

IV Central America Sea Turtle Conservation Workshop

San Ignacio, Belize, October 9-14, 2000

Resolution 1

Incidental Fishing (Catch) of Sea Turtles by Industrial Fisheries in the Eastern Pacific

1. PROBLEM TO RESOLVE:

The negative effects of incidental fishing (capture) on sea turtles of the Eastern Pacific.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE RESOLUTION:

That the nations that have industrial fishing operations in the Eastern Pacific, including the nations of other continents, coordinate efforts to significantly reduce incidental fishing (capture) of sea turtles during industrial fishing operations in the Eastern Pacific.

3. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS SO THAT THE RESOLUTION IS PUT INTO USE:

Seek funds to support biological investigations. Implementation of awareness campaigns directed toward regional authorities and the industrial fishing sector about the need to apply the existing legislation in the control of fishing practices and to legislate the actions that are not included in current law. At the same time, propose to them the development of environmentally ethical support programs for fisherman.

4. PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ACTIONS:

The fishing authorities of the nations involved, FAO, OLDEPESCA, PRADEPESCA, the Regional Sea Turtle Conservation Network in Central America and the local National Sea Turtle Conservation Networks.

CONSIDERING:

1. That sea turtles are valued for recreational, scientific, socioeconomic, cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual reasons;

2. That in spite of the protection efforts in nesting beaches being carried out by governments and non-profit organizations of the region, some sea turtle populations continue declining, especially the leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) of the Eastern Pacific, whose nesting populations have seen reductions of 90% during the last decade;
3. That an excessive, high mortality of adults and juveniles has been identified, a product of incidental fishing (catch), and that this is a principal factor of the recent decline of this species in the Eastern Pacific;
4. That sea turtles are highly migratory species and as such are a shared resource, and that the incidental capture of these species in a place of their geographic distribution neutralizes the efforts to protect the nesting sites that have taken place since many decades ago, in other areas;
5. That the sea turtle species of the region have been listed as endanger of extinction (EN) or critically endanger of extinction (CR) by the Red Book of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);
6. That the nations of the Central American isthmus are members of international treaties as well as fishing agreements whose obligations are to promote the responsible use of fishing resources, and as well have domestic regulations designed to protect marine turtles and their habitats;
7. That the fishing industries that use industrial long lines in pelagic waters capture juvenile and adult leatherback sea turtles and other species;
8. That this capture has not been completely evaluated and it is estimated that it is likely that it could be dozens of thousands of sea turtles per year;
9. That the artesian fishing using gill nests and lines in shallow coastal waters is also an important source of mortality of leatherback turtles and other species;
10. That current scientific evidence suggests that certain fishing zones, particularly in waters around the Galápagos Islands, are biological corridors for the leatherback, and it is precisely in these zones of concentration of reproductive adults where the population is most vulnerable;
11. That regional guidelines do not exist concerning the assigning of responsibilities and fishing ban periods;

12. That numerous examples exist that show that the industrial fisheries tend to be short term planners, and that that same destiny can be expected of the long line fishery at high sea that is being developed now;
13. That in earlier instances the regional fishing authorities have been warned of this situation, and have not taken adequate measures regarding this issue;

RECOGNIZING:

1. That the participation of the industrial fishing sector is indispensable to generate the scientific information necessary for the appropriate management of fishing resources and the species captured incidentally;
2. That in this sense, the collaboration of the Costa Rican fishing industry, in particular Papagayo Seafood S.A., has been key in obtaining the updated scientific information about the capture of sea turtles in waters of the exclusive economic zone of this nation;
3. That whatever effort to obtain funds and investigation should consider the legitimate interests of the fishing sector, both artisan and industrial.

