

# **REPORT OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE NORTHERN INDIAN OCEAN MARINE TURTLE TASK FORCE**

*(online)*  
**6-8 May 2025**



**Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine  
Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia**



## **5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Northern Indian Ocean Marine Turtle Task Force**

### **Report**

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## Report of the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Northern Indian Ocean Marine Turtle Task Force

### 1. Opening of the Meeting

1. In the absence of the Task Force Chair, it was agreed that Vice-Chair Muralidharan Manoharakrishnan (Non-Governmental Member India) would moderate the meeting.
2. The Chair and Secretariat welcomed participants who briefly introduced themselves.

### 2. Adoption of the Agenda and Schedule

3. The Chair introduced the provisional agenda and schedule ([CMS/IOSEA/NIO-MTTF-5/Doc.2/Rev.1](#)), which the Task Force adopted.

### 3. Outcomes of MOS9 (2024)

4. To provide some background to new Task Force Member, Heidrun Frisch-Nwakanma (Secretariat) provided a brief overview of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia (IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU). Her presentation is [available here](#).
5. The Meeting of the Signatory States (MOS) is the decision-making body of the MOU, which is supported by an Advisory Committee (AC), composed of ten experts who work intersessionally to provide recommendations on scientific, technical, and legal matters, and the Secretariat, which has a coordinating function. [MOS9](#) took place 24-27 June 2024 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
6. With regard to the Work Programme 2024-2028, the Secretariat noted it:
  - follows the structure of the CMP;
  - delineates 147 activities and the actors that would carry these out (governments, NGOs, research institutes, private sector, local communities) as well as the role of the Advisory Committee, Secretariat, and MTTF where relevant;
  - indicates which elements require additional funding beyond the MOU's core budget; and
  - cross-links to existing guidance developed under the MOU.
7. Other key outcomes include:
  - the addition of new sites to the Network of Sites of Importance for Marine Turtles in the Indian Ocean-South-East-Asia Region, now totalling 15 sites, with only one so far in the NIO; and
  - the establishment of intersessional working groups on, among others, the national reporting format, the site network application document, and illegal take and trade.

### 4. Outcomes of NIO-MTTF-4 (2023)

8. The Chair provided a summary of the Task Force's [last meeting](#), which was held 7-9 March 2023 in the Maldives in a hybrid setting that allowed for a large attendance. He noted the meeting focused on country updates, with work on marine debris, ghost gear, and sea turtle health crystallizing as prominent themes within the region. He recalled that discussions



also touched upon, among others: satellite tagging; flipper tagging; cross-ministry communication, especially with regard to reducing bycatch; training programmes for local institutions; project monitoring; environmental offsets; and funding constraints.

9. The Secretariat noted that upon request, it had issued letters of support for countries submitting funding applications for projects relevant to marine turtle conservation. They also highlighted that a call for applications related to the Global Biodiversity Framework was circulated among members.

## 5. Country Presentations

10. The **Maldives** presented a national update, which is [available here](#). They highlighted numerous activities related to research and monitoring, including on turtle distribution, abundance and movements, as well as on different kinds of turtle use (consumptive and non-consumptive). They further highlighted conservation actions and management measures focusing on nesting, rehabilitation of injured individuals, as well as threats, pressures and implementation challenges they encountered.
11. In their update, which is [available here](#), **Pakistan** noted a number of policy, protection and management measures underway, including strengthened legal and spatial protection through a nationwide turtle capture ban, new MPAs, and management planning for key sites. They also reported a strong emphasis on capacity building, awareness and community engagement specifically with regard to bycatch reporting and mitigation, while highlighting persistent threats, research needs and operational constraints.
12. The update provided by **Bangladesh**, which is [available here](#), highlighted, among other, conservation management measures such as nest relocation and large-scale beach monitoring and habitat restoration measures, research and monitoring efforts as well as engagement of fishers, and various and intensifying threats pointing to ongoing needs for stronger enforcement and improved management of impacts of development.
13. **India** presented an update, which is [available here](#), highlighting among others extensive survey initiatives, and other research and monitoring-focused activities. They also highlighted the ongoing review and update of the national marine turtle action plan, and identified coastal development as a major pressure.
14. In their update, which is [available here](#), **Sri Lanka** pointed to, among others, publication of studies on nesting, illegal trade, tourism, and pollution-related incidents, testing of bycatch mitigation measures, community-based conservation programmes, awareness-raising and capacity-building efforts, as well as persistent threats and conservation challenges they encountered.
15. In the ensuing discussion, participants reflected on:
  - the value of AI-based detection and plans to make the relevant algorithm open-source;
  - opportunities for collaboration, for example in sharing satelliting tracking information;
  - bycatch being related to multiple forms of fishing;
  - advancing research on LED light deterrents and the combination of different types of deterrent devices;
  - assessing water turbidity and temperature; and
  - conducting research on bottom-set nets.



