



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



## United States

### GENERAL INFORMATION

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

National Marine Fisheries Service

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

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
U.S. Department of State  
Department of Agriculture, Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources, Guam

**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]

Territory of Guam

1. Urunao Point to Ritidian Beach
2. Cocos Island (Government Beach)
3. Ipan: Togcha to Asanite Bay
4. Cetti/Sella Bay
5. Orote bay/Sasa Bay (Apra harbor)
6. Inarajan, Nomna and Asiga Bays
7. Nimitz Beach to Facpi Point

8. Ritidian Beach to Tarague Beach Territory of American Samoa pending Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands pending Additionally details can be found at [http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/Library/PUBDOCs/tech\\_memo/GreenTurtle\\_TechMemoFINAL2.pdf](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/Library/PUBDOCs/tech_memo/GreenTurtle_TechMemoFINAL2.pdf)

**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]**

U.S. facilitated development of standardized hawksbill nesting population and foraging population monitoring protocols for index sites which were developed by a working group established at the CITES Wider Caribbean Hawksbill Dialogue Meeting. Available at CITES website or by contacting Earl\_Possardt@fws.gov

U.S. has established population monitoring protocols for loggerhead and green turtle nesting populations for index sites on southeast U.S. which may be useful with adaptation to other regions. Additional information on these monitoring protocols can be obtained through Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Lighting ordinances at the statewide and local community level are in place throughout the southeastern U.S. Model ordinances can be obtained through Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Nest protection programs in southeastern U.S. are guided by the principle of the least manipulative approach to ensure nest/hatchling success with least likelihood of interference with natural behaviors or mechanisms such as imprinting, hatchling orientation and hatchling frenzy.

Poaching is not a significant threat on southeastern nesting beaches and with this in mind and where possible nests are left in situ. Nests threatened with tidal inundation may be relocated to sites higher on the beach in some cases. Predator control and self release screens are used on some beaches. Beach hatcheries are rare and a last resort where beach erosion, highly developed beaches, beach driving prevent less manipulative approaches. In these cases hatchlings are released the night of emergence.

In September 2007, the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) held an internal workshop to synthesize and review longline bycatch reduction activities, to evaluate current efforts and look towards future longline bycatch reduction efforts and to discuss approaches to garner greater international support for the use of circle hooks and other identified bycatch reduction measures, such as bait type, abroad. In addition to sea turtles, the workshop reviewed the state of our knowledge of longline bycatch reduction efforts for marine mammals, seabirds, and billfish. The workshop will enable NMFS to continue moving forward on developing approaches to reduce the incidental capture and mortality of non-target species in longline fisheries.

Since the last report, the United States has released two recovery plans. On January 16, 2009 a revised Recovery Plan for Northwest Atlantic Loggerheads was released. This plan can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/loggerhead.htm>.

On September 22, 2011, the United States and Mexico released the updated Kemp's Ridley Recovery Plan. This plan can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/kempstridley.htm>.

In addition to these recovery plans, the United States recently designated nine distinct population segments for Loggerhead sea turtles. In doing so, the protection status for the North Pacific loggerhead was changed from threatened to endangered. More information can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/loggerhead.htm>.

UPDATE (2014)

The United States is currently conducting five year reviews of sea turtle species listed on the Endangered Species Act. This a requirement of the act to ensure that the listing remains accurate. The five year reviews can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/listing/reviews.htm>.

The United States is currently finalizing a recommendation as to how the distinct population segment will apply to green turtles. This could result in listing changes for certain green sea turtle distinction population segments.

The United States is currently in the process of completing critical habitat designations for NW Atlantic Loggerheads. [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/criticalhabitat\\_loggerhead.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/criticalhabitat_loggerhead.htm)

NOAA Fisheries recently held the first Sea Turtle Week (June 16-20, 2014). This was a multimedia outreach (web page,

twitter and facebook page) effort starting on World Sea Turtle (June 16, 2014) to publicize our sea turtle conservation efforts and help the public learn about sea turtles.

