

# MEETING REPORTS

## The Second Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles, Turkey (4-7 May 2005)

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The Second Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles took place in Kemer, about 40 km south of Antalya (Turkey) in May 2005. The Mediterranean Conference is a joint initiative by the Secretariats of the three International Conventions pertaining to the conservation of marine turtles in the Mediterranean, namely the Barcelona Convention (RAC/SPA), the Bern Convention and the Bonn Convention (CMS), with the scientific support of the IUCN/SSC's MTSG. The conference was locally hosted by the Ministry of Environment & Forestry and facilitated by WWF-Turkey.

The efficient organization and the excellent surroundings at the Mirage Park Resort assisted in the conference's success with 177 registered participants from 20 countries. The following events occurred during the main conference dates (4-7 May 2005): 3 introductory speeches, 8 key-note talks, 27 oral presentations, 43 poster contributions, 3 guided discussions (on the regional population of green turtles, on a proposal for the creation of a Mediterranean network, on the continuation of the Mediterranean conference), 4 workshops (Fisheries Interactions, Regional Red Listing Assessments, Education, Tagging Standardization). Further, the regional meeting of the MTSG took place on 5 May in the presence of the MTSG's Co-Chair Roderic Mast (see MTSG article in this issue of MTN). Prior to the conference, on 2 and 3 May, two specific Working Groups elaborated the following topics, the outcomes of which were presented in respective workshops within the conference:

1. Tagging Standardization, organized by RAC/SPA.
2. Regional Red Listing Assessment, organized by the MTSG under the supervision of Jeffrey Seminoff, Chair of the MTSG's Red List Task Force (see MTSG article in this issue of MTN).

The Book of Abstracts as well as the Conclusions (or Highlights) of the conference can be downloaded from the conference website <[www.medturtleconf.net](http://www.medturtleconf.net)>. If you wish a hard copy of the Book of Abstracts, please contact me, providing your full postal address.

A great improvement in this conference was the decision to develop a mechanism which would facilitate the smooth continuation of this important regional event in the years to come. Analysing the drawbacks of previous organizations, and specifically the difficulty in taking decisions, Marco Barbieri (CMS Secretariat) proposed to draw from existing successful examples, e.g. the International Sea Turtle Symposium. To this regard, it was decided that at each conference, the Country of the next conference should be decided as well as a Chairperson, who will undertake all responsibilities of coordination in decision-making and of the timely implementation

of the conference. Proposals for the next Chairperson should be elaborated and brought forward by a Nominations Committee. This general scheme was accepted and in order to have the mechanism ready by the next conference, it was decided that, as a provisional procedure, the next Country and Chair should be ideally selected in this conference.

A proposal to have the next conference in Tunisia (in about spring 2008) under the Chairmanship of Mohamed Nejmeddine Bradai was readily accepted. Further, a Nominations Committee, with the task to investigate and propose at the conference in Tunisia the next Country and Chair, was formulated after a proposal by the Marine Turtle Specialist Group. The persons comprising the Nominations Committee are Dimitris Margaritoulis (coordinator), Monica Aureggi, Abdulmaula Hamza, Yakup Kaska, and Jesus Tomas. The Committee will draft and circulate the basic selection criteria in order to assist colleagues wishing to undertake this important regional event.

Finally, it was emphasized that a great opportunity to continue our regional work is the forthcoming 26th International Sea Turtle Symposium, to take place in Greece (Island of Crete, 2-8 April 2006). For this reason, a 1- or 2-day regional meeting (depending on the amount of business) will be scheduled either for 4 April or 3 & 4 April 2006. If you have any ideas and/or plans which are of regional interest and you would like them included in this forthcoming Mediterranean meeting, please contact Paolo Casale <[paolo.casale@tiscalinet.it](mailto:paolo.casale@tiscalinet.it)>.

Closing this short announcement I would like to thank all participants, invited speakers, committee members, contributors, session chairs, workshop & discussion coordinators, facilitators, and donors. Further, I would like to extend my thanks to the Turkish Ministry of Environment & Forestry and the personnel of WWF Turkey, without whom the conference wouldn't have recorded this pronounced success. Last but not least, the involvement of the Secretariats of the three International Conventions and specifically of Eladio Fernandez-Galiano, Marco Barbieri and Atef Ouerghi, has been catalytic in making the Second Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles a memorable event.