



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

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8TH MEETING OF THE SIGNATORY STATES

Da Nang, Viet Nam, 21-25 October 2019

Agenda Item 9.1

PHILIPPINES – NATIONAL REPORT 2019

(Prepared by the Philippines)

IOSEA MARINE TURTLES MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING - NATIONAL REPORTING 2019

IOSEA Marine Turtles MoU - National Reports

The purpose of completing the national report is to provide information on your country's implementation of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU including, as far as possible, contributions of cooperating non-governmental partners. Implementation will be assessed in terms of the six objectives of the Conservation and Management Plan (CMP). The online questionnaire is divided into these six main objectives, and asks specific questions in relation to the activities that need to be carried out to fulfil those objectives.

Please answer all questions as fully and as accurately as possible. It may seem time-consuming, but once you have completed the first report, the next time will be much easier because you can simply revise your existing report online. Comprehensive responses to the questions posed in Section 1.4 should satisfy many of the reporting requirements of the 2004 FAO Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality in Fishing Operations, thereby avoiding duplication of effort.

Description text is provided below some of the questions to explain what information needs to be provided. Text boxes can be expanded to accommodate longer answers or to explain and provide additional information, beyond what is requested. Details of future plans are especially encouraged. Wherever possible, please try to indicate the source of information used to answer a particular question, if a published reference is available. Remember that you are sharing information with other countries about your progress, so that it may be of benefit to them. At the same time, you may find it useful to look at other countries' reports to get ideas for marine turtle conservation that might be adapted to your context.

When working on the online questionnaire, save your information by clicking on the "Save all" button inside each section. An auto-save feature also saves any changed responses every 30 seconds, and whenever you move between sections. Feel free to attach additional material (published reports, maps etc) to this questionnaire.

Throughout the questionnaire, alongside each question you will find one or more 3-letter abbreviations within square brackets. These are used to indicate the purpose for which the information provided will be used in the subsequent analysis of all of the national reports, as shown in the following table.

To some extent, the order in which these different types of information are listed below is a reflection of their importance - ranging from critical indicators of performance to factual details that are merely informative.

Abbreviation

Type

Treatment / Purpose

IND

Indicator

The information provided serves, in and of itself, as a key indicator of successful implementation or of pre-requisites for same (eg. of core actions undertaken, resource availability, capacity etc.)

PRI

Priorities

The collective data will be synthesized to give an indication of what has been done already (helping to avoid duplication of effort); what is generally not being done (gaps that need to be addressed); and what interventions or specific assistance may be required.

TSH

Trouble-shooting

Particular implementation problems and issues (possibly of special interest to a small group of countries) are identified/highlighted with a view to stimulating remedial action in the short-term.

BPR

Best practice

Well-documented examples of best practices / success stories will be compiled and presented as approaches that other Signatory States might consider pursuing (ie adopting or adapting to suit their own circumstances).

SAP

Self-Appraisal

Self-assessment of effectiveness and completeness of actions undertaken - intended to stimulate reflection within a given Signatory State on what more could or should be done in relation to a particular activity.

INF

Information

The information will be collected and compiled, with little or no modification, mainly for purpose of sharing of information that could be of interest or value to other readers and/or other analyses.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Signatory State:

Which agency or institution has been primarily responsible for the preparation of this report?

> Wildlife Resources Division
Biodiversity Management Bureau
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Quezon City, Philippines

List any other agencies, institutions, or NGOs that have provided input:

> Other government agencies:

1. Department of Environment and Natural Resources Regional and Field Offices
2. Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources

Non-government organizations:

1. Marine Wildlife Watch of the Philippines (MWWP)
2. Large Marine Vertebrates Research Institute Philippines (LAMAVE)
3. Community Centered Conservation (C3) Philippines, Inc.
4. Candis 3 Marketing Cooperative

People's organizations:

1. Bantay Pawikan, Inc., Morong, Bataan
2. Pawicare, San Narciso, Zambales

Private corporations:

1. Davao Light and Power Company, Inc.
2. Ten Knots Philippines, Inc.
3. Anvaya Cove Beach and Nature Club
4. Quezon Power Philippines, Ltd.
5. Science of Identity Foundation - Community Assistance for Responsible Existence
6. Montemar Beach Club
7. Aquos Foundation

Memorandum in effect in Signatory State since (dd/mm/yyyy):

> 01/09/2001

Designated Focal Point (and full contact details):

> Mr. Anson M. Tagtag (temporary)
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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

Please introduce and summarise, in an abstract of less than a page, the marine turtle populations and their habitats in your country. Comment on their status and highlight the main conservation challenges and achievements to date. It is not necessary to list here by name the individual nesting beaches, feeding areas and developmental habitats that are important for marine turtles in your country, as this information can be generated from the 'Site-Threat' data sheets to be completed in Annex 1. **[INF]**

> Of the seven species of marine turtles in the world, five are found in the Philippines. The green turtle, hawksbill turtle and olive ridley turtle have established nesting sites in the coastal areas. Two incidents of leatherback turtle nestings were recorded in 2013 but hatching was not successful. No follow-up nesting incidents of leatherback turtles have been observed/recorded. The loggerhead turtle on the other hand uses the Philippine waters as foraging and migrating routes.

