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**SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS OF THE SINGLE
SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR THE HAWKSBILL TURTLE (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) IN
SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE WESTERN PACIFIC OCEAN REGION**

(Prepared by the Secretariat and the Steering Group for the Hawksbill Turtle SSAP)

Summary:

This document contains a summary and analysis of the Implementation Reports for the Single Species Action Plan for the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean Region submitted by Parties in response to Notification 2025/004, in accordance with Decision 14.100 (d).

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Introduction

The Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) for the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean was adopted in 2024 both by CMS Parties ([CMS Resolution 14.11](#)) and Signatories to the IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU ([CMS/IOSEA/MOS9/Outcome 9.3](#)).

This document provides a summary of reports on the implementation of the SSAP. Reports are based on a template that was developed by the Secretariat for that purpose, as instructed in CMS Decision 14.100. The format requests information on each of the activities that are included in the SSAP: actions taken, obstacles to implementation and progress in implementing activities. The reports gathered from Range States will be used to inform recommendations for further implementation of the Action Plan.

Out of 33 the Range States,¹ 8 responded to CMS [Notification 2025/004](#) and follow-up emails which requested Range States to report on the implementation of the Hawksbill Turtle SSAP. The findings described below apply only to these countries.

Key Findings

Using the reports received, the Secretariat and Steering Group summarized the status of implementation of each action in Table 1, using a traffic light system. However, the analysis is limited both due to the overall low submission rate (less than 25 per cent), and the fact that several reporting countries did not use the drop-down menu provided in the reporting template to indicate percentage completion under the progress column.

1. The key outcomes of the report highlight significant progress in strengthening the criminal justice process, legislative reform for hawksbill protection, and efforts to close legal gaps and enforce international commitments.
2. Of the eight Range States that submitted reports, Malaysia documented having completed the most actions, with 11 out of 23 actions fully implemented. Australia reported having completed eight actions and New Zealand recorded most actions as Not Applicable due to the rarity of hawksbill turtles in their territory. All others reported Work in Progress for most actions.
3. Five Range States reported having completed Action 1.1.5 on addressing shortcomings in the criminal justice process with regard to illegal activities involving hawksbill turtles – the highest rate of completion for any of the Actions.
4. Enacting new laws on hawksbill turtle conservation related to use and trade (Action 1.1.2) also showed notable progress, with three Range States having reported it as complete.
5. Most engagement was reported for Action 1.1.3 on capacity building and Action 1.1.4 on improving law enforcement activities had the most reported engagement, with all eight reporting Range States having initiated some form of activity.
6. The least implemented actions were Action 2.1.2 on tackling illicit financial flows and corruption linked to hawksbill turtle trafficking and Action 3.1.2 on examining motivations behind legal and illegal use and proposing alternative livelihoods.

¹ List of Range States: (countries who reported in bold): **Australia**, Brunei Darussalam, **Cambodia**, China (Hong Kong and Taiwan), Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, **Fiji**, France (French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna), Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, **Malaysia**, Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Nauru, **New Zealand**, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, **Philippines**, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, **Thailand**, Timor-Leste, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, **USA** (America, American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Northern Marianas), Vanuatu, Viet Nam

7. The establishment of quotas regarding legal domestic harvest of hawksbill turtle specimens (including eggs) (Action 1.2.2) was reported as Not Applicable as it is illegal in most Range States, with provisions for traditional and Indigenous communities.
8. Lack of financial and technical support was identified as one of the main challenges to the full implementation of the Hawksbill Turtle SSAP.
9. Limited capacity was also reported as an obstacle, with gaps in capacity-building hindering the effective implementation of several actions within the SSAP, particularly those related to Action 2.2.1 on intra- and inter-regional collaboration and exchange of actionable intelligence on the illegal take and trade of the Hawksbill Turtle, as well as Action 2.4.2 on defining and identifying habitat critical for Hawksbill Turtle stocks at different life history stages.
10. Other obstacles to the full implementation of the Hawksbill Turtle SSAP include the lack of information and scientific data, overlapping powers and legal jurisdiction as well as conflicting interest between economic gains and environmental sustainability.
11. Overall, the SSAP implementation shows varying levels of progress among Range States. The achievement of the objectives under the SSAP and the implementation of the planned actions appear only partially satisfactory.

Recommendations

To support continued progress under the Action Plan, the Secretariat and Steering Group have developed the following recommendations to further strengthen the Action Plan implementation, based on challenges identified by Range States and its own assessment of key gaps.

1. Secure additional funding to ensure effective implementation of the SSAP, with a focus on enhancing monitoring programmes, capacity-building and training, as well as wider outreach campaign programmes.
2. Establish capacity-building and training across stakeholders, such as indigenous populations and government agencies to improve monitoring of the Hawksbill Turtle.
3. Strengthen efforts on data collection regarding illegal wildlife take and trade as well, and address illicit financial flows linked to Hawksbill Turtle trafficking.
4. Enhance institutional capacity to support the need for additional CITES officials.
5. Promote interagency collaboration through targeted capacity-building to address the illegal take and trade of the Hawksbill Turtle, including regular training, joint workshops, and shared best practices.
6. Support targeted research to fill current data gaps, particularly for completing and implementing Marine Turtle National Plans of Action
7. Facilitate improved exchange of relevant conservation data to inform planning and monitoring.
8. Ensure continued technical support from regional and international partners by facilitating access to expert guidance, standardized tools, and best practices that help align Range States' national actions with SSAP objectives.

