation and management</li> <li>e) Compile on a regular basis data on marine turtle populations of regional interest</li> </ul>		

**Objective 4. Increase public awareness of the threats to marine turtles and their habitats, and enhance public participation in conservation activities**

Programme	Activity	Priority	Implementation progress to date
4.1 Establish public education, awareness and information programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Collect, develop and disseminate education materials</li> <li>b) Establish community learning / information centres</li> <li>c) Develop and implement accurate mass media information programmes</li> <li>d) Develop and conduct focused education and awareness programmes for target groups (e.g. policy makers, teachers, schools, fishing communities, media)</li> <li>e) Encourage the incorporation of marine turtle biology and conservation issues into school curricula</li> <li>f) Organise special events related to marine turtle conservation and biology (e.g. Turtle Day, Year of the Turtle, symposia, Track-a-turtle)</li> </ul>		
4.2 Develop alternative livelihood opportunities for local communities to encourage their active participation in conservation efforts	Identify and facilitate alternative livelihoods (including income generating activities) that are not detrimental to marine turtles and their habitats, in consultation with local communities and other stakeholders		
4.3 Promote public participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Involve stakeholders, and local communities in particular, in planning and implementation of conservation and management measures</li> <li>b) Encourage the participation of Government institutions, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and the general community (e.g. students, volunteers, fishing communities, local communities) in research and conservation efforts</li> <li>c) Implement, where appropriate, incentive schemes to encourage public participation (e.g. T-shirts for tag returns, public acknowledgement, certificates)</li> </ul>		

## Objective 5. Enhance national, regional and international cooperation

Programme	Activity	Priority	Implementation progress to date
<p>5.1 Collaborate with and assist signatory and non-signatory States to regulate and share information on trade, to combat illegal trade, and to cooperate in enforcement activities relating to marine turtle products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Encourage signatory States that have not already done so to become Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)</li> <li>b) Review at a national level compliance with obligations under CITES relating to trade in marine turtles, their eggs, parts or products</li> <li>c) Facilitate better compliance with CITES through training of relevant authorities in cooperation with other signatory States, the CITES Secretariat and other relevant organisations</li> <li>d) Identify routes of international illegal trade through monitoring, and seek cooperation to take action to prevent, deter and, where possible, eliminate illegal trade</li> <li>e) Exchange and discuss information on compliance and trade issues at regular intervals, such as through annual reporting to the MoU Secretariat and at meetings of the signatory States</li> <li>f) Identify, prevent, deter and, where possible, eliminate domestic illegal trade through monitoring, implementation of legislation, identification of gaps in enforcement capabilities in each country, and training of enforcement officers</li> </ul>		
<p>5.2 Assist signatory and non-signatory States, upon request, to develop and implement national, sub-regional and regional action plans for the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Develop a set of key management measures that could be used as a basis for action plans, through consultation with concerned Government authorities, research institutions, NGOs, local communities and other stakeholders</li> <li>b) Identify existing action plans that could be used as models</li> <li>c) Identify specific local management issues where cooperation among States is required for successful conservation and management</li> <li>d) Review action plans at regular intervals to take into account recent advances in skills and knowledge regarding marine turtle conservation and management, as well as changes in conservation status of marine turtle populations</li> </ul>		
<p>5.3 Enhance mechanisms for cooperation and promote information exchange</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Identify and strengthen existing mechanisms for cooperation at the sub-regional level</li> <li>b) Develop a website and/or newsletter to facilitate networking and exchange of information</li> <li>c) Develop a web-based information resource for marine turtle conservation (including data on populations, nesting, migration, on-going projects)</li> <li>d) Create a directory of experts and organisations concerned with marine turtle conservation</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) Develop networks for cooperative management of shared populations, within or across sub-regions, and, where appropriate, formalise cooperative management arrangements</li> <li>f) Cooperate where possible in the establishment of transboundary marine protected areas using ecological rather than political boundaries</li> <li>g) Develop a streamlined format for reporting and exchanging information (through the MoU Secretariat and among signatory States) on the state of marine turtle conservation at the national level</li> <li>h) Encourage MoU signatory States that have not already done so to become Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)</li> <li>i) Encourage signatory States to become Parties to global fisheries agreements such as the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (1995) and the FAO Compliance Agreement (1993) and implement the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1995)</li> <li>j) Establish relationships with regional fisheries bodies with a view to obtaining data on incidental capture and encourage them to adopt marine turtle conservation measures within EEZs and on the high seas</li> </ul>		
<p>5.4 Build capacity to strengthen conservation measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Identify needs for capacity-building in terms of human resources, knowledge and facilities</li> <li>b) Provide training (e.g. through workshops) in marine turtle conservation and management techniques to relevant agencies, individuals and local communities</li> <li>c) Coordinate training programmes and workshops</li> <li>d) Develop partnerships with universities, research institutions, training bodies and other relevant organisations</li> </ul>		
<p>5.5 Strengthen and improve enforcement of conservation legislation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Review domestic policies and laws to address gaps or impediments to marine turtle conservation</li> <li>b) Cooperate in law enforcement to ensure compatible application of laws across and between jurisdictions (including through bilateral/multilateral agreements and intelligence sharing)</li> </ul>		

## Objective 6. Promote implementation of the MoU including the Conservation and Management Plan

Programme	Activity	Priority	Implementation progress to date
6.1 Broaden membership in the MoU, and ensure continuity of MoU activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Encourage non-signatory States to sign the MoU</li> <li>b) Arrange sub-regional workshops involving non-signatory States to raise awareness of the MoU</li> <li>c) Consider at the first meeting of the signatory States the development of a timetable for possible amendment of the MoU to make it a legally binding instrument</li> </ul>		
6.2 Promote the role of the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee of the MoU in ensuring the objectives of the Conservation and Management Plan are met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Secure reliable sources of funding to support the MoU Secretariat</li> <li>b) Appoint at the first meeting of the signatory States the members of the Advisory Committee</li> <li>c) Establish lines of communication between the MoU Secretariat and the Advisory Committee to facilitate advice to the signatory States</li> </ul>		
6.3 Seek resources to support the implementation of the MoU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Prioritise conservation and management activities for funding</li> <li>b) Explore funding options with Governments and other donors such as the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, UNDP, European Union, UNEP, GEF, etc.</li> <li>c) Solicit funding and other contributions from industries that have impacts on marine turtles and their habitats (e.g. fisheries, tourism, oil industry, real estate)</li> <li>d) Explore the use of economic instruments for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats</li> <li>e) Approach the private sector, foundations and NGOs that may have an interest in funding activities in particular countries to catalyse the creation of a small grants fund</li> <li>f) Generate funding for conservation and management activities through managed ecotourism and other self-supporting schemes (while benefiting local communities)</li> <li>g) Seek synergies (with respect to fund-raising, provision of institutional support, etc.) with other regional/global convention secretariats</li> <li>h) Explore international funding support and other incentives for signatory States that effectively manage marine turtle populations, which might include the complete prohibition of direct harvest (capture or killing)</li> </ul>		
6.4 Improve coordination among government and non-government sectors in the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Review the roles and responsibilities of government agencies related to the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats</li> <li>b) Designate a lead agency responsible for coordinating national marine turtle conservation and management policy</li> <li>c) Encourage cooperation within and among government and non-government sectors, including through the development and/or strengthening of national networks</li> </ul>		