This year, 2019, the threatened species list of wild fauna was reviewed and updated by the Philippine Red List Committee and has been approved by the DENR Secretary. Formal adoption and dissemination as a DENR Administrative Order will commence after publication. In this document, the hawksbill and leatherback turtles are categorized as critically endangered while the green, olive ridley and loggerhead turtles are categorized as endangered.

More local government units have been supporting the government's marine turtle conservation program. Each institution/agency/organization has developed conservation action plans specific for their areas of jurisdiction that are anchored on the DENR's programs. Highlights of their conservation program/s is the intensification of public awareness to encourage community participation in the conservation program. Several municipalities celebrate Pawikan (Marine Turtle) Festival, the dates of which vary in each area. The festival usually includes lectures on marine turtle conservation, interactive skits for school children, talks on human wellness and livelihoods, and street dancing competitions to name a few activities.

In 2017, the marine turtle tagging database maintained by the Biodiversity Management Bureau was analyzed by a non-government organization (NGO). It was evident that reporting of marine turtle encounters has increased through the years. This was attributed to the increased awareness of the general public on marine turtle conservation. Some private individuals resort to social media platforms in reporting turtle encounters. This, along with inaccurate filling-up of standard reporting forms, became a disadvantage in the data analysis. The NGO recommended reiteration of accurate reporting of marine turtle encounters using the standard prescribed forms.

The Marine Wildlife Watch of the Philippines, a NGO, provided funds for the creation of a series of Philippine Aquatic Wildlife Rescue and Response Manual (Marine Turtles, Marine Mammals, and Sharks and Rays). The manual was distributed to concerned stake holders most especially to first responders of marine wildlife stranding incidents after the conduct of training on the use of the manual.

2018 was the year when a prominent area/store, notorious for serving marine turtle soup in the Visayas region, was finally caught and apprehended. The area/store has been under surveillance for more than 10 years. During the enforcement operation, chopped parts of marine turtles were recovered on site, including a flipper with a Malaysian metal tag.

1.2 Best practice approaches to minimizing threats

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. **[BRP]**

> 1. The Philippines established a Marine Turtle Protected Area Network (MTPAN) in order to strengthen the protection of marine turtles and their habitats as well as improve management effectiveness of identified critical habitats of marine turtles. The MTPAN has been formalized through a memorandum of agreement between National Government Agencies (DENR, PCSD), Local Government Units (Palawan, Tawi-tawi) and Protected Area Management Boards of El Nido, Turtle Islands Heritage Parks.

2. Community-based marine turtle programs/projects have also been established in various areas in the country. Key stakeholders are trained on various activities on marine turtle conservation, including hatchery management. They are more frequently the first responders during marine turtle encounters. Sometimes, community members are deputized as Bantay Dagat, or Guardians of the Sea, and implement enforcement activities.

3. The advancement of technology paved the way for the increased awareness on marine turtle conservation as well as reporting of marine turtle encounters from the general public through social media platforms like Facebook. Reports from the general public also include reports of illegal activities that are validated and apprehended by enforcement officers.

4. The Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP) is one of the flagship Programs of the Philippine Government for the coastal and marine environment. CMEMP aims to address the threats posed by marine pollution as well as maintaining and/or improving status of coastal and marine ecosystems such as coral reefs, mangrove forests and seagrass beds through several approaches: Integrated Coastal Management, Partnership Building, Ecotourism/Sustainable Tourism, Protection, Management and Law Enforcement, Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA), and Valuation of Ecosystems Service.

5. The DENR has also developed the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP) for 2015-2028 that is anchored with the goals of the Philippine Development Plan. The PBSAP provides the roadmap for conserving and managing biodiversity resources and integrating biodiversity objectives into national development and sectoral planning frameworks.

6. The DENR - Biodiversity Management Bureau has developed a Marine Turtle Conservation Action Plan that is intended to be adapted and implemented in the entire Philippines. The Plan shall be presented to key stakeholders within the year (2019).

1.3 Programmes to correct adverse economic incentives

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]**

Elaborate on the nature of the socio-economic study/ activity undertaken, the results obtained (successful or otherwise) and the desirability/ suitability for replication.

Include references to published reports, where available.

> No socio-economic studies have recently been made among local communities that interact with marine turtles. However, an economic assessment survey was conducted in 2018-2019 in the local community of Turtle Islands. The survey aimed to develop an island-specific alternative livelihood program to further deter illegal egg collection in the island.

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

Ease of access to the turtle resource (e.g. by virtue of proximity or ease of land/water access)

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

Yes (If yes, please describe these measures in detail)

> The Biodiversity Management Bureau has been instrumental in establishing community-based partnerships between concerned stakeholders for the conservation and protection of marine turtles and their habitats.

1.4 Reduction of incidental capture and mortality

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 and interact with marine turtles.