[http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/stories/2014/06/6\\_13\\_14sea\\_turtle\\_week\\_2014.html](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/stories/2014/06/6_13_14sea_turtle_week_2014.html)

### **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]**

The Southwest Fisheries Science Center conducted research from 2004-2008 on the economics of Pacific leatherback conservation. This included assessing the costs and benefits and community incentives of nesting beach conservation projects in Malaysia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Interviews were conducted with project staff from all the above countries and community household surveys were conducted in Papua, Indonesia. In addition, the SWFSC collaborated with the WorldFish Center, World Wildlife Fund, and Department of Fisheries (DOF) Malaysia, to conduct surveys with fishermen in Malaysia to assess sea turtle bycatch and costs and earnings from fishing. The following publications resulted from these efforts:

Ferraro, P. J. and H. Gjertsen. 2009. A Global Review of Incentive Payments for Sea Turtle Conservation. *Chelonian Conservation and Biology*. (In press.)

Gjertsen, H. 2009. Can We Improve our Conservation Bang for the Buck - Cost Effectiveness of Alternative Leatherback Turtle Conservation Strategies. In *Conservation of Pacific Sea Turtles*. Dutton, P. H., D. Squires, and M. Ahmed (Eds.) University of Hawaii Press (In press).

Gjertsen, H. and T. Stevenson. 2009. Direct Incentive Approaches for Leatherback Turtle Conservation. In *Conservation of Pacific Sea Turtles*. Dutton, P. H., D. Squires, and M. Ahmed (Eds.) University of Hawaii Press (In press).

Yeo, B., D. Squires, K. Ibrahim, H. Gjertsen, S. Kamil, R. Zulkifli, T. Groves, M. Hong, and C. Tan. 2009. Sea Turtle-Fisheries Interactions in Coastal Fisheries: A Case Study of the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. In *Conservation of Pacific Sea Turtles*. Dutton, P. H., D. Squires, and M. Ahmed (Eds.) University of Hawaii Press (In press).

Yeo, B.H., D. Squires, K. Ibrahim, H. Gjertsen, S. K. Syed Mohd Kamil, R. Zulkifli, T. Groves, M. C. Hong, and C.H. Tan. 2009. Can Coastal Fisheries Bear the Cost of Sea Turtle Conservation - Evidence from the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. In *Conservation of Pacific Sea Turtles*. Dutton, P. H., D. Squires, and M. Ahmed (Eds.) University of Hawaii Press (In press).

Gjertsen, H., P. H. Dutton, and D. Squires. 2009. Conservation of the Leatherback Sea Turtle in the Pacific. In *Handbook of Marine Fisheries Conservation and Management*. Grafton, Q. and D. Squires (Eds.) Oxford University Press (In press).

Steering Committee, Bellagio Sea Turtle Conservation Initiative. 2008. Strategic Planning for Long-term Financing of Pacific Leatherback Conservation and Recovery: Proceedings of the Bellagio Sea Turtle Conservation Initiative, Terengganu, Malaysia; July 2007. WorldFish Center Conference Proceedings 1805, The WorldFish Center, Penang, Malaysia. 79 p.

Yeo, B.H., D. Squires, K. Ibrahim, H. Gjertsen, S.K. Syed Mohd. Kamil, R. Zulkifli, T. Groves, M.C. Hong and C.H. Tan. 2007. Fisher profiles and perceptions of sea turtle-fishery interactions: case study of East Coast Peninsular Malaysia. The WorldFish Center Discussion Series 6, 69 p. The WorldFish Center, Penang, Malaysia.

Gjertsen, H. and C. Hitipeuw. 2006. Using Socioeconomic Surveys to Design Community Incentives for Conservation. In *Book of Abstracts from 26th Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation*. Frick, M., A. Panagopoulou, A. F. Rees, and K. Williams (Eds.) International Sea Turtle Society, Athens, Greece, p. 346.

UPDATE (2014)

We do not currently have any economists or sociologists working on community level studies related to sea turtles. We will be putting forth an economic analysis of the impact of our forthcoming critical habitat designation for NW Atlantic loggerheads. See the draft at -- [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/criticalhabitat\\_loggerhead.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/criticalhabitat_loggerhead.htm).

### **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:** Lack of funding for enforcement

**■ Other2:** Need for improved coordination between federal and local agencies

Other3:

**■ None of the above or Not Applicable**

It is illegal under the U.S. Endangered Species Act to take sea turtles. While economic incentives to poach turtles exist to some extent, poaching is not huge issue on the mainland. However, there are issues in CNMI and Guam.

