



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



Mauritius

GENERAL INFORMATION

Agency or institution primarily responsible for the preparation of this report:

Ministry of Fisheries and Rodrigues (Fisheries Division)
Albion Fisheries Research Centre

Other agencies, institutions, or NGOs that have provided input:

None

Designated Focal Point:

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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]

Nesting occurs on the beaches of St. Brandon and Agalega (Chapman and Swinnerton 1996; Griffiths and Tatayah 2007). Foraging and feeding takes place in seagrass, algae and reef areas around Mauritius, St. Brandon and Agalega. Nesting (and foraging) numbers of turtles have been declining since the 1970's, due to excessive exploitation (Hughes 1976; Chapman and Swinnerton 1996; Mortimer and Donnelly 2007), as well as impacts from coastal development and tourism. Occasional cyclonic storms also affect nests from time to time (Groombridge and Luxmoore 1987).

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]

Enactment of legislation and prescribed measures as stated in the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act 2007. Monitoring of beaches as per the Beach Authority Act which might be habitats for nesting turtles.

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]

No known studies

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:
- Other2:
- Other3:
- None of the above or Not Applicable

Marine turtles are protected species in the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act 2007.

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)

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:

b) Set gill nets:

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

FADs - 22 operating around Mauritius

d) Purse seine (with or without FADs):

e) Longline (shallow or deepset): YES NO

Longline fishery by Mauritian and foreign vessels

f) Driftnet: YES NO

g) Other1:

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: Trawling is not carried out in Mauritius

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: Longlining is carried out but the impacts on marine turtles as by catch is not known.

f) Driftnet

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source: NA

g) Other1 (from 1.4.1):

Fishing effort:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Perceived Impact:

RELATIVELY HIGH MODERATE RELATIVELY LOW NONE UNKNOWN

Source: NA

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: NA

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]**

In an effort to combat IUU fishing in Mauritius, a National Plan of Action to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU Fishing has been developed with the assistance of the Government of Norway, which is based on the International Plan of Action to combat IUU Fishing. A Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) was installed in Mauritius in 2005. Fishing licences are issued only to vessels equipped with a functional VMS on board.

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

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

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

No fishing takes place

h) **Effort management control**

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Other (list and explain):

The Fisheries and Marine Resources Act 2007 provides for regulations regarding fishing with the aid of artificial light.

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

Vessel monitoring systems

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

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

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

In port and landing sites

Training programmes / workshops to educate fishers

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Informative videos, brochures, printed guidelines etc.

YES **NO** **NOT APPLICABLE**

The DVD from IOSEA is being shown on television.

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**

Not applicable

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? [\[SAP\]](#)

Use of large scale drift nets is not licensed in waters of Mauritius.

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**

Under the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act 2007, Act No. 27 of 2007, the marine turtle is a protected species. No exemptions for traditional harvest has been made. However, enforcement in remote areas is problematic.

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**

Meat consumption

**RELATIVE PREVALENCE /
IMPORTANCE**

YES NO

HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN

Overexploitation of turtles and turtle eggs continues (Griffiths and Tatayah 2007; Mortimer and Donnelly 2007). Residents of the Agalega Islands admitted to poaching turtles (meat and carapaces) and turtle eggs, in spite of the law prohibiting it, because it is considered part of their tradition, and because of the economic gains from selling turtle products (Griffiths and Tatayah 2007). Insufficient law enforcement contributes to the poaching of turtles (Griffiths and Tatayah 2007).

Green turtles, in particular, are targeted; whereas the meat of hawksbill turtles is considered poisonous (Groombridge and Luxmoore 1989).

Egg consumption

YES NO

HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN

(Groombridge and Luxmoore 1989; Griffiths and Tatayah 2007; Mortimer and Donnelly 2007)

Shell products

YES NO

HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN

(Chapman and Swinnerton 1996; Griffiths and Tatayah 2007; Mortimer and Donnelly 2007)

Fat consumption

YES NO

HIGH MODERATE LOW UNKNOWN

(Chapman and Swinnerton 1996)

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:

1.5.4 Have any [domestic](#) management programmes been established to limit the levels of intentional harvest? [\[SAP\]](#)

YES NO UNKNOWN

Not applicable

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. [\[BPR\]](#)

None

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
Education/awareness programmes	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
Egg relocation/hatcheries	
<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
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
Fishing of marine turtles and collecting turtle eggs is prohibited under the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act, 2007. No measures are in place for minimising or reducing mortality by feral and domestic animals.	
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	

YES NO N/A

EXCELLENT GOOD LOW UNKNOWN

Re-vegetation of frontal dunes

YES NO N/A

EXCELLENT GOOD LOW UNKNOWN

Building location/design regulations

YES NO N/A

EXCELLENT GOOD LOW UNKNOWN

As a requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment license, the proponents need to keep a setback of 15-30m depending on the nature of the site, from the High Water MARK.

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

A project on the study of marine turtles at St. Brandon is being put up by the Ministry, which will be carried out under the biodiversity component of the SWIOFP. This project will include the following;

- Monitoring the biological, reproductive and migratory behaviour of marine turtles in St. Brandon;
- Establish a database in connection with existing sea turtle populations on the island of St. Brandon;
- Establish a monitoring program for the protection of marine turtles in St. Brandon.

