

**3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning  
Conservation Measures for Marine Turtles of the Atlantic Coast of Africa**

*Saly, Senegal, 4-5 September 2023*

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CMS/Atlantic-Turtle-MOU/MOS3/Doc.5

**DRAFT REVISED CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This draft revision of the Conservation and Management Plan is based on the Conservation and Management Plan adopted by the Second Meeting of the Signatory States (Dakar, Senegal, 5-7 March 2008), and with changes based on the priorities and issues identified through the National Reports submitted by Signatory States, taking into account all reports received by 25 August 2023.

Extent of Changes Compared to the Version Adopted by MOS2

The order of the Objectives was modified to match the sequence of information requested in the National Report template for MOS3; in some cases minor revisions were made to Objectives titles.

Two new Objectives were added:

- Objective 1. Improve our knowledge of marine turtle presence and distribution in-water and on the nesting beaches
- Objective 2. Improve our knowledge of threats impacting marine turtle populations and their habitats

Objective 3 was divided into two components:

- 3.1 Reduce direct and indirect threats
- 3.2 Protect/conserve/restore habitats

Objective 5 was divided into two components:

- 5.1 Improve our knowledge of marine turtle populations and ecology through capacity building and research
- 5.2 Enhance national, regional and international cooperation

A significant portion of the original content agreed by MOS2 was maintained. Edits included updating information based on the analysis of the National Reports for MO3, rewording for simplicity and clarity, and deleting elements of which the relevance was unclear or outdated.

**OBJECTIVE 1. Improve our knowledge of marine turtle presence and distribution in-water and on the nesting beaches**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
1. Address gaps in our knowledge of marine turtle distribution, population size, and their habitats	1.1 Collect baseline data on the presence and distribution of species on the beaches and in-water. 1.2 Identify and characterize key nesting beaches and marine (developmental and foraging areas) habitats. 1.3 Implement nesting beach monitoring programs in key areas. 1.4 Implement in-water marine turtle and habitat monitoring programs in key areas.		

**OBJECTIVE 2. Improve our knowledge of threats impacting marine turtle populations and their habitats**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
<p>2. Determine the nature and intensity of threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats</p>	<p>2.1 Compile existing data on anthropogenic threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats on land and in-water.</p> <p>2.2 Characterize the nature of traditional exploitation, and establish data collection and monitoring programs (where needed) to quantify the intensity of threat from traditional exploitation.</p> <p>2.3 Characterize the existing artisanal fisheries, and establish data collection and monitoring programs (where needed) to quantify the intensity of threat from artisanal fisheries.</p> <p>2.4 Characterize the existing industrial fisheries, and establish data collection and monitoring programs (where needed) to quantify the intensity of threat from industrial fisheries.</p> <p>2.5 Characterize the existing IUU fishing, and establish data collection and monitoring programs (where needed) to determine the intensity of threat from IUU fishing.</p> <p>2.6 Characterize the nature of marine pollution (plastics, inshore oil, industrial effluents, etc.), and establish data collection and monitoring programs (where needed) to quantify the intensity of threat from marine pollution.</p> <p>2.7 Characterize and quantify the impact of factors causing coastal degradation (sand mining, agriculture, urban and touristic developments, vehicles driving on the beach, etc.).</p> <p>2.8 Establish data collection and monitoring programs (where needed) to quantify the nature and intensity of threat from climate change.</p> <p>2.9 Identify and quantify factors encouraging illegal take of marine turtles.</p> <p>2.10 Establish data collection and monitoring programs (where needed) to quantify the intensity of all other relevant threats.</p>		

