



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.6.2/Rev.1
28 September 2023
Original: English

14th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 12 – 17 February 2024
Agenda Item 27.6

**SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR
THE HAWKSBILL TURTLE (*Eretmochelys imbricata*)
IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE WESTERN PACIFIC OCEAN REGION**

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary:

This document reports on progress to implement Decision 13.70 c) and proposes a draft Resolution for the adoption of the Single Species Action Plan, and Decisions.

Rev.1 makes consistent the language in Decisions directed to the Scientific Council.

SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR THE HAWKSBILL TURTLE (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE WESTERN PACIFIC OCEAN REGION

Background

1. Decision 13.70 c) requested the Scientific Council, subject to the availability of resources, to:

develop, in collaboration with the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU, CITES, Ramsar Convention and relevant non-governmental organizations and supported by the Secretariat, a draft Single Species Action Plan for the conservation of Hawksbill Turtles to be presented preferably at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to address their trade and use in South-East Asia, and the adjacent Western Pacific, and taking into account the 2019 CITES Report on Status, Scope and Trends of the Legal and Illegal International Trade in Marine Turtles, its Conservation Impacts, Management Options and Mitigation Priorities, as well as the Hawksbill Assessment under preparation by the Advisory Committee of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU.

Activities to implement Decision 13.70 c)

2. The CMS Secretariat worked closely with the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU Secretariat to prepare a draft Action Plan and an approach for consultations, thereby assisting the Scientific Council with the implementation of this mandate. Following the activities described below, a Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) was successfully finalized, presented in Annex 2. This part of the Decision is therefore considered fully implemented and is proposed for deletion in [UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.27.6.1 Marine Turtles](#).
3. The SSAP seeks to integrate the actions necessary to address trade and use at both the domestic and the international level, in line with the mandate of the Decision, to assist governments in implementing their commitments under CMS, the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU, CITES and other frameworks in a cohesive way.

Engagement of Range States, partners, and other stakeholders

4. The Secretariat worked together with CMS partner organization World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) to undertake important background work collating existing policies and mandates (see [CMS/IOSEA/Hawksbill-SSAP/Inf.5](#)). In a next step, the most urgent high priority actions were identified and included in the draft SSAP.
5. A first complete draft of the SSAP was shared for written comments in March 2022 with the Scientific Council of CMS, the Advisory Committee (AC) of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU (which consists of ten highly regarded scientists chosen by the MOU Signatory States), the Illegal Trade Working Group of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU, and all Range States. Additional partners, such as the CITES Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) and the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), were consulted in the development of this SSAP.
6. Following written consultations, a revised draft was considered in three sub-regional meetings of the Range States to elicit more detailed comments, and a consolidated draft incorporating these further comments was presented to a Range State Plenary Meeting (31 May - 2 June 2022) for final changes and adoption by that meeting. The report of the meeting, along with the presentations given by country representatives, can be found on the [meeting page](#) (English only).

7. Following its adoption, the AC of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU was asked specifically for their recommendation of the SSAP, which was given with full agreement.
8. The SSAP is open for adoption by all Range States, no matter whether they are Parties to CMS, Signatories to the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU, or currently not participating in either of these agreements. Four countries, Cambodia, Myanmar, Philippines and Viet Nam adopted the SSAP already at the end of the meeting on 2 June 2022, while others indicated their readiness to do so in the near future.
9. The current focus of the Secretariat is on promoting the SSAP and encouraging further Range States to adopt it. One success in this regard was getting the SSAP recognized in [CITES Resolution Conf.19.5 Conservation of and trade in marine turtles](#). There are also plans for joint outreach with the CITES Secretariat to promote uptake of the SSAP by more Range States.
10. Further, as agreed in the above-mentioned Range State Meeting, based on [CMS/IOSEA/Hawksbill-SSAP/Doc.8 Suggestions for a Governance Structure to Support the Implementation of the Single Species Action Plan](#), a Steering Group comprised one national government representative (Focal Point) and one national expert per Range State, plus international stakeholders, will be established shortly. Further, participating countries are encouraged to establish National Working Groups (NWG) consisting of National Focal Points, local stakeholders and scientists, particularly those who would be involved to implement actions.

Two scientific assessments underpinning the need for the SSAP

11. The development of the SSAP, in addition to considering in detail existing commitments of Range States, as outlined above, was also based on the clear identification of a need for urgent action based on findings of two regional assessments of the conservation status of hawksbill turtles.
12. In March 2022, under the leadership of the AC of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU, the [Assessment of the Conservation Status of the Hawksbill Turtle in the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia Region](#) was published.
13. In May 2023, the parallel [Assessment of the Conservation Status of the Hawksbill Turtle in the Western Pacific Ocean Region](#) was published. At the time of the development of the SSAP, this report was already available in draft form.

Discussion and analysis

14. The SSAP seeks to integrate the actions necessary to address trade and use, key threats to hawksbill turtle populations in the South-East Asia and Western Pacific Ocean Region, at both the domestic and the international level. In this way, it assists governments in implementing their commitments from numerous international agreements in a cohesive way.
15. The plan, as adopted by the Range States on 2 June 2022, is now presented to CMS Parties for adoption or endorsement. Following this, it will also be tabled at the 9th Meeting of Signatory States to the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU (MOS9) for their adoption or endorsement.
16. Given that only ten of the 34 States in the range covered by the SSAP are CMS Parties, including two that are both Parties to CMS and Signatories to the IOSEA Marine Turtle

MOU, and an additional eight are Signatories to the MOU, there is a need for concerted efforts to reach out to non-Party Range States to encourage them to adopt the SSAP for their own use and join forces with CMS Parties and MOU Signatories in order to address the urgent need for action related to these key threats to hawksbill turtles in the South-East Asia and Western Pacific Ocean Region.