Tick 'YES' to indicate that a fishery is present and interacting marine turtles or 'NO' to indicate that a fishery is not present or is not interacting with marine turtles. **[INF]**

If a fishery is present, use the text box to indicate, for example, the approximate geographic distribution of the fishery, how long it has been operating, how many vessels are involved, etc.

a) Shrimp trawls:

Yes (Please provide details)

> Shrimp trawls have been observed within the Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary, Tawi-tawi, Lingayen Gulf, Manila Bay, San Miguel Bay, Visayan Sea and Samar Sea.

b) Set gill nets:

Yes (Please provide details)

> Set gill net is a common fishery gear being used all over the Philippines.

c) Anchored Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs):

Yes (Please provide details)

> Although there is a number of fishermen using these devices, there are no reports of interaction with marine turtles.

d) Purse seine (with or without FADs):

Yes (Please provide details)

> These devices are used all over the Philippines but very little reported interaction with marine turtles.

e) Longline (shallow or deepset):

Yes (Please provide details)

> Long lines are used all over the Philippines. The past five years have shown increased interaction of these kind of devices with marine turtles. Several marine turtles have been rescued with large hooks lodged in their beaks or esophagus.

f) Driftnet:

Yes (Please provide details)

> Driftnets are used all over the Philippines. There have been a few reports of interaction with marine turtles.

g) Others (Please provide details)

> 1. Ghost nets - Illegal foreign fishers in the Philippine waters have been caught using ghost nets targeting large marine vertebrates including marine turtles and dolphins.

> 2. Set nets (Otoshi-ami) - Some local fishers still utilize these kinds of nets and are known to have minimal interaction with marine turtles. Turtles caught in these kinds of nets are more often released alive.

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]. Select from one of the following descriptions: RELATIVELY HIGH, MODERATE, RELATIVELY LOW, NONE (i.e. not present), UNKNOWN (i.e. unable to answer for whatever reason).

a) Shrimp trawls

Please select only one per line

	UNKNOW N	NON E	RELATIVELY LOW	MODERAT E	RELATIVELY HIGH
Fishing efforts:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived impact:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Source of information / clarification

> Reports from DENR Regional and Field Offices; Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources

b) Set gill nets

Please select only one per line

	UNKNOW N	NON E	RELATIVELY LOW	MODERAT E	RELATIVELY HIGH
Fishing effort:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Perceived impact:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- Source of information / clarification

> Reports from DENR Regional and Field Offices; Fishery/Agriculture officers of local government units

c) Anchored Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)

Please select only one per line

	UNKNOW N	NON E	RELATIVELY LOW	MODERAT E	RELATIVELY HIGH
Fishing effort:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived impact:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

d) Purse seine (with or without FADs)

Please select only one per line

	UNKNOW N	NON E	RELATIVELY LOW	MODERAT E	RELATIVELY HIGH
Fishing efforts:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived impact:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Source of information / clarification

> Reports from DENR Regional and Field Offices; Fishery/Agriculture officers of local government units

e) Longline (shallow or deepset)

Please select only one per line

	UNKNOW N	NON E	RELATIVELY LOW	MODERAT E	RELATIVELY HIGH
Fishing effort:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived impact:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- Source of information / clarification

> Reports from DENR Regional and Field Offices; Fishery/Agriculture officers of local government units

f) Driftnet

Please select only one per line

	UNKNOW N	NON E	RELATIVELY LOW	MODERAT E	RELATIVELY HIGH
Fishing effort:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived impact:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Source of information / clarification

> Reports from DENR Regional and Field Offices; Fishery/Agriculture officers of local government units

g) Others (from 1.4.1 g))

Please select only one per line

	UNKNOW N	NON E	RELATIVELY LOW	MODERAT E	RELATIVELY HIGH
Fishing effort:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Perceived impact:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- Source of information / clarification

> For the past five years, there is an increased incident of poaching of marine turtles in the Philippines (i.e. Apo Reef, Occidental Mindoro; Puerto Princesa and Balabac, Palawan). Upon investigation of the fishing boats used in the activity, ghost nets were found on board the boats and were being used to catch marine turtles. On a similar note, there is also an increased number of marine turtles rescued with hooks (from long lines) lodged in their beaks or esophagus. Some of these turtles are released alive after minor surgical removal of veterinarians.

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

> The use of explosives (dynamites and improvised explosive devices) and noxious substances are banned in the Philippines. However, many fisher folks still resort to using these illegal fishing methods.

The local government units, together with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and the Philippine Coast Guard, created the "Bantay Dagat," or Guardians of the Sea, to assist the national government in the implementation of fishery laws. The members of these groups from local communities are trained on law enforcement as well as in responding to marine wildlife rescues.

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 (Details/future plans)

> Some fishers keep scoop nets in their boats to facilitate release of accidentally caught turtles.

There are large, private corporations like energy/power plants that have trained staff to handle and rescue marine turtles that get accidentally trapped in their underwater devices.

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

YES (Details/future plans)

> There have been discussions during meetings with commercial fishers on the use of TEDs. Nothing has been

finalized yet.

On the other hand, some methods are employed by commercial fishers to release accidentally captured turtles (i.e. lowering of nets) to allow escape of the turtles.