**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)

It is illegal under the U.S. Endangered Species Act to take sea turtles. However, where we do have issues we are undertaking the following activities. In Guam we are funding Haggan Watch, a group created by Guam Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, that involves community members in monitoring beaches. Also we support education and outreach efforts of Guam DAWR. In CNMI we are funding the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources turtle program. They provide education and outreach to grade school students to promote awareness and pride in their natural resources and hopefully they will share information with their families. Also the program participates in fishing fairs and festivals to promote awareness of turtles and laws regarding their protection. In partnership with NOAA Enforcement, a part-time conservation officer will be funded with FY14 funds to work on CNMI's nesting beaches.

**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 trawls operate in much of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic. The United States has regulations in place requiring the use of Turtle Excluder Devices in otter trawls. The current Turtle Excluder Device regulations can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/fr/fr69-31035.pdf>. The US National Marine Fisheries Service is conducting additional gear testing to demonstrate the effectiveness of using Turtle Excluder Devices in skimmer trawls.

Through the Sea Turtle Observer Requirement regulation, known as the Annual Determination, NMFS has identified several trawl fisheries as needing additional fisheries observer information. Please see <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/observers.htm> for more information.

**b) Set gill nets:** **■ YES**  NO

Through the Sea Turtle Observer Requirement regulation, known as the Annual Determination, NMFS has identified several gillnet fisheries as needing additional fisheries observer information. Please see <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/observers.htm> for more information.

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

Anchored FADs are found primarily in the State waters of Hawaii. U.S. Fishermen also fish on FADs in the IATTC waters of the Eastern Tropical Pacific, but those generally are not anchored FADs.

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

Many of the U.S. Fishermen operating in the tuna fisheries of the InterAmerican Tropical Tuna Convention use purse seines with and without FADs. In the Gulf of Mexico, the menhaden boats also use purse seine. NMFS has in the past placed observers on some of these boats, due to concerns about sea turtle and dolphin interactions.

Through the Sea Turtle Observer Requirement regulation, known as the Annual Determination, NMFS has identified purse seine fisheries as needing additional fisheries observer information. Please see <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/observers.htm> for more information.

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

Shallow set and deepset long lining occurs in the Atlantic, the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific. In the Northeast Distant fishery in the Atlantic NMFS requires fishermen to use 18/0 circle hooks. In the Gulf of Mexico and other parts of the Atlantic fishermen in the highly migratory species fishery (principally tuna and swordfish) must use 16/0 non-offset or greater than 16/0 non-offset circle hooks or 18/0 with a 10 degrees offset or greater. Further in the Northeast Distant, U.S. fishermen are required to use whole mackerel or squid. Elsewhere in the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico, whole finfish or squid is used. In the Gulf of Mexico, live bait is prohibited. In the Atlantic fisheries, fishermen are also required to take a course on safe handling and release of sea turtles and receive a certificate. Dehooking and release gear is required to be on board.

In the Pacific shallow-set fishery, U.S. fishermen are required to use 18/0 circle hooks with a 10 degree offset north of the equator. Pacific U.S. fishermen are also required to use mackerel type bait north of the equator. Fishermen also are not allowed to use lightsticks and must attend a protected species workshop and receive a certificate. Dehooking and release gear is required to be on board. There is also 100% observer coverage and if the Pacific Highly Migratory Species fishery interacts with a certain number of Leatherback and Loggerhead sea turtles it is closed down for the year. This has only occurred twice, since these regulations went into place -- 2006 and 2011.

In 2011, NOAA Fisheries required that the American Samoa longline fishery fish deeper than 100m to avoid interactions with sea turtles. This rule is still in place.

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2010-0192-0007>

**f) Driftnet:**  YES  NO

Driftnet gills are fished off the West Coast of the United States.

Through the Sea Turtle Observer Requirement regulation, known as the Annual Determination, NMFS has identified drift gillnet fisheries as needing additional fisheries observer information. Please see <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/observers.htm> for more information.

**g) Other1:**

In several of the Atlantic fisheries, fishermen use finfish trawls. There are recorded incidents of bycatch in these trawl fisheries. It is under discussion what regulatory actions will occur in these fisheries.

**h) Other2:**

There are several other gear types that NMFS believes there are likely sea turtle interactions with. Additional information can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/observers.htm> (NEW LINK)

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: Now under the 2007 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act, there is mandatory observer coverage. See amendment 13 which required mandatory observer coverage.

