



IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group  
2015 Annual General Meeting  
Regional Update

# Eastern Pacific

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# Regional Membership

- Countries represented
  - US, MX, GU, NI, HO, ES, PA, CO, EC, PE, CH
- Number of members
  - 20
- Recent changes to membership
  - Addition of A. Gaos as regional chair, replacing B. Wallace
- Membership gaps, highlights, goals
  - Dependent on overall goals of the MTSG

# Regional Concerns

- Emerging / ongoing concerns for turtles
  - Egg collection/sale
  - Fisheries bycatch
  - Information gaps
  - Restricted funding opportunities
  - In general, little, if any, request by government agencies for direct advice from MTSG on sea turtle issues
- Concerns for MTSG
  - Lack of clear goals/objectives
  - Prioritization for regional approach
  - Do we need regional strategy?? Is it practical??

# Regional Opportunities

- New projects, opportunities
  - Leatherback network re-boot under FFI leadership
  - Incentive programs (works for areas with low nesting or critical populations)
- Relevant new research
  - Darrien Gap-Choco hawksbill nesting
  - Regional in-water hawksbill evaluations
  - Utria – Gorgona, CO; Isla Coiba, PA; Isla Espiritu Santo, MX; Easter Island, CH
  - Peru (juvenile) hawksbill tracking
  - Aserradores Ei nesting, Nicaragua
  - Los Cobanos & El Maculis (El Salvador) projects rejuvenated
  - Hawksbill genetics & nest-site selection
  - Michoacan green turtle nesting
  - Juvenile loggerhead tracking off California coast
  - Juvenile hawksbill tracking in Padre Ramos estuary, Nicaragua using open source, cheap electronics
- Gaps
  - Consistent updates on leatherback nesting/status
  - Bycatch of loggerheads in Peru and Chile
- Opportunities for MTSG involvement in regional issues
  - Strategic alliances with NGO and Govt (marine research institutes)
- Potential funding sources -

# MEXICO Recent items of relevance

- Mexico's FISHERY RESTRICTION agreement 10 April 2015 establishing refuge area and measures to reduce bycatch of marine turtles in Golfo de Ulloa, on the west coast of Baja California Sur.
  - 2 year fishing restrictions in core area within Golfo de Ulloa, where the region's highest density of **loggerhead turtles** are found
    - Gillnet mesh size > 6" are prohibited year-round; 4.5" - 6" are not permitted May-Aug
    - No J hooks allowed in longlines
    - Fish traps are prohibited
    - Fishing for domestic consumption by near-shore fishermen only with manual lines and nets with mesh size < 4.5"
  - Results to be evaluated and legislation adjusted after 2 years

# Red List Assessments

- Species in need of regional assessments
  - Loggerheads, hawksbills, green turtles, leatherbacks, olive ridley
- Status of regional assessments (ongoing support to global assessment processes, stand-alone assessments, etc)
  - IAC – Recent Ei assessment.
    - El Salvador and Nicaragua aren't members
    - Colombia trying
    - National reports from 2005 - onwards available in the IAC website

# Networking & Regional Development

- Linkages between MTSG and other regional bodies (existing/proposed/possible)
  - IAC
- Support needed from IUCN and / or MTSG
  - Letters of endorsement, funding sources and lobby
  - Linkages with CMS and RFMO

# SALUDOS 2015 MTSG!!

