



Indian Ocean – South-East Asian Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding



Islamic Republic of Iran

GENERAL INFORMATION

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OBJECTIVE I. REDUCE DIRECT AND INDIRECT CAUSES OF MARINE TURTLE MORTALITY

1.1 Introduction to marine turtle populations and habitats, challenges and conservation efforts. [INF]

Persian Gulf:

Nakhiloo, Ommolkaram, Khark, Kharkoo and Farsi Islands, Nayband Bay, in Booshehr Province.

Shidvar, Hendourabi, Queshm, Lavan, Kish, Hengam, Hormoz and Larak Islands in Hormozgan Province.

Oman Sea area (Sistan and Balochistan Province): Karatti, Tang, Pozm, Chabahar, Kohpansar, Ramin, Miami.

1.2.1 Describe any protocol or approaches practiced in your country, which you consider exemplary, for minimising threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats, which may be suitable for adaptation and adoption elsewhere. [BPR]

Employment of local people as Environment Guards, and their participation in research and protection activities.

Legal protection of sea turtles and the establishment of fines for any related harvest.

Designation of turtle habitats as legally protected areas (protected areas, wild life refuges).

The best practice approaches adapted and/or adopted with success are:

Legal measures for the protection of turtles prohibiting any harvest (of a legally protected wildlife species) and related fines for any turtles or eggs taken.

Local participation in conservation and protection activities, as on Qeshm Island or Shidvar Island.

1.3.1 Describe any socio-economic studies or activities that have been conducted among communities that interact with marine turtles and their habitats. [BPR, INF]

Sea turtles and local people, a study by Asghar Mobaraki, Department of Environment, in the Oman Sea area (2003).

Note: Local people are traditionally, rather than economically, dependent on sea turtles.

1.3.2 Which of these adverse economic incentives are underlying threats to marine turtles in your country? [TSH]

- High prices earned from turtle products relative to other commodities
- Lack of affordable alternatives to turtle products
- Ease of access to the turtle resource (eg. by virtue of proximity or ease of land/water access)
- Low cost of land near nesting beaches
- Low penalties against illegal harvesting
- Other1: Income generation for some families, derived from turtle eggs
- Other2:
- Other3:
- None of the above or Not Applicable

Traditional/cultural use: in most parts of Iran, turtle eggs are used as traditional medicine for different illnesses, as well as for aphrodisiac effects. So egg harvest is usual in all areas for personal use and for sale to local markets.

1.3.3 Has your country has taken any measures to try to correct these adverse economic incentives? [BPR]

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE (no adverse economic incentives exist)

Banning and prohibition of the buying and selling of turtle eggs and related products, as well as more legal protection for turtles. Public awareness would also be a useful tool to prevent any adverse economic activities.

We are trying to persuade people to stop using turtle eggs, and in this regard have gained judgements from Grand Ayatollahs stating that, from a religious point of view, the eating of turtle eggs and meat is prohibited (Haram).

1.4.1 Indicate, and describe in more detail, the main fisheries occurring in the waters of your country, as well as any high seas fisheries in which flag vessels of your country participate, that could possibly interact with marine turtles. [INF]

a) Shrimp trawls: YES NO

Shrimp trawling is permitted for about 45-60 days a year in late summer and early fall in Booshehr and Hormozgan provinces - at other times it is forbidden. In the Oman sea area there are trawling ships which are mainly active in the fall and winter. Out of 76 ships, 49 of them are authorized for shrimp trawling. There are 3047 large wooden boats, of which an unknown number of them undertake shrimp trawling.

b) Set gill nets: YES NO

This method (in different forms) is used all year long in the Oman sea and Persian Gulf. There are 10 682 vessels in total (motor boats: 7559, large wooden boats: 3047 and ships: 76) that conduct fishing activities, and one of the usual methods used is gill nets. Note: this information comes from an Iran Fisheries Organization statistics report.

c) *Anchored Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)*: YES NO

d) *Purse seine (with or without FADs)*: YES NO

This method is mainly used for sardine fishing in very low numbers in spring in two most important areas, Djask in Hormozgan and Daier in Booshehr. Only 8 ships are engaged in this fishing activity.

