



WIDER  
CARIBBEAN  
SEA TURTLE  
CONSERVATION NETWORK

**FINAL REPORT OF THE**  
**WIDECAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
***ADAMS MARK HOTEL, PHILADELPHIA (USA)***

**22 – 23 FEBRUARY 2001**

**Dr. Karen L. Eckert**  
**Executive Director**  
**Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST)**

**Juliet Edwards**  
**Darwin Initiative Marine Turtle Project**  
**QMW College - University of London**  
***Secretary, 2001 Annual General Meeting***

**June 2001**

**- MINUTES -**

**2001 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST)**

*Adams Mark Hotel  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA  
22 – 23 February 2001*

**On 22 February 2001** at 0800 hr, breakfast was catered to Grand Ballroom A-B at the Adams Mark Hotel in Philadelphia. The Meeting was called to order at 0900 hr by Karen Eckert, Executive Director.

Karen Eckert welcomed Meeting participants, each of whom introduced themselves in turn. The WIDECAST roster was circulated and participants were asked to make needed corrections. Observers were asked to provide their names and email addresses. Announcements were made regarding accommodations, transportation, and meals, as well as registration for the Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation.

Juliet Edwards (Darwin Initiative Marine Turtle Project, University of London) agreed to act as Meeting Secretary.

The Meeting was attended by 41 members of the WIDECAST network and 21 regular Observers (see Appendix I), as well as a number of students and short-term Observers. Thirty-three (33) nations and territories were represented, including eight (8) outside of the Wider Caribbean Region (Chile, Liberia, Gabon, Sri Lanka, Australia, Germany, The Netherlands, and England).

Karen Eckert highlighted some of the many informative materials featured in the Meeting packet (see Appendix II) and expressed gratitude to various agencies of the U. S. Government, the U. S. states of Florida and South Carolina, World Wildlife Fund (Endangered Seas Campaign), the United Nations Environment Programme, New England Aquarium, CORAL (the Coral Reef Alliance), and other donors of educational and technical materials included in the meeting packet and offered to meeting participants.

The agenda, presented in both English and Spanish, was reviewed (see Appendix III). The first order of business was the Executive Director's Report (Appendix IV), followed by Country Reports (Belize, Aruba, Martinique and Guadeloupe, Sint Maarten, St. Lucia), lunch, and invited presentations on international issues. Following the afternoon coffee break, the Chairman of the IUCN/SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group provided an update on a CITES-sponsored inter-governmental meeting, scheduled to convene in Mexico City in the spring, to discuss regional hawksbill sea turtle management issues.

Most speakers spoke from prepared notes that are available upon request.

**On 23 February 2001** at 0800 hr, breakfast was catered to Grand Ballroom A-B at the Adams Mark Hotel in Philadelphia. The Meeting was called to order at 0830 hr by Karen Eckert, Executive Director.

Karen Eckert welcomed Meeting participants, each of whom introduced themselves in turn. The WIDECAST roster was circulated and participants were asked to make needed corrections. Observers were asked to provide their names and email addresses. Announcements were made regarding accom-

modations, transportation, and meals, as well as registration for the Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation.

The morning session featured invited presentations on training and capacity building opportunities available to and/or sponsored by members of the WIDECAST network (see Appendix III).

During her opening presentation, Karen Eckert acknowledged the *pro bono* efforts of Tom Adams (an attorney with Renner, Otto, Boisselle and Sklar in Cleveland, Ohio) to register “WIDECAST” with the Patent and Trademark Office of the United States Department of Commerce. As a result, “WIDECAST” will soon be granted a U.S. Service Mark Registration – WIDECAST® - protecting our network name. The meeting expressed its gratitude to Adams for his time and efforts on our behalf.

Jennifer Gray (Country Coordinator, Bermuda) presented an overview of sea turtles in Bermuda and the objectives of the Bermuda Turtle Project Field Course (“Biology and Conservation of Marine Turtles”). She expressed pleasure at the partnership with WIDECAST that facilitates participation in the course by qualified applicants from throughout the region each year.

Julia Horrocks (Country Coordinator, Barbados) informed the meeting of a beachfront lighting workshop hosted by the Barbados Sea Turtle Project and WIDECAST, and sponsored by the Barbados Tourism Development Corporation. Attendance exceeded expectations and hoteliers were very receptive to information presented about “turtle friendly” lighting technologies. The workshop unanimously adopted a Resolution (see Appendix V).

After the morning coffee break, Country Reports were presented for Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, and French Guiana. [*Secretary Notes*: Members of the Guyana Marine Turtle Conservation Society were, at the last minute, unable to attend the meeting. The Country Report from Guyana was not presented. In addition, due to delays in transporting participants of the “VII Reunion of Latin American Sea Turtle Specialists” from their meeting site back to the hotel, the meeting did not hear a report of the Reunion.]

The afternoon session featured invited presentations on integrating research and community participation, focusing on initiatives in Brazil, Suriname, and Bermuda. Jennifer Gray and Bobbie Cartwright (Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo) entertained the group with an animated sea turtle conservation song! Again, most speakers spoke from prepared notes that are available upon request.

Following the afternoon coffee break, participants were given the option of staying with the meeting to participate in Working Groups or leave the meeting to participate in workshop/ seminar entitled, “Treaties, MOUs, and other international instruments for marine turtle conservation” chaired by Dr. Jack Frazier (Smithsonian Institution) and sponsored by the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation.

Those who remained with the WIDECAST meeting formed two Working Groups to discuss and make recommendations concerning “Index Beach Monitoring” and “Environmental Education Priorities” (see Appendix VI).