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

NO (Details/future plans)

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

YES (Details/future plans)

> The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources issued Fisheries Administrative Order regarding the use of these devices after the conduct of research of the academe/university.

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

NO (Details/future plans)

f) Net retention and recycling schemes

NO (Details/future plans)

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

YES (Details/future plans)

> Depending on the species, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources issue seasonal closures to allow growth and population recovery of the fish species.

h) Effort management control

UNDER INVESTIGATION or NOT APPLICABLE (Details/future plans)

> No effort management control in relation to marine turtles.

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]

Please use the corresponding text boxes to explain/clarify each of your responses, including 'NOT APPLICABLE' responses, and indicate future plans in this regard. [IND]

Please describe the collaboration, when/where the programmes were introduced, any difficulties encountered, and general results obtained (i.e. successful and unsuccessful). Provide references to publications, where available.

a) Onboard observer programmes

X

YES (Details/future plans)

> The Philippines, through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, implements a Fisheries Observer Program to monitor by-catch of cetaceans and marine turtles among other species.

b) Vessel monitoring systems

YES (Details/future plans)

> The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, in collaboration with USAID and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), utilizes Visual Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) as a tool to combat illegal fishing activities and protect marine biodiversity.

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

YES (Details/future plans)

> Enforcement Officers are stationed in sea ports and landing sites to conduct inspections. The Philippine Coast Guard and Maritime Police conduct inspection at sea.

d) Training programmes / workshops to educate fishers

YES (Details/future plans)

> Government agencies, like the Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Biodiversity Management Bureau and Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and non-government organizations like World Wildlife Fund for Nature and

Oceana, conduct training to educate fishers on various topics including better fishing techniques and gears and awareness on environmental laws and policies.

e) Informative videos, brochures, printed guidelines etc.

YES (Details/future plans)

> Aforesaid agencies also produce informative materials that are usually handed over to fisher folks during trainings and workshops.

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

YES (Please give details)

> The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources spearheads the review and evaluation of the mitigation measures. Concerned stakeholders are enjoined to attend the evaluation.

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]

> Data collection through interviews are conducted during field surveys and habitat monitoring. Information on marine turtle by-catch are also collected during such interviews.

The Marine Turtle Tagging Data Sheet being used by DENR Regional and Field Offices and other agencies to report marine turtle encounters include information on the fishing device that captured the turtle.

1.5 Addressing harvest of, and trade in, marine turtles; and protecting of habitat

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]

Please provide details (title/date) of the relevant legislation, as well as any exemptions (e.g. for traditional harvest) under that legislation.

YES

> Republic Act 9147 or the "Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001" is being implemented by the Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development. The Act bans the harvest and trade of marine turtles, their eggs and by-products.

Republic Act 11038, also known as the "Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System," enacted in 2018, provides the guidelines in protecting marine turtle habitats.

1.5.2 Which, among the following list, are economic uses and cultural values of marine turtles in your country? [INF]

Please rate the relative prevalence / importance of each consumptive or non-consumptive use. Use the text boxes below each rating to explain or clarify your responses.

a1) Meat consumption

YES

a2) Meat consumption: relative prevalence/importance

MODERATE

b1) Egg consumption

YES

b2) Egg consumption: relative prevalence/importance

MODERATE

c1) Shell products

YES

c2) Shell products: relative prevalence/importance

HIGH

d1) Fat consumption

NO

e1) Traditional medicine

YES

e2) Traditional medicine: relative prevalence/importance

LOW

f1) Eco-tourism programmes

YES

f2) Eco-tourism programmes: relative prevalence/importance

HIGH

g1) Cultural / traditional significance

YES

g2) Cultural/traditional significance: relative prevalence/importance

MODERATE

1.5.3 Please indicate the relative level and impact of traditional harvest on marine turtles and their eggs.

[IND, TSH]

	RELATIVELY HIGH	UNKNOWN	NONE	RELATIVELY LOW	MODERATE
Level of harvest:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impact of harvest:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source of information / explanation:

> DENR Regional and Field Offices reports; surveillance activities of Wildlife Enforcement Officers

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

Use the text box to give details.

YES

> Local government units pass/enact Municipal/City Ordinances in support of Republic Act 9147 and Republic Act 10654 (Amendment of The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998).

1.5.5 Describe any management agreements negotiating 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]**

> The first trans-boundary agreement in the world for the protection and conservation of marine turtles, the Turtle Islands Heritage Protected Area (TIHPA), has been discussing the issue of traditional harvest during meetings. The TIHPA is an agreement between the governments of Malaysia and the Philippines. The Philippines is a member of the Coral Triangle Initiative and the protection of marine turtles and their habitats within the Triangle is included in the National Plan of Action.

