



ANNEX 1.2

IOSEA Meeting of the Signatory States 6 (Bangkok, 2012) Terms of Reference and Guidance for IOSEA National Focal Points

Introduction

This document has been developed to clarify the general roles and responsibilities of IOSEA Focal Points and to make participation in Signatory State meetings more effective. Given periodic turnover of official delegates, it is considered that a document serving as a basic guide to activities before, during and after a Signatory State meeting would be useful. This will allow IOSEA representatives to contribute more effectively to the conduct of IOSEA business between regular meetings of the Signatory States and to better understand the process surrounding the meeting itself – in order to enhance the value of this special event for international cooperation in marine turtle conservation.

The terms of reference are not meant to be prescriptive, insofar as it is recognized that the Memorandum of Understanding is not legally binding and the circumstances for implementation differ from one Signatory State to another. However, they are considered to offer helpful guidance to Focal Points to assist them in the important tasks for which they have been appointed.

Intersessional activities

With a view to maximizing efficiency and enhancing outcomes, each IOSEA Focal Point should:

1. Inform the Secretariat as soon as possible about any changes in the personnel responsible for IOSEA matters, so that the Secretariat can ensure that they receive all relevant communications.
2. Take the lead in the establishment and active functioning of a national marine turtle committee or network*, as appropriate, to bring together representatives of relevant ministries, agencies, departments, and other relevant stakeholders, including research and academic organizations, non-governmental organizations, private sector (such as fishing organizations, tourism organizations, etc). This Committee should meet periodically to exchange information on marine turtle conservation and to review IOSEA implementation.
3. Oversee the preparation and/or updating of the IOSEA National Report, including the Site Data Sheets, making use of the Online Reporting Facility created for this purpose. The process of soliciting stakeholder inputs to the National Report should begin at least 6-9 months prior to the Signatory State meeting. (The 'Editor' allows Focal Points with password access to make changes to the report at any time.)
4. Identify and delegate appropriate technical specialist(s) for the preparation of periodic species assessments, in accordance with decisions of the Meeting of the Signatory States.
5. Consult the IOSEA website (www.ioseaturtles.org) at least once a month, and preferably more often, to be acquainted with the latest developments from around the region, and to make sure that general information from their country is accurate and up to date.

* Programme 6.4c) of the Conservation and Management Plan of the IOSEA MOU encourages cooperation within and among government and non-government sectors, including through the development and/or strengthening of national networks. Progress towards the establishment of such national 'coordinating committees' has been under review since the Third Meeting of the Signatory States (2005); and a special page on the IOSEA website (under 'Membership') is devoted to this important topic.

6. Compile and send periodically to the Secretariat information of general interest on marine turtle conservation activities being conducted in their country, for publication on the IOSEA website, including plans for new work and details of upcoming meetings of interest.
7. Communicate with the respective IOSEA sub-regional Focal Point as and when necessary (ideally, at least twice a year), and respond in a timely manner to requests for information.
8. Identify and describe, in as much detail as possible (in Section 5.4.1 of the national report template), the resources that would be required (in terms of human, equipment, training, etc.) to better implement the provisions of the MOU and CMP within the country and, in particular, identify essential activities that are not being conducted for lack of resources.
9. Solicit funding and support within the national budget and from other sources within the country for implementation of IOSEA-related activities, for attendance at relevant IOSEA meetings, and for voluntary contributions towards IOSEA operational costs, in keeping with decisions of the Signatory States.
10. Where applicable, consider submitting an application to benefit from funding through the IOSEA Technical Support and Capacity Building Programme.
11. Call attention to and promote implementation of the IOSEA MOU in national and international forums, with a view to promoting synergy and avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort.