**OBJECTIVE 3.1. Reduce direct and indirect causes of marine turtle mortality**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
3.1.1 Determine and implement the best practices to minimize anthropogenic threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats	3.1.1.1 Identify the best, culturally-appropriate practices for the conservation of marine turtle populations and their habitats. 3.1.1.2 Adapt and adopt the best, culturally-appropriate practices for the conservation and management of marine turtle populations and their habitats. 3.1.1.3 Incorporate traditional knowledge in the management of marine turtle populations and their habitats. 3.1.1.4 Promote tourism practices that do not harm marine turtle populations or their habitats.		
3.1.2 Implement programs to correct adverse economic incentives threatening marine turtle populations	3.1.2.1 Undertake socio-economic studies on communities that interact with marine turtles and their habitats. 3.1.2.2 Identify and modify economic incentives to reduce threats and mortality.		
3.1.3 Minimize the effects of artisanal and industrial fisheries on marine turtles and their habitats	3.1.3.1 Develop/modify and use gear, devices, techniques and other measures to minimize incidental capture of marine turtles in fisheries. 3.1.3.2 Develop procedures and training programs to promote implementation of these measures with relevant fishery management organizations. 3.1.3.3 Train fishermen, the fishing industry, and relevant institutions in techniques to minimize incidental take. 3.1.3.4 Identify bottom-up solutions to address incidental take in collaboration with fishermen. 3.1.3.5 Liaise and coordinate with fisheries industries and fisheries management organizations to develop and implement incidental capture mitigation mechanisms in national waters and on the high seas. 3.1.3.6 Develop and implement net retention and recycling schemes to minimize the disposal of fishing gear at sea and on beaches.		

	3.1.3.7	Provide and ensure the use of port facilities for the disposal of ship- borne waste.		
3.1.4 Minimize the effects of extractive industries on marine turtles and their habitats.	3.1.4.1	Develop and implement best practice guidelines to mitigate against negative impacts of sand mining, seismic exploration, etc. on marine turtles and their habitats.		
	3.1.4.2	Develop and implement best practice guidelines to mitigate against negative impacts of offshore mining on marine turtles and their habitats.		
3.1.5 Prohibit the direct harvest (capture or killing) of, and domestic trade in, marine turtles, their eggs, parts or products, whilst allowing exceptions for traditional harvest by communities within each jurisdiction provided that: such harvest does not undermine efforts to protect, conserve and recover marine turtle populations and their habitats; and the marine turtle populations in question are able to sustain the harvest	3.1.5.1	Enact, where not already in place, law enforcement to prohibit direct harvest and domestic trade.		
	3.1.5.2	Assess the level and impact of traditional harvest on marine turtles and their eggs.		
	3.1.5.3	Establish management programs that may include limits on levels of intentional harvest.		
	3.1.5.4	Determine the cultural and traditional values and economic uses of marine turtles (both consumptive and non-consumptive).		
	3.1.5.5	Negotiate, where appropriate, management agreements on the sustainable level of traditional harvest, in consultation with other concerned States, to ensure that such harvest does not undermine conservation efforts.		

**OBJECTIVE 3.2. Protect, conserve and restore terrestrial and marine habitats for marine turtles**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
3.2.1 Establish necessary measures to protect and conserve marine turtle terrestrial and marine habitats	3.2.1.1 Design and manage critical habitats as protected areas, sanctuaries, or impose seasonal bans on human activities. 3.2.1.2 Develop incentives for the adequate protection of terrestrial and marine habitats outside classified protected areas. 3.2.1.3 Implement coastal management measures that promote the survival of marine turtle populations. 3.2.1.4 Manage and regulate the use of nesting beaches around urban areas (for example, placement and construction of buildings, artificial lights, and vehicles). 3.2.1.5 Initiate and cooperate in the creation of transboundary protected marine areas, including nesting beaches and feeding and developmental areas, using ecological borders rather than political borders. 3.2.1.6 Minimize pollution in marine turtle coastal habitats, through development of appropriate legislation and best practice in collaboration with source sectors. 3.2.1.7 Promote responsible disposal of persistent litter, such as plastics, amongst industry and the public.		
3.2.2 Restore degraded marine turtle habitats	3.2.2.1 Reduce anthropogenic threats on the nesting beaches and in-water that compromise the quality of the habitat. 3.2.2.2 Promote measures to ensure recovery of mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs.		