1.6 Minimizing mortality through nesting beach programmes

1.6.1 Measures and effectiveness

First, tick one of the YES/NO-boxes 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]**

Use the text boxes below each rating to elaborate on your responses, including any lessons learned that might be of value to other Signatory States, and indicate your plans for the coming year. Please explain any "Not Applicable (N/A)" responses.

a1) Monitoring/protection programmes

YES

> Local government units, private beach resort owners and corporate lands near the coast have established their own marine turtle monitoring and protection programs, in consultation with the DENR.

a2) Monitoring/protection programmes: relative effectiveness

GOOD

b1) Education/awareness programmes

YES

> The DENR Regional and Field Offices regularly conduct education/awareness programs. Non-government organizations and corporate lands near the coast also conduct awareness programs. Schools and universities near the coast include marine turtle conservation topics and projects within their curriculum or Science club activities.

b2) Education/awareness programmes: Relative effectiveness

GOOD

c1) Egg relocation/hatcheries

YES

> There are a few established marine turtle hatcheries in the Philippines that have trained staff to perform relocation of eggs.

c2) Egg relocation/hatcheries: Relative effectiveness

GOOD

d1) Predator control

YES

> The training of staff who will manage marine turtle hatcheries always include topics on predator control.

d2) Predator control: Relative effectiveness

GOOD

e1) Vehicle / access restrictions

YES

> There are established marine turtle nesting sites that restrict vehicle and human movements during nesting season.

e2) Vehicle/access restriction: relative effectiveness

GOOD

f1) Removal of debris / clean-up

YES

> The conduct of coastal clean-ups has been increasing for the past five years. Government agencies, local government units and non-government organizations participate in the annual International Coastal Clean-up. They also organize their own coastal clean-ups in other important bays and not just in the major water ways. Some private corporations include coastal clean-up activities as part of their Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR).

f2) Removal of debris /clean-up: relative effectiveness

GOOD

g1) Re-vegetation of frontal dunes

YES

> Re-vegetation has been practiced in Baguan Island, Turtle Islands, Tawi-tawi. Some beach resorts also conduct this after consultation with experts.

g2) Re-vegetation of frontal dunes: relative effectiveness

GOOD

h1) Building location/design regulations

YES

> Corporations constructing residential or commercial establishments near the coast consult with experts prior to full implementation of development. Building design is a requirement prior to issuance of an Environmental Clearance Certificate by the DENR.

h2) Building location/design regulations: relative effectiveness

GOOD

i1) Light pollution reduction

YES

› Lighting system along the coast is supposedly part of the building design and land development plan.

i2) Light pollution reduction: Relative effectiveness

LOW

1.6.2 Has your country undertaken any evaluation of its nest and beach management programmes? **[SAP]**

Use the text box to elaborate on your response, if necessary.

YES

› The DENR - Biodiversity Management Bureau, in collaboration with a non-government organization, Marine Wildlife Watch of the Philippines, created, published and disseminated a series of manuals on the proper responses to marine wildlife strandings. The series, entitled "Philippine Aquatic Wildlife Rescue and Response Manual," has one book for Marine Mammals; Sharks and Rays; and Marine Turtles. The Manual on marine turtles included guidelines on nest evaluation. The said manual was published in 2014 and included revisions to the guidelines disseminated in 2008.

OBJECTIVE II: PROTECT, CONSERVE AND REHABILITATE MARINE TURTLE HABITATS

2.1 Measures to protect and conserve 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]**

> The DENR encourages local government units (LGUs) to declare important marine turtle sites (developmental and/or nesting) as sanctuaries or marine protected areas. Having the country's Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP) as a reference, the LGUs are provided with scientific standards and ecosystem approaches to scale-up locally established and managed marine protected areas (MPAs) into ecological MPA networks (MPANs). The CMEMP also aims to address the threats posed by marine pollution as well as maintaining and/or improving status of coastal and marine ecosystems such as coral reefs, mangrove forests and seagrass beds.

In some areas, the DENR Administrative Order Number 2007-02, "Guidelines in the Establishment and Management of Critical Habitats," is being used as basis in declaring important sites, public or private, being utilized by threatened species outside of protected areas.

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

Use the text box to elaborate on your response.

YES

> An Environmental Impact Assessment is a requirement of the DENR to be complied for areas intended for development.

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

YES

> There is a regular marine water quality testing being done not just near marine turtle habitats but also in prominent ecotourism sites. In some instances, establishments along the beach that were found violating the country's Clean Water Act (DENR Administrative Order Number 2005-10) are closed until measures are taken to correct and improve their sewage system.

During coastal clean-ups, an inventory of the marine litter is conducted and recorded. The local government units are imposed to strictly implement Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

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

Use the text box to elaborate on your response.

YES

> Republic Act 8550, or the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, explicitly bans the use of poisonous chemicals and explosives during fishing.

2.2 Rehabilitation of degraded marine turtle habitats

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]**

Provide sufficient details of the measures taken, especially those measures shown to have been effective in recovering degraded coral reefs. Please indicate future plans in this regard.

YES (Details/future plans)

> In Tubbataha Reefs, efforts were made to recover the degraded corals brought about by the large boats that ran aground.

In Turtle Islands, the seasonal presence of the crown-of-thorns starfish cause degradation of the corals. These pests were plucked from the reefs to allow coral re-growth.

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 (Details/future plans)

> With the assistance of the DENR and the academe, re-planting of mangrove species have been conducted in some parts of the Philippines, like Cavite and Boracay Island.