THEREFORE:

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America, resolve to request governments, fisheries offices and fishing chambers of the region, to take immediate actions in the coordination of efforts to:

1. To stimulate and support biological investigation directed at the evaluation of incidental capture of sea turtles, during fishing operations at high sea that use long lines and gill nets, in collaboration with investigation and conservation bodies, both public and private;
2. Perform a socioeconomic evaluation on the importance of this activity, and identify possible sources of alternative income;
3. Evaluate the effects of the subventions on the development of fishing with long-line and the fishing effort;
4. Perform training directed at fishermen so that they take actions to resuscitate turtles when taken aboard, and that they take the necessary measures to

reduce the damage inflicted upon turtles when they are captured and liberated;

5. Based on the investigations propose temporary bans in feeding, breeding, and nesting zones of turtles as well as other critical ecosystems in their life cycle;
6. Develop environmental certification programs for products collected in environmentally ethical fishing operations;
7. Develop consumer campaigns to motivate fishermen to comply with the protection recommendations for sea turtles;
8. Ensure effective control and vigilance of the activities that threaten the populations of sea turtles of the region;
9. Formulate an investigation proposal within one month with the political support of the interested parties, to initiate the efforts and paperwork necessary to secure funds;
10. Perform an initial investigation in the Eastern Pacific, with observers on board long-line ships with a duration of at least 6 months, and depending on the results of this investigation carry out an emergency meeting.

***Approved by majority vote of plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize, 14
October 2000.***

Resolution 2

Support of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles

1) PROBLEM TO RESOLVE:

The lack of regional, sub-regional, and national mechanisms for the protection and conservation of sea turtles between the countries that share these resources.

2) OBJECTIVE OF RESOLUTION:

The signing and ratification to put in motion the Inter-American Convention.

3) FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS SO THAT THE RESOLUTION IS PUT INTO USE:

Demonstrate to the countries of the Region, through analysis and study of the Convention, the importance of it entering into force as soon as possible.

4) THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ACTIONS:

The National Networks of each country and the Regional Network of Central America.

CONSIDERING:

1. That the coastal communities of the region share a cultural heritage, in which sea turtles play an important role;
2. That sea turtles migrate and disperse over large areas, therefore they are a shared resource that forms part of the natural patrimony of the Central American isthmus;
3. That sea turtles need special conservation measures and management because they are species that have long times to maturity and their populations depend on low mortality levels of adults and large juveniles.

4. That the sea turtle populations of both coasts of Central America are subject to diverse threats, including exploitation, incidental capture in fisheries, contamination and loss of habitat, in foraging areas as well as nesting areas;
5. That the Central American nations have demonstrated their interest and commitment to protect sea turtles, supporting investigation and conservation efforts, creating protected areas in foraging and reproduction zones, establishing specialized legislation for their protection and management and identifying economic alternatives to the direct uses of sea turtles and their products;
6. That in various nations of the isthmus sea turtles are a source of income through their indirect use in tourism;
7. That all the sea turtle species of the region have been listed as species endanger of extinction in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), as well as critically endanger of extinction (CR) by the Red Book of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
8. That the conservation of sea turtles and their habitats is a regional priority for all the countries of Central America;
9. That the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles is a hemispheric initiative;
10. That the Inter-American Convention recognizes the need to develop regional, sub regional and national mechanisms to coordinate investigation and conservation activities of sea turtles and their habitats;
11. That this Convention is based in other instruments of great importance at the international level in the topic of marine resources, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) of 1982; the Declaration of Río of 1992 on the Environment and Development, as well as Program 21 of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) of 1992 and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, adopted by the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in its 28th session of 1995;
12. That the Inter-American Convention manifests the importance that the states of the American continent collaborate in the conservation of sea turtles and their habitats;

13. That said Convention will apply to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and the Caribbean Sea, where each Party will take the appropriate and necessary measures, in conformity with international law and based on the most sound scientific data available, for the protection, conservation and recuperation of the populations of sea turtles and their habitats;
14. That the Conference of Ministers of the Latin American Organization for Fisheries Development (OLDEPESCA), approved Resolutions # 141-CM-96 and 154-CM-97 and that during the meetings of specialists of the XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX and XX Annual Symposia on the Biology and Conservation of Sea Turtles, as well as the II and III Regional Workshops of the Conservation of Sea Turtles of Central America, it was agreed to solicit support from the countries of the Americas for the Inter-American Convention;
15. That eight countries must ratify this Convention for it to enter into force;
16. That the only countries of the Central American region that have signed the Inter-American Convention are: Belize, Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua, and that only Costa Rica has deposited its ratification instrument.