*Decisions of the Meeting:*

Send a letter to the Government of Guatemala (Ministry of Environment) to congratulate the Ministry for its efforts to accede to the IAC, wishing the Government every success in implementing the IAC, and offering the assistance of the WIDECAST network in whatever capacity might be requested. Anabella Barrios (Country Coordinator, Guatemala) agreed to assist the Executive Director in drafting this letter.

Send a letter to the Government of the British Virgin Islands to congratulate them for adopting new legislation that sets maximum (as opposed to minimum) size limits on greens and loggerheads and fully protects leatherbacks and hawksbills.

Send a letter to the Government of Anguilla to congratulate them for renewing a moratorium on the hunting of sea turtles, giving resource managers time to undertake a national survey and assessment of the status of local sea turtle stocks.

Send a letter to all Governments that have ratified the IAC, congratulating them on bringing this important international instrument into force. Enclose the resolution adopted by WIDECAST in 1999 (see Appendix VII).

Send a letter to insular Caribbean Governments including information on the new InterAmerican Convention on the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC), as many meeting participants were concerned by the lack of participation in (and perhaps the lack of awareness of) the IAC and the fact that it is now in force.

Send a letter to all Governments that have ratified the SPAW Protocol [to the UNEP Convention on the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, or 'Cartagena Convention'], congratulating them on bringing this important regional biodiversity instrument into force.

*Other notes of import:*

A unanimous vote of gratitude was extended to the meeting's donors – the Columbus Zoo, the UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme, BHP Petroleum, IdeaWild, and four individual donors. In addition, The Packard Foundation in the U.S. awarded travel grants, through the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, to many meeting participants.

The meeting approved the "2001 Workplan", as described by the Executive Director in her report to the meeting (see Appendix IV).

Meeting participants requested that the 2002 Annual General Meeting feature a session on the Guianas, including status reports of species occurring in this important region and an update on the "Regional Sea Turtle Conservation Program and Action Plan for the Guianas" commissioned by World Wildlife Fund – Guianas Forests and Environmental Conservation Project (GFCEP) and authored by Henri Reichart (WIDECAST) and Laurent Kelle (WWF) et al. Meeting participants also requested a session on programs that have successfully converted sea turtle hunters and hunting communities to conservation and other alternatives. A "donor lunch" featuring representatives of foundations interested in the conservation of Caribbean sea turtles, was also suggested.

Meeting participants thanked Karen Eckert for her efforts in organizing the 2001 Annual General Meeting, and for her dedicated efforts on behalf of WIDECAST throughout the year.

The meeting was adjourned at 16:30.

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**APPENDIX I**

**- WIDECAST Annual General Meeting -  
22-23 February 2001**

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## **APPENDIX II**

**- WIDECAS<sup>T</sup> Annual General Meeting -  
22-23 February 2001**

**MEETING PACKET DOCUMENTS**

*General Documents:*

- Meeting Agenda ([English](#), [Spanish](#))
- WIDECAS<sup>T</sup> Roster: Country Coordinators, Staff, Board of Directors
- Grants, Contracts and Contributions to WIDECAS<sup>T</sup>: 1999-2000
- WIDECAS<sup>T</sup> Resolution (2000): “Endorsing Continued Protection for the Sea Turtles of Anguilla”
- Agenda – “Sea Turtles and Beachfront Lighting” (Barbados Sea Turtle Project / WIDECAS<sup>T</sup> workshop, October 2000)
- Draft invitation letter for WIDECAS<sup>T</sup>’s Board of Scientific Advisers

*Technical Publications:*

- Eckert, K. L. K. A. Bjorndal, F. A. Abreu G. and M. A. Donnelly (eds.). 1999. Research and Management Techniques for the Conservation of Sea Turtles. IUCN/SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group Publ. No. 4. Washington, D.C. ([English](#), [Spanish](#))
- Guada, H. J. and G. Solé. 2000. Plan de Acción para la Recuperación de las Tortugas Marinas de Venezuela. Programa Ambiental del Caribe. Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente /WIDECAS<sup>T</sup>. Reporte Técnico No. 39, Kingston, Jamaica. xiv + 122 pp. ([Spanish](#))
- Jackson, J. B. C. 1997. Reefs since Columbus. Coral Reefs 16, Suppl.: S23-S32.
- Witherington, B. E. and R. E. Martin. 2000. Understanding, Assessing, and Resolving Light-Pollution Problems on Sea Turtle Nesting Beaches (revised edition). Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, FMRI Technical Report TR-2. 73 pp. ([English](#), [Spanish](#) available later in 2001)

*Treaties and Related Items:*

- WIDECAS<sup>T</sup>’s “Open Letter to Delegates” of CITES COP12, April 2000, Nairobi ([English](#), [Spanish](#))
- Summaries: CITES COP11 Prop. 11.40 and Prop. 11.41 ([English](#), [Spanish](#))
- Resolutions: IV Taller Regional para la Conservación de las Tortugas Marinas en Centramérica, October 2000, Belize ([English](#), [Spanish](#))
- Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA<sup>W</sup> Protocol) to the UNEP Cartagena Convention ([English](#), [Spanish](#))
- “Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region: A Regional Protocol on Biodiversity” (UNEP, June 2000) ([English](#), [Spanish](#))
- An update and notice that the SPA<sup>W</sup> Protocol entered into force on 18 June 2000, source: CEPNews (Newsletter of the UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme) Vol. 15, No. 2. ([English](#))
- Inter-American Convention [IAC] for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles ([English](#), [Spanish](#))