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 (Details/future plans)

> Local government units, with the assistance of experts, have been conducting studies to allow recovery of sea grass habitats. The provinces of Batangas and Mindoro have been conducting these activities.

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

3.1 Studies on marine turtles and their habitats

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]**

- > 1. Biodiversity Management Bureau - Wildlife Resources Division Annual Accomplishment Reports
- 2. Unpublished project report of Marine Wildlife Watch of the Philippines on the analysis of the marine turtle tagging data of the Philippines
- 3. The Philippine Marine Turtle Conservation Action Plan, 2019, Unpublished

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]**

Please give details of the nature, duration and continuity of these programmes.

YES

> Monitoring programs for marine turtle populations are included in the priorities of the Turtle Islands Heritage Protected Area (TIHPA), Marine Turtle Protected Area Network (MTPAN) and Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI).

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

Please give details (e.g. which species, which populations?).

YES

> DNA tests on marine turtles found in Tubbataha Reefs have been conducted. The green turtle population in Turtle Islands has also been subjected to DNA tests. To date, samples are being collected on encountered marine turtles in some areas of the Philippines. These will be subjected for DNA test with the assistance and funding of non-government organizations.

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]

a) Tagging

YES (Details/future plans)

> Tagging of marine turtles is one of the activities that is being carried out by DENR Regional and Field Offices. Local Government Units, People's Organizations and/or non-government organizations have similarly been supporting this activity.

b) Satellite tracking

YES (Details/future plans)

> In cooperation with Marine Research Foundation, Malaysia and Large Marine Vertebrates Research Philippines, seven marine turtles in Tubbataha were released in 2016 and 2019 attached with satellite tracking devices.

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]**

NO

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

YES

> Marine turtles with fibropapillomas are being encountered in the Philippines. In some cases, the tumors are surgically removed and the turtles are released successfully. In the other instances, necropsy is performed on mortalities to identify possible cause of death.

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

YES

> Traditional knowledge is incorporated in the habitat survey forms.

3.2 Collaborative research and monitoring

- 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]**

Use the text box to elaborate on your response.

> The Philippines is actively implementing the Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) of the Coral Triangle Initiative. Although it is a non-legally binding document, the country implements RPOA since the goals include improved status of threatened species and priority seascapes within the CoralTriangle Region.

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 (Details/future plans)

> Genetic studies on marine turtles in Tubbataha Reefs have been conducted together with Marine Research Foundation, Malaysia.

b) Conservation status

YES (Details/future plans)

> Conservation status of marine turtles have been discussed in the TIHPA and CTI meetings.

c) Migrations

YES (Details/future plans)

> Migration of marine turtles has been discussed in TIHPA and CTI meetings.

d) Other biological and ecological aspects

NO (Details/future plans)

> Mostly local collaborations are currently being conducted.

3.3 Data analysis and applied research

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]**

> Green turtle: generally nesting in various Philippine islands all year round. Nesting population in Turtle Islands appears to be increasing after a huge drop in 2010.

Hawksbill turtle: have established nesting sites in the Philippines, some of which have been declared as critical habitats. These species are the common targets of poachers and a few hundred stuffed turtles as well as sacks of turtle scutes/scales have already been apprehended in ports. Nesting season is from April to October.

Olive ridley turtle: have established nesting sites in the Philippines with a nesting season from September to February-March of the following year. Genetic studies need to be conducted on these species.

Leatherback turtles: more often use the Philippine waters as migratory routes. Two incidents of nestings have been recorded in the country but hatching was not successful. Incidents of strandings have increased in the past 2-3 years.

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

> Review and evaluation of the activities are reviewed annually.

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]**

> Collaborative research efforts are being used to improve conservation actions including declaration of priority coastal and marine areas. Best practice methods are documented and replicated in areas, as may be identified appropriate.

Data and information on marine turtle encounters being provided by DENR Regional and Field Offices, LGUs and other stakeholders are analyzed and relayed back to them for implementation or improvement.

3.4 Information exchange

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 [If yes, please give details of the agreed protocol(s)]

> These topics have been discussed in the TIHPA meetings. A scientific group has been organized between Malaysia and the Philippines to discuss these topics in detail.

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

OCCASIONALLY

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]**

> 1. Joint Management Committee Meetings of the TIHPA: plenary presentation and discussion
2. Presentation of researches conducted in international meetings, conferences and fora

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

Please give details **[INF]**

YES

> The database on marine turtle encounters in the Philippines is being maintained by the Wildlife Resources Division of the Biodiversity Management Bureau. The data includes records of marine turtles encountered in the country with foreign tags.

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

4.1 Public education and information programmes

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

Details/future plans:

> The Biodiversity Management Bureau has developed a program to increase awareness of varied audiences on biodiversity conservation. The program, locally called Dalaw Turo (Visit and Teach), includes lectures, interactive games and story-telling activities. The program is flexible and adjusted according to the audience.