e) *Longline (shallow or deepset)*: YES NO

This method is not so popular and takes place at a local scale. Mostly small boats use it to catch specific fish species like croacker and mackerel. There are some foreign ships that are authorized to carry out long line fishing in international waters.

f) *Driftnet*: YES NO

As for the set gill nets.

g) *Other1*:

This method is traditionally used in some locations, mainly in Hormozgan and Booshehr. It takes place in different seasons, but not for long times. The target species are small fishes.

h) *Other2*:

None of the above

1.4.2 Please indicate the relative level of **fishing effort** and **perceived impact** of each of the above fisheries on marine turtles (e.g. in terms of by-catch). [TSH]

a) *Shrimp trawls*

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source: All the answers related to fisheries are based on information from the Iran Fisheries Organization.

b) *Set gill nets*

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source:

c) *Anchored Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)*

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source: -

d) Purse seine (with or without FADs)

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source:

e) Longline (shallow or deepset)

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source:

f) Driftnet

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source:

g) Other1 (from 1.4.1): Trapping (Traditional cages)

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source:

h) Other2 (from 1.4.1):

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source:

1.4.3 Describe any **illegal fishing that is known to occur in or around the waters of your country that may impact marine turtles. Describe the measures being taken to deal with this problem and any difficulties encountered in this regard. [TSH]**

The Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) has legally prohibited the use of monofilament nets for any fishery activities, but some fishermen especially in the western part of the Persian Gulf use these for fishing. The impact of this type of fishing on turtles is not considerable.

1.4.4 Which of the following methods are used by your country to minimise incidental capture/mortality of marine turtles in fishing activities? [IND]

a) **Appropriate handling** of incidentally caught turtles (e.g. resuscitation or release by fishers using equipment such as de-hooking, line cutting tools and scoop nets)

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Generally, as a fishing regulation and rule approved by IFO, any catch of protected species including sea turtles is forbidden and subject to penalties. So all fishermen release any captured turtles to the sea. However there is no specific equipment used for this purpose.

b) **Devices that allow the escape of marine turtles** (e.g. turtle excluder devices (TEDs) or other measures that are comparable in effectiveness)

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Preliminary studies and the first phase of a project using TEDs to reduce bycatch in shrimp fishing have been completed. The final report for this international effort supported by GEF/ UNEP and the FAO is now under preparation.

Based on the results, all of the 49 ships authorized for shrimp fishing in Iran will be required to use TEDs in their trawls. Notably, the main aim of this project was to reduce fisheries bycatch in general, rather than turtle capture.

c) **Measures to avoid encirclement** of marine turtles in purse seine fisheries

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

d) **Appropriate combinations** of hook design, type of bait, depth, gear specifications and fishing practices

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

e) **Monitoring and recovery of fish aggregating devices** (FADs)

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

f) **Net retention and recycling schemes**

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

g) **Spatial and temporal control of fishing** (e.g. seasonal closures of fishing activities)

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

There are temporal and spatial controls in place, which consider the target species and are based on fish biology. The program is concerned with fisheries resources control and protection, not turtle bycatch.

h) **Effort management control**

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

For the same reason, there is seasonal control of the methods used and net limitations are imposed. As an example, shrimp trawling is only permitted during specific 3-6 month periods.

Other (list and explain):

None of the above

1.4.5 Which of the following programmes has your country developed - in consultation with the fishing industry and fisheries management organisations - to promote implementation of measures to minimise incidental capture and mortality of turtles in national waters and in the high seas? [IND]

Onboard observer programmes

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

As a general rule any fishing related activities carried out outside of set times and places are forbidden and subject to penalty - to enforce this vessels and their catch are checked by resource protection guards.

Vessel monitoring systems

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Vessels use remote control system to record their movements. Also, observers from the Iran Fisheries Organization check them at different times.

Inspections (i.e. at sea, in port, at landing sites)

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

In each fishing port there are observers from the Iran Fisheries Organization who check the catch of fishermen.

Training programmes / workshops to educate fishers

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Official meetings and negotiations with Fisheries Organization of Iran have been held to enhance fishers' knowledge and awareness. These have also enabled the monitoring of activities in fishing areas.

