UNEP CMS

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

Report of the Second Meeting of the Advisory Committee (Bangkok, 15 March 2004)

Present: Colin Limpus (Chairman), Jack Frazier, Jeanne Mortimer, Romeo Trono, Douglas Hykle (Secretariat); apologies were received from Nicholas Pilcher

Agenda item 1: Welcoming remarks

1. The Secretariat welcomed the Advisory Committee members to the second meeting of the Committee, taking place on the eve of the Second Meeting of Signatory States. The Committee had conducted most of its work over the past year through e-mail correspondence. It noted the passing of one of its members, Mr. K.D. Amarasooriya, the previous September.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda

2. The agenda (attached hereto) was adopted without amendment. The Committee proposed to meet for the full afternoon. Dr. Frazier agreed to serve as rapporteur.

Agenda item 3: Action points arising from First Advisory Committee Meeting (Kuala Lumpur, March 2003)

3. The meeting reviewed the action points arising from the first Advisory Committee meeting, as well as other intersessional activities. The Secretariat reported on contacts that had been or would be made with a number of organisations and non-Signatory States (e.g. ASEAN, SEAFDEC, Government of Malaysia), as well as prospects for additional MoU signatures. Mr. Trono suggested making use of opportunities to promote marine turtle conservation and the IOSEA MoU within the framework of bilateral meetings among ASEAN nations. He also suggested engaging the Attorney General's Chambers in Kuala Lumpur, for promoting the IOSEA MOU (which the Secretariat had done in 2003). The Secretariat work plan and the annotated Conservation and Management Plan had been circulated in the first half of 2003, and a comprehensive website had been developed over the past six months. The Chairman suggested that an IOSEA information pack be produced as well, including a brief synopsis of the MoU.

Agenda item 4: Second Signatory State Meeting – Secretariat overview

4. The Secretariat described the proposed arrangements for working groups during the Meeting. It was recommended that three groups be established to review implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan (CMP), and to facilitate the completion of the national reports, as follows: South-East Asia (facilitator: R. Trono); Northern Indian Ocean, provisionally including a few countries from the Northwestern Indian Ocean (facilitator: J. Frazier); and Western Indian Ocean (facilitator: J. Mortimer). The Chairman and Secretariat would circulate among all of the groups.

5. The meeting discussed how best to secure additional information from States that had not yet completed a national report; the need to review and assess information already provided in reports that had been submitted; and the need for Signatories to review and revise the matrix that the

6. Secretariat had prepared to assess progress in implementing the CMP. The Chairman noted that an efficient strategy was needed for completing information and pointing out gaps. He also commented that completing the form for the national report had been problematic in Australia where, without having a printed copy, it had been difficult to evaluate the contents. The Secretariat said that it was aware of this problem, which would be rectified once the print module, currently under development, was ready.

7. There was a brief discussion about the role of nongovernmental organisations in the Meeting, which had been a sensitive issue in the context of the Inter-American turtle convention. In the IOSEA forum, it had always been the practice to allow NGO observers to participate freely in the plenary and working groups, where their contribution was highly valued. This approach was applauded by Dr. Frazier, who suggested that the *modus operandi* be made explicitly clear to the Signatory States to avoid any misunderstandings in the future.

Agenda item 5: Overview/discussion of expected presentations during SS2

8. The meeting discussed procedural matters surrounding a number of expert presentations that had been invited for the Meeting of Signatory States, namely, presentations on: (a) Bali, Indonesia – Dr. Windia Adnyana; (b) Orissa, India – Dr. Kartik Shanker; (c) Modelling as a management tool – Dr. Milani Chaloupka; (d) Hatchery guidelines – Mr. Thushan Kapurusinghe; and (e) Marine debris (etc.) – Dr. Scott Whiting.

Agenda item 6: Institutional matters

9. The Committee discussed the need for a mechanism for adding and replacing members between sessions. A number of prospective candidates were discussed. The need to address thematic aspects was emphasised, notably in relation to communities, economics, fisheries and legal matters. The value of having a broad geographic representation on the Committee was noted, particularly from the Middle East region, which was not currently represented.

Agenda item 7: Advisory Committee papers to SS2

10. Three papers that were to have been prepared by the Advisory Committee for the Meeting of Signatory States were discussed:

(a) Project recognition – MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 11.3 (Romeo Trono)
The idea of recognizing projects and other initiatives that were supporting implementation of the IOSEA MoU had been raised at the first Meeting of Signatory States. It was felt that granting some kind of formal recognition might help them in their work, and a proposal had been developed by Romeo Trono along these lines.

(b) Tag standardisation - MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 11.4 (Jeanne Mortimer)
The need to avoid confusion and duplication in codes for flipper tags was evident from problems that had arisen in the Western Indian Ocean, and elsewhere. The paper that J. Mortimer had developed presented a number of clear options, and deliberately did not address in detail the more complex issue of whether or not to tag in the first place. The Chairman mentioned some recent advances that had been made in the SPREP region to organise and coordinate information on tags through a centralised database. He also noted that in Australia, tags could only be issued through a central authority (as in the case of bird bands/rings in many countries), thereby avoiding problems of duplicate numbers etc.