- An update and notice that the IAC is in force as of 2 May 2001, presented by Jack Frazier (Smithsonian Institution) ([English](#), [Spanish](#))

*Videos and Educational Resources:*

- WIDECAST Sea Turtle Species Identification Leaflets ([English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#))
- UNWANTED CATCH – a video produced and distributed by the New England Aquarium and The Pew Charitable Trusts ([English](#))
- MAGNIFICENT FISH: THE FORGOTTEN GIANTS (World of Water Series) – a video produced by the New England Aquarium and The Pew Charitable Trusts ([English](#))
- DISCOVERING THE PARADISE OF SEA TURTLES: COSTA RICA (Sin Fronteras Series) – a video produced by MERTEC, Costa Rica ([English](#), [Spanish](#))
- “Sea Turtle Adventures: Activity Book for All Ages”, Sarasota County Environmental Services, Florida ([English](#), [Spanish](#))

*Training Information:*

- WIDECAST “XI Course on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation”, Venezuela ([Spanish](#))
- Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute “Biology of Sea Turtles”, Florida ([English](#))
- Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo “Turtle Project Field Course: Biology and Conservation of Marine Turtles”, Bermuda ([English](#))
- Duke University Marine Laboratory “Biology and Conservation of Sea Turtles”, South Carolina ([English](#))

*Miscellaneous:*

- “Turn out the lights” – switchplate stickers ([Spanish](#))
- “Lights out: Sea Turtles Dig the Dark” – bumper sticker ([English](#))
- postcards featuring a Caribbean green turtle hatchling, *Chelonia mydas*
- CORAL (Coral Reef Alliance) literature
- WWF Endangered Seas Campaign literature
- UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme brochure

In addition, a great variety of materials -- including project reports, local educational materials, and program literature -- were shared by meeting participants from throughout the Wider Caribbean Region.



## **APPENDIX III**

**- WIDECAST Annual General Meeting -  
22-23 February 2001**

**AGENDA**

**Thursday, 22 February**

- 08:00 Juice and Pastries [Grand Ballroom A-B]  
09:00 Welcome - *Karen Eckert, WIDECAST Executive Director*  
09:10 Introductions  
09:20 Call to Order
- Meeting Secretary
  - Attendance
- Announcements
- Accommodations, transportation, meals
  - Symposium registration
  - Others

Session I: Executive Director's Report, 2000

- 09:30 Executive Director's Report – *Karen Eckert, WIDECAST Executive Director*  
10:30 Coffee Break

Session II: Country Reports (12-15 min each)

- 11:00 Belize - *Leroy Andrewin, Field Director, Gales Point Hawksbill Project and Linda Searle, Director, SYMBIOS*  
Aruba - *Lidy Zienstra, Biologist, Parke Nacional Arikok and Director, CARET*  
Martinique & Guadeloupe - *Johan Chevalier, Chargé de mission Tortues marines dans les Départements Français d'Amérique, DIREN Martinique*  
Sint Maarten (Netherlands Antilles) - *Andy Caballero, Manager, Marine Park and Nature Foundation of Sint Maarten*  
St. Lucia - *Moses Wilfred, Forest Officer, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries*

- 12:30 LUNCH  
13:30 Open Room – Displays and Sharing

Session III: International Issues

- 14:00 Migratory Turtles and the Imperative of Regional Planning – *Scott Eckert, Senior Research Biologist, Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute*

- 14:30 International Movements of Hawksbills – *Peri Mason, Field Director, Jumby Bay Hawksbill Research Project (Antigua), with notes from Julia Horrocks, Univ. West Indies/ Barbados Sea Turtle Project, on Barbados-tagged turtles*
- 14:45 An Update on the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) – *Jack Frazier, Smithsonian Institution*
- 15:00 CITES “COP11” (10-20 April, Nairobi) and IV Taller Regional para la Conservación de las Tortugas Marinas en Centroamérica (9-14 October, San Ignacio) - *Didiher Chacon C., Head, WIDECAST NGO Observer Delegation to COP11 and Coordinator, IV Taller (Costa Rica)*
- 16:00 Coffee Break
- 16:30 CITES Regional Hawksbill Workshop – *Alberto Abreu G., Chair, IUCN/SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group (México)*
- 17:00 Open Forum  
Resolutions and Recommendations of the Meeting
- 17:30 Closing Remarks and Adjourn

*Thank You for Joining Us,  
Have a Relaxing Evening!*

\* \* \* \* \*

**AGENDA**  
**Friday, 23 February**

- 08:00 Juice and Pastries [Grand Ballroom A-B]
- 08:30 Welcome and Opening Remarks - *Karen Eckert, WIDECAST Executive Director*
- 08:40 Introductions
- 08:50 Call to Order
  - Meeting Secretary
  - Attendance
- Announcements
  - Symposium registration
  - Others

Session IV: Training and Capacity Building

- 09:00 WIDECAST Training Partnerships: 2000-2001 - *Karen Eckert, WIDECAST Executive Director*
- 09:15 Bermuda Turtle Project Field Course: Biology and Conservation of Marine Turtles - *Jennifer Gray, Sea Turtle Coordinator, Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo*
- 09:30 Sea Turtles and Beachfront Lighting: An Interactive Workshop for Industry Professionals and Policy-Makers in Barbados - *Julia Horrocks, Univ. West Indies/ Barbados Sea Turtle Project*
- 09:45 Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation: Venezuela Course – *Hedelvy Guada, WIDECAST Coordinadora para Sur America y las Antillas Mayores*
- 10:00 Coffee Break

Session V: Country Reports (12-15 min each)