Table 1: Overview of the progress reported for each action on the implementation of the Single Species Action Plan for the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean.

Action	Range States							
	Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
1.1.1	Completed	N/A	Work in	Work in	N/A	N/A	N/A	Completed
1.1.2	No Action	Work in	Completed	Completed	No Action	Work in	Completed	Work in
1.1.3	Completed	Work in	Work in	Completed	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in
1.1.4	Completed	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in
1.1.5	Completed	Work in	Work in	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Work in
1.2.1	Completed	Work in	Work in	Completed	No Action	Work in	Work in	Work in
1.2.2	Work in	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No Action	No Action	N/A
2.1.1	No Action	Work in	Work in	Completed	N/A	Work in	No Action	Work in
2.1.2	No Action	Work in	Work in	Completed	Work in	No Action	No Action	Work in
2.1.3	Completed	Work in	Work in	Completed	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in
2.1.4	Completed	Work in	Work in	Completed	No Action	Work in	No Action	Work in
2.1.5	Work in	Work in	Work in	Completed	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in
2.2.1	Work in	Work in	Work in	Completed	No Action	Work in	No Action	Work in
2.2.2	Completed	Work in	Work in	Completed	N/A	Work in	No Action	Work in
2.3.1	Work in	No Action	Work in	Work in	N/A	No Action	Work in	Work in
2.3.2	No Action	Work in	Work in	Work in	N/A	Work in	No Action	Work in
2.3.3	No Action	No Action	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in
2.3.4	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in	N/A	Work in	Work in	Work in
2.4.1	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in	N/A	Work in	Work in	Work in
2.4.2	Work in	Work in	Work in	Work in	N/A	Work in	Work in	Work in
3.1.1	No Action	Work in	Work in	Work in	N/A	Work in	Work in	Work in
3.1.2	No Action	Work in	Work in	Work in	N/A	No Action	No Action	Work in
3.1.3	No Action	Work in	Work in	Work in	N/A	Work in	No Action	Work in

 No Action
  Work in
  Completed

Detailed Summary of Reports

Objective 1 - Review and where necessary improve legislation, policy, compliance and enforcement of hawksbill turtle take, use and trade in at least half of SSAP countries in South-East Asia and the Adjacent Western Pacific by 2025.

1.1. Legislative reviews and, if necessary, reforms are made in each country that result in greater protection from unsustainable use and trade of hawksbill turtles

1.1.1. Conduct a review of protective legislation and identify problematic inconsistencies between countries

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
	N/A			N/A	N/A	N/A	

Four Range States (Australia, Fiji, Malaysia, and USA) have reported developments regarding this action.

Australia, Malaysia, and the USA contributed to and participated in the [World Wildlife Fund for Nature's \(WWF\) Marine Turtle Legislative and Baseline Status Review](#). Fiji reported the use of several legislative instruments for marine turtle management and protection, including the [Offshore Fisheries Management Act 2012](#), the *Offshore Fisheries Management Regulation 2012*, the *Fiji Fisheries Act 1941*, and the *Endangered and Protected Species Act 2002*, all administered by the Ministry of Fisheries. In addition, Malaysia is undertaking a comprehensive review of State Fisheries Rules relevant to marine turtles and continues to implement its National Plan of Action (NPOA) for Marine Turtles, focused on the conservation and protection of marine turtle populations within its national jurisdiction.

Cambodia, New Zealand, the Philippines and Thailand reported this action item as not applicable. Thailand further explained that they have the Wildlife Preservation and Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) and the amended Fisheries Act B.E. 2558 (2015) and is also a Party to the CITES Convention. The country strictly enforces regulations prohibiting the hunting and trade of marine turtles within its territory. Therefore, there is currently no plan to review existing legislation.

1.1.2. Enact new laws on hawksbill turtle conservation related to use and trade, seeking to remove any problematic inconsistencies (including between countries) within national legislation, and alter legislation to fully implement international commitments related to hawksbills, where necessary and appropriate

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

Six Range States (Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) reported progress under this action.

Cambodia's new Law on Fisheries strengthens the management and protection of fisheries resources, including endangered aquatic species such as hawksbill turtles, both within and beyond national jurisdiction. It was passed by the Senate and will shortly be submitted to the King for official endorsement. Fiji reported the use of multiple legislative instruments for marine

turtle management and protection, including the *Offshore Fisheries Management Act 2012*, *Offshore Fisheries Management Regulation 2012*, *Fiji Fisheries Act 1941*, and the *Endangered and Protected Species Act 2002*, all administered by the Ministry of Fisheries. Malaysia enforces the *International Trade in Endangered Species Act 2008* in line with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and is updating its *Fisheries Act 1985*, with WWF-Malaysia contributing to proposed provisions on turtles. The Philippines is advancing the designation of critical habitats for hawksbill nesting sites, supported by ongoing habitat assessments. Thailand noted that under the [Wild Animal Conservation and Protection Act, B.E. 2562](#) (2019), the Hawksbill turtle is listed as a protected species, with provisions on import and export outlined in Section 23. In the USA, under section 9 of the [Endangered Species Act](#), it is illegal to import, export, or take endangered species for any purpose, including commercial activity. The term “take” means to harass, hunt, shoot, capture, trap, kill, collect, wound, harm, or pursue an ESA-listed species, or attempt any of these activities. Trade of hawksbills and their parts is illegal in the United States.

Australia and New Zealand recorded no action but did not provide any further clarification.