THEREFORE:

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America resolve:

To congratulate the governments of Belize, Costa Rica, Honduras y Nicaragua for having signed the Convention and particularly Costa Rica for having ratified;

To exhort the governments of Belize, Honduras y Nicaragua to deposit their ratification instrument before 31 December 2000;

To exhort the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean that have not signed the Inter-American Convention to accede to it as soon as it enters into force;

To exhort the community of scientists, conservationists and environmental lawyers to collaborate in international, multi-sector and interdisciplinary meetings to produce preparatory documents that guide and support the development of the treaty, with the goal that it effectively complies with its objectives; in a like manner, exhort the Parties to collaborate with this effort to strengthen the development of the democracy in the conservation of shared resources;

Appeal to the good will of the governmental, non-governmental, civil, academic, multilateral and other organisms to decidedly support the execution of this

Convention and to see to the faithful compliance of its application in each one of the countries of the region.

*Approved by majority of the plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize,
14 October 2000.*

RESOLUTION 3

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

1) PROBLEM TO RESOLVE:

The international trade of endangered species of wild flora and fauna.

2) OBJECTIVE OF RESOLUTION:

That the public and Regional Network be consulted with on the sea turtle proposals evaluated by CITES, before their approval.

3) FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS SO THAT THE RESOLUTION IS PUT INTO USE:

Schedule meetings with CITES authorities, to explain the technical and social needs and reasons to promote this initiative.

4) THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ACTIONS:

The National Networks of each country and the Central American Network.

CONSIDERING:

1. That sea turtles migrate and disperse over large areas, and therefore they are a shared resource that forms part of the natural patrimony of the Central American isthmus;
2. That mitochondrial DNA studies and massive sea turtle tagging have shown that many populations are formed by a mosaic of sub populations;

3. That multiple pressures put in risk the survival of sea turtles and the state of their populations, such as the direct exploitation of all stages of their life cycle, incidental capture, marine and terrestrial contamination, disturbance and destruction of habitats;
4. That distinct histories of sea turtle conservation exist in the countries of Central America;
5. That due to the nature of this resource the use that takes place in one country can undermine the research and conservation efforts of another nation;
6. That the principal objective of CITES is to protect endangered species from excessive exploitation through a system of control of importation, exportation, and re-exportation of products coming from the sea;
7. That all sea turtle species of the region fulfill the biological criteria to belong to the group of species in danger of extinction that are found in Appendix I of CITES;
8. That it is necessary to strengthen research on the impact of trade of wildlife and the study of national quotas of use;
9. That it is a priority to improve the application and compliance of legislation related to trade of wildlife;
10. That the states, non-profit organization, universities and communities who have in their hands the responsibility to conserve sea turtles, should combine efforts and coordinate at the national and regional level;
11. That the Central American Regional Network for the Conservation of Sea Turtles is a voluntary alliance that promotes dialogue, sharing and up-dating of ideas and knowledge, and that has significantly improved at the short term the opportunities of sea turtles to be protected.

THEREFORE:

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America solicit:

To the contracting Parties, the Secretariat and offices of CITES in Central America that the proposals about sea turtles evaluated by CITES at national and international levels be in done in consultation with Consultative Committee of sea

turtles of the Central American Network and the scientific community in front of the public, before being approved.

***Approved by majority of the plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize,
14 October 2000.***

RESOLUTION 4

Support to the Opening of a TRAFFIC Office in Central America

1) PROBLEM TO SOLVE:

The illegal trade in wildlife species.

2) OBJECTIVE OF THE RESOLUTION:

Bring a TRAFFIC office to Central America.

3) FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS SO THAT THE RESOLUTION IS PUT INTO USE:

Meet with TRAFFIC representatives, to evaluate together the opening of an office for Central America.

4) THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTIONS:

The National Networks of each country and the Central American Regional Network.