Based on an announcement by the Iran Fisheries Organization, fishermen are prohibited from harming to turtles and must release them if they become entangled.

Informative videos, brochures, printed guidelines etc.

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Other (list and explain):

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

None of the above

1.4.6 Are the mitigation measures described in 1.4.4 and 1.4.5, periodically reviewed and evaluated for their efficacy? [SAP]

YES NO UNSURE

1.4.7 In your country, what types of data collection, research and development have been undertaken to support the reduction of marine turtle incidental catch (while taking into consideration the impact of various mitigation measures on other species)? [SAP]

1.4.8 Has your country exchanged information and provided technical assistance (formally or informally) to other Signatory States to promote the activities described in 1.4.4, 1.4.5 and 1.4.7 above? [SAP]

YES NO UNSURE

1.4.9 What legislative and practical measures has your country taken in support of UN General Assembly Resolution 46/215 concerning the moratorium on the use of large-scale driftnets? [SAP]

None

1.5.1 Does your country have legislation to prohibit direct harvest and domestic trade in marine turtles, their eggs, parts and products; and to protect important turtle habitats? [IND]

YES NO UNSURE

Sea turtles have been listed as an "endangered" wildlife species In Iran. Any killing of turtles originally carried a penalty of 3 200 000 RIs, and the harvest of eggs was punished (fines are equivalent to US \$400 and \$120, respectively).

The fine amounts were doubled this year to 6 400 000 Rials- about US\$670 for any turtle and \$225 for any egg, with the approval of the Environment High Council.

1.5.2 Which, among the following list, are economic uses and cultural values of marine turtles in your country? Please rate the relative prevalence / importance of each consumptive or non-consumptive use. [INF]

**USES /
VALUES**

**RELATIVE PREVALENCE /
IMPORTANCE**

Meat consumption

YES NO

HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN

Turtle eggs and in some places, turtle meat, are used for aphrodisiac purposes as well as traditional medicine. In some parts of Iran, such as the Oman sea area, this take is too high.

Egg consumption

YES NO

HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN

Turtle eggs and in some places, turtle meat, are used for aphrodisiac purposes as well as traditional medicine. In some parts of Iran, such as the Oman sea area, this take is too high.

Shell products YES NO HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN**Fat consumption** YES NO HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN**Traditional medicine** YES NO HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN**Eco-tourism programmes** YES NO HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN**Cultural / traditional significance** YES NO HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN**Other****1.5.3 Please indicate the relative level and impact of traditional harvest on marine turtles and their eggs.**[\[IND, TSH\]](#)**Level of harvest:** RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN**Impact of harvest:** RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source of information:

In some places the level of traditional harvest is high, e.g. Sistan and Balochistan Provinces. (Source: Field observations; Mobaraki, A.: Wildlife and Aquatic Affairs Bureau reports)

1.5.4 Have any [domestic](#) management programmes been established to limit the levels of intentional harvest? [\[SAP\]](#) YES NO UNKNOWN

Department of Environment guards routinely check and control turtle nesting sites at times, though there is no specific management program.

1.5.5 Describe any management agreements negotiated [between your country and other States](#) in relation to sustainable levels of traditional harvest, to ensure that such harvest does not undermine conservation efforts. [\[BPR\]](#)

There is no recorded international or regional trade.

1.6.1 First, select one of the options at left to indicate whether or not your country has any of the following measures in place to minimise the mortality of eggs, hatchlings and nesting females. If yes, then estimate the relative effectiveness of these measures. [IND, SAP]

MEASURES	RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS
Monitoring/protection programmes	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
Through the programme conducted in Queshm Island, turtle nesting sites and nests are being protected. Also, some nests are translocated to suitable places to reduce the threats to hatchlings. We are planning to start a nest protection programme in the Oman sea area for Green turtles next year.	
Education/awareness programmes	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> LOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
Posters have been produced and distributed in all coastal provinces.	
Egg relocation/hatcheries	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
As noted above, some nests on Queshm Island are translocated to suitable places to reduce the threats to hatchlings. Results of the programme have not been published, but hatchling success is thought to be low (less than 50%). The GEF-funded UNDP project ended in 2006.	
Predator control	
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
Vehicle / access restrictions	
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
Removal of debris / clean-up	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
for the first time in the country, beach cleaning up in main nesting sites(Shidvar and Nakhiloo) was implemented. It was through a small project funded by MOU-IOSEA secretariat.	
Re-vegetation of frontal dunes	
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
Building location/design regulations	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN

Light pollution reduction YES NO N/A EXCELLENT GOOD LOW UNKNOWN**Other (list and rate them)** YES NO N/A**1.6.2 Has your country undertaken any evaluation of its nest and beach management programmes?**[\[SAP\]](#) YES NO NOT APPLICABLE**OBJECTIVE II. PROTECT, CONSERVE AND REHABILITATE MARINE TURTLE HABITATS**

2.1.1 What is being done to protect critical habitats *outside* of established protected areas? (NB: It is assumed that legislation relating to established protected areas will have been described in Section 1.5.1) [\[BPR, SAP\]](#)

sea turtles have classified as 'The Threatened Species' of the country and any harvest and harm on them is forbidden subject to fine, in case of happening.

2.1.2 Are assessments routinely made of the environmental impact of marine and coastal development on marine turtles and their habitats? [\[IND, SAP\]](#)

 YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Not directly on sea turtles, but on the marine environment and habitat. Any activity proposed adjacent to the sea has to submit an EIA for approval by the Department of Environment (DOE).

2.1.3 Is marine water quality (including marine debris) monitored near turtle habitats? If yes, describe the nature of this monitoring and any remedial measures that may have been taken. [\[SAP\]](#)

 YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Some regular sampling and studies have been carried out all across coastal waters. Oceanographic research cruises in the Persian Gulf have collaborated with other ROPME states to provide water and sediment samples. These have been analysed to determine and monitor pollution levels in the area every 2 or 3 years.

Moreover any kind of activity causing marine pollution is subject to a fine. The DOE offices in different parts and cities of Iran check and control any activities causing pollution.

2.1.4 Are measures in place to prohibit the use of poisonous chemicals and explosives? [\[SAP\]](#)

 YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

They are not used in Iran, but as a general rule any kind of activity causing pollution is legally forbidden.

2.2.1 Are efforts being made to recover degraded coral reefs? If yes, give details (*location, duration, effectiveness, lessons learned, future plans* etc). [\[IND, SAP\]](#)

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE (no degraded coral reefs)

Work on the identification of critical coral reef areas has recently finished but there have not been any programs to recover degraded parts.

2.2.2 Are efforts being made to recover degraded mangrove habitats that are important for turtles? If yes, give details (location, duration, effectiveness, lessons learned, future plans etc.) [IND, SAP]

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE (no mangrove habitats important for turtles)

Some efforts to recover mangrove forests are being undertaken in Booshehr (Nayband, Mele Gonze) and Hormozgan (Hara protected area in Queshm Island) Provinces. The results achieved are satisfactory.

2.2.3 Are efforts being made to recover degraded sea grass habitats? If yes, give details (location, duration, effectiveness, lessons learned, future plans etc.). [IND, SAP]

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE (no degraded sea grass habitats)

OBJECTIVE III. IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF MARINE TURTLE ECOLOGY AND POPULATIONS THROUGH RESEARCH, MONITORING AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE

3.1.1 Give a list of available literature that includes baseline information from studies carried out in your country on marine turtle populations and their habitats. [INF]

In some areas these studies have been conducted but they do not cover all of the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea areas.

Also the results of some of these studies have not been published and presented yet. The only available publications and literature are:

- 1) Asghar Mobaraki, Nesting of Hawksbill Sea Turtle in Shidvar Island, 2003, Marine Turtle Newsletter and www.ioseaturtles.org website
- 2) Asghar Mobaraki, Sea Turtle Status in Iran, 23rd symposium on sea turtles, 2003, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 3) Asghar Mobaraki, Green Sea Turtle Nesting in Iran, Marine Turtle Newsletter and www.ioseaturtles.org website 2004
- 4) Hamzeh Valavi, Sea Turtle Nesting in Nakhiloo Island, Booshehr Province, Quarterly Journal of DOE, No 25, 1998
- 5) Asghar Mobaraki, Amir Mohammad elmi, First Sea Turtle Tagging Program in Iran, MTN, No 110, 2005
- 6) Asghar Mobaraki, Global Strategy for the Conservation of Sea Turtles (IUCN), Translation, Quarterly Journal of DOE, No 30, 2000
- 7) Asghar Mobaraki, Amir Mohammad Elmi, Marine Turtle Tagging Program in Iran, 2005, www.ioseaturtles.org website
- 8) Asghar Mobaraki, Sea turtle study and situation in Iran, Marine conservation forum, Abu Dhabi, UAE, Sep 2006.

3.1.2 Have long-term monitoring programmes (i.e. of at least 10 years duration) been initiated or planned for priority marine turtle populations frequenting the territory of your country? [IND, BPR]

YES NO UNSURE

For about 8 years Shidvar ,Island, one of the most important nesting sites, has been visited during the Hawksbill turtle nesting season. More over other important sites like Nakhiloo, Ommolkaram, Hendourabi Islands have been regularly visited and studied during the past 5 years (see reports from A. Mobaraki).

3.1.3 Has the genetic identity of marine turtle populations in your country been characterised? [INF, PRI]

YES NO UNSURE

Through the kind help of Dr. Nancy Fitzsimmons, who provided restoration vials, some tissue samples have been collected (by Asghar Mobaraki) for related genetic work. The main laboratory work has not yet been started.

3.1.4 Which of the following methods have been or are being used to try to identify migration routes of turtles? Use the text boxes to provide additional details. [INF, PRI]

Tagging YES NO

Through the kind donation of the IOSEA MoU, and great help of Mr. Douglas Hykle, Iran recently received turtle flipper tags for the first time.

A tagging program has been started in the country since 2006 - over short stays in the Shidvar and Nakhiloo Islands, 38 hawksbills have been tagged. Also 7 green turtles have been tagged in the Oman Sea area.

The DOE is planning to cover more islands over time once suitable support has been found. After the starting time, the main nesting sites have been visited regularly during the nesting season and up to now, more than 800 Hawksbills and Tens of green turtles have been tagged. Each year we have recorded tagged turtles returning to the sites too. The works have been supported by the Biodiversity and Wildlife Bureau of DOE.

Satellite tracking YES NO

Satellite tracking of Hawksbill populations started for the first time in Iran since 2010 through a regional Cooperative project initiated by WWF-EWS and MRF in the Persian Gulf region. For the first year, 2010, 5 nesting Hawksbills tagged with ST equipment in Sheedvar (Shidvar) Island in Hormozgan province. For the second year, 2011, another 5 hawksbills were tagged in Nakhilli Island, Bushehr Province. The project supposed to be continued for one more year.

Other

None of the above

3.1.5 Have studies been carried out on marine turtle population dynamics and survival rates (e.g. including studies into the survival rates of incidentally caught and released turtles)? [INF, PRI]

YES NO UNSURE

3.1.6 Has research been conducted on the frequency and pathology of diseases in marine turtles? [INF, PRI]

YES NO UNSURE

3.1.7 Is the use of traditional ecological knowledge in research studies being promoted? [BPR, PRI]

YES NO UNSURE

In a study conducted in the Oman Sea area (Asghar Mobaraki, Marine Environment Bureau, 2003), local people and fishermen were asked about sea turtles in the area in a simple questionnaire.

3.2.1 List any regional or sub-regional action plans in which your country is already participating, which may serve the purpose of identifying priority research and monitoring needs. [INF]

An MoU is in place between the Wildlife and Aquatic Affairs Bureau of DOE, Iran and the Environment Agency (and ERWDA) in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Collaborative works on the conservation and management of sea turtles have been recommended, but not yet confirmed/undertaken.