Please see are updated National Bycatch Report for the latest estimates of sea turtle bycatch for each fishery where there is observer coverage. <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/first-edition-update-1>

***b) Set gill nets***

**Fishing effort:**

RELATIVELY HIGH  MODERATE  RELATIVELY LOW  NONE  UNKNOWN

**Perceived Impact:**

RELATIVELY HIGH  MODERATE  RELATIVELY LOW  NONE  UNKNOWN

Source: Based on observed fisheries, NMFS has documented sea turtle bycatch in all gill net fisheries.

Please see are updated National Bycatch Report for the latest estimates of sea turtle bycatch for each fishery where there is observer coverage.

<http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/first-edition-update-1>

***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: The United States have a very small number fishermen that fish on FADs and mostly on the high seas.

***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: See U.S. National Bycatch Report for Estimates.  
<http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/first-edition-update-1>

***e) Longline (shallow or deepset)***

**Fishing effort:**

RELATIVELY HIGH  **MODERATE**  RELATIVELY LOW  NONE  UNKNOWN

**Perceived Impact:**

**RELATIVELY HIGH**  MODERATE  RELATIVELY LOW  NONE  UNKNOWN

Source: See U.S. National Bycatch Report for Estimates.  
<http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/first-edition-update-1>

***f) Driftnet***

**Fishing effort:**

RELATIVELY HIGH  MODERATE  **RELATIVELY LOW**  NONE  UNKNOWN

**Perceived Impact:**

RELATIVELY HIGH  **MODERATE**  RELATIVELY LOW  NONE  UNKNOWN

Source: NMFS is answering this question based on our drift gillnet fisheries.

See U.S. National Bycatch Report for Estimates.  
<http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/first-edition-update-1>

***g) Other1 (from 1.4.1): traps and pots***

**Fishing effort:**

**RELATIVELY HIGH**  MODERATE  RELATIVELY LOW  NONE  UNKNOWN

**Perceived Impact:**

RELATIVELY HIGH  **MODERATE**  RELATIVELY LOW  NONE  UNKNOWN

Source: The interactions are rare relative to observer effort, but leatherbacks and loggerheads have been documented to entangled and sometimes killed in the buoy lines.

See U.S. National Bycatch Report for Estimates.  
<http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/first-edition-update-1>

***h) Other2 (from 1.4.1): non-shrimp trawl***

**Fishing effort:**

**RELATIVELY HIGH**  MODERATE  RELATIVELY LOW  NONE  UNKNOWN

**Perceived Impact:**

**RELATIVELY HIGH**  MODERATE  RELATIVELY LOW  NONE  UNKNOWN

Source: If no turtle excluder devices are on the nets, turtle bycatch and mortality can be very high. NMFS has developed turtle excluder devices for finfish trawls, but not yet adopted them in regulation.

See U.S. National Bycatch Report for Estimates.  
<http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/first-edition-update-1>

**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]**

Under the amendments made to the High Seas Driftnet Fisheries Moratorium Protection Act in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 2007, the Secretary of Commerce must certify to the United States Congress every two years a list of nations whose vessels have been identified under Section 609 on Illegal, Unreported, or Unregulated fishing. If countries are certified to be engaged in IUU fishing, the provisions of the High Sea Driftnet Fisheries Moratorium Protection Act can come into force. These provisions include the denial of port privileges. The most recent report to Congress can be found at [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/msra\\_page/msra.html](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/msra_page/msra.html).

**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

NMFS requires protected species training which includes safe-handling and release training in our longline fisheries and purse seine fisheries. Please see the final rules for the Atlantic and Pacific longline fisheries for further detail -- <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/regulations.htm>.

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

Note, there are regulations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act to avoid encirclement of dolphins in purse seine fisheries but these regulations are not specific to sea turtles. However, the United States has been a strong proponent in several Regional Fisheries Management Organizations for resolutions that urge/require countries to avoid encircling turtles in FADs. Including the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, where we helped to get this resolution adopted -- <http://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/Resolution%202005-04.pdf>.

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

**YES**  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

See <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/regulations.htm> for more details.



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

**YES**  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

Under the InterAmerican Tropical Tuna Convention, sea turtle resolution (C-07-03) all purse seine vessels are to avoid encircling sea turtles in FADs. This applies to the US boats fishing in the IATTC area as well.

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

As mentioned above, the Hawaii longline fishery closes if a certain number of Loggerhead/Leatherback turtles are taken. See <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/regulations.htm> for more details.

h) **Effort management control**

**YES**  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

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

NMFS currently has over 47 observer programs operating. More details on NMFS' observer program can be found at <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st4/nop/index.html>.