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]

Marine turtles are protected species under the Fisheries Act of 1980 and the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act of 1998 (Anon 2002; Griffiths and Tatayah 2007; Mortimer and Donnelly 2007), and hence the public is well aware of the importance of conservation. However, in spite of the legislation, turtles continue to be harvested. An interview with residents of the Agalega Islands revealed that turtles were being slaughtered, although the public is aware of the legislation prohibiting this (Griffiths and Tatayah 2007).

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

All the EIAs need to clarify if the area to be developed is not an important habitat housing endangered or rare organisms. This is one of the main criteria in an EIA.

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

Guidelines for water quality standards have been worked out under the EPA.

Appropriate regulations regarding effluent discharge into the ocean, and Coastal Water Quality Guidelines for various categories have been formulated and water analyses are carried out regularly in Mauritius. Outer islands, being remote are not monitored.

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

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Fishing with a poisonous substance or an explosive is prohibited by law.

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)

Relocation of short sewage outfalls to long outfalls to protect coral reefs or to allow reefs to regenerate. Regular monitoring of coral reefs is done on a yearly basis to know their status.

All coastal developments and hotels are required to submit EIAs and also monitor the water quality as per regulations and guidelines.

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)

(a) The Ministry has an ongoing mangrove rehabilitation programme since 1992 for mangrove propagation in order to reforest denuded areas of the lagoon.

A total of around 220,000 mangrove seedlings has been successfully planted on an area of more than 130,000 m² (13 hectares) of the coastal strip with a survival rate exceeding 80%. The total mangrove cover around the island has significantly increased and presently stands at some 145 hectares (ESA Classification Report, June 2009). (b) Dredging activities and any coastal development at sea require an Environment Impact Assessment licence.

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)

Dredging activities and any coastal development at sea require an Environment Impact Assessment licence.

In an EIA usually dredging of sea grass beds is not allowed. The ex-sand mining sites in the NE and SE of Mauritius are being monitored and the sea grass beds are in good condition with a lot of fish species. Sand mining in the lagoon

was banned as from October 2001 in Mauritius.

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]

Hughes, G.R. (1971) Sea turtle research and conservation in south east Africa. Proceedings of the second working meeting of marine turtle specialists: 57 - 67.

Hughes, R (1972). Report to the Southern Africa Wildlife Foundation (World Wildlife Fund) on the status of the marine turtles in South East Africa. Section 2: Madagascar and the Mascarene Part 5: The proposed Mahebourg Green Turtle Farm.

Hughes, G.R. (1974) The sea turtles of south east Africa. PhD. Thesis, University of Natal. 200 p.

Hughes, G.R. (1974) The Sea turtles of South-East Africa I. Status, morphology and distributions. Invest. Rep. Oceanograph. Res. Inst. No. 35: 2-44.

Hughes, G.R. (1975) The St. Brandon turtle fishery. Proceedings of the Royal Society of Arts and Science of Mauritius 111(2): 165 - 189.

Hughes, G.R. (1976) Sea turtles in south east Africa. Proceedings of the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences of Mauritius: 81 - 87.

Thompson, R.K. (1981) Nesting of green sea turtle, *Chelonia mydas* (Linnaeus) 1758, in Mauritius. Revue Agricole et Sucriere de l'île Maurice 60: 125 - 130.

Bonnet, B. (1985) Les tortues marines dans les îles du sud-ouest de l'Océan Indien, Rapport de l'atelier régional "Ressources Biologiques Aquatiques".

Chapman, R.E. and Swinnerton, K.J. (1996) The Mauritius Wildlife Fund St. Brandon Expedition: Marine turtles. 7pp.

Griffiths, O. and Tatayah, V. (2007) Rapid survey of marine turtles in Agalega, Western Indian Ocean. Marine Turtle Newsletter 115: 14 - 16.

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

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

YES NO UNSURE

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

Satellite tracking YES NO

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

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]

The main turtle nesting populations are found in the outer islands, like St. Brandon, Agalega, Tromelin and Chagos Archipelago. The main reason for not having monitoring programmes on these islets are because they are isolated and far away from the mainland and facilities are very minimal to carry out any research works on turtle populations.

Mauritius is part of the South Western Indian Ocean Fisheries Project (SWIOFP) and the management and conservation of turtles will be part of this project. The project will include:

- Monitoring of the biological, reproductive and migratory behaviour of marine turtles in St. Brandon;
- Establishing a database in connection with existing sea turtle populations on the island of St. Brandon;
- Establishing a monitoring program for the protection of marine turtles in St. Brandon.

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

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]

The green turtle is the most common turtle species in the waters around Mauritius (Hughes 1976; Chapman and Sennerton 1996). They rarely come to nest in the beaches of Mauritius where peaceful and pristine beaches for nesting are difficult to find. In outer islands like St. Brandon, Agalega nesting is more common due to less coastal development (Chapman and Swinnerton 1996; Griffiths and Tatayah 2007).

