

**3rd Meeting of Signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning
Conservation Measures for Marine Turtles of the Atlantic Coast of Africa**

Saly, Senegal, 4-5 September 2023

REVISED CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

(as adopted by the 3rd Meeting of Signatories on 5 September 2023)

OBJECTIVE 1. Improve our knowledge of marine turtle presence and distribution in-water and on the nesting beaches

Programme	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
1.1 Address gaps in our knowledge of marine turtle distribution, population abundance and density, and their habitats	1.1.1 Collect baseline data, including from strandings, on the presence and distribution of species on the beaches and in-water. 1.1.2 Identify and characterize key nesting beaches and marine habitats (mating, developmental and foraging areas, and migratory routes). 1.1.3 Implement nesting beach monitoring and data collection programmes in key habitats. 1.1.4 Implement in-water marine turtle and habitat monitoring and data collection programmes in key habitats.		

OBJECTIVE 2. Improve our knowledge of threats impacting marine turtle populations and their habitats

Programme	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
2.1 Determine the nature and intensity of threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats	2.1.1 Compile existing data on anthropogenic threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats on land and in-water. 2.1.2 Characterize the nature of traditional exploitation, and establish data collection and monitoring programmes (where needed) to quantify the intensity of threat from traditional exploitation. 2.1.3 Characterize the existing artisanal fisheries, and establish data collection and monitoring programmes (where needed) to quantify the intensity of threat from artisanal fisheries. 2.1.4 Characterize the existing industrial fisheries, and establish data collection and monitoring programmes (where needed) to quantify the intensity of threat from industrial fisheries. 2.1.5 Characterize the existing IUU fishing, and establish data collection and monitoring programmes (where needed) to determine the intensity of threat from IUU fishing. 2.1.6 Characterize the nature of marine pollution (plastics, inshore oil, industrial effluents, etc.), and establish data collection and		

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	<p>monitoring programmes (where needed) to quantify the intensity of threat from marine pollution.</p> <p>2.1.7 Characterize and quantify the impact of factors causing coastal degradation (sand mining, agriculture, urban and touristic developments, vehicles driving on the beach, etc.).</p> <p>2.1.8 Establish data collection and monitoring programmes (where needed) to quantify the nature and intensity of threat from climate change.</p> <p>2.1.9 Identify and quantify factors encouraging illegal take of marine turtles.</p> <p>2.1.10 Characterize the nature of natural threats, and establish data collection and monitoring programmes (where needed) to quantify the intensity of threat from natural threats.</p> <p>2.1.11 Establish data collection and monitoring programmes (where needed) to quantify the intensity of all other relevant threats.</p>		

OBJECTIVE 3.1. Reduce direct and indirect causes of marine turtle mortality

Programme	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
<p>3.1.1 Determine and implement the best practices to minimize anthropogenic threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats</p>	<p>3.1.1.1 Identify the best, culturally appropriate (where applicable) practices for the conservation of marine turtle populations and their habitats.</p> <p>3.1.1.2 Adapt and adopt the best, culturally appropriate (where applicable) practices for the conservation and management of marine turtle populations and their habitats.</p> <p>3.1.1.3 Incorporate traditional knowledge in the management of marine turtle populations and their habitats.</p> <p>3.1.1.4 Promote tourism practices that do not harm marine turtle populations or their habitats.</p>		