- 10:30 Guatemala - *Anabella Barrios, Proyecto Manglares, UICN - UE – INAB*  
Honduras - *Carlos Molinero, MOPAWI*  
Costa Rica - *Didiher Chacón C., Coordinador, Proyecto de Conservación de las Tortugas Marinas, Asoc. ANAI*  
Guyana - *Annette Arjoon, Audley James, and Romeo De Frijetas, Guyana Marine Turtle Conservation Society*  
French Guiana - *Grégory Talvy, Coordinator, Sea Turtle Program, Association KWATA and Isabelle Nolibos, Coordinator, Sea Turtle Program, Association SEPANGUY*
- 11:45 Report on the VIII Reunion of Latin American Sea Turtle Specialists – *Roxana Silman, Caribbean Conservation Corporation and Reunion Steering Committee*
- 12:00 LUNCH

13:00 Open Room – Displays and Sharing

Session VI: Integrating Research and Community Participation

13:30 Embracing a Nation - *Neca Marcovaldi, Presidente, Fundaçao PróTAMAR (Brazil)*

13:45 Village-based Conservation in Suriname - *Raggie Slijngard, Sea Turtle Coordinator, STINASU*

14:00 Public Education at the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo - *Jennifer Gray, Sea Turtle Coordinator and Bobbie Cartwright, Interpretive Tour Guide*

Session VII: 2001-2002 Work Plan

14:15 Introduction to the Working Groups – *Karen Eckert, WIDECAST Executive Director*

14:30 Working Group A – Creating [www.widecast.org](http://www.widecast.org) (*Chair, H. Guada - Venezuela*)  
Working Group B – Designing a Regional Tagging Database (*Chair, S. Eckert - USA*)  
Working Group C – Resolutions Committee (*Chair - D. Chacón, Costa Rica*)  
Working Group D – Environment Education Priorities (*Chair - J. Gray, Bermuda*)  
Working Group E – Facilitating Index Beach Monitoring (*Chair - M. Felix, St. Lucia*)

16:00 Coffee Break

16:30 Working Group Reports

17:00 Open Forum  
Resolutions and Recommendations of the Meeting

17:30 Closing Remarks and Adjourn

*Thank you for joining us!*

*Enjoy the 21<sup>st</sup> Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and  
Conservation!*

**APPENDIX IV**

**- WIDECAST Annual General Meeting -  
22-23 February 2001**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

*Karen L. Eckert, Ph.D.*

Introduction and Overview

The Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST) is a unique consortium. Started in Santo Domingo 20 years ago, at an international meeting of NGOs in 1981, it was the first region-wide sea turtle network in the world, and while the idea has since taken hold in other regions, this network is still the most cohesive and the most active. With my office as a central coordinating point, and outstanding members and partner organizations working throughout the region, we have a long history of unified and effective action at all levels -- community, national, regional, and international.

Our goal is "to realize a future where the all inhabitants of the Wider Caribbean Region, human and sea turtle alike, can live together in balance." It is that balance that I want to focus on this morning, because perhaps more than anything else, "conservation" is about balance. I believe one of the reasons we are so successful as a network is that balance has a lot to do with what we stand for. We value our common ground and our common objectives, but we also honor the fact that each of us comes from a unique place -- we work in different socio-economic contexts, we have different levels of expertise, we are constrained by different political realities. Yet we come together to visualize a future where sea turtles *do* survive as a functioning component of the Caribbean ecosystem.

We have in common the timeless, consistent biology of sea turtles. As biologists we are trained to work in a natural system that is largely devoid of political, geographic, economic, and linguistic variables. Sea turtle biology is sea turtle biology. We know that sea turtles are not going to alter their rates of survival, their migratory instincts, their growth rates, or their reproductive potential based on our political or economic contexts. Our job, as a scientific network, is to work together to ensure that political and economic decisions at all levels -- community, national, international -- are made with as much genuine scientific input as possible. For example, that fisheries laws, which may include legal size limits and open seasons, make sense with regard to the biology of sea turtles; that we can defend protectionist measures, including moratoria and trade bans, based on scientific evidence; and that we can give communities and governments credible choices when biological realities and political realities clash.

In order to meet our common objectives, we need hundreds of additional sea turtle biologists and community-level conservationists and millions of dollars. But since that's not likely to happen anytime soon, we need to depend heavily on one another -- seeking expertise from our neighbors so that we don't have to waste limited human and financial resources "re-inventing the wheel"; working together to define national and regional priorities that ensure that our limited resources are targeted in ways that matter; and utilizing the power of our combined voices when speaking out in isolation is useless. Talking to one another, working collaboratively, speaking with solidarity ... these are the things that are best facilitated by joining together in a network.

Networks encourage information-sharing, and one of the things that WIDECAST has always done well is to provide governmental and non-governmental stakeholders with updated information on the status of sea turtles, specific recommendations for their management and recovery, and a framework for effective collaboration. This is why the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) so highly values WIDECAST as a regional partner. The UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme office, based in Kingston and charged with implementing the Cartagena Convention and its SPAW Protocol, relies on consortiums such as ours to provide the international policy-making community with critical information from local sources on the status of sea turtles and for scientifically-sound recommendations for their management. Without that type of input, all you're left with is a political decision-making context, which may or may not coincide with what's best for a natural resource.