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 (describe):

> Beach resort owners/managers

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

Please give details and indicate future plans

YES

> Locally-managed learning centers have been established in La Union, Bataan, Zambales, and Sarangani provinces. Most of the established protected areas also have learning centers. Other information centers are established by non-government organizations in cooperation with local government units.

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

> A feasibility study for the alternative livelihood program for the Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary has been developed. The document is set to be reviewed and evaluated.

In other areas, like Zambales and Bataan, the local government units provide alternative livelihoods for the Rangers during off-nesting season.

Non-government organizations also provide assistance to local communities by engaging them to produce local souvenirs. The organizations provide the techniques and materials.

In 2018, the DENR established the Biodiversity-friendly Enterprise (BDFE) program within protected areas. The BDFE program is envisioned to contribute to the objectives of environmental protection, economic and social development through sustainable use and equitable sharing of resources and at the same time promote sustainable businesses that support environmental protection, economic growth and social equity.

4.3 Stakeholder participation

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]**

> The newly-developed Marine Turtle Conservation Action Plan (MTCAP) is set for review and evaluation prior to its dissemination and implementation in important marine turtle sites (developmental and/or nesting). The general public is encouraged to report to proper authorities marine turtle encounters (citizen science). Others use social media platforms like Facebook to report to authorities marine turtle encounters.

In return, tokens like certificates of appreciation, hats or shirts, are distributed to concerned individuals who report incidents.

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]

> Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are executed between agencies and the DENR to encourage cooperation in marine turtle conservation programs. Activities agreed upon most frequently include trainings on marine turtle handling, rescue/first aid management to strandings and hatchery establishment. They are also encouraged to report marine turtle encounters within their areas of jurisdiction.

In return, tokens like certificates of appreciation, hats or shirts, are distributed to concerned individuals who report incidents. In big-scale apprehensions, medals are awarded to those who contributed.

OBJECTIVE V: ENHANCE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

5.1 Collaboration with, and assistance to, signatory and non-signatory States

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 (If yes, please elaborate briefly)

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

YES (If yes, please provide details of these training programmes)

> Wildlife Enforcement Officers have attended CITES training programs.

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]**

Please give details of particularly successful interventions and prosecutions; and/or mention any difficulties experienced that impede progress in this area. Please provide references to any published reports (e.g. already prepared for CITES purposes) that give a more ample explanation.

YES

> The Philippines works in collaboration with the US Fish and Wildlife Services as well as with the Asean Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on international illegal trade routes. The country sends representatives to meetings and share local experiences.

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]**

> 1. Surveillance and law enforcement operations
2. Foreign encroachment in Philippine waters

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]**

> The DENR has created Regional Wildlife Monitoring teams stationed in major airports and sea ports to monitor shipment of wildlife (live or by-products). Wildlife Enforcement Officers are also designated and trained to conduct monitoring and surveillance of areas and/or establishments engaged in illegal trade of wildlife. Lawyers and prosecutors of Regional Trial Courts are also enjoined to participate in wildlife enforcement trainings to provide guidance in Environmental/Green Courts.

5.2 Prioritisation, development and implementation of national action plans

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]**

Please explain.

YES

> A newly-developed Marine Turtle Conservation Action Plan is set for review and evaluation. This can be the basis in the creation of local/specific action plans, including conservation/management plans of beach resorts on marine 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?

(List up to 10 activities from the IOSEA Conservation and Management Plan). **[PRI]**

> 1.1 Identify and document the threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats

1.2 Determine and apply best practice approaches to minimising those threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats

2.1 Establish necessary measures to protect and conserve marine turtle habitats -

a. Monitor and promote the protection of water quality from land-based and maritime pollution, including marine debris, that may adversely affect marine turtles

b. Undertake assessments of the environmental impact of marine and coastal development and other human activities that may affect marine turtle populations and their habitats

3.2 Conduct collaborative studies and monitoring on genetic identity, conservation status, migrations, and other biological and ecological aspects of marine turtles
 3.4 Exchange at regular intervals scientific and technical information and expertise among nations, scientific institutions, non-governmental and international organisations, in order to develop and implement best practice approaches to conservation of marine turtles and their habitats

5.1 a. Identify routes of international illegal trade through monitoring, and seek cooperation to take action to prevent, deter and, where possible, eliminate illegal trade

b. Identify, prevent, deter and, where possible, eliminate domestic illegal trade through monitoring, implementation of legislation, identification of gaps in enforcement capabilities in each country, and training of enforcement officers

Identify ecotourism activities (including income generating activities that are biodiversity-friendly) that are not detrimental to marine turtles and their habitats, for implementation by local communities and other stakeholders

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 achieve progress. **[PRI]**

In other words, how important is **international** cooperation for addressing these issues?

Please select only one per line

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

Use the text box to list and rank any other local management issues for which international cooperation is needed to achieve progress.

> Surveillance, patrolling and law enforcement

Encroachment by foreign fishers

Research on genetic studies

5.3 Cooperation and Information exchange

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]**

> The CTI Regional Plan of Action has been translated into National Action Plans by each of the six CT countries. For the Philippine National Plan of Action (NPOA), Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) serves as the overall framework in pursuing the five regional CTI goals. It draws heavily from the inputs provided by Coastal Resources Management practitioners representing public, private and NGO sectors all over the country. A bottom-up approach was utilized in coming up with the final list of actions and targets, most of which are cross-cutting and are representative of lessons learned in the course of implementing coastal resources management.