**OBJECTIVE 4. Increase awareness to threats facing marine turtles and their habitats, and enhance stakeholder participation in conservation activities**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
<p>4.1. Establish education and awareness programs</p>	<p>4.1.1 Build local capacity in environmental education and collect, develop, and distribute suitable educational material in the appropriate languages.</p> <p>4.1.2 Set up information centres for villages, schools and tourists.</p> <p>4.1.3 Develop and implement dynamic media programs.</p> <p>4.1.4 Develop and undertake education and awareness programs for targeted groups (e.g. for the relevant authorities, politicians, policy makers, military/navy/police, judicial personnel, students, teachers, fishing communities and industry, beach owners, the media).</p> <p>4.1.5 Encourage the integration of biodiversity themes, especially marine turtle biology and conservation, into school curriculum.</p> <p>4.1.6 Organize special events on the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats (e.g., day of the turtle, festival or year of the turtle, publicized releases of accidentally captured turtles, etc.).</p> <p>4.1.7 Use the media to promote groups and individuals contributing to the conservation of biodiversity, including marine turtles and their habitats.</p> <p>4.1.8 Consider the use of local taboos to better protect marine turtles by coastal communities.</p> <p>4.1.9 Provide information at airports and through travel agencies, about national and international restrictions on the sale, purchase, export and import of marine turtle products.</p>		
<p>4.2. Develop alternative livelihood opportunities for local communities to encourage their participation in conservation efforts</p>	<p>4.2.1. Identify and facilitate alternative livelihoods (including income generating activities) that are not detrimental to marine turtles and their habitats, in consultation with local communities and other stakeholders.</p> <p>4.2.2. Promote community development (e.g., clinics, scholarships, activities for the youth and women, etc.) to encourage participation in conservation efforts.</p>		

<p>4.3. Promote stakeholder participation</p>	<p>4.3.1 Encourage local communities, indigenous groups, and other interested parties and stakeholders to participate in the planning and implementation of conservation measures for marine turtles and the management of their habitats.</p> <p>4.3.2 Encourage participation by public administrators, fishing industry, judicial personnel, military/navy/police, NGOs, the private sector, and various groups (women, fishermen, youth, etc.) in efforts to conserve coastal biodiversity and especially marine turtles.</p> <p>4.3.3 Establish incentives to encourage participation by the public.</p> <p>4.3.4 Encourage and train leaders from local communities to take ownership for the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats.</p>		
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**OBJECTIVE 5.1. Improve our knowledge of marine turtle populations and ecology through capacity building and research**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
5.1.1 Build skills and capacity of local stakeholders for effective conservation and management of marine turtles	5.1.1.1 Identify the needs, in terms of human resources, knowledge and facilities, for capacity building. 5.1.1.2 Hold training workshops for relevant stakeholders on bycatch monitoring and bycatch reduction techniques. 5.1.1.3 Hold training workshops for relevant stakeholders on in-water marine turtle population and habitat characterization and monitoring techniques. 5.1.1.4 Hold training workshops for relevant stakeholders on effective nesting beach management techniques. 5.1.1.5 Hold training workshops to build the awareness, skills, and capacity of law enforcement people to effectively implement environmental legislation. 5.1.1.6 Hold training workshops for relevant stakeholders on coastal management. 5.1.1.7 Hold training workshops for relevant stakeholders on appropriate socio-economic studies and community empowerment activities. 5.1.1.8 Hold training workshops for relevant stakeholders on national database development, data management, and grant writing. 5.1.1.9 Create partnerships with universities, research institutions, training bodies, and other relevant organizations. 5.1.1.10 Review or establish suitable institutional structures and in general reinforce the national capacity of each Signatory State.		