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3.1.2 Implement programmes to correct adverse economic incentives threatening marine turtle populations	3.1.2.1 Undertake socio-economic and behaviour-change studies on communities that interact with marine turtles and their habitats. 3.1.2.2 Identify and modify economic incentives to reduce threats and mortality.		
3.1.3 Minimize the effects of artisanal and industrial fisheries on marine turtles and their habitats	3.1.3.1 Develop/modify and use gear, devices, techniques and other measures to minimize incidental capture of marine turtles in fisheries. 3.1.3.2 Develop procedures and training programmes to promote implementation of these measures with relevant fishery management organizations. 3.1.3.3 Train fishermen, the fishing industry, and relevant institutions in techniques to minimize incidental take. 3.1.3.4 Identify bottom-up solutions to address incidental take in collaboration with fishermen. 3.1.3.5 Liaise and coordinate with fisheries industries and fisheries management organizations to develop and implement incidental capture mitigation mechanisms in national waters and on the high seas. 3.1.3.6 Develop and implement net retention and recycling schemes to minimize the disposal of fishing gear at sea and on beaches. 3.1.3.7 Provide and ensure the use of port facilities for the disposal of ship-borne waste. 3.1.3.8 Reinforce existing legislation that promotes reduction in incidental take. 3.1.3.9 Address gaps in fisheries legislation. 3.1.3.10 Implement ecosystem-based approaches to reducing bycatch.		
3.1.4 Minimize the effects of legal extractive industries on marine turtles and their habitats.	3.1.4.1 Develop and implement best practice guidelines and new technology to mitigate against negative impacts on marine turtles and their habitats of onshore/nearshore/offshore resource extraction, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. sand mining, b. agriculture, 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. seismic exploration, d. deep-sea mining, e. all other extractive industries (incl. oil, gas, zircon, phosphate, and diamonds). <p>3.1.4.2 Implement existing legislation to mitigate against negative impacts of extractive industries.</p>		
<p>3.1.5 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 where the law allows, provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) such harvest does not undermine efforts to protect, conserve and recover marine turtle populations and their habitats; and b) the marine turtle populations in question are able to sustain the harvest 	<p>3.1.5.1 Enact, where not already in place, law enforcement to prohibit direct harvest and domestic trade.</p> <p>3.1.5.2 Assess the level and impact of traditional harvest on marine turtles and their eggs.</p> <p>3.1.5.3 Establish management programmes that may include limits on levels of intentional harvest.</p> <p>3.1.5.4 Determine the cultural and traditional values and economic uses of marine turtles and their products/derivatives (both consumptive and non-consumptive).</p> <p>3.1.5.5 Negotiate, where appropriate, management agreements on the sustainable level of traditional harvest, where the law allows, in consultation with other concerned States, to ensure that such harvest does not undermine conservation efforts.</p>		

OBJECTIVE 3.2. Protect, conserve and restore terrestrial and marine habitats for marine turtles

Programme	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
3.2.1 Establish necessary measures to protect and conserve marine turtle terrestrial and marine habitats	3.2.1.1 Design and manage critical habitats as protected areas, sanctuaries, or impose seasonal bans on human activities. 3.2.1.2 Develop incentives for the adequate protection of terrestrial and marine habitats outside designated protected areas. 3.2.1.3 Implement coastal management measures that promote the survival of marine turtle populations. 3.2.1.4 Manage and regulate the use of nesting beaches around urban areas (for example, placement and construction of buildings, artificial lights, and vehicles). 3.2.1.5 Initiate and cooperate in the creation of transboundary protected marine areas, including nesting beaches and feeding and developmental areas, using ecological borders rather than political borders. 3.2.1.6 Minimize habitat loss and degradation, incl. pollution, in coastal and aquatic habitats relevant to marine turtles, through development of appropriate legislation and best practices in collaboration with source sectors. 3.2.1.7 Promote responsible disposal of persistent litter, such as plastics, amongst industry and the public.		
3.2.2 Restore degraded marine turtle habitats	3.2.2.1 Reduce anthropogenic threats on the nesting beaches and in-water that compromise the quality of the habitats. 3.2.2.2 Develop and implement measures to ensure recovery of mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs.		