1.1.3. Relevant authorities commit to building capacity and undertaking training to improve the implementation and enforcement of national regulations and regional/international treaties, instruments or initiatives that apply to the unsustainable take and use of hawksbill turtles

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

All eight reporting Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) noted efforts under this item.

Australia delivers training through government and NGO partnerships, targeting rangers, coastal communities, and Traditional Owners to support monitoring and enforcement. Cambodia established a new CITES management structure and is building capacity in collaboration with Fauna & Flora and the Department of Fisheries. Fiji reported [Fish Warden training](#) and appointment under the *Fiji Fisheries Act 1941*, joint compliance and enforcement training across agencies, and education and awareness initiatives at border points. Enforcement efforts are supported through collaboration with the Fiji Police Force, Navy, Customs, and the Pacific Community (SPC), which provides technical assistance for Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) and electronic reporting. Malaysia is enhancing enforcement efforts in Sabah through training for law enforcement agencies, support for managing confiscated wildlife, and the development of a rapid reference guide on illegal wildlife trade with Indonesia and the Philippines. The Philippines conducted a series of wildlife enforcement trainings from 2023 to 2024, including Countering Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC), Crimes and Corruption Watch (CCW), as well as environmental law enforcement courses, and training-of-trainers sessions for customs officers. The U.S. noted that the Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for carrying out [CITES provisions](#), which forbids the trade of any turtle products on the international market, including hawksbill tortoise shell.

Cambodia cited limited financial and technical support as a key barrier. Malaysia highlighted insufficient data, funding constraints, overlapping jurisdictions, and development pressures as major challenges. Fiji noted the need to enhance outreach capacity and develop additional support materials.

1.1.4. *Improve law enforcement activities, surveillance, compliance and response (detection, confiscation, monitoring and reporting) as necessary where hawksbill turtles are exploited in coastal areas and at transaction points, both where take is legal and where illegal activities occur.*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

All eight reporting Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) documented advancement under this action.

Australia enforces strict [trade prohibitions](#) under the [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act \(EPBC Act\)](#) and collaborates internationally through [INTERPOL](#) and the [Australian Border Force \(ABF\)](#). Cambodia has equipped vessels with Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), established a new CITES enforcement division, and set up the National Sea Turtle Conservation Network. Fiji reported targeted species identification training, compliance education, [ShellBank engagement](#), and development of a national compliance database with SPC support. Malaysia conducts gillnet enforcement, monitors nesting beaches with rangers, and is preparing to implement ShellBank in Sabah. New Zealand and Thailand also reported progress under this action without providing further details. The Philippines is actively participating in WWF’s ShellBank by collecting and processing DNA samples. The USA established a cross-agency task force under the [Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt \(END\) Wildlife Trafficking Act](#) to tackle trafficking, alongside ongoing enforcement of the [Endangered Species Act](#).

Cambodia cited a lack of financial and technical support as the main barrier to fully implementing enforcement and surveillance efforts.

1.1.5. *Address any shortcomings in the criminal justice process with regard to illegal activities involving hawksbill turtles.*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

Eight Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand and USA) recorded progress under this action.

Australia has significantly strengthened penalties under the [Environment Legislation Amendment Act 2015](#), which amended various sections of the [EPBC Act](#) and [Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act](#), tripling fines and prison terms for offences involving marine turtles, while safeguarding Native Title rights. Cambodia and Malaysia have delivered targeted enforcement and awareness training for officials. Fiji uses the [Offshore Fisheries Management Act 2012](#) and is enhancing inter-agency coordination, training, and case management systems, while also investing in community outreach and intelligence-sharing networks. Malaysia also developed a Rapid Reference Guide (RRG) for use in Sabah. New Zealand also reported progress on this action, marking it as complete. The Philippines, supported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), produced an RRG to support prosecution of wildlife crimes. In Thailand, the enactment of the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) has significantly increased the penalties for the hunting, trading, and possession of protected and reserved marine wildlife compared to the previous version of the law: the maximum imprisonment has been raised from 4 years to 10–15 years, and the fines have been increased up to 40 times. The USA continues [multi-agency enforcement operations](#) targeting illegal trade in marine turtle products.

Fiji cited the need for increased effort, funding, and technical support, particularly in areas such as database development, species identification, and enforcement training. Cambodia reported a lack of financial and human resources as key barriers to further action.

1.2. Conservation actions and targeted management plans are developed that address unsustainable use and trade of hawksbill turtles, where appropriate reflected in newly enacted legislation, and are enforced

1.2.1. *Update, complete and implement Marine Turtle National Plans of Action (CTI-CFF) or equivalent management plans), community-led traditional use agreements, and in consultation with other range states, CTI-CFF Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) and SPREP’s Regional Marine Turtle Action Plan 2023-2028, ensuring that they address relevant recommendations in CITES information document Cop18 Inf.18 and related Decisions 18.211-18.213 (and any relevant new Decisions or Resolutions, and:*

- *Surveillance and enforcement of trade and hawksbill meat and parts;*
- *Legislative reform for incidental bycatch in all fisheries (including small-scale community fisheries) and practical modifications of fishing gear);*
- *Traditional management and regulation of domestic quotas, if any, and any user rights relating to habitat critical for hawksbill turtles*
- *Identification, based on satellite tracking, tag recovery, and genetic data, of a network of hawksbill habitat and migratory protection sites and of habitat requiring greater protection.*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

Seven Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) have taken steps to advance this action.