(c) Year of the Turtle - MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 12.1 (Nicolas Pilcher) – N/A
A paper on the feasibility of organising a Year of the Turtle campaign had not been prepared, however the Chairman had developed an outline of possible activities that might be undertaken. It was suggested that a starting point for the discussion among Signatory States would be a general presentation of the basic ideas, needs and concerns.

Agenda item 8: Other SS2 matters requiring Advisory Committee advice

11. The meeting discussed a number of other matters for which Advisory Committee involvement or advice was envisaged.

(a) Complementary initiatives (SS2 Agenda item 7)
The Secretariat explained a proposal to request Meeting participants having particular knowledge about other organisations and meetings of relevance to the IOSEA MoU to give brief presentations in the plenary. Most of the Advisory Committee members would be asked to contribute.

(b) Extension of the MoU's geographic scope – MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 11.1
There was a general discussion of the proposal to extend the scope of the MoU, on biological grounds, to include China, Japan and Republic of Korea (as States within the Region covered by the MoU). It was agreed that there were reasonable grounds for doing so, and that this would not be inconsistent with the definition of the Region provided in the MoU. The Secretariat reported on the so-called "Bellagio Blueprint" which had resulted from an expert think-tank organised in Italy in November 2003. Among other things, the Blueprint proposed that alternative institutional arrangements be envisaged for the conservation of marine turtles of the Pacific, including possibly the extension of the IOSEA MoU. This would be the subject of discussion by the Meeting of Signatory States. Dr. Frazier pointed out the need for consistency in the use of the term "Range State" in the context of the IOSEA MoU and the Convention on Migratory Species – where the term 'Range State' in fact referred to any State, inside or outside the Region, where turtles from the Region occur (and could theoretically also include any State, maritime or other, whose flag vessels impact turtles from the Region).

(c) Site network proposal – MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 11.2
The Secretariat explained the origin and rationale behind the proposal for the establishment of a site network linked to the MoU. Dr. Frazier considered the proposal to be of great importance to the IOSEA MoU and worthy of enthusiastic support.

Agenda item 9: Other issues requiring Advisory Committee input/promotion

12. The Secretariat explained the development of the IOSEA website and some of the content, including an electronic library, a projects database, the Marine Turtle Interactive Mapping System (IMapS), and the eventual availability of online reporting which would facilitate an assessment of gaps in implementation. Advisory Committee members were requested to provide inputs and information, to help flesh out the basic structure that had been put in place.

Agenda item 10: Oral report of Chair to SS2

13. It was agreed that the Chairman would present an oral report to the Meeting of Signatory States highlighting the Committee's activities over the previous year.

Agenda item 11: Any other business

14. The Secretariat drew attention to an invitation from WIOMSA to review a manuscript on the application of TEDs in Madagascar. J. Frazier and J. Mortimer agreed to review the paper. The Secretariat passed on details of a proposed environmental pollutant study focussing on Australian / South-East Asian Green turtles.

15. There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 1845.

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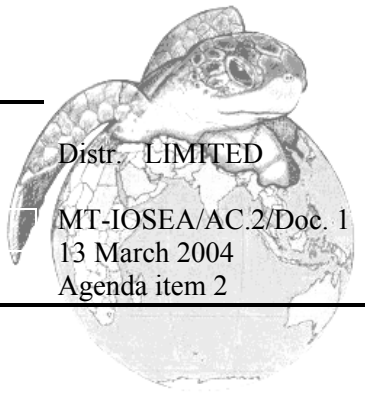

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Agenda item 2

SECOND MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Bangkok, 15 March 2004

AGENDA

1. Welcoming remarks

2. Adoption of the agenda

3. Action points arising from First Advisory Committee Meeting (Kuala Lumpur, March 2003)

4. Second Signatory State Meeting – Secretariat overview
   (a) Working group assignments during SS2

5. Overview/discussion of expected presentations during SS2
   (a) Bali, Indonesia – Windia Adnyana
   (b) Orissa, India – Kartik Shanker
   (c) Modelling as management tool – Milani Chaloupka
   (d) Hatchery guidelines – Thushan Kapurusignhe
   (e) Marine debris (etc.) – Scott Whiting

6. Institutional matters
   (a) Identification of additional Advisory Committee expertise
   (b) Terms of Reference – proposal for minor amendment (intersessional appointments)

7. Advisory Committee papers to SS2
   (a) Project recognition – MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 11.3 (Romy Trono)
   (b) Tag standardisation - MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 11.4 (Jeanne Mortimer)
   (c) Year of the Turtle - MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 12.1 (Nicolas Pilcher) – N/A

8. Other SS2 matters requiring Advisory Committee advice
   (a) Complimentary initiatives (Agenda item 7) - rapporteur
   (b) Extension of geographic scope (2 part) – MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 11.1 (Secretariat)
   (c) Site network proposal – MT-IOSEA/SS.2/Doc 11.2 (Secretariat)

9. Other issues requiring Advisory Committee input/promotion
   (a) IOSEA Electronic Library
   (b) IOSEA Projects Database
   (c) IMapS
   (d) CMP gaps

10. Oral report of Chair to SS2

11. Any other business
   (a) Invitation from WIOMSA to review Gove (TED) paper
   (b) Green turtle – environmental pollutant study – Australia/ SEA