Another thing that WIDECAST does well is that we really *are* "rooted in the belief that conservation must be nurtured from within, it cannot be commanded from outside." Our emphasis on information-sharing has the beneficial result of building a technical understanding of sea turtle biology and management among individuals and organizations throughout the region and at all decision-making levels. The goal is for information *not* to be centralized, but rather to be as decentralized as possible. Most sea turtles live or die at the hand of a fisherman who encounters them far away from a conservation NGO or a law enforcement officer. Most laws are made by policy-makers, sometimes in environments quite isolated from NGOs or other advocates. If sea turtles are going to survive, we have to find new ways of getting people at all levels to participate in management programs and everyday decisions that promote sea turtle survival, rather than marginalize it.

We do have a very real challenge in the Caribbean Region, and that is to somehow ensure the survival of these ancient creatures despite the disappearance of so many of their populations over the course of the last century. To be successful in meeting this challenge, we – each of us in our own context -- need to prioritize habitat census and population monitoring projects, we need to provide technical training to field workers, we need to emphasize standard guidelines and protocols, we need to collaborate to ensure data compatibility amongst projects, we need to urge public participation, and we do need, certainly, to attract money and other resources to the cause.

Everyone knows that sea turtles cannot be managed unilaterally; that is, through the heroic efforts of one or two or three range states alone. Their survival depends on management decisions made by literally dozens of range states spread over millions of square miles of the Greater Atlantic basin. And so we come to the purpose of our meeting over the next two days.

Every year we gather to discuss how we're doing -- how well we're meeting our challenges, our well we're addressing our program priorities, and what our emphasis should be for the coming year. I've tried to squeeze as much information as I could into these two days, while still providing coffee breaks and long lunch hours so that we have ample opportunity to talk among ourselves. You can see that the agenda is divided topically into sessions, and we need for everyone to be very conscientious in keeping to the clock ... if we start running overtime, we'll never catch up.

Recognizing that we cannot manage sea turtles unilaterally, or in isolation from one another, and that we are, in fact, far more powerful as a coalition than we could ever be as individuals or single organizations, we need to emphasize and take advantage of these strengths as we evaluate our progress each year and set our priorities for the coming year. As members of WIDECAST we come together for the explicit purpose of accomplishing more together than we could alone. And for that reason, I think the



bulk of our combined attention, as a consortium, should be directed toward a work plan that benefits all of us in one way or another.

We usually think of WIDECAST as having five primary areas of activity:

- field-level research and conservation, including population monitoring and assessment;
- management intervention, including developing national recovery plans, making recommendations to governments, and participating in the policy-making process;
- training and capacity building at individual and organizational levels;
- environmental education and public awareness; and
- fund-raising.

I try to keep these activity areas in focus with regard to my efforts on behalf of the network. There's simply no way that I can respond to everything that crosses my desk, and so I do make a concentrated effort to serve you both individually and *collectively* whenever possible. The office of the WIDECAST Executive Director employs no secretarial or other support staff, and our overhead is very low. Consequently, all the money we raise is distributed directly to you and the field programs you represent, or directly to collaborative ventures that are mandated by you at this meeting each year.

#### 2000 Work Plan and Accomplishments: Office of the Executive Director

If you'll refer to the Grant Summaries, 1999 and 2000, in your packets, I'll summarize the actions of the Executive Director's office in two broad categories:

- ongoing programs and outstanding 1999 contract obligations; and
- programs that were new in 2000, including mandates from the 2000 AGM.

**First**, ongoing programs and outstanding 1999 contract obligations:

#### **Guayana Shield Regional Sea Turtle Conservation Program**

*Donor:* WWF-Suriname

*Project Officers:* Henk Reichart (WIDECAST) and Laurent Kelle (WWF)

*Notes:* Henk gave a presentation of this project at the AGM last year, the document is now complete; in the coming weeks it will be peer-reviewed by members of the WIDECAST network and undergo a final edit. This is an example of collaboration between a major donor (in this case WWF) with its own program agenda, and WIDECAST ... because we brought sea turtle expertise and regional planning experience to this project. I hope that the final document, entitled "Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Program and Strategic Plan for the Guianas" will set an example of planning and program execution at the subregional level among range states that clearly share management obligations for a population of sea turtles.

### **Promoting Conservation and Recovery of Sea Turtles in MesoAmerica**

*Donors:* NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, William Talbott Hillman Foundation, and the World Stewardship Institute

*Project Officer:* Alexis Suárez (WIDECAST Director of Latin American Programs)

*Notes:* This project spanned our 1999 and 2000 fiscal years, and accomplished several important goals, including ensuring that all countries in Central America are represented in the WIDECAST network by active Country Coordinators, and to lay the groundwork for the development of national “Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plans” in these countries.

Alexis is no longer with WIDECAST. When she joined the WIDECAST family as a part-time Latin American Director in 1997, we agreed that she would serve for three years in order to establish a framework for a long-term Latin American program, attract a donor base, and draft supporting documents. And that at the end of those three years, the office would be established in Latin America. Alexis did an excellent job, and she’s now planning to return to her own research interests in Indonesia. She will be sorely missed!

### **Jumby Bay Hawksbill Demographic Project**

*Donors:* Jumby Bay Homeowners Association members, Jumby Bay Hotel

*Project Officers:* Dr. Jim Richardson (Scientific Director), Peri Mason (Senior Field Director)

*Notes:* This ongoing project, started by WIDECAST in 1987, is a model hawksbill demographic study for the Caribbean (and the world) and a perfect example of the type of project that WIDECAST, as an organization, should sponsor. Jumby Bay provides unique data to support decision-making not only at the national level, but at the international level as well, as we’ve seen in the CITES debates of the last three years. As there are relatively few places where we can intensively study a particular species, these long-term saturation tagged populations provide fundamental information to all other projects that focus on that particular species, and as such they are shared treasure with immense value far beyond their host countries.