3.2.2 On which of the following themes have collaborative studies and monitoring been conducted? Use the text boxes to describe the nature of this international collaboration or to clarify your response. Answer 'NO' if the studies/monitoring undertaken do not involve international collaboration. [INF, PRI]

a) Genetic Identity YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Hawksbill populations have been studied as genetic point of view in main nesting sites through 2 projects in Biodiversity and WILDLIFE bureau initiated in 2008 as well as Marine Eco-Biology bureau of Marine Environment Deputy in 2010. The sites of study were: Nakhiloo, Sheedvar, Ommolkaram, Hendourabi Islands.

b) Conservation status YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

c) Migrations YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

d) Other biological and ecological aspects YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Other

3.3.1 List, in order of priority, the marine turtle populations in your country in need of conservation actions, and indicate their population trends. [PRI]

- 1) Green sea turtle population in the Oman Sea area.
- 2) Hawksbill population in Oman Sea area, for which the only reports are from many years ago.
- 3) No studies have been conducted on other populations, but in general, due to different factors, the nesting populations of Hawksbills in different islands of the Persian Gulf are under threat and in need of conservation.

3.3.2 Are research and monitoring activities, such as those described above in Section 3.1 periodically reviewed and evaluated for their efficacy? [SAP]

YES NO UNSURE

3.3.3 Describe how research results are being applied to improve management practices and mitigation of threats (in relation to the priority populations identified in 3.3.1, among others). [SAP]

Research results are being used to improve the efficacy of conservation actions through management, threat mitigation and the assessment of habitat loss.

3.4.1 Has your country undertaken any initiatives (nationally or through collaboration with other Range States) to standardise methods and levels of data collection? [BPR, INF]

YES NO UNSURE

3.4.2 To what extent does your country exchange scientific and technical information and expertise with other Range States? [SAP, IND]

OFTEN (SYSTEMATICALLY) OCCASIONALLY RARELY NEVER

3.4.3 If your country shares scientific and technical information and expertise with other Range States, what mechanisms have commonly been used for this purpose? Comment on any positive benefits/outcomes achieved through these interactions. [INF]

By publishing the results of studies in related journals and publications like the DOE Journal, through websites, newsletters etc.

3.4.4 Does your country compile and make available to other countries data on marine turtle populations of a regional interest? [INF]

YES NO UNSURE

We are trying to assist any interested bodies by sharing information from Iran. At the regional scale, more co-operation is needed on this issue.

OBJECTIVE IV. INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE THREATS TO MARINE TURTLES AND THEIR HABITATS, AND ENHANCE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

4.1.1 Describe the educational materials, including mass media information programmes that your country has collected, developed and/or disseminated. [INF, PRI]

Some documentary movies on sea turtles have been produced in Booshehr Province.

We have also had reports and articles published in popular newspapers, and plan to expand on these.

4.1.2 Which of the following groups have been the targets of these focused education and awareness programmes described in above in Section 4.1.1? [PRI, INF]

- Policy makers
- Fishing industry
- Local/Fishing communities
- Indigenous groups
- Tourists
- Media**
- Teachers**
- Students**
- Military, Navy, Police
- Scientists**
- Other:All people interested in the subject.**
- None of the above

4.1.3 Have any community learning / information centres been established in your country? [BPR, SAP]

YES **NO**

4.2 Alternative livelihood opportunities [IND, BPR] Describe initiatives already undertaken or planned to identify and facilitate alternative livelihoods (including income-generating activities) for local communities.

None

4.3.1 Describe initiatives already undertaken or planned by your country to involve local communities, in particular, in the planning and implementation of marine turtle conservation programmes. Please include details of any incentives that have been used to encourage public participation, and indicate their efficacy. [BPR, IND]

We have successfully drawn the attention of local people through research and conservation programs, and attracted their cooperation in some areas eg. Queshm and Shidvar Islands.

4.3.2 Describe initiatives already undertaken or planned to involve and encourage the cooperation of Government institutions, NGOs and the private sector in marine turtle conservation programmes. [IND, BPR]

Our activities provide income for local people, for example when we hire boats and ask people to accompany us in the field.

OBJECTIVE V. ENHANCE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

5.1.1 Has your country undertaken a national review of its compliance with Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) obligations in relation to marine turtles? [SAP]

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

5.1.2 Does your country have, or participate/cooperate in, CITES training programmes for relevant authorities? [SAP]

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

CITES Management and Scientific Authority of Iran has participated in regional workshops on CITES implementation. More over a provincial experts of DOE, including the coastal provinces, participated in a international treaties workshop conducted in 2010 in Iran in which 1 day was for CITES.

