



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

CMS/IOSEA/MOS8/Inf.9.1.h

15 October 2019

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8TH MEETING OF THE SIGNATORY STATES

Da Nang, Viet Nam, 21-25 October 2019

Agenda Item 9.1

UPDATES ON THE STATUS OF IOSEA NETWORK SITES

TURTLE ISLANDS WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

(Prepared by the Philippines)

Update on the Status of the IOSEA Network Site
(Version: 21 August 2019)

TURTLE ISLANDS WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

A. Date of submission (DD/MM/YYYY):

The date on which the questionnaire was completed.

October 2, 2019

B. Name and address of compiler(s), if not the IOSEA Focal Point

Name and contact information (including affiliation) for the individual(s) who prepared this information.

Name:

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Name:

Functional Title:

Organization:

Address:

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C. Country: *The name of the country in which the site is located.*

PHILIPPINES

D. Name of site: *The name of the site (alternative names should be given in brackets).*

TURTLE ISLANDS WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

1. Have there been changes in the management authority?

Name, address and contact details of the body responsible for the direct local conservation and management of the site, if different than in original proposal.

Yes, expansion of composition of PAMB membership base on Expanded National Integrated Protected Area System Law, additional members were the Provincial Governor, District representatives (Congressman), and the Municipal Mayor of Turtle Islands.

2. What are the current population numbers and trends for the marine turtle species present at the site?

Please insert population numbers for each species present and the year when the population was estimated, as well as the population trend (e.g. stable, increasing, decreasing, unknown)

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|--------|--------|
| 2005- | 9,870 |
| 2006- | 12,344 |
| 2007- | 11,557 |
| 2008 - | 12,802 |
| 2009- | 16,625 |
| 2010- | 14,035 |
| 2011 | 20,419 |
| 2012 | 19,550 |
| 2013 | 17,593 |
| 2014 | 14,347 |
| 2015 | 14,075 |

3. Have there been any changes in land/sea ownership, protected status, legislation and/or governance framework, which affect the site?

Describe any changes to legislation / regulations relevant to the protection / conservation of marine turtles and their habitats at this site, and comment on their effectiveness.

Mention any changes in nationally relevant protected area status, international conservation designations and, in the case of transboundary sites, bilateral or multilateral conservation measures which pertain to all or part of the site since 2014. If a protected area or reserve has been established (at a national/regional level), give the date of its establishment and size. If only a part of the site is included within a protected area, the area of marine turtle habitat that is protected should be noted.

New International designations since 2014 may include sites listed under the UNESCO/World Heritage Convention, Man and Biosphere Reserve Network, Ramsar Convention, other site conservation networks, etc. Where appropriate, list the IUCN (1994) protected areas management category(ies) that apply to the site.

The Turtle Islands is now a legislated Protected Area under the expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System .

However, with the passage of the Bangsamoro organic law, Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary is now part of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao(BARMM). As such, its management shall be transferred to the Bangsamoro Government. Transfer of management to the BARMM is under transition.

4. What are currently the most important threats to marine turtles and their habitat at the site?

Describe the human and natural factors negatively affecting the ecological character of the site, both within and in the vicinity of the site. These may include new or changing activities/uses, major development projects etc., which have had, are having, or may have a detrimental effect on the natural ecological character of the site. For example, describe in terms of the percentage of coastline (or other area) modified/affected by a particular threat; for egg collection, describe in terms of number of nests, per species, per year. Mention also data-deficient threats, where a threat is known to be present but is not quantified. Collectively, this information should provide a basis for monitoring of ecological character of the site.

- sea turtle egg poaching (unquantified);
- illegal fishing leading to by catch and destruction of corals;
- Beach erosion caused by a method (sharpened galvanized iron) for collecting sea cucumber exacerbating inundation by extreme weather disturbance/waves
- Pollution- marine debris (plastic bags)

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5. New conservation and management interventions taken since 2014 and measures planned for near future

Describe conservation and management interventions taken at the site to address threats since 2014. Any application of coastal and marine spatial planning, or integrated coastal/marine zone management planning, involving or affecting the site should be noted.

Describe any other new conservation measures taken at the site, such as restrictions on development, management practices beneficial to wildlife, closures of fishing, etc. (Note that information on any monitoring schemes and survey methods should be given under point 19, below.)

Where applicable, describe public outreach and communication activities. In addition, if applicable, describe any new developments in the involvement of local communities and indigenous people in the participatory management of the site, including co-management activities, surveillance and enforcement, and performance evaluation since 2014.

- Management Zoning on Fish Sanctuary in 2014 covering the islands of Langaan, Bakkungan, Boan and Lihiman.
- Information, Education Campaign (IEC) conducted in the community at the same time organized Peoples Organization in the 5 islands in 2017.
- Launched of the “Adlaw sin Payukan Festival (marine turtle festival) in May 2017.
- LGU of Turtle Islands organized a Bantay Dagat (community enforcement group) with 50 members in 2019
- Covenant of Task Force
- Turtle Islands (along with Tubbataha Reef, El Nido Marine Reserve), is part of the newly established Marine Turtle Protected Area Network which covers the Philippine Sea Turtle Corridor within the Sulu-Sulawesi Seascape to enhance the protection of marine turtles by covering the different life stages of the species and reducing threats to the migratory routes of sea turtles as well as strengthening of enforcement network;
- The Mindanao Development Authority plans to develop of ecotourism in the area.

6. Current / proposed scientific research and monitoring since 2014

Name current and/or proposed scientific research projects and their start and end dates, relating to marine turtles and their habitats. Please describe monitoring activities (e.g., tagging, satellite tracking, genetic sampling, nesting and foraging ground surveys, ongoing beach monitoring, etc.). Cite relevant published papers in support of the submission.

- Tagging of nesters is regularly undertaken and daily record of nesting incidence as part of protected area management activities
- Beach Profiling
- Habitat Vulnerability Assessment
- Proposed scientific research on identification of foraging area of sea turtles.

7. Briefly describe current financial as well as capacity-building needs

Identify fundraising and capacity building needs for the site (e.g. in relation to monitoring, management interventions, surveillance and enforcement, and performance evaluation).

As a newly legislated protected area (covering 242,958 hectares), an investment plan for 2020 amounting to 97 Million PhP was identified to cover the setting up of the protected area management staff, capacity building in protected area management and law enforcement, infrastructures, biodiversity monitoring, among others.

8. References since 2014

List any new references relevant to marine turtle records and to the site, including management plans, major scientific reports, scientific articles and bibliographies. When a large body of published material on the site is available, only the most important references need be cited, with priority being given to recent literature containing extensive bibliographies. Reprints or copies of the most important literature should be appended whenever possible. Provide website addresses of references where available.

- 1) ADB. 2017. Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment. Consultant's report. Manila: <https://iwlearn.net/resolveuid/285a1e1e-983b-4404-a6db-4f127f1149d3>
- 2) Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary management plan. Unpublished.
- 3) Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary UNESCO nomination:
<https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/6008/>