OBJECTIVE 4. Increase awareness to threats facing marine turtles and their habitats, and enhance stakeholder participation in conservation activities

Programme	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
<p>4.1. Develop and implement education and awareness programmes for all stakeholders, incl. relevant government institutions</p>	<p>4.1.1 Build local capacity in environmental education and collect, develop, and distribute suitable educational material in the appropriate languages.</p> <p>4.1.2 Set up information centres for villages, schools and tourists.</p> <p>4.1.3 Develop and implement dynamic media programmes.</p> <p>4.1.4 Develop and undertake education and awareness programmes for targeted groups and/or train them in environmental knowledge management systems (EKMS) (e.g. for the relevant authorities, politicians, policy makers, military/navy/police, judicial personnel, religious leaders, students, teachers, fishing communities and industry, beach owners, the media).</p> <p>4.1.5 Encourage the integration of biodiversity themes, especially marine turtle biology and conservation, into school, university and training curricula.</p> <p>4.1.6 Organize special events on the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats (e.g., day of the turtle, festival or year of the turtle, publicized releases of accidentally captured turtles, etc.).</p> <p>4.1.7 Use the media to promote groups and individuals contributing to the conservation of biodiversity, including marine turtles and their habitats.</p> <p>4.1.8 Consider the use of local taboos to better protect marine turtles by coastal communities.</p> <p>4.1.9 Provide information at airports and through travel agencies, about national and international restrictions on the sale, purchase, export and import of marine turtle products.</p>		
<p>4.2. Develop alternative livelihood opportunities for local communities to encourage their</p>	<p>4.2.1. Identify, create awareness and implement alternative livelihoods (including income-generating activities from conservation for youth, women, etc.) that are not detrimental to marine turtles and</p>		

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<p>participation in conservation efforts</p>	<p>their habitats, in consultation with local communities and other stakeholders.</p> <p>4.2.2. Promote community development (e.g., clinics, scholarships, activities for the youth and women, etc.) to encourage participation in conservation efforts.</p> <p>4.2.3. Develop and promote a local blue economy framework in consultation with local communities and other stakeholders.</p> <p>4.2.4. Enhance the value of activities that benefit communities, marine turtles and their habitats.</p>		
<p>4.3. Promote stakeholder participation</p>	<p>4.3.1 Integrate local communities, indigenous groups, and other interested parties and stakeholders in the planning and implementation of conservation measures for marine turtles and the management of their habitats.</p> <p>4.3.2 Integrate participation by leaders/administrators, fishing industry, judicial personnel, military/navy/police, NGOs, the private sector, media, religious leaders and various groups (women, fishermen, youth, etc.) in efforts to conserve coastal biodiversity and especially marine turtles.</p> <p>4.3.3 Establish incentives to encourage participation by the public.</p> <p>4.3.4 Encourage and train leaders from local communities to take ownership for the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats.</p> <p>4.3.5 Demonstrate benefits to local communities from the presence of marine turtles.</p> <p>4.3.6 Promote citizen scientists in sea turtle conservation and management.</p>		

OBJECTIVE 5.1. Enhance research and capacity-building programmes to improve the understanding and conservation of marine turtle populations

Programme	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
5.1.1 Build skills and capacity of local stakeholders, incl. relevant government institutions, for effective conservation and management of marine turtles	5.1.1.1 Identify the needs, in terms of human resources, knowledge and facilities, for capacity building. 5.1.1.2 Hold training workshops for relevant stakeholders on: a) bycatch monitoring and bycatch reduction techniques b) in-water marine turtle population and habitat characterization and monitoring techniques c) effective nesting beach management techniques d) coastal management and environmental assessment techniques e) appropriate socio-economic studies and community empowerment activities f) national database development, data management and analysis, and funding strategies, incl. grant writing. 5.1.1.3 Hold training workshops to build the awareness, skills, and capacity of law enforcement people to effectively implement environmental legislation. 5.1.1.4 Create partnerships with universities, research institutions, training bodies, and other relevant organizations. 5.1.1.5 Review or establish suitable institutional structures and in general reinforce the national capacity of each Signatory State.		
5.1.2 Improve the conservation and management of marine turtle populations and their habitats through research	5.1.2.1 Carry out studies, (e.g., using satellite telemetry, tagging, genetics), to determine and map inter-nesting habitats, migration routes and foraging and developmental grounds of marine turtle populations. 5.1.2.2 Carry out studies to enhance hatchling production and maintain appropriate hatchling sex ratios. 5.1.2.3 Initiate and/or continue the long-term monitoring of marine turtle populations to evaluate their status and conservation. 5.1.2.4 Analyze data at the national, sub-regional and regional levels.		

