



Marine Turtle Specialist Group

Species Survival Commission / IUCN–The International Union for Conservation of Nature

Member Terms of Reference

The following Terms of Reference are provided to ensure that Members understand the overriding vision, mission and objectives of the Marine Turtle Specialist Group (MTSG), its operation, and the way in which Members are expected to contribute to the fulfillment of these goals.

MTSG Vision

We envision marine turtles fulfilling their ecological roles on a healthy planet where all peoples value and celebrate their continued survival.

MTSG Mission

To develop and support strategies, set priorities, and provide tools that promote and guide the conservation of marine turtles, and their ecological roles and habitats. We accomplish this by:

1. Providing advice and practical support to those who manage and conserve marine turtles and their habitats;
2. Promoting, using and synthesizing the best multidisciplinary science and information and innovative approaches;
3. Ensuring that conservation planning and actions are guided by the biological constraints of marine turtles such as delayed maturity, long distance migrations and dependence on multiple habitats;
4. Building and promoting diverse and dynamic partnerships among stakeholders including local communities to ensure effective networking and synergy;
5. Promoting universal appreciation of the values of marine turtles and their habitats through varied means to diverse peoples of different backgrounds and cultures;
6. Building capacity to educate, inspire, and empower people to conserve marine turtles and their habitats;
7. Recognizing that marine turtles are a shared international resource;
8. Promoting conservation and population monitoring efforts that are long-term in nature and anticipate changes in environmental, social and political climates;
9. Integrating local, national, and international conservation efforts;
10. Recognizing that marine turtle conservation is integrally linked to broader conservation issues.

Membership Policies

1. MTSG will build, nurture, and maintain a dynamic, active, multi-skilled, professional, and regionally representative group of members who support the mission and activities of the group.
2. Members are appointed by invitation from the MTSG chairs. Regional Vice Chairs (RVCs) assist the MTSG Chairs in selecting and appointing members from their regions, and are responsible for leading, managing and representing their regional memberships. New members may be nominated by existing MTSG members or self-nominated; such nominations are reviewed jointly by the MTSG Chairs and the relevant Regional Vice Chairs.

3. Member appointments are on a four-year cycle, marked by the IUCN World Conservation Congress; at the cusp of each quadrennium, all SSC specialist groups are dissolved and Chairs, Vice Chairs, and members must be appointed anew.
4. Members are advised that their comments and actions when representing the MTSG should be consistent with the IUCN-SSC mission and policies. This includes adherence to the “[Code of Conduct of the Members of IUCN Commissions](#)” described within section 8 of the SSC bylaws. The SSC mission and bylaws can be found here: <https://www.iucn.org/theme/species/about/species-survival-commission>.
5. Members are authorized to comment or act on behalf of the MTSG only when officially representing the MTSG with prior approval of the Co-Chairs.
6. When an MTSG member or office holder is involved in a private consultancy, their reports should carry an explicit disclaimer to read: "The content and views expressed herein are those of the author(s), and do not necessarily represent the positions and policies of IUCN, SSC, or the MTSG."
7. When any MTSG office holder (i.e. Regional Vice Chair or Chair) is involved in a private consultancy on marine turtles, they should provide the appropriate MTSG Regional Vice Chair(s) with prior notification of the specific nature of the consultancy.

Members’ Roles and Pledge

Overview

Accepting appointment as a MTSG member implies a pledge to volunteer one’s service through contributing to a strong and representative body of MTSG members within one or more MTSG Regions. Members are expected to contribute in a substantial way to the overall objectives of the MTSG, and to:

1. Dedicate a minimum of 40 hours (1 week) per year to MTSG-related business.
2. Commit to regular communication with the Co-Chairs and Regional Vice Chairs, and timely response to queries from the Co-Chairs, Regional Vice Chairs, and other members; ensure that all those subjects have the member’s most updated contact details (email).
3. Contribute, in a coordinated fashion, to specific MTSG tasks.
4. Actively identify research, management, and conservation priorities for marine turtles and their habitats in their region, and make data available for inclusion in status assessments.
5. Actively participate in MTSG activities (e.g. Burning Issues assessments, Regional Management Unit updates, Red List Assessments, relevant white papers, updates for the Annual General Meetings, online discussions).
6. Ensure that the Co-Chairs, Regional Vice Chairs, and Program Officer are aware of issues of regional importance to the conservation of marine turtles, either internal or external to the MTSG.
7. Adhere to the MTSG Mission (as outlined above), including a general collaborative attitude on sea turtle conservation issues, within and outside the MTSG.