Australia’s National Recovery Plan includes hawksbills and is reviewed every five years under the *EPBC Act*. Cambodia is implementing its 2016-2026 Marine Turtle NPOA alongside enforcement and tagging efforts. Fiji is finalizing a national sea turtle recovery plan, enforces a hawksbill harvest ban, and engages in regional data sharing and bycatch mitigation through the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). Malaysia is active in both NPOA and RPOA processes and works on enforcement baselines, genetic tracking (ShellBank), and gear modifications like Turtle Excluder Devices. The Philippines is revising its National Marine Turtle Action Plan and participates in Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF) regional efforts across the Sulu-Sulawesi Seascape. Thai NGO ATMEC has collected photo identification of sea turtles for population estimation and distribution of sea turtles in the Gulf of Thailand, and the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) has studied the migration of sea turtles through satellite tracking of nesting sea turtles. The USA enforces strict [trade controls](#) through joint surveillance and enforcement (Office of Law Enforcement, FWS, U.S Coast Guard and others), [catch limits](#), mandates bycatch-reduction gear and training, and [tracks hawksbills via tagging across Pacific territories](#).

Malaysia cited limited data, funding constraints, jurisdictional overlap, and development pressures as key challenges.

New Zealand did not report action under this item due to the rarity of hawksbills in its waters.²

1.2.2. *Where domestic harvest of specimens of hawksbill turtles, including eggs, is legal, ensure any domestic harvest quotas are established based on robust science-based methods and the principles of sustainability, including accounting for existing use in other States that share hawksbill turtle stock(s).*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A

Two Range States (Australia and Thailand) reported developments regarding this action.

Australia permits non-commercial traditional harvest under the *Native Title Act 1993*, with Indigenous communities implementing self-imposed limits and sustainable hunting practices through [community-based management plans for sustainable marine turtle hunting](#).

Six Range States (Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, New Zealand, Thailand, and USA) reported this action as not applicable, as most do not allow legal take under their national legislation. Cambodia allows no catch except for scientific research. Fiji enforces a full ban on hawksbill harvest under several laws including the [Offshore Fisheries Management Act 2012](#) and the *Endangered and Protected Species Act 2002*, allowing only scientific research. Malaysia has banned hawksbill harvest and egg sales nationwide, with Terengganu enforcing a turtle egg sale ban since 2022. New Zealand reported no domestic harvest of eggs as they do not breed within New Zealand territory.

The Philippines reported no action taken.

Objective 2: *Increase action and improve accountability to further monitor and report on hawksbill take, use and trade nationally and cooperate regionally to exchange data, share intelligence and strengthen collaborations*

2.1. Accountability and action in detecting and monitoring is enhanced, improving the control and reporting of illegal trade and fishery/vessel activity

2.1.1. *In a standardized manner, collect illegal wildlife trade data and using all available technologies ascertain key trade routes, methods, volumes, and trade ‘hot-spots’ that can be used for monitoring trade in hawksbill turtles; and submit comprehensive and accurate information on illegal trade in marine turtles in national annual illegal trade reports to the CITES Secretariat and other relevant bodies (e.g., CTI-CFF, TRAFFIC WITIS database).*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Five Range States (Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, and USA) recorded progress on this action.

² Dunn, M., Finucci, B., Pinkerton, M., & Sutton, P. (2022). Review of commercial fishing interactions with marine reptiles. NIWA Client Report 2022/147WN

Cambodia has recorded illegal trade but noted that data sharing and management were limited. Fiji is [collaborating with WWF on the ShellBank initiative](#) and a national trade survey, and is enhancing enforcement, data collection, and surveillance technologies. Malaysia has implemented enforcement operations and plans ShellBank implementation in Sabah by late 2025. The Philippines regularly submits wildlife trade reports, including on hawksbills, to CITES. The USA maintains a comprehensive trade database (LEMIS) and leads a cross-agency wildlife trafficking task force under the *END Wildlife Trafficking Act*.

New Zealand documented this section as not applicable as there is no trade of hawksbills in their country due to the species being rarely seen in New Zealand waters.

Australia and Thailand reported no action taken; with Thailand specifying that they do not have any arrests or incidents related to the illegal trade of hawksbill turtles.

Cambodia mentioned the lack of financial support and the need for more capacity-building for new CITES officials as barriers to effective implementation.

2.1.2. Increase action where necessary to tackle the illicit financial flows associated with hawksbill turtle trafficking and related corruption, including increasing use of financial investigation techniques and public/private collaboration to identify criminals and their networks.

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

Five Range states (Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, New Zealand, and USA) are increasing efforts to address this action.

In Cambodia, Fisheries Administration officers have received training from UNODC on wildlife crime scene investigation. Fiji, through the Ministry of Fisheries, has adapted financial crime indicators from UNODC training and calls for expanded inter-agency operation. Malaysia (Sabah) has enhanced cybercrime enforcement and participates in ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (WEN) to improve intelligence sharing and joint operations. New Zealand noted that all sea turtle bycatch, including hawksbills, must be reported by observers or fishers and is monitored by the Department of Conservation. The United States, under the *END Wildlife Trafficking Act*, utilizes financial investigation tools through FinCEN, collaborates with the Association of Anti-Money Laundering Specialists (ACAMS), and enforces transparency via the *Corporate Transparency Act*.

Australia, Philippines, and Thailand reported no action taken without providing any explanation.

2.1.3. Improve accountability for the practices (e.g., handling, release, record keeping) undertaken by all vessels and improve the associated monitoring and control at landing sites.

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

Eight Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand and USA) have taken varied actions to improve the implementation of this action.