16. The Secretariat invited participants to contribute through sharing data to the “Blue Corridors for Turtles”-project, the aim of which was to support the IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group with the identification of Important Marine Turtle Areas (IMTAs).

## 6. Updating Sub-Regional Situation

17. The Vice-Chair noted the relevant tables (see Annex 3 from the [NIO-MTTF-4 Report](#)), issues and tasks identified by the Task Force, outlining their priority, status of completion, and the person overseeing its completion. It also identifies needs related to training, funding, and technology transfer.

18. Participants discussed updates, including:

- the initiation of observer trainings for fisheries bycatch in India;
- the initiation of soak time studies in Sri Lanka and India and the need for relevant training in Bangladesh;
- the initiation of the use of turtle excluder devices (TEDs) in Sri Lanka;
- tests showing the effectiveness of LED light deterrent devices in Sri Lanka and Pakistan
- fishers’ reluctance to use light deterrents, pointing to time constraints, which could be circumvented by using solar-powered devices that automatically turn on;
- the value of deterrents not only for turtles but also for sharks;
- the initiation of data collection on mesh sizes in India and Sri Lanka;
- analysis of temperature data in the Maldives, which can serve as a proxy for determining sex ratios, although dead hatchlings are not collected for histology due to funding constraints;
- Pakistan and Sri Lanka needing funding to initiate sex ratio analyses;
- progress in removing ghost gear in Pakistan and India;
- progress with flipper tagging in India;
- flipper tagging is no longer allowed in the Maldives, instead photo-ID is used;
- the need for funding and technology transfer to initiate genetic studies in India;
- the ongoing development of guidelines for turtle monitoring in Pakistan;
- the development of guidelines for interactions with sea turtles, including in ecotourism, in the Maldives;
- the development of guidelines on rehabilitation sites and holding facilities;
- the upcoming publication of baseline data on sea turtle health in the Maldives, especially on hawksbills but also on olive ridleys and green turtles;
- a training programme for veterinarians in the Maldives;
- first aid best practices and guidance for rehabilitation facilities in the Maldives (which the Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance could share with interested stakeholders);
- studies on fishers’ willingness to engage in gear modification in Sri Lanka;
- all countries expressing the need for funding to support satellite telemetry;
- the collection of data on nest moisture content and nest location on beaches, including with regard to vegetation and tide line, in the Maldives and Pakistan;
- the need for training on nest monitoring in Bangladesh; and
- the initiation of monitoring nesting beach habitat for pollution in Bangladesh and India, with the Maldives focusing on microplastics, qualitative data collected as an add-on in the context of surveys initiated in Sri Lanka, and Pakistan having beach cleaning initiatives but no pollution monitoring as such.

19. The updated tables can be found in Annex 3 to this report.



## 7. Analysis of National Reports of the NIO Sub-Region

20. AC Member Manjula Tiwari delivered a recorded presentation on key insights from the national reports of Bangladesh, the Maldives, and Pakistan submitted in 2024. She highlighted, among other:

- an increasing number of green turtles reported in Pakistan;
- a stable number of olive ridleys and hawksbills but decreasing number of green turtles in Bangladesh;
- reported threats include marine debris, habitat degradation, incidental capture in coastal fisheries, urban and tourism development, and predation by domestic and feral animals;
- an average of 200 turtles caught per year in Bangladesh across all fishing methods, with an additional 20-23 turtles bycaught in artisanal fisheries;
- the bycatch rate in Pakistan is unknown;
- the Maldives report no bycatch, with fisheries focused on pole and line tuna fishery and handline fishery;
- Bangladesh is periodically reviewing and evaluating bycatch mitigation measures;
- Bangladesh is using both flipper tagging and satellite tracking, with the Maldives using satellite tracking, Pakistan using neither, and of the three countries conducting genetic studies;
- the Maldives and Bangladesh reported harvest, with harvest practices unknown in Pakistan and only Bangladesh having mechanisms in place to identify domestic and international illegal trade routes;
- the Maldives reported meat, egg, and shell use, with Bangladesh reporting rare consumption of eggs, and Pakistan noting a lack of information;
- all three countries have legislation in place to prohibit direct harvest and domestic trade as well as measures to minimise the mortality of eggs, hatchlings, and nesting females;
- Bangladesh and the Maldives have government-certified protocols to protect turtles from tourism;
- neither country is evaluating the effectiveness of its nesting beach management in terms of hatchling recruitment;
- all countries identified a range of management issues, such as the need to enhance enforcement and alternative livelihood development, and emphasized the importance of habitat and genetic studies;
- only Bangladesh is reporting efforts towards seagrass recovery;
- all noted a variety of training, scientific, and technical support needs (see discussions in the context of Agenda Item 11); and
- the Maldives expressed support for amending the IOSEA MOU to make it legally-binding, which Bangladesh opposed, and Pakistan expressed no view on.

21. Responding to questions, the Secretariat clarified that the analysis is based on the official national reports submitted by the countries in advance of MOS9 as part of their obligations under the MOU. Some countries had prepared a report but not completed the final submission, preventing the Secretariat from considering them in the analysis.

22. The Secretariat further noted that domestic consultations are encouraged for focal points to gather comprehensive information on action undertaken on the ground, including by NGOs, to prepare the reports. The reporting is done once in every MOS cycle, with the next meeting expected to take place in 2028, and the reporting format may be updated by then.



## 8. Priority Actions for Each Country

23. First, each country provided a brief update on its respective priority actions.

24. Pakistan noted:

- the need to strengthen monitoring of olive ridleys, which are not nesting in the country but are nevertheless subject to bycatch;
- there is no evidence of poaching; and
- funding gaps are limiting the monitoring of bycatch and climate impacts as well as the conduct of genetic analysis.

25. Maldives highlighted:

- the establishment of a Whatsapp group, which is not yet used to its full potential; and
- improvements in terms of local participation in conservation.

26. Sri Lanka pointed to:

- the difference between national reserves and sanctuaries, with the later sometimes being on private land;
- a planned increase in the number of sea turtles hatcheries;
- a planned expansion of conservation efforts beyond the southern part of the country, including with support from the private sector;
- the upcoming publication of a genetic study of loggerheads;
- adult turtles that were released from hatcheries several decades ago are now returning to nest on Sri Lankan beaches; and
- the conduct of nesting surveys in the northern part of the country.

27. Bangladesh noted:

- progress in satellite tracking efforts;
- challenges to secure funding; and
- infrastructure development compromising nesting sites.

28. India highlighted:

- ongoing debates on hatchery management;
- upcoming updates on tagging information; and
- the need for regionally-tailored protection incentives and alternative livelihood opportunities for local communities, including with regard to ecotourism.

29. In a second round, participants then specifically discussed changes to the table on priority actions (see Annex 4 from the [NIO-MTTF-4 Report](#)), notably:

- for Pakistan, highlighting safe release, tagging, reporting of strandings, and crew-based observations as activities in which to enhance local fishing communities' participation in, and adding the reduction of mortality from bycatch as a new action;
- for Bangladesh, adding actions on the development by the Forest Department of a centralised platform to improve communication among sea turtle conservation groups, the formulation of a national action plan for sea turtles, the reduction of bycatch in coastal fisheries, and the participatory management with the private sector of nesting beaches in high tourism zones;
- for Sri Lanka, adding an action on the development of guidelines for *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation outside protected areas;
- for the Maldives, adding actions on expanding regular monitoring programs across the country and developing more localised research facilities and partnerships with local universities, and deleting the previously defined action related to communication channels, since progress has been achieved in this regard; and



- for India, new actions towards better understanding of foraging grounds for olive ridleys in the exclusive economic zone and high seas around the Bay of Bengal, strengthening fisheries observer programs and locally relevant bycatch management strategies, and reviewing and updating information on genetic stocks of nesting and foraging turtles in the region.