CONSIDERING:

1. That the Central American region has more than 6% of the diversity of species in the world;
2. That the Central American isthmus is a corridor of exchange of species between the neotropics and nearctic;
3. That species diversity propitiates and complicates control of commerce in wildlife species like sea turtles, making control more complicated;
4. That since various centuries ago wildlife species like sea turtles have been used by the peoples of Central America as a food resource or for production of accessories from their shell and body;
5. That the countries of the region have been sources of exportation of products and sub-products of sea turtles for centuries;

6. That even now when all the nations of the region are part of CITES, border control problems of sea turtle products and sub-products exist in Central America between various countries;
7. That the problem of national and international commerce is rooted in the efficient implementation of a practical, clear regulatory framework, and where the controls against illegal use are clear and effective;
8. That the application of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is indispensable to safeguarding wildlife;
9. That the CITES authorities in the region are limited and for that reason can not efficiently combat illegal commerce;
10. That the application of and compliance with legislation related to commerce of wildlife needs to improve;
11. That TRAFFIC is an office that dedicates itself to design controls for the illegal commerce of wildlife.

THEREFORE:

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America, strongly solicit the evaluation of opening a TRAFFIC office in a country of the Central American region.

***Approved by majority of the plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize,
14 October 2000.***

Resolution 5

A Note of Appreciation to Donors

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America, celebrated in San Ignacio Belize, 9 to 14 of October, 2000, wish to extend to the:

- Government of Belize;
- Belize Fisheries Department;
- Belize Audubon Society;

- Belize Coastal Zone Management Authority & Institute;
- Belize Zoo;
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation;
- Red para la Conservación de las tortugas marinas en el Gran Caribe WIDECAS;
- Department of State United States of America;
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Department of the Interior;
- Convención sobre los Humedales Ramsar;
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF/SAM);
- Proyecto Regional Ambiental para Centro América, PROARCA-CAPAS/USAID;
- Frankfurt Zoological Society, Help for Threatened Wildlife;
- Joanna Foundation;
- Comisión Centroamericana de Ambiente y Desarrollo-SICA;
- Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente (PNUMA);
- Japan Wildlife Conservation Society;
- Wildlife Conservation Society;
- Asociación ANAI;
- Corredor Biológico del Atlántico-Panamá;
- Corredor Biológico del Atlántico-Nicaragua;
- Proyecto Pobreza Rural y Recursos Naturales, Componente Biodiversidad;
- Proyecto Cerro Hoya-ANAM/GTZ;
- Caribbean Conservation Corporation;
- Proyecto "Aprovechamiento Sostenible de los Manglares del Pacífico de Guatemala" INAB-UE-IUCN;
- Sea Turtle Restoration Project, Turtle Island Restoration Network;
- CODDEFFAGOLF;
- MOPAWI;
- NicaAmbiental;

Our most sincere appreciation for the financial support that they gave to the organization and execution of this event and exhort them to support our work in the Central American region, as well as to help strengthen the development of the V Regional Workshop that will take place in La Ceiba, Honduras in the year 2001.

***Approved by majority of the plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize,
14 October 2000.***

Resolution 6

Formation of the Consultative Committee on Sea Turtles

1) PROBLEM TO RESOLVE:

The lack of strict and sound scientific bases to deal with issues related to sea turtles.

2) OBJECTIVE OF RESOLUTION:

That the Regional Network serves as a Consultative Committee ad Hoc to address issues related to sea turtles.

3) FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS SO THAT THE RESOLUTION IS PUT INTO USE:

Program meetings with the Secretaría de Integración Centroamericana, governments of the region and other related entities, to explain the advantages of having a Sea Turtle Consultative Committee.

4) THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ACTIONS:

The National Networks of each country and the Regional Network of Central America.

CONSIDERING:

1. That sea turtles are an important component of the world's biodiversity;
2. That these species play a very important role as mythic, artistic and economic elements directly as well as indirectly;
3. That sea turtles pass through stages of their life cycle at high sea and ecosystems located in different nations, being a migratory and shared resource;

4. That the nations of the region in greater or less measure have developed conservation efforts for sea turtles and that these efforts are in the hands of states, non-profit organization, universities and communities;
5. That there is a lack of regional protocols for monitoring, conservation and sustainable use in the context of sea turtles and their habitats;
6. That the conservation of sea turtles must be based on strict and sound science;
7. That the Regional Network for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America is made up of the majority of specialists in the topic of sea turtle conservation and biology;
8. That the Regional Network for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America is a voluntary alliance that promotes dialogue, the sharing and updating of knowledge, that has improved for the short term the opportunity for sea turtles to be protected;
9. That the Regional Network is founded in the creation of national networks that agglutinate all the key partners and actors with the desire to work to improve the state of conservation of sea turtles in their respective countries.