5.1.3 Does your country have in place mechanisms to identify international illegal trade routes (for marine turtle products etc.)? Please use the text box to elaborate on how your country is cooperating with other States to prevent/deter/eliminate illegal trade. [SAP]

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

There is no international trade on sea turtle products in Iran.

5.1.4 Which international compliance and trade issues related to marine turtles has your country raised for discussion (e.g. through the IOSEA MoU Secretariat, at meetings of Signatory States etc.)? [INF]

None

5.1.5 Describe measures in place to prevent, deter and eliminate domestic illegal trade in marine turtle products, particularly with a view to enforcing the legislation identified in Section 1.5.1. [INF]

Taking into account that marine turtles are listed as protected marine fauna, there are a series of criteria and regulations in place to impede people from harvesting these species. Through a monitoring program carried out specially in the nesting season, DOE game guards monitor nesting beaches.

5.2.1 Has your country already developed a national action plan or a set of key management measures that could eventually serve as a basis for a more specific action plan at a national level? [IND]

YES NO

5.2.2 From your country's perspective, which **conservation and management activities, and/or which particular **sites or locations**, ought to be among the highest priorities for action? [PRI]**

- 1) Conduct baseline studies. (3.1)
- 2) Initiate long-term monitoring of sea turtle populations. (3.1)
- 3) Identify and document threats to sea turtle populations. (1.1)
- 4) Adopt the best conservation and management practices for sea turtle populations. (1.2)
- 5) Determine those populations affected by sources of mortality. (1.1)
- 6) Reduce the mortality of eggs and hatchlings to maximize their survival. (1.6)
- 7) Use research results to improve management, mitigate threats and assess the efficacy of conservation activities. (3.3)
- 8) Identify areas of critical habitat such as migratory corridors, nesting beaches, inter-nesting and feeding areas.(2.1)
- 9) Prioritise populations for conservation actions (3.3)
- 10) Designate and manage protected/conservation areas, sanctuaries, or temporary exclusion zones in areas of critical habitat or take other measures. (2.1)

5.2.3 Please indicate, from your country's standpoint, the extent to which the following **local management issues require **international** cooperation in order to to achieve progress. [PRI]**

Illegal fishing in territorial waters	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Incidental capture by foreign fleets	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Enforcement/patrolling of territorial waters	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Hunting/harvest by neighboring countries	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Poaching, illegal trade in turtle projects	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Development of gear technology	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Oil spills, pollution, marine debris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Training / capacity-building	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Alternative livelihood development	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Identification of turtle populations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Identification of migration routes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Tagging / satellite tracking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Habitat studies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Genetics studies	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL

5.3.1 Identify existing frameworks/organisations that are, or could be, useful mechanisms for cooperating in marine turtle conservation at the sub-regional level. Please comment on the strengths of these instruments, their capacity to take on a broader coordinating role, and any efforts your country has made to enhance their role in turtle conservation. [INF, BPR]

Regional or sub-regional agreements, such as ROPME could play a very effective role in starting co-operation between the States for conservation measures, particularly on shared turtle populations. We have carried out preliminary activities to initiate such co-operation.

5.3.2 Has your country developed, or is it participating in, any networks for cooperative management of shared turtle populations? [BPR, INF]

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

5.3.3 What steps has your country taken to encourage Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) to adopt marine turtle conservation measures within Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and on the high seas? [SAP]

None

5.4.1 Describe your country's needs, in terms of human resources, knowledge and facilities, in order to build capacity to strengthen marine turtle conservation measures. [PRI]

More participation in regional and international gatherings.
Regional cooperation.
Establishment of a regional databank.
Regional expertise information exchange and co-operation.

5.4.2 Describe any training provided in marine turtle conservation and management techniques (e.g. workshops held, training manuals produced etc.), and indicate your plans for the coming year. [PRI, INF]

5.4.3 Specifically in relation to [capacity-building](#), describe any partnerships developed or planned with universities, research institutions, training bodies and other relevant organisations. [BPR]

5.5.1 National policies and laws concerning the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats will have been described in Section 1.5.1. Please indicate their effectiveness, in terms of their practical application and enforcement. [SAP, TSH]

Considering the high fines on turtles and eggs and the information-gathering systems in place, the laws are quite effective.