<p>5.1.2 Improve the conservation and management of marine turtle populations and their habitats through research</p>	<p>5.1.2.1 Carry out studies, (e.g., using satellite telemetry, tagging, genetics), to determine and map inter-nesting habitats, migration routes and foraging and developmental grounds of marine turtle populations.</p> <p>5.1.2.2 Carry out studies to enhance hatchling production and maintain appropriate hatchling sex ratios.</p> <p>5.1.2.3 Initiate and/or continue the long-term monitoring of marine turtle populations to evaluate their status and conservation.</p> <p>5.1.2.4 Analyze data at the national, sub-regional and regional level levels.</p> <p>5.1.2.5 Characterize the genetic identity of marine turtle populations.</p> <p>5.1.2.6 Initiate studies on population dynamics, demographics, and survival rates of marine turtles.</p> <p>5.1.2.7 Collect ethnozoological information from local communities and promote the use of popular and traditional knowledge.</p> <p>5.1.2.8 Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of research and monitoring activities.</p> <p>5.1.2.9 Promote the development and implementation of national and regional strandings networks to record and store data on marine turtle stranding occurrence.</p> <p>5.1.2.10 Investigate current and future effects of climate change on marine turtles and their habitats.</p> <p>5.1.2.11 Use the research results to improve management, reduce threats, and evaluate the effectiveness of conservation activities.</p>		
<p>5.1.3 Undertake collaborative research and monitoring</p>	<p>5.1.3.1 Identify and integrate research and monitoring priorities into sub- regional and regional Action Plans.</p> <p>5.1.3.2 Encourage universities and local institutions to undertake research, conservation, and monitoring activities relevant to marine turtles in collaboration with NGOs and local communities.</p>		

<p>5.1.4 Information exchange</p>	<p>5.1.4.1 Standardize basic data collection methodologies, and adopt or develop an approved series of protocols for the monitoring of nesting beaches, studies at foraging and developmental habitats, and data collection on mortality.</p> <p>5.1.4.2 Determine the most effective ways of disseminating information within the MOU region.</p> <p>5.1.4.3 Exchange, at regular intervals, scientific and technical information and expertise among nations, scientific institutions, and national and international NGOs to develop and use approaches based on the best practices for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats.</p> <p>5.1.4.4 Disseminate traditional knowledge that promotes conservation of marine turtles and their habitats to improve the conservation of turtles and the management of their habitats by the residential communities.</p> <p>5.1.4.5 Organize training workshops regularly at a sub-regional level to evaluate and enhance works in progress.</p>		
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**OBJECTIVE 5.2. Enhance national, regional and international cooperation**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
5.2.1 Collaborate with Signatory and non-Signatory States to the Memorandum of Abidjan to organize and share information on trade issues, prevent illegal trade, and enforce laws concerning marine turtle products	5.2.1.1 Encourage the Signatory States to the Memorandum of Abidjan, who are not yet Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) to join. 5.2.1.2 Examine compliance to CITES at the national level with regard to legislation that regulates international trade in marine turtle eggs and products. 5.2.1.3 Improve compliance with CITES by training the relevant and competent authorities in cooperation with other Signatory States, the CITES Secretariat, and other relevant organizations. 5.2.1.4 Identify and monitor illegal international trade routes (for marine turtle products etc.) and seek cooperation to take measures to prevent and where possible eliminate illegal trade. 5.2.1.5 Attempt to identify, prevent, deter, and where possible eliminate illegal domestic trade through monitoring, legislation implementation, identification of weaknesses in the law enforcement in each State. 5.2.1.6 Train personnel (customs people, the police force, guards, authorities of protected areas, fisheries inspectors, etc.) authorized to monitor illegal trafficking and the enforcement of national legislation for the conservation of marine turtles.		