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	5.1.2.5 Characterize the genetic identity of marine turtle populations. 5.1.2.6 Initiate studies on population dynamics, demographics, and survival rates of marine turtles and post-release mortality. 5.1.2.7 Collect ethnozoological information from local communities and promote the use of popular and traditional knowledge. 5.1.2.8 Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of research and monitoring activities. 5.1.2.9 Promote the development and implementation of national and regional strandings networks to record and store data on marine turtle stranding occurrence. 5.1.2.10 Investigate current and future effects of climate change on marine turtles and their habitats. 5.1.2.11 Apply the results from the research proposed and all other relevant research to improve management, to reduce and assess the impact of threats, and to evaluate the effectiveness of conservation activities. 5.1.2.12 Undertake studies on causes of mortality (e.g., diseases, plastics, chemical accumulation) through necropsies.		
5.1.3 Undertake collaborative research and monitoring	5.1.3.1 Identify and integrate research and monitoring priorities into sub- regional and regional Action Plans. 5.1.3.2 Encourage universities, research institutions, the private sector, citizen scientists (e.g., volunteers, informants) and local and national institutions to undertake research, conservation, and monitoring activities relevant to marine turtles in collaboration with NGOs and local communities.		
5.1.4 Information exchange	5.1.4.1 Harmonize basic data collection methodologies and adopt or develop science-based best practice protocols for the monitoring of nesting beaches, studies at foraging and developmental habitats, and data collection on mortality. 5.1.4.2 Determine the most effective ways to foster information exchange among all stakeholders, incl. scientists, local actors, communities and government, and Signatory States.		

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	<p>5.1.4.3 Exchange, at regular intervals, scientific and technical information and expertise among nations, scientific institutions, and national and international NGOs to develop and use approaches based on the best practices for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats.</p> <p>5.1.4.4 Disseminate traditional knowledge that promotes conservation of marine turtles and their habitats to improve the conservation of turtles and the management of their habitats by the residential communities.</p> <p>5.1.4.5 Organize training workshops regularly at a sub-regional level to evaluate and enhance works in progress.</p> <p>5.1.4.6 Promote regional exchange of information through regular national report analysis.</p>		

OBJECTIVE 5.2. Enhance national, regional and international cooperation

Programme	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
<p>5.2.1 Collaborate with Signatory and non-Signatory States to the Memorandum of Abidjan to organize and share information on marine turtle-related trade issues, and improve and enforce the implementation of national wildlife conservation legislation</p>	<p>5.2.1.1 Examine and ensure compliance with the CITES National Legislation Project.</p> <p>5.2.1.2 Improve compliance with CITES by training the relevant and competent authorities in cooperation with other Signatory States, the CITES Secretariat, and other relevant organizations.</p> <p>5.2.1.3 Identify and monitor illegal international trade routes (for marine turtle products etc.) and seek cooperation to take measures to prevent and where possible eliminate illegal trade.</p> <p>5.2.1.4 Attempt to identify, prevent, deter, and where possible eliminate illegal domestic trade through monitoring, legislation implementation, identification of weaknesses in the law enforcement in each State.</p>		

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	<p>5.2.1.5 Train personnel (customs people, the police force, guards, authorities of protected areas, fisheries inspectors, etc.) authorized to monitor illegal trafficking and the enforcement of national legislation for the conservation of marine turtles.</p> <p>5.2.1.6 Establish concrete mechanisms for engagement and coordination with existing regional and national CITES implementation processes, such as regional networks for combatting wildlife crime and national wildlife enforcement task forces.</p> <p>5.2.1.7 Where applicable, advocate for developing standardized regional policy frameworks that integrate global biodiversity conventions into national-level decision making.</p> <p>5.2.1.8 Review and revise, if necessary, the existing national legislation and internal legal provisions to identify any gaps or impediments in their application to marine turtle conservation.</p> <p>5.2.1.9 Cooperate in the implementation of legislation, in order to ensure the compatible application of legal and lawful provisions across and among jurisdictions (including through bilateral/multilateral agreements and the sharing of information).</p>		
<p>5.2.2 Assist Signatory States with the development and implementation of dynamic and realistic national action plans for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats</p>	<p>5.2.2.1 Designate national focal points (one administrative and one scientific) to serve as correspondents on issues relating to marine turtles.</p> <p>5.2.2.2 Develop key management measures and “living” and realistic Action Plans, in consultation with relevant administrators, NGOs, research institutions, local communities, the CMS ScC Aquatic Wild Meat Working Group and other interested parties and stakeholders, incl. the Abidjan Convention.</p> <p>5.2.2.3 Review and update action plans at regular intervals to take into account recent progress.</p>		