### **Capacity Building for Research and Conservation of Sea Turtles in Venezuela and Colombia**

*Donor:* British Petroleum / BirdLife International

*Project Officers:* Hedelvy Guada (WIDECAST-Venezuela), Diego Amorocho (WIDECAST-Colombia)

*Notes:* This excellent project won the BP Conservation Award in the “Islands and Marine Habitats” category in 1998, and was then selected for a follow-up award in 1999. It included the first-ever surveys of critical nesting and foraging habitat in both countries, an assessment of threats in these areas, and the development of joint research and management projects; training courses were also taught in both countries and efforts were made to integrate local communities into the research.

## **Marine Turtle Conservation in the Wider Caribbean Region: A Dialogue for Effective Management**

*Major Donors:* WWF, NOAA, UNEP

*Project Officer:* Karen Eckert, WIDECAST Executive Director

*Notes:* The first regional meeting of Caribbean governments since WATS II in 1987 was sponsored by WIDECAST, WWF, IUCN (Marine Turtle Specialist Group), and UNEP (Caribbean Environment Programme) in November 1999, in Santo Domingo. This unique gathering was a milestone in encouraging a commitment at the policy level to regional management of shared sea turtle populations. Alfonso Avilez, Belize Department of Fisheries, reported on this meeting at our last AGM. The project carried into last year because I spent several months working on the Proceedings, which will constitute a major contribution to Caribbean sea turtle literature. A comprehensive Resolution was adopted by the meeting.

**And second**, programs that were new in 2000, including mandates from last year's AGM, which were (i) to ensure that the network's voice was heard during the CITES debate over whether to re-open the commercial hawksbill trade with Japan; (ii) to move forward with establishing a regional tagging center (a decision first put forward by our 1996 AGM); and (iii) to secure funding to study the growing problem of sea turtle bycatch in Caribbean fisheries.

You can see from the grant summary that CITES consumed about one-quarter of our budget last year, or about US\$ 80,000. Many of you worked closely with your national CITES offices to ensure that the economic and political debate over whether to re-open the commercial hawksbill trade with Japan did take the best available science into account, and your efforts on the ground played an important role in the vote which was eventually taken at the Conference of Parties in Nairobi, where downlisting proposals which would have enabled a re-opening of trade, were narrowly defeated. We supported a 5-member Observer Delegation to the Nairobi Conference, and we co-sponsored a follow-up meeting in Belize in October.

I think all of us, and certainly the members of the Observer Delegation, learned a lot about what international conservation looks and feels like during COP11 in April. We owe a huge debt to those who represented us in Nairobi – Didiher Chacón (Costa Rica), Head; Anabella Barrios (Guatemala); Solomon Aguilera (Trinidad); Rhema Kerr (Jamaica); and Carlos Molinero (Honduras). We all look forward to the afternoon session where Didiher will talk in detail about what was learned last year, and what course we should follow for COP12.

Our CITES initiative last year had two main components, and for bookkeeping purposes I refer to them as "CITES I" and "CITES II" --

**CITES I: Ensuring the Participation of NGO Experts from the Wider Caribbean Region in the 11<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties, 10-20 April 2000, Nairobi**

**CITES II: Understanding CITES and the Role of the NGO Sector in Safeguarding Endangered Species in the Intergovernmental Arena**

*Major Donors:* Homeland Foundation, World Wildlife Fund, Columbus Zoo, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Intl Fund for Animal Welfare, The Nature Conservancy, Ramsar Convention, Joanna Foundation, ProArca/ CAPAS, Wildlife Conservation Society, and several individuals. Didiher was a great partner in the fund-raising effort for CITES-related efforts last year, ~ 30% of project funds were raised by Asociación ANAI.

*Project Officers:* Karen Eckert (WIDECAST Executive Director), Didiher Chacón (WIDECAST-Costa Rica)

*Notes:* Didiher will review this initiative for us later in the program

### **Establish a Caribbean Database for Sea Turtle Tagging Records and Center of Excellence for Sea Turtle Marking Technologies**

*Donors:* UNDP/GEF Small Grants Fund (Barbados office), National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

*Project Officers:* Julia Horrocks (WIDECAST-Barbados), Karen Eckert (WIDECAST Executive Director)

*Notes:* Based on recommendations made by the AGM Working Group on this topic last year, the project will include the development of both national and regional database software, complimentary training in tagging technologies, and the provision of free tags to participating projects. The center will provide a much-needed service, especially in the Eastern Caribbean where many small tagging projects lack standard record-keeping and database management protocols. The mandate of the UNDP grant is that we select our initial project partners from Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, BVI, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts & Nevis, and St. Lucia. We have enough funding to purchase 15,000 Inconel tags and 15,000 Monel tags, to develop the database software, and to convene the first training workshop. This will be an ongoing commitment of the WIDECAST network, and hopefully eventually embrace any Caribbean project that meets the requirements of participation.

### **Assessment of Sources of Sea Turtle Bycatch in Commercial and Artisanal Fisheries Operating in the Wider Caribbean Region**

*Donor:* WWF-US

*Project Officer:* Karen Eckert (WIDECAST Executive Director)

*Notes:* This is the third project that I was asked to fund-raise for as a matter of priority this last year. From the excellent notes provided by the Working Group Chair, Rafe Boulon, at last year's AGM, I developed a project proposal which was later approved for funding by WWF-US. It is a 'desk study', and narrower in scope than we had originally anticipated, but since there is no formal information on the subject, I think this is the best way to begin. The objectives of the study are to:

- Document the spatial (geographic scope) and temporal (seasonality) fishing effort of at least eight (8) widely practiced Caribbean fisheries;

- Evaluate the extent to which sea turtle populations exhibit coincident spatial and temporal distribution with these fisheries;
- Characterize the various fisheries that have the greatest potential for capturing sea turtles;
- Provide a qualitative analysis (ranking) of the potential role of these fisheries in the incidental capture of sea turtles;
- Characterize the fate of sea turtles hauled as bycatch (e.g., turtles are discarded at sea, consumed by vessel crew, marketed ashore);
- Identify potential bycatch “hot spots” (i.e., areas of highest interaction between fisheries and sea turtles);
- Describe existing data gaps; and
- Make recommendations for follow-up conservation, management, research and policy.

A Fisheries Expert will be contracted to do the study, which we hope will be concluded by the end of the year. Network members will be contacted to provide input into this study, and so expect further information on this very soon. “Phase II” (not yet funded) of this initiative will focus on implementing the recommendations of Phase I, including “hot spot” site visits to investigate quantitative information on incidental catch rates and mortality, thereby enabling managers to define impact at the population level.

In addition to these three initiatives, which were undertaken as a result of decisions made collectively at our 2000 AGM, I also devoted time to a variety of other projects supported by WIDECAST last year. These can be found in the grant summary included in your meeting packets. I was particularly impressed with the success of three of these projects, which will receive further attention later in the meeting –

**Sea Turtles and Beachfront Lighting: Making Informed Choices**

*Donors:* Tourism Development Corporation of Barbados, UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme

*Project Officer:* Julia Horrocks (WIDECAST-Barbados)

**Conservation of Leatherback and Loggerhead Sea Turtles in Colombia**

*Donor:* NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (and local sources)

*Project Officer:* Diego Amorocho (WIDECAST-Colombia)

**2000 Bermuda Turtle Project Field Course**

*Donor:* Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo

*Project Officer:* Jennifer Gray (WIDECAST-Bermuda)

Those are the year’s highlights! There were also a number of smaller projects for which funds were successfully raised in partnership between the Executive Director and a WIDECAST Country Coordinator, or simply on the initiative of the Executive Director, such as in re-printing our species identification sheets (which, as you can see from examples included in the meeting packet, have been

noticeably improved!), maintaining the WIDECAST library, convening our Annual General Meeting, reviewing and evaluating project proposals and project reports, placing interns, etc.

#### 2001 Provisional Work Plan: Office of the Executive Director

There are several projects already well underway for 2001, and these include ongoing programs and outstanding 2000 contract obligations, as well as programs that will be new this year, including any mandates that emerge from *this* AGM! Funding is already in hand for the following initiatives to be undertaken this year:

- Proceedings from the Beachfront Lighting Workshop in Barbados (*Donor*: Tourism Development Corporation-Barbados, Columbus Zoo);
- bilingual slide show (*Donor*: “Ocean Fund” - Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines);
- revision/reprinting bilingual WIDECAST brochure (*Donor*: FWS, Columbus Zoo);
- bilingual “Certificate of Pride” (*Donors*: NFWF, PADI, CTSF, UNEP)
- assessment of Caribbean sea turtle bycatch (*Donor*: WWF-US)
- regional tagging center, including database and training, at UWI (*Donor*: UNDP)
- and, (finally!) computerized library and slide archives
- funding will be secured, as a priority, for ongoing commitments, such as to the Jumby Bay Hawksbill Project and to the training course in Venezuela.

In addition, I hope that we can complete a manual and standard guidelines for “sea turtle eco-tourism”. We have \$10,000 committed from UNEP, and matching funding has been solicited from Sea World of Florida and the U.S. FWS Office of International Affairs. As is the case with the bycatch study, an expert will be contracted to take the lead in developing this manual based on an evaluation of key sea turtle eco-tourism initiatives in the Caribbean Region, such as that, for example, sponsored for the last decade in Trinidad by the Nature Seekers.

Projects for which we have no funding as yet, but I consider them to be high priorities for the coming year, include:

- [www.widecast.org](http://www.widecast.org) (*pending*: NOAA/NMFS, CMS)
- STRAPs: Trinidad & Tobago, Panama, Anguilla, Jamaica (*pending*: NOAA/NMFS)
- Office of Latin American Programs
- regional sea turtle training course, English language
- general book on the biology and status of Caribbean sea turtles
- media training workshop (in partnership with The Panos Institute in Haiti), and
- COP12

It’s a full plate of projects, and I welcome your feedback on how well my office is responding to your needs. In addition to our collective work, which is largely embodied in the projects I’ve just summarized, I also work one-on-one with WIDECAST members throughout the region needs arise. I review funding proposals, project reports, and draft legislation, draft letters of support/ recommendation, put people in touch with resources, and just in general I do my best to assist your efforts in research, conservation, education, and policy intervention in any way that I can.

I don't want to leave my report without congratulating the BVI for new legislation that sets maximum (as opposed to minimum) size limits on greens and loggerheads and fully protects leatherbacks and hawksbills; congratulating Anguilla for renewing its moratorium to enable a national survey and assessment of the status of local sea turtle stocks; and Venezuela for completing the first Spanish language STRAP! WIDECAST maintains a Conservation Materials Distribution Center in St. Croix, where all the materials we produce or distribute, including the new STRAP for Venezuela, are available free of charge. Amy Mackay is WIDECAST's Information Officer -- [cheloniam@viaccess.net](mailto:cheloniam@viaccess.net).