<p>5.2.2 Assist Signatory States with the development and implementation of dynamic and realistic national action plans for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats</p>	<p>5.2.2.1 Designate national focal points (one administrative and one scientific) to serve as correspondents on issues relating to marine turtles.</p> <p>5.2.2.2 Develop key management measures and “living” and realistic Action Plans, in consultation with relevant administrators, NGOs, research institution, local communities and other interested parties and stakeholders.</p> <p>5.2.2.3 Review and update action plans at regular intervals to take into account recent progress.</p> <p>5.2.2.4 Identify the specific management questions at the local level which require cooperation among the Signatory States to ensure successful conservation and management.</p> <p>5.2.2.5 Annually report (to be submitted by each Signatory State in a format approved by the Signatory States) on the national progress made in the implementation of the objectives in the regional Conservation Plan.</p> <p>5.2.2.6 Generate an annual analysis of the national reports for the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) to inform Signatory States on measures to improve their compliance with the Convention with respect to the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats.</p>		
<p>5.2.3 Enhance mechanisms for cooperation and promote information exchange</p>	<p>5.2.3.1 Identify and enforce existing mechanisms that allow for successful cooperation in each sub-region.</p> <p>5.2.3.2 Establish networks for the coordinated management of shared populations within a State or across political boundaries or a sub- region and where possible formalize the collaboration.</p> <p>5.2.3.3 Encourage Signatory States to ratify big environmental conventions and join global fishing agreements.</p> <p>5.2.3.4 Establish relationships with regional fisheries bodies to obtain data on accidental captures and encourage them to adopt marine turtle conservation measures within Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and on the high seas.</p>		

<p>5.2.4 Improve and enforce the implementation of national conservation legislation in each Signatory State of the wildlife and their habitats</p>	<p>5.2.4.1 Review and revise, if necessary, the existing national legislation and internal legal provisions to identify any gaps or impediments in their application to marine turtle conservation.</p> <p>5.2.4.2 Cooperate in the implementation of legislation, in order to ensure the compatible application of legal and lawful provisions across and among jurisdictions (including through bilateral/multilateral agreements and the sharing of information).</p>		
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**OBJECTIVE 6. Promote implementation of the Memorandum of Abidjan and its Conservation and Management Plan**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
<p>6.1. Expand membership and ensure activities of the Memorandum of Abidjan</p>	<p>6.1.1 Encourage States with jurisdiction on the western coast of the African continent or the coastal waters of Atlantic Africa, States whose flag vessels and other activities have direct effects on the marine turtles and their habitats of the region or anywhere in their geographic range during their life history, as well as any other States interested in collaborating with the objective of this MOU, to sign the Memorandum of Abidjan.</p> <p>6.1.2 Consider making the MOU a legally binding document for a more effective conservation and management of marine turtles by the Signatory States.</p>		
<p>6.2. Promote the role of the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee of the MOU to ensure that the objectives of the Conservation and Management Plan are achieved</p>	<p>6.2.1 Define the Terms of Reference for and designate the Scientific and Technical Committee of the MOU.</p> <p>6.2.2 Set up suitable ways of management among the CMS, the MOU Secretariat, and the Advisory Committee of the MOU to help the Signatory States and provide advice for improving the research and conservation of marine turtles in their territory.</p>		

<p>6.3. Locate resources to support the implementation of the Memorandum of Abidjan</p>	<p>6.3.1 Prioritize conservation and management activities for funding.          6.3.2 Explore funding possibilities with governments and other potential donors.          6.3.3 Request funds, donations of materials/equipment and other contributions from international and local industries whose activities have an impact on marine turtles and their habitats (e.g., petroleum companies, breweries, hotels, fisheries, tourism, etc.).          6.3.4 Study the use of economic instruments for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats.          6.3.5 Approach the private sector, foundations, and international NGOs who might be interested in funding activities in particular countries to catalyze the creation of a small grants programme.          6.3.6 Fund conservation and management activities through directed ecotourism and other self-sufficient schemes with benefits to the local communities.          6.3.7 Search for synergies among the Secretariats and other regional and international conventions.          6.3.8 Promote inclusion of costs associated with marine turtle conservation and research into the national budgets of Signatory States.</p>		
<p>6.4. Improve coordination among government and non- government agencies for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats</p>	<p>6.4.1. Review the roles and responsibilities of all the competent administrative agencies in the conservation of marine turtles and the management of their habitat.          6.4.2. Designate an organization (if needed) responsible for the coordination and implementation of identified activities for the conservation of marine turtles and the management of their habitat.          6.4.3. Encourage cooperation and synergy within and among governmental and non-governmental sectors including the development and reinforcement of national networks.</p>		