

Original: English

**DRAFT 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**

1. The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (hereafter ICCAT) and the Secretariat of Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (hereafter IAC); hereafter jointly called “the Participants”;
2. *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 IAC Parties;
3. *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;
4. *NOTING FURTHER* the IAC Resolutions “Reduction of the adverse impacts of fisheries on sea turtles” (COP3/2006/R-2) and “Conservation of Northwest Atlantic Leatherbacks” (CIT-COP9-2019-R2), which request the IAC Secretariat to commence discussions with regional fishery management organizations to develop Memoranda of Understanding;
5. *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;
6. *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;
7. *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;”
8. *AWARE* that the feeding, mating, migration and inter-nesting habitats of six species of sea turtles occur in the ICCAT Convention Area;
9. *CONSCIOUS* that some Parties of the ICCAT are Parties to the IAC;
10. *RECOGNIZING* that, while each of them has its respective areas of competency and respective procedures, 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, and will benefit fisheries sustainability in the long term;
11. *DESIRING* to put in place arrangements and procedures to promote cooperation to enhance 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 to support the efforts to minimize bycatch and enhance the conservation of sea turtle species within ICCAT’s Convention area.

## 2. Areas of cooperation

The ICCAT and the IAC intend to consult, cooperate and collaborate within their respective areas of competency and in accordance with their respective procedures, on areas of common interest that are directly or indirectly relevant to the recovery and conservation of sea turtles including:

- a) development of systems for collecting and analyzing data, and exchanging information concerning the accidental bycatch of sea turtles in ICCAT fisheries, subject to confidentiality requirements of ICCAT and IAC, that can support the monitoring of fisheries impacts and mitigation measures;
- b) assessing the possible exchange of reported data that is subject to confidentiality requirements of the respective organizations, aiming to support the development of management approaches relevant to the conservation of sea turtles;
- c) implementation and development of training, education and awareness on conservation techniques and measures to mitigate threats affecting sea turtles, including fisheries bycatch mitigation measures, for CPCs whose fisheries operate in areas where sea turtles may be encountered;
- d) design and testing of sea turtle bycatch mitigation measures in ICCAT fisheries, as well as assessment of impact of the implementation of such measures under the guidance of the SCRS and subject to its further consideration;
- e) exchange of expertise, techniques, and knowledge relevant to the conservation of sea turtles in ICCAT fisheries; and
- f) reciprocal participation with observer status at the relevant meetings of IAC and ICCAT as appropriate.

## 3. Review and modification

This Memorandum may be reviewed and modified at any time by the mutual consent of both Participants. The modifications are to 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 discontinuation

- a) This Memorandum is to remain in effect for six years. At that stage, the Participants intend to review the operation of the Memorandum and decide whether to renew or modify it.
- b) Either Participant may discontinue this Memorandum by giving six months written notice to the other Participant.
- c) This Memorandum takes effect on signatures on behalf of both Participants.

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

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ICCAT Executive Secretary

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IAC Secretary