Australia has ratified the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) and applies strict Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) [fishing enforcement](#) through at-sea operations, seizure of vessels, and collaboration with Indonesia. Cambodia has also ratified PSMA and monitors sea turtle bycatch at landing sites. Fiji has ratified and domesticated the PSMA, uses the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's e-PSM system to share inspection data globally, and is building enforcement capacity through specialized units. Malaysia has developed Standard Operating Procedures for port state measures but has not ratified the PSMA. New Zealand cited existing requirements for fishers and observers to [report](#) all sea turtle bycatch, including hawksbills, to the Department of Conservation (despite low observer coverage) and to address this, introduced electronic monitoring on fishing vessels in 2024. The Philippines is developing IUU fishing policies through the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) but lacks detailed port monitoring actions. Thailand reported that the 2023 Notification by Thailand's Department of Fisheries sets forth rules and operational guidelines for Thai-flagged fishing vessels operating beyond national waters in areas under the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) ; it emphasizes the conservation of marine turtles and other vulnerable marine species, with purse seine vessels required to carry equipment for rescuing sea turtles, and in cases of incidental catch of hawksbills, they must be released and recorded using specific reporting forms submitted to the Department of Fisheries. The USA, via the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, enforces safe handling procedures, gear requirements, observer programs, and logbook documentation for bycatch.

2.1.4. *Continue and/or establish national and regional bycatch mitigation programmes for industrial and artisanal fisheries (also community/small-scale fisheries), particularly where additional management is required, to enhance their use (including gear modification).*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

Six Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, and USA) have taken steps for the implementation of this action.

Australia integrates [bycatch strategies](#) into fishery management plans and mandates gear modifications like Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) and circle hooks. Cambodia collaborates with NGOs on gear modifications and anti-trawling measures. Fiji applies its [fisheries legislation](#) to protect marine turtles, including through the *Offshore Fisheries Management Act* and the *Endangered and Protected Species Act*. Malaysia mandates TEDs seasonally and is assessing national implementation. The Philippines has held stakeholder consultations on a TED policy. The U.S. enforces deep-set gear rules, observer programs, and workshops in American Samoa's longline fishery.

Cambodia noted the lack of technical and financial support as an obstacle to the implementation of this action.

New Zealand and Thailand reported no progress under this action.

2.1.5. *Continue and/or establish national and regional observer programmes to assess and quantify fishery impact/overlap to hawksbill turtle populations, stocks and distribution, and prioritize areas, stocks, fisheries for additional management.*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

Eight Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) are progressing efforts for the implementation of this action.

Australia deploys human observers and electronic monitoring (EM) systems to collect [protected species interaction data](#), both domestically and via Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs). Cambodia established a conservation network and marine fishery management areas near nesting sites. Fiji partners with WWF-Pacific, FFA, and SPREP to train fishers, monitor bycatch, and raise awareness through coastal community programs and legal tools, while also issuing permits and guidelines for turtle research and care. Malaysia is mapping critical habitats in Sabah using Unmanned Ariel Vehicle (UAV) and Geographic Information System (GIS) technology. New Zealand noted that the introduction of cameras on inshore fishing vessels by the Government in 2024 has increased visibility of sea turtle bycatch, which is then reviewed by Department of Conservation officials to confirm species identification. The Philippines' BFAR is enhancing its observer program and updating data sheets to include turtle records. Thailand reported on the Department of Fisheries' Notification on the Criteria for the Deployment of Observers on Thai Overseas Fishing Vessels, B.E. 2558 (2015), issued to comply with RFMO requirements along with the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation developed a Marine Turtle Conservation Handbook for Phang Nga and Phuket Provinces (2020) as part of its knowledge management plan. The handbook serves as a performance indicator and aims to support preparedness among relevant authorities, agencies, and local communities for monitoring and surveillance activities related to marine turtle conservation. The U.S. Pacific Islands Region Observer Program (under NOAA) gathers comprehensive data across Guam, CNMI, and American Samoa to inform regional conservation strategies.

Thailand reported no action with no information.

2.2. Improved collaboration, cooperation and intelligence sharing to all relevant policy fora (local, national, regional and international) and between all South-East Asia and Western Pacific Ocean countries results in better coordinated efforts to address unsustainable take and trade of hawksbill turtles

2.2.1. Increase intra- and interregional collaboration and exchange of actionable intelligence between source, transit, and destination countries to address the illegal take and trade of hawksbill turtles, and coordinate efforts to identify and address fishing interactions with hawksbill turtles in the high seas.

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Six Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, USA) are strengthening efforts for the implementation of this action.

Australia participates in international frameworks like CITES and CMS, supports the Hawksbill Single Species Action Plan, and is a member of the IOSEA Illegal Take and Trade Working Group. It also enforces provisions through [bilateral agreements with Indonesia](#) and [Papua New Guinea \(Torres Strait Treaty\)](#). Cambodia, as an IOSEA MoU member, has enacted new fisheries legislation to improve high seas management. Fiji, a PSMA signatory and Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) member, participates in [e-PSMA reporting](#), bilateral enforcement partnerships, and cross-agency coordination for surveillance and response in national and international waters. Malaysia engaged in a [2023 transboundary wildlife crime investigation](#)

with Indonesia and the Philippines and has developed Standard Operating Procedures on Port State Measures. The Philippines continues to participate in ASEAN and inter-regional wildlife enforcement meetings. The U.S. enhances intelligence sharing via CITES reports, is party to PSMA, and engages through CTI-CFF and [WCPFC](#) to combat IUU fishing and illegal turtle trade.