Recommended actions

17. The Conference of the Parties is recommended to:
 - a) adopt the draft Resolution contained in Annex 1 of this document, including the Action Plan that is annexed to the Resolution (Annex 2);
 - b) adopt the draft Decisions contained in Annex 3 of this document.

ANNEX 1

DRAFT RESOLUTION

**SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR
THE HAWKSBILL TURTLE (*Eretmochelys imbricata*)
IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE WESTERN PACIFIC OCEAN REGION**

Noting that the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) was listed on CMS Appendix II in 1979 and Appendix I in 1985,

Concerned that the Hawksbill Turtle has been assessed for *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* in 2008 as Critically Endangered (CR), and the population trend was assessed as decreasing, raising serious concerns about the viability of a number of populations given ongoing high threat levels,

Welcoming the two recent scientific assessments of the conservation status of Hawksbill Turtles in the Indian Ocean South-East Asia Region prepared under the leadership of the Advisory Committee of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia (IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU), and in the Western Pacific Ocean Region, published as CMS Technical Series No. 45,

Noting that use and trade were identified as key threats to Hawksbill Turtles in the South-East Asia and Western Pacific Ocean Region in the abovementioned scientific assessments,

Recognizing that there are complex linkages between community and commercial use, and that use at the domestic and international levels need to be addressed in conjunction,

Recognizing the support of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in the implementation of COP mandates related to Hawksbill Turtles, assisting governments in implementing coherent conservation measures addressing their use and trade,

Affirming the need to address these issues in close collaboration with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) as well as other relevant partners, such as the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP),

Noting that CITES Resolution Conf.19.5 welcomed this Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) and recommended numerous measures in line with those outlined in it,

Also noting the SPREP Pacific Islands Regional Marine Species Programme 2022-2026, which likewise recommends numerous measures in line with those outlined in this SSAP,

Recognizing that the actions contained in this SSAP may be relevant for other regions outside of its geographic scope, such as the area covered by the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC),

Welcoming the opportunity to foster close collaboration between the Convention and the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU,

*The Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*

1. *Adopts* the Single Species Action Plan for the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean Region, as adopted by Range States on 2 June 2022 and contained in Annex [..];
2. *Urges* Parties in the area covered by the Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) to urgently undertake actions to implement its provisions;
3. *Invites* non-Party Range States to adopt the Action Plan;
4. *Encourages* Parties and non-Party Range States to provide technical and/or financial support to activities outlined in the Action Plan;
5. *Invites* the governing bodies and Secretariats of other intergovernmental agreements and programmes, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP), as well as, insofar as relevant the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC), to take into account the provisions of the Action Plan in the consideration of their activities and to support implementation of relevant Action Plan activities that fall within their mandate, as appropriate; and
6. *Instructs* the Secretariat to bring the Action Plan to the attention of all Range States and relevant intergovernmental organizations and to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan.

ANNEX 2

**SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR
THE HAWKSBILL TURTLE (*Eretmochelys imbricata*)
IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE WESTERN PACIFIC OCEAN REGION**

NB: The Single Species Action Plan for the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean Region is presented as a separate file [here](#).

DRAFT DECISIONS

**SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR
THE HAWKSBILL TURTLE (*Eretmochelys imbricata*)
IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE WESTERN PACIFIC OCEAN REGION**

Directed to Parties that are Range States to the Single Species Action Plan (SSAP)

14.AA Parties that are Range States to the SSAP are requested to:

- a) As foreseen in CMS/IOSEA/Hawksbill-SSAP/Doc.8 *Suggestions for a Governance Structure to Support the Implementation of the Single Species Action Plan*,
 - i) nominate one national government representative (Focal Point) and one national expert per Range State to serve on the Steering Group, and support activities of the Steering Group, in particular by providing regular reports on implementation of the SSAP;
 - ii) establish National Working Groups consisting of National Focal Points, local stakeholders and scientists, particularly those who would be involved to implement actions;
 - iii) develop a national work plan focusing on priority actions relevant to their country or territory;
- b) implement, as a matter of priority, the SSAP actions for immediate implementation and those for delivery within three years, and start implementation of those to be addressed within five years;
- c) actively encourage non-Party Range States to adopt the SSAP for their use.

Directed to non-Party Range States of the SSAP

14.BB Non-Party Range States of the SSAP are encouraged to:

- a) adopt the SSAP;
- b) once the SSAP is adopted,
 - i) nominate one national government representative (Focal Point) and one national expert per Range State to serve on the Steering Group;
 - ii) establish National Working Groups consisting of National Focal Points, local stakeholders and scientists, particularly those who would be involved to implement actions;
 - iii) urgently implement actions for immediate implementation and for delivery within three years, and start implementation of those to be addressed within five years.

Directed to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

14.CC Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to provide financial and technical support for the implementation of the SSAP.

Directed to the Scientific Council

14.DD The Scientific Council is requested to:

- a) consider the report received from the Steering Group on implementation of the Action Plan, as foreseen in CMS/IOSEA/Hawksbill-SSAP/Doc.8;
- b) provide guidance on the further implementation of the Action Plan to COP15.

Directed to the Secretariat

14.EE The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external resources:

- a) encourage non-Party Range States to adopt the Action Plan for their use;
- b) support States that have adopted the Action Plan in its implementation by facilitating meetings of the Steering Group;
- c) develop a reporting form enabling the Steering Group of the Action Plan and the Scientific Council to assess progress in the implementation of the Action Plan;
- d) prepare a report to the Scientific Council at the 8th meeting of the Sessional Committee and COP15 on progress in implementing the Action Plan.