THEREFORE:

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America respectfully request the Secretaría de Integración Centroamericana, governments of the region, and related entities to consider the Regional Network as the Consultative Committee on sea turtles *ad Hoc* that gives scientific advice on decisions related to policies, investigation and management of sea turtles and their habitats in the region.

**Approved by majority of the plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize,
14 October 2000.**

Resolution 7

Support of the Protocol Related to Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) of the Convention for the Protection and

Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region

1) PROBLEM TO RESOLVE:

The exploitation of wild flora and fauna of the marine environment of the wider Caribbean region.

2) OBJECTIVE OF RESOLUTION:

That the governments of Central America join the SPAW Protocol.

3) FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS SO THAT THE RESOLUTION IS PUT INTO USE:

Demonstrate to the countries of the region, through analysis and study of the Protocol, the importance to join as soon as possible.

4) PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTIONS:

The National Networks of each country and the Regional Network of Central America.

CONSIDERING:

1. That the coastal zones and marine environment of the wider Caribbean contain the most productive and diverse marine habitats, such as coral reefs, marine pastures, mangrove swamps, mud flats and sand; ecosystems that represent points of attraction for tourists, protection of coasts and serve as refuges for an uncountable number of organisms, many of them of great economic value;
2. That the Caribbean of the Central American region possesses special hydrographic, biotic, cultural and ecological characteristics;
3. That the coastal marine zones of the wider Caribbean and their biological resources have been vital as sites of extractive activities, without estimating the time necessary for an efficient regeneration, impairing the survival of the species;
4. That the current panorama of these zones is over-fishing, the use of arts and methods of capture that are not very selective;

5. That the coasts of the wider Caribbean are being altered by the discharge of wastes of human origin coming from agricultural, urban, tourist, and industrial development;
6. That the protection and conservation of the natural environment of the wider Caribbean region are essential to maintaining biodiversity;
7. That a joint effort of protection of threatened species or species in danger of extinction will strengthen the natural patrimony and the cultural values of the countries and territories of the wider Caribbean and therefore of the Central American region;
8. That it is necessary to maintain, protect and restore areas of special biological, ecological, educational, scientific, historical, cultural, recreational, archaeological, esthetic, or economic value in the Central American coasts and in the wider Caribbean in general;
9. That it is necessary to regulate or prohibit the discharge of waste and contaminants and the fishing, hunting or collection of species of flora and fauna threatened or in danger of extinction and their parts or products, and of migratory species along the wider Caribbean;
10. The need to promote and develop scientific and technical investigation aimed at the management of protected areas in the Central American region;
11. That the content of this Protocol can not be interpreted in any form to affect the rights and obligations of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS);
12. That various countries of Central America share a historical and political promise in the protection and conservation of wild flora and fauna.

THEREFORE:

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America appeal to the governments of the countries of the region such that the signature countries of the Cartagena Convention ratify it and join the SPAW Protocol.

***Approved by majority of the plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize,
14 October 2000.***

Resolution 8

***That the Area of the Current Sea Turtle Sanctuary: X
'Acel - X'cacelito En Quintana Roo Mexico Be Increased and
Protected as Critical Habitat for Sea Turtles***

1.- Problem to resolve:

-Protect Xcacel-Xçacelito as the most important nesting site in México for the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) and white sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*).

- Protect the populations of nesting females of these species which have the greatest genetic diversity and endemic haplotypes receptor of the Atlantic;

2.- Objective of the resolution:

-To affect government decision making at three levels.

-Support the actions of the different sectors with interest in the total protection of X'cacel-X'cacelito

3.-Follow-up actions to ensure resolution takes effect:

-Deliver the resolution to the various authorities (state-federal), non-governmental organization (NGOs) and national and international communication media

4.- Persons responsible for these actions:

-Roberto L. Herrera Pavón – El Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR-
Unidad Chetumal)

-Adrián Maldonado PRONATURA Península de Yucatán A.C.