30. The updated table can be found in Annex 4 to this report.

## 9. Community-Led Turtle Watch for Conservation and Eco-Tourism: Standard Operating Procedures in the Northern Indian Ocean

31. In his [presentation \(CMS/IOSEA/NIO-MTTF-5/Doc.9.1 and Doc.9.2\)](#), Task Force Member Shoaib Abdul Razzaque emphasized the purpose of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for community-led turtle watch and eco-tourism is to:

- protect turtles and their habitats;
- align with best practices, from pre-patrol to post-reporting;
- promote ethical and standardized monitoring;
- build local capacity and ownership; and
- enable data-driven decisions.

32. He shared field experiences applying these SOPs in Pakistan, where the following had been found important for success:

- limiting turtle watch group size to 25 people;
- having participants vouch to remain silent and not to use their phones during the turtle watching;
- alerting participants not to block or stand in a turtle's path to the ocean and to let hatchlings crawl to the water on their own;
- crowd management during the turtle watch activity; and
- having emergency protocols in place (such as suspending patrols during unsafe weather and marking rally points).

33. Participants then discussed the benefits of releasing hatchlings as soon as possible, so that they do not lose energy when held, versus releasing them at low tide so that it is easier for them to reach the open water than at high tide, with several participants noting best practice is to perform a quick release, as healthy hatchlings are well equipped to swim across waves.

## 10. Factors Shaping Decisions About Sea Turtle Nest Management in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia Region

34. AC Member Andrea Phillott presented work conducted in response to the IOSEA Work Programme 2020-2024 Action 15 to develop guidelines on the management of beaches for successful hatchling production, including management of hatcheries if and when required. Her presentation is [available here](#).

35. She noted nest management strategies relate to either: leaving nests unprotected *in situ*; protecting them *in situ*; relocating clutches elsewhere on the beach, such as above the tide line; or moving clutches to a hatchery. She pointed out key insights from the review, looking at primary decision makers and the most common decisions made. The most common ecological reason for nest management decisions is depredation risk, but economic reasons including tourism also play a role.



36. As recommendations emanating from the research project she highlighted:
  - developing multilingual guidelines on best practices regarding common ecological threats (such as depredation), turtle-friendly tourism, and the holding of hatchlings (which affects hatchling health and post-release survival);
  - better understanding the reasons for illegal take in the region, such as whether it is related to sociocultural factors or few alternatives for nutrition; and
  - facilitating community involvement in nest management decisions.
37. She noted the full report on the study will be published following review by the Advisory Committee.
38. In the ensuing discussion, participants emphasized the need for protocols for mitigating climate change impacts.

## 11. Capacity-Building Needs in the Region

39. The Secretariat briefed participants about ongoing and planned activities of the AC's Capacity Building Working Group.
40. The Chair recalled that Bangladesh, the Maldives, and Pakistan highlighted a number of capacity-building needs in their national reports (see Agenda Item 7). He noted these are currently only identified in general terms and invited participants to identify more specific capacity-building needs.
41. Participants highlighted, among others:
  - nesting beach management, genetic studies, and data collection protocols for hatchery managers in Bangladesh;
  - non-field research methods and non-invasive population monitoring (such as photo-ID) in the Maldives;
  - species identification, tagging, population estimation, hatchery management, and mitigating climate impacts in Pakistan;
  - turtle rehabilitation, and data collection and analysis to inform management decisions in Sri Lanka; and
  - large-scale area-based planning (e.g. Blue Corridors) in India.
42. The table in Annex 4 to this report reflects the discussions under this item.