Before the Meeting of the Signatory States: Preparation

12. An important step in preparing for a Signatory State meeting is to hold national consultations several months before the meeting. Among other things, this will facilitate a review of the national report and compilation of any final inputs. Typically, the Secretariat issues reminders at least six months prior to the Meeting of the Signatory States calling for updates to the national reports to be finalized at least 2-3 months in advance of the Meeting, to enable the Secretariat to prepare an overall synthesis of implementation progress.
13. The Secretariat will circulate a provisional agenda for the upcoming Meeting of the Signatory States at least three months in advance. It is important for the Focal Point to review this document: (1) to be informed of the major topics that will be discussed, as well as the focus of any thematic workshops; (2) to consider proposing additional agenda items and discussion topics; and (3) to offer any other general feedback. Delegates should prepare themselves to discuss national activities in these specific areas, as well as any international or regional initiatives. Delegates who are expected to make a presentation at the meeting will be mentioned in the provisional agenda.
14. Prior to the meeting, Focal Points are encouraged to compile information on new marine turtle conservation and management actions / initiatives that have been carried out in their country since the previous Meeting of Signatory States. This would be a useful preparatory exercise for the sub-regional Working Group meetings, held at the Meeting of the Signatory States, where Focal Points may be called upon to present an update of activity in their country.
15. IOSEA Signatory States have decided that any draft resolutions should be submitted to the Secretariat, for wider circulation (to other delegations, Advisory Committee etc.) at least 60 days prior to the meeting (cf. Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Signatory States). Whereas draft resolutions must be submitted through a Focal Point, they may be drafted by the Advisory Committee or any other interested party. Any exceptions to the 60-day deadline must be agreed by the Signatory States by consensus at the meeting. Focal Points should consult with interested partners as widely as possible on the contents of any draft resolution they wish to introduce.

16. An important topic of discussion at the Signatory State meeting will be securing funding and other support for the work to be conducted in the coming year. Focal Points are encouraged to hold internal discussions prior to the Signatory State meeting to explore possible sources of funding that their government or outside organizations may be able to offer. Where possible, Focal Points are requested to come to the Meeting of the Signatory States prepared to indicate the amount of financial resources their Government might be in a position to provide during the next 1-2 years.

During the Meeting: Participation

17. Focal Points should review any resolutions proposed by Signatory States and to provide input as requested by other delegations, the Secretariat, or Advisory Committee. They may be called upon to give feedback on a procedural question, provide information on regional or national conservation and management activities, or discuss proposed activities and priorities for implementing the IOSEA MOU.
18. During the Meeting of the Signatory States, countries of each of the four IOSEA sub-regions will have an opportunity to discuss among themselves their current conservation programmes, priorities, challenges and successes; as well as future plans and opportunities to coordinate at the sub-regional level. Each sub-region will report back to the meeting as a whole.

After the Meeting: Follow-up

19. Focal Points are encouraged to review the minutes and make any suggestions (within a time frame to be agreed at the meeting) for corrections or changes to be incorporated in the final document. This will allow delegates to stay focused on what was decided at the meeting as well as the next steps needed to further the goals of the IOSEA MOU.
20. Focal Points should arrange to reconvene their national committee/network (as appropriate) as soon as possible to keep all parties up-to-date on IOSEA decisions and goals for the coming two years. This should include discussions among national stakeholders as to how they plan to collectively implement the IOSEA MOU requirements at the national level; and make arrangements for future marine turtle conservation actions in light of the results of the meeting.
21. Also as follow-up, Focal Points should submit any outstanding or requested documents to the Secretariat; and should make it a priority to finish updating the national report if this was not done prior to the meeting.
22. To assure continued implementation of the MOU, Focal Points should take personal responsibility to initiate the internal process of securing the financial or in-kind contributions volunteered at the Signatory State meeting. Focal Points should inform the Secretariat within 45 days of the meeting about the status of the voluntary financial contribution.
23. Focal Points should continue to collaborate with sub-regional partners between the periodic Meetings of the Signatory States, with a view to implementing the projects and collaborative activities agreed during the sub-regional discussions.
24. In addition to giving diligent attention to IOSEA matters domestically, Focal Points should work with the Secretariat to promote the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats, as well as the work of the IOSEA, in other relevant forums.