**Vessel monitoring systems**

**YES**  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

More than 4,000 vessels in the U.S. fleet are required to use Vessel Monitoring Systems. More information can be found at [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ole/about/our\\_programs/vessel\\_monitoring.html](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ole/about/our_programs/vessel_monitoring.html).

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

YES  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

NMFS Office of Law Enforcement together with state law enforcement agencies and the U.S. Coast Guard carries out inspections at sea, in port and at landing sites. For some fisheries, such as the Gulf and South Atlantic shrimp fishery, NMFS has a gear monitoring team which is composed of gear extension agents and office of law enforcement officials to conduct trainings and courtesy boardings. Through regular interaction with the shrimp fleet, NMFS aims for a high level of compliance with the Turtle Excluder Device regulations.

**Training programmes / workshops** to educate fishers

YES  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

Several NMFS fisheries, particularly the longline fisheries, require protected species training which teaches fishermen what to do when they interact with a marine mammal or sea turtles. See example below -- [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/news/news\\_list/2014/6/pr\\_workshops\\_jul-sept2014.html](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/news/news_list/2014/6/pr_workshops_jul-sept2014.html)

**Informative videos, brochures, printed guidelines** etc.

YES  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

Below are links for several NMFS training materials related to sea turtles and release from fishing gear.

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/workshops/#AreThereWorkshopMaterials>

<http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/species/turtles/observers.htm>

**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

NMFS reviews sea turtle mitigation measures whenever there are changes in the Fishery Management Plans, the ESA Recovery Plans and the ESA mandated five year reviews.

**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]**

NMFS has a few programs that contribute to the research and development of bycatch reduction devices for sea turtles. The first is the Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program. More information on this program can be found at [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/by\\_catch/bycatch\\_BREP.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/by_catch/bycatch_BREP.htm). The Cooperative Research Program (<http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/cooperative-research/>) and Saltonstall-Kennedy Program ([http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/mb/financial\\_services/skhome.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/mb/financial_services/skhome.htm)) can also provide funding to support bycatch reduction/conservation engineering work.

**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

U.S. has an active program to exchange technical information related to Turtle Excluder Devices, circle hook technology and more recently modified gillnets with interested countries. A summary of these efforts can be found at [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/msra\\_page/2013\\_biennial\\_report\\_to\\_congress\\_\\_jan\\_11\\_\\_2013\\_\\_final.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/msra_page/2013_biennial_report_to_congress__jan_11__2013__final.pdf).

**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]**

U.S. adopted the High Sea Driftnet Moratorium Protection Act to implement this UNGA resolution. NMFS reports annually to Congress on our implementation of this Act (see link below). This Act was amended by the 2006 Reauthorization of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation Act. These amendments gave NMFS broader scope to look across gear types (not just large scale drift gillnets), but all fisheries to identify countries for IUU or bycatch of protected living marine resources. [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/driftnet\\_reports/driftnet\\_reports.html](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/driftnet_reports/driftnet_reports.html) [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/msra\\_page/msra.html](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/msra_page/msra.html)

**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 are completely protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act and various state laws. Turtles, eggs or their parts cannot be taken except with permits for scientific or educational purposes.

**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

**Egg consumption**

YES  NO

HIGH  MODERATE  LOW  UNKNOWN

**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:

Six of the seven sea turtle species are listed on the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Take of listed species is strictly prohibited and so no traditional harvest can take place.

**1.5.4 Have any domestic management programmes been established to limit the levels of intentional harvest? [SAP]**

YES  NO  UNKNOWN

Traditional harvest is illegal in the United States.

**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]**

N/A

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**

**YES**  NO  N/A

EXCELLENT  GOOD  LOW  UNKNOWN

Territory of Guam: Regular patrolling of important green turtle nesting beaches between April and August.

**Education/awareness programmes**

YES  **NO**  N/A

EXCELLENT  GOOD  LOW  UNKNOWN

**Egg relocation/hatcheries**

YES  **NO**  N/A

EXCELLENT  GOOD  LOW  UNKNOWN

**Predator control**

YES  **NO**  N/A

EXCELLENT  GOOD  LOW  UNKNOWN

**Vehicle / access restrictions**

**YES**  NO  N/A

EXCELLENT  GOOD  LOW  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

Major efforts are underway to restore Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to original condition (re-vegetate frontal dunes at nesting beaches) after military use.

**Building location/design regulations**

**YES**  NO  N/A

EXCELLENT  GOOD  LOW  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

Programs are continuously reviewed through scientific and permit review process.

## 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]

In the United States critical habitat is defined as "specific areas within the geographical area occupied by the species at the time of listing, if they contain physical or biological features essential to conservation, and those features may require special management considerations or protection; and specific areas outside the geographical area occupied by the species if the agency determines that the area itself is essential for conservation." In recent years, NMFS and FWS have been asked to designate more and more critical habitat. Current and proposed critical habitat designations for all listed sea turtles species can be found at -- <http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pr/species/criticalhabitat.htm>.

### 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

Federal Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies that carry out any action or permit or fund any action that may affect federal listed endangered species (all sea turtles except flatback) must consult with National Marine Fisheries Service or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure these actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species. In instances where an action does not jeopardize a species but will still result in the taking of individual animals, the Services must establish a permitted incidental take level after required reasonable and prudent measures are in place to minimize incidental or accidental take. Also Environment assessments or impact statements required for most government projects or government permitted projects.

### 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

Federal and state statutes address water quality protection.

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

YES  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

Yes, the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act require through analysis prior to any project using Federal funds. These analysis would cover chemicals and explosives, should they used in a project.

#### 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)

Our primary emphasis is on reef protection and reducing threats not active rebuilding. However, the NMFS Restoration Program does work to rebuild reefs if there has been a physical impact (such as a ship landing). With the listing of several coral species on the U.S. Endangered Species Act, there will be more emphasis on recovering certain coral species as well. <http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/restoration/approaches/corals.html> <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/invertebrates/#corals>

#### 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)

Mangrove and seagrass protection focuses on reducing threats rather than active restoration of particular sites.

#### 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)

Mangrove and seagrass protection focuses on reducing threats rather than active restoration of particular sites.

### 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]

See 1.2.1 for monitoring of nesting populations.

<http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/species/turtles/publications.htm>

[https://swfsc.noaa.gov/publications/swcpub/Publications.asp?Title=turtle&TitleX=All&Author=&AuthorX=All&Source=&PubYr=&Sort=date\\_d&Submit=Search](https://swfsc.noaa.gov/publications/swcpub/Publications.asp?Title=turtle&TitleX=All&Author=&AuthorX=All&Source=&PubYr=&Sort=date_d&Submit=Search)

[http://www.pifsc.noaa.gov/marine\\_turtle/staff\\_publications.php](http://www.pifsc.noaa.gov/marine_turtle/staff_publications.php) <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/psb/turtles/turtlepubs.html>

#### 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

See 1.2.1

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

YES  NO  UNSURE

National Sea Turtle Genetics Center established at NMFS Research Center, La Jolla, California has active program to collect and analyse tissue samples to characterize genetics structure of nesting and foraging populations within and outside the United States.

<https://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division=PRD&ParentMenuId=212&id=1331>

**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

<http://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division=PRD&ParentMenuId=212&id=12682>

See links above to each out Center's sea turtle research programs. Each of the Centers use tagging as methodology.

**Satellite tracking**  YES  NO

Nesting green turtle instrumented with satellite transmitter in Guam 2/22/04 . Turtle and transmitter recovered several months later in Philippines and transmitter returned by Philippine government.

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

NMFS launched in 2012 an internal effort to improve our stock assessment tools related to sea turtles. Many of these tools are still in development, but this process seeks to improve the quantitative and technological tools that the agency uses to conduct stock assessments. [www.sefsc.noaa.gov/turtles/TM\\_NMFS\\_OPR\\_29\\_Ryder\\_et\\_al.pdf](http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/turtles/TM_NMFS_OPR_29_Ryder_et_al.pdf) <https://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division=PRD&ParentMenuId=212&id=1333> <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/psb/AMAPPS/>

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

YES  NO  UNSURE

NMFS Honolulu Lab is a centre for coordinating priority green turtle fibropapilloma research with U.S. academic institutions. NMFS also now has a Veterinary Pathologist who works only on sea turtle issues. This person works with the Stranding Network on any unusual mortality events, including those caused by harmful algal blooms, oil spills and fisheries interactions.



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

**YES**  NO  UNSURE

Interview and cooperation with local peoples is encouraged in research.

**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]**

NMFS Pacific Islands Region participates in the SPREP Marine Turtle Action Plan discussions and assists with implementation where possible.

NMFS and USFWS jointly work to implement the US Recovery Plans for sea turtles.

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/recovery/plans.htm#turtles>

**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

See <http://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division=PRD&ParentMenuId=212&id=1331>.

**b) Conservation status**  **YES**  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

In the Pacific, there are several NMFS offices and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that work with international partners to improve the conservation status of listed species. More details about collaborative studies in the Pacific can be found at [http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd\\_intl\\_sea\\_turtles\\_index.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_intl_sea_turtles_index.html) or <http://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division=PRD&ParentMenuId=212&id=1226>. [http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd\\_intl\\_sea\\_turtles\\_index.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_intl_sea_turtles_index.html) <http://www.fws.gov/international/wildlife-without-borders/marine-turtle-conservation-fund.html>

**c) Migrations**  **YES**  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

See links above from all the NMFS Science Center activities.

**d) Other biological and ecological aspects**  **YES**  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

See links above.

**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]**

NMFS and US FWS are obliged to recovery all sea turtle populations listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Per the act, a review is conducted every five years -- <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/listing/reviews.htm>.

**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

Each NMFS Science Center program undergoes a program review on a periodic basis. All protected species programs will be in reviewed in 2015.

**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]**

NMFS and USFWS's research results, as well as those from the academic community, are regularly used in Biological Opinions for any Federal action that may occur and that will impact sea turtles. In addition, the best available science is required to be used for all five year reviews, status reviews, recovery plans and listing decisions. All gear modification regulations also rely on the best available science.

**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

see 1.2.1

**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]**

All of the above. NMFS and FWS scientists often publish their data in peer-reviewed journals and government technical memorandums. They present at the International Sea Turtle Symposium, and regional workshops.

**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

Our scientists are regularly collaborating with scientists from the IOSEA region on genetics, telemetry, bycatch reduction, etc and share information with their collaborators.

## **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]**

Numerous materials between federal, state governments and NGOs such as WIDECAST and The Ocean Conservancy.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service have websites with information on marine turtles as well as for all recovery plans under revision (Kemp's ridley and loggerhead). seaturtle.org and cccturtle.org are just a couple of the NGO sites featuring marine turtle information.

NMFS recently developed an online game for kids called "Quest to Nest." The game can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/education/>. We also recently produced a Kids' Times publications for sea turtles. This information can also be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/education/turtles.htm>.

The United States can contribute to the development of a web-based information resource for marine turtle conservation by providing data on marine turtle populations, nesting data, migration data and information on projects. As mentioned in previous sections, the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service also recently held its first Sea Turtle Week to promote over social media the importance of sea turtles conservation.

### **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:
- None of the above

Fishing Industry <http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/labs/mississippi/fishermen.htm> Tourists -- Wildlife Viewing Guidelines [http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/Library/PAO/pdfs/Marine\\_wildlife\\_viewing\\_brochure\\_PUBLIC.pdf](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/Library/PAO/pdfs/Marine_wildlife_viewing_brochure_PUBLIC.pdf) Teachers - [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2012/11/11\\_26\\_12november\\_teacher\\_at\\_sea.html](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2012/11/11_26_12november_teacher_at_sea.html) <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/education/lessons.htm> Students -- <http://games.noaa.gov/seaturtle/welcome.html> <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/education/turtles.htm>

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

**YES**  NO

Community learning centers exist in many of the coastal states of the United States.

### **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.**

N/A

**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]**

As part of creating a new regulation the United States government is required to notify the public. The public is notified via the Federal Register, the NMFS and FWS website, press releases, and emails to constituent list-servs. There are often public meetings held to get input and there is always a public comment period on the proposed regulation.

**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]**

Development and revision of recovery plans as a practice involve state and Federal government representatives, NGO and key academics in the recovery plan with conservation/research tasks assigned to specific entities. The public reviews and comments on these plans.

**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

We have consulted with the US CITES Management Authority. They have informed us we are not under any obligation to undertake a national review of our CITES compliance in relation to marine turtles. We implement the treaty for marine turtles according to their status as Appendix-I species under CITES. This means that permits are required for both import and export (except for specimens that meet the specific exemptions of the treaty), and trade for commercial purposes is prohibited. U.S. implementation of CITES for these species has never been the subject of a review by the CITES Secretariat or the CITES Animals or Standing Committees.

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

YES  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

The United States often provides funding and or personnel for CITES training programmes. The United States is particularly concerned about illegal trafficking of sea turtle parts. We are working to improve law enforcement training in the region.

**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

Yes we are an active member of CITES, ASEAN WEN and several other wildlife trafficking initiatives. With the recent Obama initiative on wildlife trafficking, there is intense work being done to combat wildlife trafficking. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/02/11/fact-sheet-national-strategy-combating-wildlife-trafficking-commercial-b>

**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, we have bilateral trade agreements or fisheries bilaterals where we directly raise issues with countries.

**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]**

Active monitoring programs and all important nesting beaches, routine law enforcement investigation of rare poaching reports.

**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

Yes, we have recovery plans for each of the listed sea turtle species in the United States.  
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/recovery/plans.htm#turtles>

**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]**

Our Recovery Plans identify the priority conservation actions for each listed sea turtles species. Please see --  
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/recovery/plans.htm#turtles>

**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]**

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

**Tagging / satellite tracking**

ESSENTIAL  IMPORTANT  **LIMITED**  NOT AT ALL

**Habitat studies**

ESSENTIAL  IMPORTANT  **LIMITED**  NOT AT ALL

**Genetics studies**

ESSENTIAL  **IMPORTANT**  LIMITED  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]**

International Sea Turtle Society and its symposiums which are partially supported by U.S. government, and U.S. based foundations, NGOs and organizations as well as others outside the United States.

SPREP is also a helpful forum for us to coordinate sea turtle conservation in the South Pacific. The Coral Triangle Initiative and our bilateral work in IOSEA area have also been important forums for us.

**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]**

The United States has promoted sea turtle conservation measures at the InterAmerican Tropical Tuna Convention (IATTC), the Western and Central Pacific Fishery Management Commission (WCPFC), the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT), the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) and throughout the Kobe Process.

**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]**

The United States has a large sea turtle conservation program composed of personnel at the Federal level from the USFWS and NMFS. In addition, many of the states have their own sea turtle program. The greatest challenge to all of these programs is and will continue to be consistent levels of funding.

**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]**

The United States has run the International TEDS program for almost twenty years. This program provides training on the use of Turtle Excluder Devices. In addition, the United States has been actively working with several countries to test circle hook technology in longline gear and modification of gillnets and pound nets to reduce sea turtle bycatch.

**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]**

The United States has worked with World Wildlife Fund in the past in the Philippines, Indonesia and more recently in Vietnam on the promotion of circle hook technology. The United States also works in Papua Barat on nesting beach conservation, satellite tracking and genetic sampling. And as already mentioned we work with several Pacific Islands nations. More information can be found at [http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd\\_intl\\_sea\\_turtles\\_index.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_intl_sea_turtles_index.html) and at <http://www.fws.gov/international/wildlife-without-borders/marine-turtle-conservation-fund.html>.

**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 Endangered Species Act is the main statute to protect sea turtles in the United States. <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/laws/esa/>. This statute has generally been very effective in protecting sea turtles.

**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

**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

At times the United States Federal government, has had inter-agency coordination issues on enforcement issues as well as coordination issues with state partners. In general though, these issues are resolved quickly.

## **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]**

The United States has actively encouraged some countries to consider joining the IOSEA. We have provided contact information for key officials in China and have offered several times to facilitate conversations between the Secretariat and Chinese officials. The United States is happy to assist the Secretariat in any outreach.

**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)? [\[IND\]](#)

The Department of State, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service have consistently provided funding to the IOSEA. Depending on budget allocations, they will make every effort to try and do so in the future.

### 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. [\[IND\]](#)

The United States government's sea turtle conservation funding is authorized under the implementation of the Endangered Species Act. By carrying out our Endangered Species Act obligations, we are able to fulfill our IOSEA obligations.

### 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

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service runs a matching grant program called the Marine Turtle Conservation Act.

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

N/A

### 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

National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service share national authority for the conservation of marine turtles. NMFS in the marine environment and USFWS on nesting beaches.

### 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 National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have an memorandum of understanding that detail their roles and responsibilities.

### 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 Endangered Species Act outlines what the statutory roles of NMFS and FWS are.

**Comments/suggestions to improve the present reporting format:**

**Additional information not covered above:**