## 12. Structured Decision-Making Framework for Evidence-Based Assessment of Threats and Protection of Sea Turtle Eggs and Hatchlings

43. AC Member Andrea Phillott presented another project conducted in response to the IOSEA Work Programme 2020-2024 Action 15 (on beach and hatchery management), [available here](#), which aims to develop a framework to assist conservationists and managers in deciding whether and how to protect sea turtle eggs and hatchlings.
44. She highlighted that the framework:
  - complements existing guidelines, as these often describe best practices but do not help make decisions about which nest management strategy to implement;
  - recognizes that eggs and hatchlings have important ecological roles and not every egg/hatchling needs to be protected; and



- proposes that, if <30% of clutches/eggs are threatened, then conservation intervention may not be required unless the population is demonstrating significant decline or is in the early stages of recovery.

45. The steps in the process are:

- assessing threats to eggs and/or hatchlings;
- considering potential actions (e.g. *in situ* protection or relocation);
- evaluating the requirements and risks for each action (e.g. availability of experienced personnel and movement-induced mortality of embryos);
- implementing the chosen nest management strategy;
- monitoring the outcome; and
- adapting actions if needed.

46. She noted an outline of the framework is already available on the IOSEA website (Section 2: Hatchery Management Practices, of [this MOS-approved document](#)) and the full framework will be finalized and published in due course.

### 13. Recommendations and Actions

47. The list of recommendations and actions was not revisited during the meeting.

### 14. Review of the ToR/Chairing Arrangements

48. Members reflected on and updated the terms of reference (ToR) of the Task Force.

49. In the introduction of the ToR, participants agreed to changes in the delineation of threats turtles face in the NIO region:

- referring not only to the destruction of nesting beaches and feeding habitats, but also their modification;
- referring to pollution in general, rather than marine pollution specifically, and highlighting light pollution in addition to plastics; and
- referring to illegal take and trade of turtles and their products, rather than unsustainable exploitation of meat and eggs.

50. With regard to the section on nominations and appointments, participants agreed to specify that a term of office “normally” spans two in-person meetings and that the Secretariat will, if possible, arrange an election through a written procedure, to be confirmed at the next Task Force meeting, should the Chair or Vice-Chair have to step down during their terms.

51. No changes were made to the other sections of the ToRs. The revised Terms of Reference are [available here](#).

52. The Task Force elected Rekha Sanjeevani Rajasinghe (Governmental Member Sri Lanka) as its new Chair and Task Force Member Shoaib Abdul Razzaque (Non-Governmental Member Pakistan) as its Vice-Chair.

### 15. Next Meeting

53. The Secretariat recalled that the ToRs specify the Task Force strives to hold annual online meetings and an in-person meeting every two years, so ideally the next meeting would be held in person, but this is contingent on a host coming forward (which includes covering



the participants' travel expenses). The Vice-Chair recalled that partners can co-fund in person meetings, as has been the case in the past.

54. The Secretariat suggested that the next meeting take place sometime from the second quarter of 2026 onwards, noting that the CMS Conference of the Parties will take place in March 2026.
55. The new Chair and Vice-Chair noted they will hold consultations on possible dates and mode of convening the next meeting and inform the Task Force in writing.

## **16. Any Other Business**

56. No other matters were raised.

## **17. Closing of Meeting**

57. Participants thanked the outgoing Chair and Vice-Chair for their dedicated work supporting the Task Force.
58. The new Chair Rekha Sanjeevani Rajasinghe closed the meeting, welcoming further discussions on marine turtle conservation within the region.



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## **Agenda**

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2. Adoption of the Agenda and Schedule
3. Outcomes of MOS9 (2024)
4. Outcomes of NIO-MTTF-4 (2023)
5. Country Presentations
6. Updating Sub-Regional Situation and Priorities
7. Analysis of National Reports of the NIO Sub-Region
8. Priority actions for each country
9. Community-Led Turtle Watch for Conservation and Eco-Tourism: Standardizing SOPs in the Northern Indian Ocean
10. Factors shaping decisions about sea turtle nest management in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia Region
11. Capacity-building needs in the region
12. Structured decision-making framework for evidence-based assessment of threats and protection of sea turtle eggs and hatchlings
13. Recommendations and Actions
14. Review of ToR/Chairing Arrangements
15. Next meeting
16. Any other business
17. Closing of meeting