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	<p>5.2.2.4 Identify the specific management questions at the local level which require cooperation among the Signatory States to ensure successful conservation and management.</p> <p>5.2.2.5 Report regularly to the Secretariat (in a format approved by the Signatory States) on the national progress made in the implementation of the objectives in the regional Conservation and Management Plan.</p> <p>5.2.2.6 Generate a regular analysis of the national reports to inform Signatory States on measures to improve the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats.</p>		
<p>5.2.3 Enhance mechanisms for cooperation and promote information exchange</p>	<p>5.2.3.1 Identify and enforce existing mechanisms that allow for successful cooperation in each sub-region.</p> <p>5.2.3.2 Strengthen networks, and establish networks as needed, for the coordinated management of shared populations within a State or across political boundaries or a sub-region and where possible formalize the collaboration.</p> <p>5.2.3.3 Encourage Signatory States to ratify multilateral environmental agreements.</p> <p>5.2.3.4 Encourage Signatory States to join regional fisheries bodies.</p> <p>5.2.3.5 Establish relationships with regional fisheries bodies to obtain data on accidental captures and encourage them to adopt marine turtle conservation measures within Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and on the high seas.</p>		

OBJECTIVE 6. Promote implementation of the Memorandum of Abidjan and its Conservation and Management Plan

Programme	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
6.1. Expand membership of the Memorandum of Abidjan	6.1.1 Encourage States whose flag vessels and other activities have direct effects on the marine turtles and their habitats within their geographic range, as well as any other interested States, to sign the Memorandum of Abidjan.		
6.2. Improve the effectiveness of the MOU and its management structure	6.2.1 Set up a suitable mechanism to manage the MOU, incl. its Secretariat and an advisory body, to help the Signatory States and provide advice for improving the effectiveness of the MOU for the conservation of marine turtles. 6.2.2 Review and implement the existing Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee. 6.2.3 Develop closer cooperation between CMS, the Abidjan Convention and PRCM for the management and implementation of this MOU.		
6.3. Locate resources to support the implementation of the Memorandum of Abidjan	6.3.1 Prioritize conservation and management activities for funding. 6.3.2 Explore funding possibilities with governments and other potential donors. 6.3.3 Request funds, donations of materials/equipment and other contributions from international and local industries (e.g., petroleum companies, breweries, hotels, fisheries, tourism, etc.). 6.3.4 Study the use of economic instruments for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats. 6.3.5 Approach the private sector, foundations, and international NGOs who might be interested in funding activities in particular countries to catalyze the creation of a small grants programme. 6.3.6 Fund conservation and management activities through directed ecotourism and other self-sufficient schemes with benefits to the local communities. 6.3.7 Search for synergies among the Secretariats and other regional and international conventions.		

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	6.3.8 Promote inclusion of costs associated with marine turtle conservation and research into the national budgets of Signatory States.		
6.4. Improve coordination among government and non-government entities at the national level for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats	6.4.1. Review the roles and responsibilities of all relevant administrative agencies in the conservation of marine turtles and the management of their habitats. 6.4.2. Designate an entity (if needed) responsible for the coordination and implementation of identified activities for the conservation of marine turtles and the management of their habitats. 6.4.3. Encourage cooperation and synergy within and among governmental and non-governmental entities, including the development and reinforcement of national networks.		