



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

MT-IOSEA/SS.3/
Report/Annex 6a

31 March 2005

RESOLUTION 3.1

**URGING THE INDIAN OCEAN TUNA COMMISSION (IOTC) AND ITS MEMBER STATES
TO ADDRESS MARINE TURTLE BY-CATCH ISSUES WITHIN THE IOSEA REGION**

Adopted by the Third Meeting of the Signatory States (Bangkok, 29-31 March 2005)

The Signatory States to the IOSEA Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding hereby resolve to express their serious concern about the conservation status of marine turtle populations in the IOSEA/IOTC Region.

Noting that some marine turtle stocks are seriously impacted by fishing in the Region and require urgent attention;

Acknowledging that the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is an important and relevant body in the Region with a mandate to pursue sustainable fisheries management;

Recalling that the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries calls for sustainable use of aquatic ecosystems and requires that fishing be conducted with due regard for the environment;

Noting the recent agreement by the FAO Committee on Fisheries (Rome, March 2005) to develop *Technical Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality in Fishing Operations*, and for member States to report biennially to FAO on progress in implementing the guidelines; and

Noting further the agreement of the Third Meeting of the Signatory States for IOSEA Signatories to also report annually on progress in implementing the same guidelines;

The Signatory States to the IOSEA Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding

1. *Urge* the IOTC to require member States to collect data and report on marine turtle by-catch through observer programmes and other appropriate and reliable methods;
2. *Request* the IOTC and other countries in the region to develop and implement appropriate combinations of hook design, type of bait, depth, gear specifications and fishing practices in order to minimize by-catch or incidental catch and mortality of marine turtles;
3. *Offer* to collaborate with the IOTC on the type of data that should be collected and ways in which fisheries could assist in the conservation of marine turtles;
4. *Urge* the respective IOSEA and IOTC secretariats to intensify their collaboration and to consider developing an appropriate memorandum of understanding which, among other things, would provide for reciprocal representation in meetings; and
5. *Request* the IOSEA Secretariat to transmit the text of this resolution to its IOTC counterpart, with a view to having it brought to the attention of the Commission at its next session.