**Annex 3**

**Priority Tasks & Sub-regional Projects for Collaboration**

Table: Detailed issues/tasks identified by the Task Force according to priority, status of completion and identified volunteer to oversee the completion (I - Initiated, NI - Not Initiated, RT - Requires training, RF - Require funding, TT - Transfer of technology, NA – Not Applicable)

Current High Priority Tasks							
Issues/ Tasks	BGD	IND	MDV	PAK	LKA	Overseen by	Comments
<b>(Large scale, mechanised) Fisheries/bycatch</b>							
Training of observers (separate for trawlers/ gill nets, smaller outboard fisheries in large quantities)	I	I	I	I	I	National volunteers	BGD + LKA: Small-scale fisheries not large fisheries
Soak time (needs preliminary data collection)	I	I	NA	I	I	National volunteers	
Training for safe releases	I	I	I	I	I	National volunteers	Collate regional practices
Reduction technologies (TEDs)	I	I	NA	I	I	National volunteers	Check compliance levels
Reduction technologies (LED lights)	NI, RT, TT	NI, RT, TT	NA	I	I	National volunteers	
Delimiting mesh sizes (needs preliminary data collection)	NI	NI	NA	I	NI	National volunteers	Distinguish between mono- and multifilament
Enforcing compliance with fishing regulations						National volunteers	Workshops to be conducted with fisheries/environment ministry to clarify details on regulations (outside of capacity of MTTF, refer to MOS/WP)
<b>Standardized monitoring protocol</b>							
Hatchery and head-starting practices	I	I	NA	I	I		Published



Issues/ Tasks	BGD	IND	MDV	PAK	LKA	Overseen by	Comments
In-water studies (photo identification, etc.)	NI	I	I	I	NI	Martin Stelfox	Central repository to be identified
Strandings and mortality (data collection, database)	I	I	I	I	I	Murali	Repository needs to be set up (e.g. expand data portal in India)
Tissue sampling	I	I	I	I	I	Andrea	Published: Phillott, A. D., & Gamage, R. N. (2014). A summary of sea turtle genetic studies in the Indian Ocean and Southeast. <i>Indian Ocean Turtle Newsletter</i> , 20, 19-35. FitzSimmons, N. N., & Limpus, C. J. (2014). Marine turtle genetic stocks of the Indo-Pacific: identifying boundaries and knowledge gaps. <i>Indian Ocean Turtle Newsletter</i> , 20, 2-18.
Determining sex ratios	NI, TT, RF	I	I, TT, RF	NI, RF, TT	I, TT, RF	Andrea	In process
<b>Ghost nets</b>							
Direct dialogue/surveys with fishermen	I	I	I	I	NI	ORP / Martin Stelfox	In process
<b>Collaborative research</b>							
Regional flipper tagging database/addressing gaps	I	I	I	I	I		Advice from AC requested (Website updated)
Genetics	I	I	I	I, TT	I		
Identifying important foraging grounds	I	I	I	I	I		



Issues/ Tasks	BGD	IND	MDV	PAK	LKA	Overseen by	Comments
<b>Sustainable eco-tourism</b>							
Establishing guidelines						Lalith, Lisama, Andrea & Shoaib	<p>Pak: Compiled and shared with secretariat.</p> <p>Mal: Guidelines prepared will be shared in detail during country presentation</p> <p>Andrea: Guidelines received for education and rehab sites/holding facilities. This can be shared to everyone or compiled</p>
<b>Citizen science</b>							
Educate on data collection and species identification, etc.							
<b>Sea turtle health</b>							
Document sea turtle health (baseline data)						Max	<p>Baseline data being collected and ready for publication on greens, hawksbills, and olive ridleys</p> <p>Training continues to happen (paid and unpaid); Get information on participation from the NIO</p> <p>The Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance has compiled information</p>
Conduct training for veterinarians						Max	
Sharing first aid best practices and guidance for rehabilitation facilities							