CONSIDERING:

1. The promise and efforts made by the Mexican Government through more than three decades for the protection of sea turtles and their habitats;
2. That scientific evidence shows that the sea turtle colonies of the Mexican Caribbean located in the state of Quintana Roo, México, represent a significant genetic reserve of the total diversity of the Atlantic populations;
3. That the coasts of the state of Quintana Roo are the only significant nesting sites of the loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) in México and X´cacel-X´cacelito is the beach with the greatest number of nests;
4. That the beaches of X´cacel, Aventuras DIF, Chemuyil y Xel-ha are the sites of greatest nesting density in México of the white (green) sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and that X´cacel-X´cacelito has the greatest number of nests of this species;
5. That the beaches of Aventuras DIF y Chemuyil adjacent to X´cacel-X´cacelito that are of similar importance for the nesting of sea turtles in Quintana Roo, have been sold and are being modified in a drastic manner for tourist development;
6. That within the agreement called the Acuerdo de Ordenamiento Ecológico del Corredor Cancún-Tulum of 1994, X´cacel was established as an ecological protection zone and that this agreement stipulates that from the isobat of 60 m to the Chetumal-Puerto Juárez federal highway, no type of development is allowed;
7. That this decree only protects a third of that established in the Ordenamiento Ecológico;
8. That the edge of 100 m is not practical for a reserve and is ecologically highly vulnerable.

THEREFORE:

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America recommend that:

The Ordenamiento Ecológico of 1994 is put into practice and that the current X´cacel- X´cacelito Sea turtle Sanctuary be increased protecting the edge located between la isobat of 60 m and the Chetumal-Puerto Juárez federal highway.

Approved by majority of the plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize, 14 October 2000.

Resolution 9

Support to the Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) Of the American Pacific

Problem to resolve:

The loss of populations of leatherback sea turtles, the lack of conservation projects in important nesting sites, and the lack of financing for existing conservation projects on the American Pacific coast.

Objective of resolution:

To develop immediate and effective actions for the conservation of leatherback sea turtles in the American Pacific.

Follow-up actions to ensure resolution takes effect:

Program meetings with sea turtle networks and projects of each country.

Persons responsible for actions:

Coordinators of the network of each country.

CONSIDERING:

1. That the leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) is a migratory species shared by all the countries of the American Pacific, as well as other countries outside of the region;
2. That the leatherback sea turtle is listed as a species critically endangered of extinction by the Red Book of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and in Appendix I of the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);
3. That according to scientific studies, the leatherback nesting populations of the American Pacific have declined by 90 per cent over the last 12 years, to critical levels;

4. That it is urgent that effective and immediate actions be taken to prevent the disappearance of leatherback populations that nest in the American Pacific;
5. That the protection of leatherback nesting sites is fundamental to the conservation of populations of this species;
6. That the Biodiversity Convention establishes the Precautionary Principle to help States to protect endangered species that do not have scientific investigations;
7. That a proposal exists before RAMSAR for nesting beaches to be considered as important parameters in the determination of RAMSAR sites of international importance.

THEREFORE:

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America resolve:

1. To unite forces to work in a coordinated manner between the distinct public and private sectors with the goal of arriving at a solution to this problem;
2. That each country identify the most important leatherback nesting sites in the American Pacific:
 - a) To determine the technical and financial help required by existing projects, defining objectives, activities, management and costs;
 - b) Initiate projects where they currently do not exist;
3. Put all this information together in a regional proposal integrating a list of individual projects with an order of priority;
4. Present the proposal to various appropriate sources to secure funds;
5. That all this information be presented in a period of 2 months according to the national coordinators of each country.

The Signatories Below:

Request the governments, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, local communities and universities to support this initiative with the goal of the conservation of this very endangered species.

Approved by majority of the plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize, 14 October 2000.
Resolution 10

On the Implementation of Regulations to Ensure the Use of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDS) During Industrial Fishing Operations of Shrimp in the Central American Isthmus

PROBLEM TO RESOLVE:

The lack of local rigor in the implementation of regulations designed to ensure the use of the TED during industrial fishing operations of shrimp in the Central American isthmus.

