



# Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

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## SECOND MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR MARINE TURTLES OF THE ATLANTIC COAST OF AFRICA

*5-7 March 2008, Dakar, Senegal*

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Annex 7

### **ACTION PLAN UPDATES: CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR MARINE TURTLES OF THE ATLANTIC COAST OF AFRICA**

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**CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN  
FOR MARINE TURTLES OF THE ATLANTIC COAST OF AFRICA**  
*(Revised)*

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**OBJECTIVE 1. Reduce direct and indirect causes of marine turtle mortality**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
1.1. Identify and document the anthropogenic threats to marine turtle populations and habitats	1.1.1 Synthesize existing data on anthropogenic threats to marine turtles populations and their habitats; 1.1.2 Establish data collection and monitoring programs to determine the nature and magnitude of the threats; 1.1.3 Evaluate the impact of traditional exploitation, accidental take in artisanal and commercial fisheries, and other sources of mortality.	High	
1.2. Determine and implement the best practices to minimize anthropogenic threats to marine turtle populations and their habitats	1.2.1 Identify and document the best practices for the conservation of marine turtle populations and their habitats; 1.2.2 Adapt and adopt the best practices for the conservation and management of marine turtle populations and their habitats.	High	
1.3. Implement programs to correct adverse economic incentives threatening marine turtle populations	1.3.1 Undertake socio-economic studies on communities that interact with marine turtles and their habitats; 1.3.2 Identify and modify economic incentives to reduce threats and mortality; 1.3.3. Identify funding sources and resources for these programs.	High	
1.4 Minimize the effects of artisanal and commercial fisheries on marine turtles.	1.4.1 Develop/modify and use gear, devices, techniques and other measures to minimize incidental capture of marine turtles in fisheries, including turtle release and resuscitation techniques and spatio-temporal fishery closures; 1.4.2 Develop procedures and training programs to promote implementation of these measures, such as vessel monitoring systems and inspections at sea, in port and at landing sites, and national on-board observer programs with relevant fishery management organisations; 1.4.3 Exchange information and, upon request, provide technical assistance to other signatory States to promote these activities; 1.4.4 Liaise and coordinate with fisheries industries and fisheries management organisations to develop and implement incidental capture mitigation mechanisms in national waters and on the high seas; 1.4.5 Support the UN General Assembly resolution 46/215 concerning the moratorium on the use of large-scale driftnets on the high seas; 1.4.6 Develop and implement net retention and recycling schemes to minimise the disposal of fishing gear at sea and on beaches;	High	

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
	1.4.7 Provide and ensure the use of port facilities for the disposal of ship-borne waste; 1.4.8 Assess potential impacts of Illegal, Unreported, Unregulated fishing (IUU) on marine turtle populations.		
1.5. Minimize the effects of marine extractive industries on marine turtles and their habitats.	1.5.1 Develop and implement best practice guidelines to mitigate against negative impacts of seismic exploration on marine turtles and their habitats, e.g. as employed by the oil and gas industry; 1.5.2 Develop and implement best practice guidelines to mitigate against negative impacts of offshore mining on marine turtles and their habitats.	High	
1.6. Develop nesting beach management programs to maximize hatchling recruitment	1.6.1 Develop protocols to monitor and protect nesting beaches 1.6.2 Train and put in place sufficient numbers of “eco-guards” to protect and monitor nesting beaches; 1.6.3. Reduce embryo and hatchling mortality and ensure their survival and recruitment using conservation techniques that emphasize natural processes whenever possible; 1.6.4 Minimize nest destruction and the mortality of embryos, hatchlings, and adult females during the nesting season, including by feral and domestic animals; 1.6.5 Evaluate the effectiveness of management programs on nesting beaches.	High	
1.7. Develop foraging and developmental habitat management programs to maximize marine turtle survival.	1.7.1 Develop protocols to monitor and protect marine turtles at foraging and developmental habitats; 1.7.2 Evaluate the effectiveness of management programs at marine turtle foraging and developmental habitats.	High	
1.8. 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	1.8.1 Enact, where not already in place, legislation to prohibit direct harvest and domestic trade ; 1.8.2 Assess the level and impact of traditional harvest on marine turtles and their eggs; 1.8.3 Establish management programmes that may include limits on levels of intentional harvest; 1.8.4 Determine the cultural and traditional values and economic uses of marine turtles (both consumptive and non-consumptive); 1.8.5 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.	High	

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
<p>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</p>			

**OBJECTIVE 2. Protect, conserve and restore terrestrial and marine habitats for marine turtles**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
2.1. Establish necessary measures to protect and conserve marine turtle terrestrial and marine habitats	2.1.1 Identify the critical and non-critical habitats such as nesting beaches, feeding and developmental areas, interesting areas, and migration corridors; 2.1.2 Design and manage critical habitats as protected areas, sanctuaries, or impose seasonal bans on human activities; 2.1.3 Develop incentives for the adequate protection of terrestrial and marine habitats outside classified protected areas; 2.1.4 Conduct assessments of the environmental impact of marine and coastal development and other human activities on marine turtles and their habitats; 2.1.5 Manage and regulate the use of nesting beaches around urban areas (for example, placement and construction of buildings, artificial lights, and vehicles); 2.1.6 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; 2.1.7 Reduce pollution in marine turtle coastal habitats, through development of appropriate legislation and best practice in collaboration with source sectors; 2.1.8. Promote responsible disposal of persistent litter, such as plastics, amongst industry and the public.	High	
2.2. Restore degraded marine turtle habitats	2.2.1 Reduce anthropogenic threats, on the nesting beaches, to adults and hatchlings (e.g. by identifying the appropriate forestry companies to address the problem of logs on the nesting beaches); 2.2.2 Promote measures to ensure recovery of mangroves, seagrass beds and reef turtle foraging habitats; 2.2.3 Encourage local authorities and NGOs to organize regular beach cleaning activities.	High	

**OBJECTIVE 3. Improve our knowledge of marine turtle populations and ecology through research, monitoring, and information exchange**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
3.1. Conduct studies on marine turtles and their habitats	3.1.1 Collect and compile baseline data on the presence and distribution of species; 3.1.2 Where possible and appropriate, implement extensive tagging programs at nesting beaches and in foraging and developmental habitats; 3.1.3 Map key terrestrial (nesting beaches) and marine (developmental and foraging areas) habitats; 3.1.4 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; 3.1.5 Initiate and/or continue the long-term monitoring of marine turtle populations to evaluate their status and conservation; 3.1.6 Establish standardized protocols for data collection; 3.1.7 Create national, sub-regional and regional level databases, and analyze the data at these three levels; 3.1.8 Characterize the genetic identity of marine turtle populations; 3.1.8 Maintain updated national and regional bibliographies and distribute it to the signatory States; 3.1.9 Initiate studies on population dynamics and determine the survival rates of marine turtles; 3.1.10 Conduct research on diseases in marine turtles and their frequency in the region covered by the Memorandum of Abidjan; 3.1.12 Collect ethnozoological information from local communities and promote the use of popular and traditional knowledge; 3.1.14 Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of research and monitoring activities; 3.1.15 Promote the development and implementation of national and regional strandings networks to record and store data on marine turtle stranding occurrence; 3.1.16 Investigate current and future effects of climate change on marine turtles and their habitats.	High	