The main problem for turtle conservation, considering the numbers of sites involved, is a lack of staff and equipment to check and control these areas.

5.5.2 Has your country conducted a review of policies and laws to address any gaps, inconsistencies or impediments in relation to marine turtle conservation? If not, indicate any obstacles encountered in this regard and when this review is expected to be done. [SAP]

YES NO UNSURE

In last review, the fine amounts for harvesting hatched turtles and eggs were doubled.

5.5.3 From the standpoint of law enforcement, has your country experienced any difficulties achieving cooperation to ensure compatible application of laws across and between jurisdictions? [TSH]

YES NO UNSURE

Each provincial office of DOE has a legal and legislation expert, who stays in close contact with local jurisdictions. This means that judges are well aware of environmental crimes like the hunting or harvesting of protected species, and related punishments like fines. However, sometimes problems do exist.

OBJECTIVE VI. PROMOTE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MoU INCLUDING THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

6.1.1 What has your country already done, or will it do, to encourage other States to sign the IOSEA MoU? [\[INF\]](#)

This could be achieved through sub-regional or regional agreements, or MoUs.

6.1.2 Is your country **currently** favourable, in principle, to amending the MoU to make it a legally binding instrument? [\[INF\]](#)

YES NO NO VIEW

6.1.3 Would your country be favourable, over a **longer time horizon**, to amending the MoU to make it a legally-binding instrument? [\[INF\]](#)

YES NO NO VIEW

6.2 Secretariat and Advisory Committee

6.2.1 What efforts has your country made, or can it make, to secure funding to support the core operations of the IOSEA MoU (Secretariat and Advisory Committee, and related activities)? [\[IND\]](#)

None

6.3.1 What funding has your country mobilised for domestic implementation of marine turtle conservation activities related to the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU? Where possible, indicate the specific monetary values attached to these activities/programmes, as well as future plans. [\[IND\]](#)

We have requested funds from related sections of DOE for a turtle tagging program on some islands or other areas. The results are not yet known.

6.3.2 Has your country tried to solicit funds from, or seek partnerships with, other Governments, major donor organisations, industry, private sector, foundations or NGOs for marine turtle conservation activities? [\[IND\]](#)

YES NO

We have submitted proposals to the IOSEA MoU Secretariat to support tagging or conservation programmes at important sites in Iran.

6.3.3 Describe any initiatives made to explore the use of economic instruments for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats. [\[BPR\]](#)

None

6.4.1 Has your country designated a lead agency responsible for coordinating national marine turtle conservation and management policy? If not, when is this information expected to be communicated to the IOSEA MoU Secretariat? [\[IND\]](#)

YES NO

At the national and international level, Iran's Department of the Environment (DOE) is responsible for any works and activities related to the environment.

Within the DOE, the Wildlife and Aquatic Affairs Bureau is the legally authorized section for work on wildlife species. It could take a leading role in co-ordinating with related organizations and bureaus.

6.4.2 Are the roles and responsibilities of all government agencies related to the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats clearly defined? [IND]

YES NO UNSURE

The responsibilities of all organizations and related bureaus are defined, however far more clarification and coordination is necessary.

6.4.3 Has your country ever conducted a review of agency roles and responsibilities? If so, when, and what was the general outcome? If not, is such a review planned and when? [SAP],

YES NO UNSURE

There are no specific programs for such a review, although there have not been any impediments either.

Maybe this is why there has not been a specific conservation and management program on sea turtles and their habitats to date.

Comments/suggestions to improve the present reporting format:

Additional information not covered above:

We would like to acknowledge the IOSEA MoU Secretariat, especially Mr. Douglas Hykle, for their kind help in providing and donating turtle tags. These enabled us to start a tagging program for the first time in Iran, and considerably helped to accelerate our work on sea turtles.

Note: the present report was lightly edited by the Secretariat (09 February 2006)