Lower priority/to be addressed in the future							
Issues/ Tasks	BGD	IND	MDV	PAK	LKA	Overseen by	Comments
<b>(Large scale, mechanised) Fisheries/bycatch</b>							
Gear modification (hook/net modification)	I	NI	NA	I	NI		
Promotion of low impact fishing gear (needs preliminary data collection)							(outside of capacity of MTTF, refer to MOS/WP)
Recommend to national fisheries agencies to monitor sea turtle bycatch							
Identifying gear/nets being used; (need to collect secondary data from fisheries)							(outside of capacity of MTTF, refer to MOS/WP)
<b>Collaborative research on and protection of all species</b>							
Satellite telemetry	I	I	I	I	I		Requires funding for entire region
Identifying important nesting habitats	I	I	I	I	I		
Identifying important developmental habitat	I	I	I	I	I		
Identifying important migratory corridors	I	I	I	I	I		
Maintaining long-term index monitoring sites	I	I	I	I	I		
Taking a multi-species approach (Sea birds, marine mammals, sea snakes, protected elasmobranchs)	I	I	I	I	I	National volunteers	
<b>Coastal development and artificial light</b>							
Best practices to manage coastal development and artificial light to be made available to the NIO							E.g. ports (outside of capacity of MTTF, refer to MOS/WP)
Use local consultants/experts rather than international consultants/experts							(outside of capacity of MTTF, refer to MOS/WP)
<b>Socio-economic issues</b>							



Issues/ Tasks	BGD	IND	MDV	PAK	LKA	Overseen by	Comments
Determine best practices (social sciences – literature review)							Covered in WP
<b>Impact of climate change</b>							
Monitor nest temperatures				NI			Link and connect with hatchling sex ratios
Determine pivotal temperatures							
Monitor habitat variables							Maldives & PK (ORP): Habitat variables such as distance from TL being collected  Bangladesh: Further training needs to be carried out for other variables
<b>Marine pollution</b>							
Monitoring nesting beach habitat for pollution							



**Table of Priority Actions**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Priority Tasks</b>
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Strengthen National Network of sea turtle conservation groups for improved communication by implementing a centralised platform organised by the Forest Department.
	Formulate a National Action Plan for Sea Turtles
	Reducing bycatch of sea turtles in coastal fisheries
	Participatory management of nesting beaches in high tourism zones from the private sector
	Sharing satellite tracking information in the region (publish overview of data as regional overview)
	Common platform to update information (could be through IOSEA website: Information hub with links)
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	Keep ground level staff engaged with the MOU
	Genetic information on loggerheads in the region initiated
	Provide regular updates of information on regional genetic stocks
	Foraging population of hawksbills in the region to be monitored
	Nesting/habitat surveys in northern Sri Lanka to be completed
	National guidelines for in-situ and ex-situ conservation practices for sea turtles to be prepared outside protected areas
<b>Pakistan</b>	Improving communication between the national and regional partners
	Determining impact of climate change on the habitat and species populations
	Enhancing engagement of local fisher communities for conservation activities (Govt and NGOs for safe release, tagging, reporting for stranding and crew-based observations)
	Reviewing current hatchery management practices and implementing best practices
	Reducing mortalities from fisheries bycatch and illegal take of adults/eggs/hatchlings from offshore and nesting habitats.
	Carry out studies on olive ridleys (Genetics, flipper tagging, satellite telemetry, include LEK from fishers)
<b>Maldives</b>	Funding for research and on-ground activities to fill the scientific gaps for marine turtle populations
	Addressing larger regional threats for turtles (impacts due to fishing, ghost nets, poaching)
	Increase of resource mobilization for monitoring and enforcement
	Increase awareness and education, especially targeting police officers
	Expand local participation in conservation to other atolls (guidance for region to track progress)
	Expanding regular monitoring programs in the entire country
	Developing more localised research facilities and partnerships with local universities



<b>India</b>	Better understanding of foraging grounds for olive ridleys in the EEZ and high seas around the Bay of Bengal
	Strengthening fisheries observer programs and locally relevant bycatch management strategies
	Best practices for protection/alternative livelihoods for local communities
	Review and update information on genetic stocks of nesting and foraging turtles in the region