

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Thirty-first meeting of the Animals Committee
Online, 31 May, 1, 4, 21 and 22 June 2021

MARINE TURTLES (*CHELONIIDAE* SPP. AND *DERMOCHELYIDAE* SPP.)

Membership (as decided by the Committee)

- Members: representatives for Asia [Mr. Diesmos (co-Chair) and Mr. Mobaraki], and representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori) (co-Chair), representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson), nomenclature specialist (Mr. van Dijk);
- Parties: Argentina, Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, Costa Rica, France, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Peru, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and
- Observers: Convention on Migratory Species, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Fauna & Flora International, Global Guardian Trust, Humane Society International, Sea Shepherd Legal, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, and World Wide Fund for Nature.

Mandate

The in-session working group shall:

- a) consider the review of the marine turtle study and draft recommendations by the co-lead of the agenda item presented in Annex 1 to the addendum of document AC31 Doc. 24, and any scientific information in the responses from Parties to Notification No. 2020/015 in Annex 2 to the addendum; and
- b) revise the draft recommendations in Annex 1 to the addendum of document AC31 Doc. 24.

Recommendations

The working group recommends that the Animals Committee agree to the following:

- a) The Animals Committee notes that the study entitled *Status, scope and trends of the legal and illegal international trade in marine turtles, its conservation impacts, management options and mitigation priorities*, identified key issues where CITES and others actors can help with the conservation of marine turtles.
- b) Parties included in the study entitled *Status, scope and trends of the legal and illegal international trade in marine turtles, its conservation impacts, management options and mitigation priorities* are encouraged to undertake comparative research in the locations and communities covered in the present assessment to understand how trade has evolved.
- c) Parties are reminded to include marine turtle confiscation and seizure data in their annual illegal trade report.

The working group recommends that the following set of draft decisions be considered by the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting:

Directed to the Parties

19.AA Parties are encouraged to:

- a) develop robust and standardized frameworks for determining sustainable use of marine turtles that are science-based, integrate a determination of suitable offtake levels, take into account the needs of traditional subsistence users, account for existing use in other States sharing the marine turtle(s) stocks, and account for national enforcement capacity taking into consideration the advice, resolutions, conservation and management measures of relevant bodies including competent fisheries authorities and experts, as appropriate;
- b) work with their fisheries communities to ensure that there is effective documentation at the national level of marine turtle fisheries by-catch and mortality that can inform conservation and management measures taking into consideration the advice, resolutions, conservation and management measures of relevant bodies including competent fisheries authorities and experts, as appropriate;
- c) where marine turtles hatchery establishments exist, develop science-based operational protocols for marine turtle hatchery establishments to ensure that they provide conservation value to marine turtle populations;
- d) undertake comparative research in the locations and communities covered in the study “Status, scope and trends of the legal and illegal international trade in marine turtles, its conservation impacts, management options and mitigation priorities” (CITES Secretariat, 2019) to understand how the illegal marine turtle trade and trade routes evolve;
- e) share holistic regional marine turtle survival probability models and their output and other information to assess sustainability of current harvest and by-catch levels while taking into account other threats to the population across their range (number of turtles of different age classes taken from populations), limitations of source rookeries (number of turtles recruited per year), natural survival probabilities, and marine turtle biology taking into consideration the advice, resolutions, conservation and management measures of relevant bodies including competent fisheries authorities and experts, as appropriate;
- f) undertake as appropriate research that can support the development of protection and conservation measures for marine turtle foraging, nesting and migratory areas;
- g) report on the implementation of paragraphs a) to f) to the Secretariat, for subsequent reporting to the Animals and Standing Committee, as appropriate.

Directed to the Secretariat

19.BB The Secretariat shall:

- a) based on analysis of the annual illegal trade reports, bring to the attention of the Animals and Standing Committee, as appropriate, any significant changes in the illegal trade of marine turtles;
- b) liaise with the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), its Indian Ocean and South-East Asia Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding (IOSEA) on the conservation and management of marine turtles, as outlined in the CMS-CITES Joint Work Programme 2021-2025; and
- c) report on the implementation of paragraphs a) to f) of Decision 19.AA to the Animals and Standing Committees, as appropriate.

Directed to the Animals Committee

19.CC The Animals Committee shall consider any reports from Decision 19.AA and 19.BB paragraph a) brought to its attention by the Secretariat, and make recommendations, as appropriate, including on the possible need for incorporation of the substantive content of Decision 19.AA and 19.BB and any other relevant measures into a new resolution on marine turtles which should also incorporate any relevant

provisions of Resolution Conf 9.20 (Rev.) on *Guidelines for evaluating marine turtle ranching proposals submitted pursuant to Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15)*.

Directed to the Standing Committee

- 19.DD The Standing Committee shall consider any reports from Decision 19.AA and 19.BB paragraph a) brought to its attention by the Secretariat and any recommendations from the Animals Committee, and make recommendations, as appropriate.