



Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
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Draft March 18 2013

**Memorandum of Understanding between the International Commission for the
Conservation of Atlantic Tunas and the Inter-American Convention for the
Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles**

This document has been reviewed once by the IAC Focal Points and was sent to the ICCAT Executive Secretary for their review.

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Memorandum of Understanding between the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas and the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (hereafter ICCAT) and the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (hereafter IAC); hereafter jointly called ‘the Parties’;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the objective of the IAC is to promote the protection, conservation and recovery of sea turtle populations and the habitats on which they depend, based on the best available scientific evidence, taking into account the environmental, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the Parties;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the objective of ICCAT is to maintain the populations of tuna and tuna-like fishes found in the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas at levels, which will permit the maximum sustainable, catch for food and other purposes;

AWARE that the feeding, mating, migration and inter-nesting habitats of some sea turtles may coincide with areas where fishing for ICCAT species occurs;

ACKNOWLEDGING FURTHER that ICCAT is committed to mitigating and reducing sea turtle bycatch and mortality in their fisheries across all fishing areas and has taken steps to improve data collection and reporting on bycatch, including sea turtle species, in ICCAT fisheries;

NOTING that Article XII of the IAC states that the IAC Parties shall promote bilateral and multilateral cooperative activities to further the objective of this Convention and, when they deem it appropriate, shall seek the support of relevant international organizations;

NOTING FURTHER the IAC’s adoption of the Resolution “Reduction of the adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles” (COP3/2006/R-2) that requests the IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretariat to commence discussions with regional fishery management organizations in order to develop Memoranda of Understanding;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that Article XI of the ICCAT Convention calls upon the Commission to make suitable arrangements for consultation, cooperation and collaboration with other relevant organizations;

FURTHER RECALLING the recommendation from the ICCAT independent performance review in September 2008 that ICCAT “develop a stronger approach generally to by-catch and develop and adopt appropriate mitigation measures including reporting on the effectiveness of these measures throughout the fisheries;”

FURTHER TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the Recommendation by ICCAT on the By-Catch of Sea Turtles in ICCAT Fisheries [Rec. 10-09] calls on the Commission, as appropriate, “to engage in cooperative activities to support the effective implementation of

this recommendation, including entering into cooperative arrangements with other appropriate international bodies;”

CONSCIOUS that some members of the ICCAT are Parties to the IAC;

RECOGNIZING that ICCAT and the IAC will benefit from cooperation and collaboration in areas of mutual interest and that this cooperation will enhance the conservation of sea turtles;

JOINTLY DECIDE, as follows:

1. OBJECTIVE OF THIS MEMORANDUM

The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding (hereafter Memorandum) is to facilitate cooperation between ICCAT and the IAC (“the Participants”) with a view to supporting efforts to minimize the incidental bycatch and enhance the conservation of sea turtle species within ICCAT’s Convention area.

2. AREAS OF COOPERATION

The ICCAT and the IAC Secretariats may consult, cooperate and collaborate with each other on areas of common interest that are directly or indirectly relevant to the recovery and conservation of sea turtles. In particular, this may include scientific collaboration regarding data and expertise exchange, techniques and knowledge relevant to the interactions of sea turtles with ICCAT fisheries, education and awareness programs, participation in relevant ICCAT and IAC meetings, and any other topics that the IAC and ICCAT Parties consider of interest.

3. REVIEW, MODIFICATIONS AND AMENDMENTS

This Memorandum can be reviewed, modified and amended at any time by the mutual consent of both Participants. The modifications or amendments must be done in writing, specifying the date they become effective.

4. LEGAL STATUS

The Participants acknowledge that this Memorandum is not legally binding between them.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERMINATION

This Memorandum will come into effect upon the date signed by the Executive Secretary of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas and the *Pro Tempore* Secretary of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles.

Either Participant may terminate this Memorandum by giving six months written notice to the other Participant.

Signed at the city of [], on the [DAY] of [MONTH] two thousand [] in four originals, in [English and in Spanish] languages, both texts being equally authentic.

ICCAT Executive Secretary

IAC *Pro Tempore* Secretary