OBJECTIVE OF THE RESOLUTION:

That the Central American nations that have industrial fishing operations of shrimp in the Eastern Pacific, use the TED effectively during the fishing efforts.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS TO ENSURE RESOLUTION TAKES EFFECT:

Securing of funds for the support of biological investigations. Completion of annual case studies per Central American country to determine the effective measures that each Central American country of the isthmus takes to ensure the implementation of Turtle Excluder Device regulations. Execution of awareness campaigns directed toward the regional authorities and the industrial fishing sector about the need to apply existing rules relating to fishing methods and to legislate concerning the actions that are not included in the current laws. At the same time, propose the development of support programs for fishermen ethical with the environment.

PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ACTIONS:

The fishing authorities of the involved nations, FAO, OLDEPESCA, PRADEPESCA, the Regional Sea Turtle Conservation Network in Central America and the local National Sea Turtle Conservation Networks.

CONSIDERING:

1. That sea turtles are valued for recreational, scientific, socio-economic, cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual reasons;

2. That sea turtles are highly migratory species and therefore are a shared resource, and that the incidental capture of these species in a place of their geographic distribution neutralizes efforts to protect nesting, feeding, refuge, and migration sites that have taken place for decades;
3. That all sea turtle species in the region have been listed as endanger or critically endanger of extinction by the Red Book of the International Union for the Conservation of the Nature (IUCN) and in Appendix I of the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);
4. That the nations of the Central American isthmus are part of diverse international treaties whose obligation is to ensure the responsible and sustainable use of fishing resources, and also have domestic regulations designed to protect sea turtles and their habitats;
5. That in agreement with available information, an extremely high capture of olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) and Pacific green (*Chelonia mydas agassizi*) sea turtles has been estimated for shrimp trawling operations in the Central American Pacific, of which at least 50% are found dead when the nets are retrieved;
6. That the mortality of adult and juvenile sea turtles has been identified to be due in large part to the incidental catch during shrimp trawling fishing operations;
7. That all the countries of the Central American region have regulations specifically designed to require the use of TEDs during shrimp fishing operations;
8. It has been proven that the TED is technologically relatively inexpensive and is effective in reducing the capture and incidental catch of sea turtles during fish trawling operations.

CONCERNED BY:

1. The massive quantity of sea turtles that wash up dead along the length of the Central American isthmus, especially in shrimp fishing zones and shrimp fishing periods, and that the number of sea turtle deaths is conservatively estimated at dozens of thousands;
2. The lack of systematic, current, sound, verifiable information on the adequate use of TEDs, as well as the lack of action against the violators of these same

regulations, despite solid evidence of some ships are flagrantly violating the law along the Central American isthmus;

3. The weak legal standard, lack of equipment and technical support that the local fishing authorities suffer to comply with this law.

RECOGNIZING:

1. That the participation of the industrial fishing sector is indispensable for the generation of the scientific information necessary for appropriate management of fishing resources and species captured incidentally;

2. That in this sense, the collaboration of the fishing industry, in particular the Cámara Puntarenense de Pescadores, has been key in obtaining the current scientific information on TED efficiency and the modifications necessary to make technology more acceptable for local fishermen;

THEREFORE:

The participants of the IV Regional Workshop for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in Central America, resolve to request the governments, fishing offices and shrimp chambers of the region, to take actions as quickly as possible in coordinating forces to:

1. Encourage biological and socio-economic investigations aimed at the evaluation of incidental capture of sea turtles during shrimp fishing operations, in collaboration with research and conservation entities, either public or private;

2. Encourage investigation aimed at the evaluation of the efficiency of TEDs and the modification of technology according to local fishing conditions;

3. Evaluate the need to establish temporary bans in sea turtle feeding, mating, and nesting zones and other ecosystems critical to their live cycle where mortality by incidental catch is an important factor;

4. Develop environmental certification programs for products collected in fishing operations ethical with the environment;

5. Develop campaigns for the consumers of shrimp in the international arena to provide fishermen with an incentive to comply with sea turtle protection recommendations;

6. To ensure effective control and vigilance of shrimping activities, including the use of the TED;

7. That the parties responsible for the administration of fishing of each nation of the isthmus publicly present to PRADEPESCA an annual report on the activities that are realized locally to ensure the implementation of regulations, including a list of ships captured breaking the law and sanctions applied;

8. Perform training directed at the fishermen so that they take actions to resuscitate comatose turtles on board their ship.

**Approved by the majority of plenary, in San Ignacio, Belize,
14 October 2000.**