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
3.2. Undertake collaborative research and monitoring	3.2.1 Identify and integrate research and monitoring priorities into sub-regional and regional Action Plans; 3.2.2 Encourage universities and local institutions to undertake research, conservation, and monitoring activities relevant to marine turtles in collaboration with NGOs and local communities.	Medium	
3.3. Analyze data to reduce threats and improve conservation practices	3.3.1 Have the necessary means to suitably manage a national, sub-regional, and regional database; 3.3.2 Prioritize populations for conservation at a regional and international level; 3.3.3 Identify population trends by species; 3.3.4 Use the research results to improve management, reduce threats, and evaluate the effectiveness of conservation activities.	High	
3.4. Information exchange	3.4.1 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, genetic sampling, and data collection on mortality; 3.4.2 Determine the most suitable ways of disseminating information within the MoU region; 3.4.3 Initiate or develop internet discussion forums and newsletters and provide the means to connect more easily to the international network; 3.4.4 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; 3.4.5 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; 3.4.6 Develop and maintain a directory with the names and addresses of people working on marine turtles, of directors and other authorities in charge of wildlife, fisheries, and protected areas, of researchers, NGOs, etc.; 3.4.7 Organize training workshops regularly at a sub-regional level to evaluate and enhance works in progress.	High	



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

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
4.1. Establish public education programs for awareness and information exchange	4.1.1 Build local capacity in environmental education and collect, develop, and distribute educational material suitable for African culture (cartoons, coloring books, games, posters, T-shirts, etc.) in the 4 languages; 4.1.2 Set up information centers for villages, small museums for schools and tourists; 4.1.3 Develop and implement rigorous media programs; 4.1.4 Develop and undertake education and awareness programs for targeted groups (e.g. for the relevant authorities and politicians, students, teachers, fishing communities, beach owners, the media); 4.1.5 Encourage the integration of biodiversity themes, especially marine turtle biology and conservation, into school curriculum; 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.); 4.1.7 Consider the use of local taboos to better protect marine turtles by coastal communities; 4.1.8 Provide information at airports and through travel agencies, about national and international restrictions on the the sale, purchase, export and import of marine turtle products; 4.1.9 Train leaders from local communities.	High	
4.2. Develop alternative livelihood opportunities for local communities to encourage their participation in conservation efforts	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; 4.2.2. Promote community development (e.g., clinics, scholarships, activities for the youth and women, fight against pandemics, through twinning of African and western villages) to encourage participation in conservation efforts.	High	
4.3. Promote public participation	4.3.1 Encourage local communities 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;	Medium	

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
	4.3.2 Encourage participation by public administrators, NGOs, the private sector, and various groups (women, fishermen, youth, sports) in efforts to conserve coastal biodiversity and especially marine turtles; 4.3.3 Establish incentives to encourage participation by the public (e.g., T-shirt gifts, awarding diplomas/certificates for participation).		

**OBJECTIVE 5. Enhance national, regional and international cooperation**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
<p>5.1. 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</p>	<p>5.1.1 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;</p> <p>5.1.2 Examine compliance to CITES at the national level with regard to legislation that regulates international trade in marine turtles eggs and products;</p> <p>5.1.3 Improve compliance with CITES by training the relevant and competent authorities in cooperation with other Signatory States, the CITES Secretariat, and other relevant organizations;</p> <p>5.1.4 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;</p> <p>5.1.5 Exchange information about and regularly discuss marine turtle product trade issues (e.g., in the annual national reports to the Secretariat of the Memorandum of Abidjan, at meetings of the signatory states);</p> <p>5.1.6 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;</p> <p>5.1.7 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>	<p>High</p>	
<p>5.2. Assist signatory and non-signatory States with the development and implementation of national action plans for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats</p>	<p>5.2.1 Designate national focal points (one administrative and one scientific) to serve as correspondents in issues relating to marine turtles;</p> <p>5.2.2 Develop key management measures, that will serve as the basis for Action Plans, in consultation with relevant administrators, NGOs, research institution, local communities and other interested parties and stakeholders;</p> <p>5.2.3 Develop the national Action Plans on the model of the current regional Plan;</p> <p>5.2.4 Identify the specific management questions at the local level which require cooperation among the signatory States to ensure successful conservation and management;</p>	<p>High</p>	

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
	<p>5.2.5 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>5.2.6 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>5.2.7 Review action plans at regular intervals to take into account recent advances in skills and knowledge.</p>		
5.3. Enhance mechanisms for cooperation and promote information exchange	<p>5.3.1 Identify and enforce existing mechanisms that allow for successful cooperation in each sub-region;</p> <p>5.3.2 Develop a website on the conservation of marine turtles along the Atlantic coast of Africa to create a network, exchange information, and post newsletters with information on each project especially for the field staff (ecoguards, ecovolunteers, etc.). Cf also 3.4.3;</p> <p>5.3.3 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>5.3.4 Create a directory of experts and organisations interested in the conservation of marine turtles; Cf also 3.4.6;</p> <p>5.3.5 Encourage signatory States to the Memorandum of Abidjan, who are not parties to the CMS, to join;</p> <p>5.3.6 Encourage signatory States to ratify big environmental conventions and join global fishing agreements such as the 1995 United Nations Fish Sticks Agreement, 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement, and adopt the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries;</p> <p>5.3.7 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>	Medium	
5.4. Build capacity to strengthen conservation measures	<p>5.4.1 Identify the needs, in terms of human resources, knowledge and facilities, for capacity building;</p> <p>5.4.2 Hold training workshops on conservation and management techniques for the relevant agencies and local communities;</p> <p>5.4.3 Create partnerships with universities, research institutions, training bodies, and other relevant organizations;</p> <p>5.4.4 Review or establish suitable institutional structures and in general</p>	High	

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
	reinforce the national capacity of each signatory State.		
5.5. Improve and enforce the implementation of national conservation legislation in each signatory State of the wildlife and their habitats	<p>5.5.1 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>5.5.2 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>	High	

**OBJECTIVE 6. Promote implementation of the Memorandum of Abidjan and its Conservation and Management Plan**

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
6.1. Expand membership and ensure activities of the Memorandum of Abidjan	<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 Encourage big organizations (UNESCO, UICN, FAO...) to collaborate with the Memorandum of Abidjan;</p> <p>6.1.3 Consider making the MoU a legally binding document for a more effective conservation and management of marine turtles by the Signatory States.</p>	Medium	
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>6.2.1 Obtain reliable funding to support the MoU Secretariat and the sub-regional networks;</p> <p>6.2.2 Define the Terms of reference for and designate the Scientific and Technical Committee of the MoU;</p> <p>6.2.3 Set up suitable ways of management amongst the CMS, the MoU Secretariat, NEPAD, and the Advisory Committee of the MoU so as to better help the signatory States and provide advice for improving the research and conservation of marine turtles in their territory.</p>	High	
6.3. Locate resources to support the implementation	<p>6.3.1 Prioritize conservation and management activities for funding;</p> <p>6.3.2 Explore funding possibilities with governments and other potential</p>		

Program	Activities	Priorities	Implementation Progress
of the Memorandum of Abidjan	<p>donors such as the World Bank, UNDP, European Union, GEF, FFEM, etc.;</p> <p>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.);</p> <p>6.3.4 Study the use of economic instruments for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats;</p> <p>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 program;</p> <p>6.3.6 Fund conservation and management activities through directed ecotourism and other self-sufficient schemes with benefits to the local communities;</p> <p>6.3.7 Search for synergies among the Secretariats and other regional and international conventions;</p> <p>6.3.8 Encourage international financial support and other incentives so that the signatory States effectively implement the conservation Plan;</p> <p>6.3.9 Promote inclusion of costs associated with marine turtle conservation and research into the national budgets of signatory states.</p>	High	
6.4. Improve coordination among government and non-government agencies for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats	<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;</p> <p>6.4.2. Designate an organization responsible for the coordination and implementation of the national Action Plan for the conservation of marine turtles and the management of their habitat;</p> <p>6.4.3. Encourage cooperation within and among governmental and non-governmental sectors including the development and reinforcement of national networks.</p>	Medium	

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