New Zealand reported this action as not applicable as there is no known illegal trade of the hawksbill turtles due to their rarity in New Zealand waters.

Thailand noted no action taken under this action.

2.2.2. Strengthen internal, bilateral, and international cooperation in enforcement by collaborating with IGOs and NGOs to ensure the issue of marine turtle trade is raised where necessary on the agendas of relevant multilateral agreements and fora, and meetings of other relevant organizations

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Six Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji Malaysia, Philippines, and USA) are increasing efforts to address this action.

Australia actively engages in key multilateral agreements (CITES, CMS, CBD, IOSEA, PSMA, CTI-CFF) and collaborates with IGOs, NGOs (e.g., WWF, HSI), Indigenous communities, and private industry to [raise marine turtle conservation](#) in global fora. Cambodia is developing MOUs with Vietnam and Thailand and works with partners like Fauna & Flora and Marine Conservation Cambodia. Fiji enhances regional enforcement through the FFA, e-PSMA reporting, and bilateral surveillance agreements with countries including Australia, France, and New Zealand, alongside robust inter-agency coordination at the national level. Malaysia's enforcement is coordinated between the Department of Fisheries and the Maritime Enforcement Agency. The Philippines contributes to ASEAN CITES and wildlife enforcement mechanisms, including the WIRE meeting. Thailand, through the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR), serves as the national focal point for the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment, specifically for ASEAN Initiative for Marine Endangered Species Conservation and Management, (AWGCME). The U.S. employs a multi-agency strategy, coordinated through the [U.S. Interagency Working Group on IUU Fishing](#) to combat illegal fishing and protect hawksbill turtles through international cooperation, joint enforcement efforts like [Operation Blue Pacific](#), and [Shiprider Agreements](#) with Pacific Island Countries that allow for coordinated maritime patrols and real-time intelligence sharing in the Pacific Islands region.

New Zealand reported this action as not applicable as there is no known illegal trade of the hawksbill turtles due to their rarity in New Zealand waters.

2.3. Research and evaluation undertaken enables baselines and scale of impact of take, use and trade to be determined

2.3.1. Enhance research to further capture the scale and impact that national and international artisanal, semi-industrial and industrial fisheries, including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, have on hawksbill turtle populations and their linkage to illegal trade including through the use of on-board observer data, fishing community surveys, and other methods where appropriate.

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Four Range States (Australia, Fiji, Malaysia, and USA) reported progress under this action.

Australia implements [bycatch mitigation measures](#) and [IUU enforcement](#) through Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), supported by a national compliance program and funding for sustainable fisheries. Fiji conducts turtle research, uses observer officers to monitor fisheries, and contributes data to regional bodies like the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). Malaysia is [monitoring nesting beaches and responding to illegal trade in Sabah](#). The USA follows the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s [\(NOAA\) National Bycatch Reduction Strategy](#) to monitor, research, and enforce bycatch reduction.

New Zealand documented this action as not applicable due to low numbers of hawksbills caught in commercial fisheries within their waters.

Cambodia, Philippines and Thailand reported no action taken under this action.

2.3.2. Evaluate social, cultural, and economic values of hawksbill turtles, both intrinsically and in terms of their use and trade and investigate the drivers that underpin the use and trade of hawksbill turtles and products.

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Five Range States (Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, and USA) are undertaking efforts to implement this action.

Cambodia conducted bycatch research at fishing landing sites. Fiji conducted a Trader User Survey with involvement from government, WWF, and partners, targeting key hotspots to assess trade dynamics. In Malaysia, Sea Turtle Research Unit (SEATRU) from the Universiti Malaysia Terengganu conducted studies informing policy such as the turtle egg sale ban in Terengganu, while WWF-Malaysia is engaging Sabah state governments through the Turtle Use Project. The Philippines has completed valuation studies focused on green turtles. The U.S., through its Marine Turtle Conservation Fund, supports behaviour change campaigns targeting hawksbill trade in Southeast Asia.

The Philippines recorded lack of financial support as an obstacle to full implementation of this action.

New Zealand reported this action as not applicable as there is no known illegal trade of the hawksbill turtles due to their rarity in New Zealand waters.

Australia recorded no action taken as this work is mainly carried out by universities, research institutes and NGOs. Cambodia reported no action due to a lack of technical and financial support.

2.3.3. Continue and/or collect genetic samples of hawksbill turtles using standardized methods and conduct reliable analysis to determine the population of origin (e.g., nesting), geographic boundaries of stocks (e.g., foraging) and the genetic diversity

between and within stocks. Compile and map data to support, for example, research, investigations and prosecutions, and policy decisions nationally and internationally.

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA

Five Range States (Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) are advancing the implementation of this action.

Fiji prioritizes ShellBank participation, genetic mapping, and nesting site identification, with research designed to inform national policy and management improvements. Malaysia has established the ShellBank genetic database and plans full implementation by late 2025, with WWF-Malaysia and Universiti Malaysia Sabah active in the Asia Pacific Marine Turtle Genetic Working Group. New Zealand noted that the Department of Conservation set up a national tissue archive for sea turtles and collects samples for genetic analyses. In the Philippines, genetic sampling is standard practice, with samples stored at the National Wildlife Research and Rescue Center, with national experts also contributing to the regional genetic group. Thailand conducts genetic studies on stranded and nesting turtles through the DMCR and partner universities, with the DMCR participating in the Asia Pacific Marine Turtle Genetic Working Group. The U.S. employs genetic, isotope, and satellite telemetry studies to inform hawksbill conservation, contributing to the IUCN’s global status review and its own *Endangered Species Act* 5-year review.