Hawksbill turtles are less common, and are thought to only nest on St. Brandon Island (Mortimer and Donnelly 2007; Frazier 1980; Hughes 1976).

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]

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

Under the SWIOFP regional project, the countries have undergone training in the identification and biology of marine turtles. A uniform data collection method is also being put in place.

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]

Training of regional counterparts in turtle biology and identification.

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

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]

During talks in schools, to the public and fishermen, the importance of conservation of marine turtle populations is stated. The DVD produced by the IOSEA has been given to the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation for mass media information.

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: Fisheries Protection Services
- None of the above

Recently in Oct 2007, a green turtle was seen laying eggs on a beach at Gris Gris in the south of Mauritius. The information was given by one of the coastal residents to the NCG. This rare occasion was followed up and the officers of the Ministry of Agro-Industry & Fisheries (Fisheries Division) and the Fisheries Protection officers were put on vigil 24 hours on site till the eggs hatched out. The site was protected and the importance of the marine turtles was informed to the general public through the media.

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]

Usually the government organisations and the registered NGOs participate in conservation programmes and the general public or community found in the vicinity of a nesting beach are also involved. In Mauritius, apart from the government, the Mauritius Marine Conservation Society and Mauritius Wildlife Fund are also active in marine turtle conservation.

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]

The Action plan for stranded mammals/ marine turtles is in place. When there is a case of a stranding, the government and the NGOs work together in the protection and conservation of the turtles.

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

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

Permits are required for the import and export of all fish and fish products. Through this mechanism, the illegal import and export of marine turtle products is controlled.

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]

Enforcement of legislation and prosecution of persons who commit a breach of the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act, 2007.

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

The National Action plan for stranded marine mammals / turtles has been prepared and the geographical area is around the lagoonal waters of Mauritius. Many government agencies and NGOs are involved and a protocol of action is clearly stated in the action plan. It has been introduced in 2007.

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. Collect and compile basic data on marine turtles (3.1)
2. Review, update and centralise existing bibliographical information, and distribute to all Range States (3.4)

3. Initiate, continue and/or complete baseline inventory and mapping of nesting beaches, and feeding grounds and migratory routes (as appropriate). Identify those which are critical habitats for marine turtles. (3.1)
4. Develop a protocol for collection, storage and analysis of pertinent data, harmonized at least on a sub-regional level. (3.1)
5. Initiate and/or continue systematic data collection and tagging programmes in order to determine occurrence, distribution and conservation status. Where feasible and appropriate, conduct this work through national networks. (3.1)
6. Assess the nature and extent of the impact of fishing activities, pollution, coastal development, climate change, and other threats caused by activities other than direct exploitation and utilisation. (1.1)
7. Acquire materials and basic equipment needed for data collection (where feasible, make joint purchases of equipment and supplies in order to benefit from economies of scale). (5.4)
8. Give protection status to sites identified as being critical for marine turtle nesting, feeding and migration. (2.1)
9. Set-up and/or facilitate monitoring (information gathering) programmes in collaboration with local communities, NGOs, fishermen, trawl operators, coastal developers and others. Ensure adequate feedback of information collected to all concerned. (4.3)
10. Improve general knowledge of legislation. (4.1)
11. Develop model projects to demonstrate the benefits of ecotourism. (6.3)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Incidental capture by foreign fleets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Poaching, illegal trade in turtle projects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Development of gear technology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Oil spills, pollution, marine debris	<input type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Training / capacity-building	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT AT ALL
Management and surveillance of fisheries resources (marine turtles) in our waters.	

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]

Nairobi Convention-IOSEA Marine Turtle Task Force in the Western Indian Ocean is an existing framework.

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]

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]

Capacity-building is required in terms of training in surveys on marine turtles concerning all aspects, equipment, research techniques, study populations etc.. The population studies on outer islands are not carried out due to their remoteness.

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]

Training has been carried out under SWIOFP for turtle identification, biology, satellite tracking and other methods and turtle conservation.

SWIOFP has been requested to fund two satellite tags per country..

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]

SWIOFP has a biodiversity component where the conservation of turtles is a project.

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]

The enforcement of legislation around mainland Mauritius is effective. Other turtle populations are found on remote islets far away from mainland Mauritius and hence the problem of practical application of conserving and protecting these habitats.

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

Legislation may be considered sufficient but enforcement is a problem.

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

In Mauritius, enforcement is not a problem but when it comes to outer islands, the enforcement is difficult due to problem of access.

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]

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 up to now.

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]

Funding for conservation activities and ad-hoc events of turtle nesting is funded by the government as and when required.

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 are trying to get funding from the project SWIOFP for management of turtle populations in the outer islands. This would also include the purchase of satellite tags.

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

Ministry of Fisheries and Rodrigues (Fisheries Division) - Albion Fisheries Research Centre

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 conservation and management of marine turtles falls under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries and Rodrigues (Fisheries Division).

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

The Ministry of Fisheries and Rodrigues (Fisheries Division) is the sole government organisation responsible for the conservation of marine turtles. The NGOs participate in the conservation process with other stakeholders.

Comments/suggestions to improve the present reporting format:

The questions should be more precise to avoid ambiguity in reply.

Additional information not covered above: