



## Plans for the Celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU

2021 is the year in which the MOU will celebrate its twentieth anniversary – a reason to celebrate, reflect and make a special effort to support marine turtle conservation in the IOSEA region!

Following repeated discussions with the Advisory Committee, a plan has been developed on how we might use this special occasion to put a spotlight on the MOU both internally and externally and at the same time tackle the implementation of a number of activities foreseen in the [Work Programme 2020-2024](#). Australia kindly agreed that we could use funds from a voluntary contribution for the MOU channelled through CMS for these activities, and we warmly thank them for their generous support!

After sharing our plans with all Signatory States in December 2020, we want to continue encouraging everyone to join in the “celebrations”. The idea is to mark the 20th anniversary of the MOU with a well-planned series of events, as appropriate in partnership with other organizations and national entities, covering different activities foreseen in the Work Programme:

- a) Celebration of World Sea Turtle Day on 16 June 2021 – oriented towards the public, multiple events in all countries where a local partner is taking the lead, could include awards and prizes for competitions etc. (WP #50) – (more detail will be discussed at the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee, taking place from 15-19 March 2021, under [agenda item 6](#))
- b) Virtual sub-regional meeting/s in the SEA+ and/or NWIO sub-region; in SEA+ region with special effort to engage the Republic of Korea, China and Japan (WP #64, #68, #69 and #92)
- c) Virtual meetings of the Marine Turtle Task Forces in the WIO and NIO sub-regions (WP #110)
- d) Virtual capacity-building workshop/s in priority countries, addressing needs identified in the WP, including assistance in seeking available counterpart funding by helping to develop some projects, both short- and long-term, for submission to donors (e.g. WP #62, #87, #88, #101)
- e) Conduct an online survey for the IOSEA constituency (both past and present) to review the performance of the MOU in its 20 years, identify what went well and where we could have tried a different approach, and identify lessons-learnt for the coming years.

All these activities are meant to revive the idea behind the MOU, namely that it is for helping the people who work with turtles through sharing knowledge and experiences – good and bad. The celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary is an excellent opportunity to bring people together, even if due to COVID we can likely only do so virtually. The Advisory Committee and Secretariat hope and trust that these plans will have your full support!

We warmly encourage all Signatory States as well as other stakeholders in the region to participate in the activities around the anniversary of the MOU by organizing events and having an active role in planning and running the meetings foreseen. We would also welcome your input on concrete capacity-building needs in your country or sub-region in order to help determine which workshops can be offered in 2021 and beyond.