Australia recorded no action taken as genetic research is mainly carried out by universities, research institutes and NGOs. Cambodia cited a lack of technical and/or financial support and financial resources as a barrier to implementation, reiterated by the Philippines.

2.3.4. Research and establish a baseline for the conservation status and distribution of hawksbill turtles in the different countries/regions and where gaps exist, further study hawksbill genetic identity, life history, population trends, habitat needs, migration routes, and other biological and ecological aspects, as necessary

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Seven Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) are progressing efforts for the implementation of this action.

Australia contributed to the Hawksbill Single Species Action Plan under CMS, supported by regional assessments through IOSEA. Cambodia conducted limited bycatch and distribution research. Fiji is prioritizing the development of a centralized national database for improved reporting and planning. Malaysia contributed to legislative reviews and introduced ShellBank to support genetic baselining. The Philippines is validating nesting sites to update national maps using standard methods. The government of Thailand gives financial support for genetic studies and work on migration of sea turtles in nesting areas. The U.S. uses genetic, satellite, and tagging data to define management units and migratory patterns, supporting regional conservation strategies.

New Zealand reported this action as not applicable because although Hawksbills are a protected species in New Zealand waters, their migrant status and scarcity here, currently precludes them from the necessity for research to inform population, habitat use and distribution studies.

Cambodia cited the lack of technical and financial support as a boundary to full implementation.

2.4. Established best practice standards and protocols are used to guide and deliver on-ground monitoring and management of hawksbill turtles

2.4.1. *Review existing research methods and monitoring protocols to ensure standard best practice monitoring guidelines and monitoring systems are used for hawksbill turtles, publish and provide training where required, and apply to existing or newly established index nesting and foraging sites to ensure monitoring of populations is carried out as precisely and accurately as possible so information can be shared amongst range states to improve knowledge of the status, distribution, numbers (trend) and state of health (refer Activity 2.3.3 and 2.3.4).*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Seven Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) have taken steps to advance this action.

Australia has developed national guidelines for [turtle monitoring](#) and [light pollution](#), underpinned by its [Marine Turtle Recovery Plan](#). Cambodia has built capacity among Fisheries Administration (FiA) officials using practical monitoring guidelines at key sites. Fiji is adopting [SPREP’s Sea Turtle Manual](#), developing SOPs and expanding turtle sanctuaries, supported by WWF-Pacific and a forthcoming national database for consistent data sharing and analysis. Malaysia’s Sabah Wildlife Department is preparing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for turtle monitoring, complementing national guidelines. The Philippines issued a standardized technical bulletin for habitat assessment. Thailand outlined that their Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) as well as their DMCR work on nesting management and monitoring. Moreover, for the conservation and management of sea turtle nesting sites, Thailand has established collaborative efforts under the “Thai Coral Reef and Marine Life Conservation Initiative” under the Royal Initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Sirivannavari Nariratana Rajakanya. The USA is finalizing a National Sea Turtle Research Standard Methods Manual via NOAA Fisheries.

New Zealand reported this action as not applicable as hawksbills are migrant species and therefore rarely seen within their waters.

Cambodia documented the lack of technical and financial support as a boundary to full implementation.

New Zealand communicated no action with no further information.

2.4.2. *Define and identify habitat critical for hawksbill turtle stocks at different life history stages with a particular focus on the trans-boundary nature of life-cycle stage requirements, migratory patterns, and related protection strategies and adequately protect critical areas including through but not limited to marine protected areas (refer Activity 3.1.3).*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Seven Range States (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) have recorded developments in this action.

Australia uses Marine Bioregional Plans and [Biologically Important Areas](#) (BIAs) to map and guide protection of key habitats through the Australian Marine Spatial Information System (AMSIS). Cambodia is collaborating with Fauna & Flora to assess nesting beaches on remote islands, though broader life-stage habitat mapping remains limited. Fiji is prioritizing the mapping of nesting, foraging, and dispersal areas, supported by WWF-Pacific, and plans to integrate findings into a central national database to inform policy and legislation. Malaysia is initiating awareness through WWF’s Turtle Use Project in Sabah. The Philippines designated two critical habitats for hawksbill nesting and is proposing a marine turtle protected area network within the Sulu Sea under the CTI-SSME. Thailand recorded that the DMCR cooperates with local people for the surveillance of hawksbill turtle nesting outside its MPAs. The USA conducts satellite tagging and genetic studies that link nesting and foraging areas across the Pacific, while maintaining protections in National Refuges and Marine Sanctuaries.

New Zealand reported this section as not applicable as hawksbills are currently a migrant species and do not breed or use critical foraging habitat here in New Zealand but cited that the situation may change with warming seas.

Cambodia cited the lack of capacity and financial resources to complete the implementation of this action.

Objective 3: Further research and evaluate the level of impact trade and fishery activity have on hawksbill populations and deliver on-ground implementation projects by 2027

3.1. Awareness, education and sustainable alternatives reduce poaching, overexploitation and trade in hawksbill turtles

3.1.1. *Work with local communities, including youth and women, turtle consumers, religious leaders as appropriate, in taking further steps to understand use and trade, including with a view to reducing unsustainable practices, and to raise community and political awareness, information sharing and education on such matters as:*

- *the conservation status of hawksbill turtles,*
- *possible health issues involved in consumption,*
- *the illegal trade including online,*
- *existing regulations and the importance of promoting the conservation of the species through compliance with policy, and*
- *formulation of effective economic incentives (supported by financial or technical assistance) to reduce poaching (refer Activity 3.1.3)*

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Six Range States (Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and USA) are engaging local communities to complete the implementation of this action.

Cambodia, with Fauna & Flora, runs community education programs involving fishers, vendors, students, and local authorities, also integrating sea turtle conservation into World Ocean Day events. Fiji conducted a Trade-User Survey and continues to engage communities via education, livelihood programs, and Community-Based Management Plans, supported by Fishers’ Cooperatives to promote sustainable practices and compliance, which can be found [here](#). Malaysia plans to roll out WWF’s Turtle Use Project to state governments in Sabah. The

Philippines, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and partners like Science of Identity Foundation-Coastal Underwater Resource Management Actions (SIF-CURMA) and Amihan sa Dahican, supports community-based marine turtle conservation activities. Thailand documented that the DMCR hosts annual training courses with local communities to build knowledge on turtle species identification and nesting management. In the USA, the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund backs behaviour change campaigns targeting hawksbill trade reduction in Malaysia and Vietnam.

New Zealand reported this action as not applicable as there is no trade or human consumption of sea turtles, as they do not breed in New Zealand and are migrant visitors.

Cambodia mentioned limited budget for the wider outreach and campaign programme as an obstacle to the completion of this action.

Australia noted no action taken as no direct or indirect incentive schemes have been established.

3.1.2. Building on Activity 2.3.2, examine motivations for both legal and illegal harvest and use of hawksbill turtles and their eggs, and where such use exceeds sustainable limits, assess the sustainability of, recommend and implement alternative livelihood options for communities which depend on marine turtles, include subsistence users in decision making, and seek financial and technical support to address this item (also refer Activity 1.2.2 on domestic trade)

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Four Range States (Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, and USA) have shown advancement under this action. Cambodia prohibits all turtle harvesting except for scientific research.

Cambodia noted that Hawksbill turtle catch is banned except for research, but that despite low livelihood dependence, illegal bycatch and trade continue. Fiji conducted a Trade-User Survey identifying drivers of illegal trade. Supported by partners and the Ministry of Fisheries, Fiji promotes education, alternative livelihoods, and Community-Based Management Plans integrated into the Integrated Village Development Plan (IVDP), along with the development of Fishers' Cooperatives to support sustainable fisheries management. In Malaysia, WWF's Turtle Use Project is being introduced to state governments in Sabah. A 2025 study, led by Sabah Wildlife Department, Sabah Tourism Board, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, and WWF-Malaysia, will assess turtle egg consumption to inform a behaviour change campaign. The USA, through the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund, is supporting a comprehensive analysis of the illegal marine turtle trade, focusing on Malaysia and Vietnam.

Cambodia noted the lack of funding as an obstacle to the monitoring of illegal trade. Australia reported no action under this action, noting that this work is primarily carried out by universities, research institutes, and NGOs. However, legal and illegal harvest and use of hawksbill turtles and their eggs are documented in the National Recovery Plan for Marine Turtles 2017.

New Zealand reported this action as not applicable as there is no harvest of sea turtles within their territory as they do not breed in New Zealand and are occasional migrant visitors.

The Philippines and Thailand reported no action taken under this action.

3.1.3. To reduce poaching and the exploitation of hawksbill turtle products, establish economically and environmentally effective direct incentive (i.e., economic) schemes (e.g., employment/payment) to deter illegal poaching, or establish effective indirect incentives (developing and fostering alternative sustainable livelihoods such as eco-tourism, use religious edicts to curb turtle consumption) for turtle users (also refer Activity 3.1.1)

Australia	Cambodia	Fiji	Malaysia	New Zealand	Philippines	Thailand	USA
				N/A			

Five Range States (Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, and USA) are implementing or planning incentive-based strategies to complete this action.

Cambodia, in partnership with Fauna & Flora, runs successful sea turtle awareness and education programs targeting coastal communities, women, youth, vendors, fishers, students, and local authorities. Fiji promotes alternative livelihoods through Fiji Fisheries' operational plans, including the formation of fishers' cooperatives, sustainable product development, value chain training, and support for marine protected areas. Malaysia plans to introduce WWF's *Turtle Use Project* to Sabah state governments, aiming to reduce illegal trade through community-focused strategies. The Philippines issued a Memorandum Circular establishing rules for marine wildlife tourism (including marine turtles), jointly implemented by the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Tourism (DOT), DENR, and Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). Tour operators and guides are trained and accredited under this policy to promote sustainable, turtle-friendly tourism. The USA continues public education campaigns on hawksbill protection laws and the penalties under the *Endangered Species Act*, as part of broader behaviour change efforts.

Cambodia reported limited funding for wider outreach campaign programmes as a key constraint to the complete implementation of this action.

New Zealand reported this action as not applicable as there is no poaching or exploitation of hawksbill turtles in their waters, because they are migrant visitors in small numbers and do not breed within their territory.

Australia reported no action taken under this action, noting that no direct or indirect incentive schemes have been established. While take of marine turtles by foreign nationals is prohibited except for Traditional Inhabitants under the Torres Strait Treaty, illegal harvesting for the tortoiseshell trade by foreign vessels has been reported and is addressed by Border Force. New Zealand and Thailand also reported no action taken under this action.