One of the platforms for the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) Program is the Sulu Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion (SSME) Project, followed by the Sulu Sulawesi Seascape (SSS) Project. Realizing the importance of conserving the few remaining resources of the Seascape, the three countries, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2004 adopting the Ecoregion Conservation Plan (ECP). The MOU led to the creation of the TriNational Committee and three sub-committees, namely: Sustainable Fisheries; Endangered, Charismatic and Migratory Species; and MPAs and Networks.

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

YES (if yes, give details)

> The Philippines is participating in TIHPA, MTPAN and CTI.

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? Please describe the interventions made in this regard, referring to specific RFBs. **[SAP]**

> The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources has programs within the EEZ and on the high seas.

5.4 Capacity-building

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]**

> Due to the changes in the management and staff of the DENR Regional and Field Offices, there is a need to conduct training of new personnel to capacitate them in responding to marine turtle encounters. Previously trained staff have either retired or have moved to a different office.

Local government units, particularly those in the committee on environment and/or those in the veterinary/agriculture departments, as well as coastal developers, beach resort owners/managers, need to be oriented and trained on marine turtle conservation and management. They are more frequently the first responders in marine wildlife stranding incidents.

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 newly-developed Marine Turtle Conservation Action Plan is intended to be reviewed and evaluated within the year. Conduct of trainings on the improvements recommended shall be accomplished within the year. The Biodiversity Management Bureau intends to develop and distribute handy, water-resistant marine turtle species identification guides. First responders to marine turtle encounters will be prioritized in the distribution of the said guides.

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]**

> A Memorandum of Agreement has been drafted among the DENR, Marine Wildlife Watch of the Philippines and Large Marine Vertebrates Research Philippines and is awaiting for the approval and signature by the DENR Secretary. Activities in the MOA include the conduct of capacity-building activities, researches on marine turtle genetics.

5.5 Enforcement of conservation legislation

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 effectiveness of the national laws has been generally good. Some local government units have enacted ordinances specific for their areas of jurisdiction that are anchored with the national laws and policies.

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]**

Please give details.

YES

> Amendments to the Republic Act 9147 have been discussed and reviewed by a Project Steering Committee. A final document will then be presented to DENR Secretary for approval. Republic Act 8550 has been amended is now known as Republic Act 10654.

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]**

Please give details.

YES

> Difficulties are encountered when there is a wrong interpretation of lawyers in the provisions of the law. Hence they are encouraged to participate in Wildlife Law Enforcement trainings to understand better environmental laws.

OBJECTIVE VI: PROMOTE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOU, INCLUDING THE CMP

6.1 IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU membership and activities

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

NO

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]**

NO VIEW (Use the text box to elaborate on your response, if necessary)

6.2 Secretariat and Advisory Committee

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]**

> Consultation meetings with other concerned agencies have been made to secure funding/donations to the IOSEA. However, difficulties are encountered in securing such because in the IOSEA MoU, Signatory States are to provide voluntary contributions.

6.3 Resources to support implementation of the MoU

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 marine turtle conservation activities has been incorporated in the regular funds of the Biodiversity Management Bureau, Wildlife Resources Division under the Conservation of Threatened Species (terrestrial and marine) program.

Local government units also provide minimal funds for their marine turtle conservation activities implemented by respective committees on environment and/or tourism.

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

YES (If yes, give details of the approaches made (both successful and unsuccessful))

> At present, USAID, US DOI-Protect Wildlife Project and US Fish and Wildlife Services have donated funds for the implementation of marine turtle conservation activities at the local level.

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

> In some protected areas, funds are generated from ecotourism activities which are then used for the management of the area including protection of marine turtle habitats.

6.4 Coordination among government agencies

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]**

Please elaborate, as necessary.

YES

> The Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is the lead government agency mandated to formulate and implement plans and programs for the conservation, protection and management of the country's wildlife resources.

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]**

Use the text box to elaborate.

YES

> National laws provide mandates of each agency.

A Convergence, in the form of a Memorandum of Agreement, has been signed between the Biodiversity Management Bureau and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources for the complementation of cross-cutting activities on marine resources and marine ecosystems of the country. Commitments of each agency for the

Management of Shared Resources was declared in the MOA and the creation of a Convergence Operations Plan for Sustainable Fisheries and Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Conservation.

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]**

This question seeks to ascertain whether Signatories have made a serious examination of which agencies have a role to play in marine turtle conservation, either directly or indirectly, and which therefore should be apprised of the IOSEA MoU and its provisions.

If no internal review of interagency roles and responsibilities has been or will be undertaken, please elaborate if only to indicate that the necessary arrangements are already clear and not in need of further review.

YES (Use the text box to elaborate)

> The Convergence of the Biodiversity Management Bureau and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources was an one output of the review of the roles of agencies on marine resources conservation.