### **Budget Notes**

I'm proud to say that in support of all these projects, our fund-raising success has increased every year. In addition to the grants that all of you bring in for your individual projects, WIDECAST as an organization raised:

- \$ 32,000 in 1996
- \$120,000 in 1997
- \$185,000 in 1998
- \$256,000 in 1999, and
- \$292,000 in 2000

... for a total of nearly \$900,000 over five years, 62% of it in the last 24 months, and all of it dedicated to science-based conservation and management of Caribbean sea turtles. Our financial records are completely computerized and available for review upon request, emphasizing a commitment to transparency and accountability.

Finally, I want to say what it a privilege it is to continue to be a part of this incredible network of colleagues, and I wish us much success in the new millennium!

Thank you.

## **APPENDIX V**



**Sea Turtles and Beachfront Lighting:  
An Interactive Workshop for Industry Professionals and  
Policy-Makers in Barbados**

*Hosted by the Barbados Sea Turtle Project (BSTP)  
and the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST)*

*Sponsored by the Tourism Development Corporation of Barbados*

**Glitter Bay Fairmont Hotel**  
*- 13 October 2000 -*

**RESOLUTION OF THE MEETING**

**RECOGNISING** that Caribbean sea turtles species are classified either as Endangered or Critically Endangered by international authorities, and are fully protected in Barbados under the Fisheries (Management) Regulations, 1997;

**CONCERNED** that sea turtle populations in Barbados have declined dramatically over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, due to threats both domestic and foreign;

**AWARE** that natural sandy beach habitat is essential to the survival of the tourism industry in Barbados, as well as to the survival of our sea turtles;

**ALARMED** that the majority of sea turtle hatchlings emerging from the beaches of Barbados are confused and disoriented by artificial lighting and that, as a result, thousands of them die every year;

**SENSITIVE** to the impact the modern tourism industry, including coastal construction and artificial beach-front lighting, has on the plight of sea turtles;

**ENLIGHTENED**, based on the results of this workshop, about how the coast-based tourism industry can participate in sea turtle conservation and protection; and

**COMMITTED** to taking effective action, both as individuals and as an industry, to ensure the survival of sea turtles in Barbados -

## **WE PLEDGE TO:**

**ADOPT** a Policy Statement regarding the protection of sea turtles on hotel grounds;

**REVISE** Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to implement the Sea Turtle Policy Statement and further encourage reporting and protecting nesting turtles and hatchlings by hotels and other beachfront properties;

**SEEK** to ensure that funding is available to support annual training (by the Barbados Sea Turtle Project) of support staff in those departments that are responsible for actualisation of the Sea Turtle Policy Statement;

**UNDERTAKE** a lighting assessment (following the guidance of Witherington and Martin, 2000) and investigate our individual hotel and villa capacities to participate in “turtle friendly” lighting schemes; and

**IMPLEMENT**, as soon as practicable, “turtle friendly” lighting on all beaches (e.g., replace HPS lights with LPS alternatives, install motion-sensitive security lights, turn off purely aesthetic lights at 9:00 PM during peak nesting and hatching seasons).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING**

**TO PROMOTE** full implementation of the RESOLUTION, we recommend that the Tourism Development Corporation, in consultation with the Barbados Sea Turtle Project and the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST) and in collaboration with other local (BHTA) and regional (CAST) industry coalitions:

**PROVIDE** the hoteliers, villa rental agencies, Ministries and other relevant agencies in Barbados with a draft Sea Turtle Policy Statement to be adopted and implemented by the hotel and villa rental community nation-wide, with each establishment ensuring that its SOPs are revised as necessary;

**PROVIDE** the hoteliers and villa rental agencies in Barbados with standard guidelines and criteria for implementing the Sea Turtle Policy Statement; and

**PROVIDE** coastal hoteliers and landowners with emergency numbers for reporting sea turtle sightings and violations, and a calendar noting the nesting and hatching months of local sea turtle species.

## **APPENDIX VI**

**- WIDECAS T Annual General Meeting -**  
**22-23 February 2001**

**WORKING GROUP REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**“ESTABLISHING MONITORING PROGRAMMES ON INDEX BEACHES”**

*Dr. Marie-Louise Felix (St. Lucia), Chair*

In order to identify an Index Beach, the Group agreed that it was important to determine (i) the goal of the research programme and (ii) the resources available, including time, money, manpower, access, Government and other legislative support. Generally, the purpose of an Index Beach monitoring programme is to provide managers and policy-makers with long-term trend data indicative of the status of a species island- or nation-wide without having to monitor every nesting beach. Initially, a broad habitat census should be undertaken to help identify index sites. The group recognized that traditional knowledge in coastal communities could be very important in choosing index sites and establishing baseline data.

Once an Index Beach has been identified, how can long-term monitoring best be facilitated? Below is a list of some of the ideas that were discussed and proposed; they are in no specific order.

- Involve the local communities, CBO's and NGO's.
- Identify beach characteristics that are likely to affect your data and monitoring programme.
- Develop a protocol (maybe a short manual) for beach monitoring. This can help standardize research within the Caribbean and facilitate greater degree of data sharing.
- Run regional workshops for beach (as well as offshore) population monitoring.
- Identify possible corporate partners or donor agencies to help fund monitoring programmes.
- Use existing local resources (e.g., beach wardens, hotel night watchmen, coastal property owners, regular beach users) to help monitor index beach sites.
- 'Piggyback' on existing programmes (e.g., biodiversity studies, marine research programmes, GIS studies, Guides/Rangers/Cadets camping exercises, wildlife photography projects).
- Involve student science groups or programmes. Create and offer to supervise senior secondary examination school research projects. (Every year students are looking for new project ideas. Since the quality of the research will influence their final Biology or Geography SBA/ School-Based Assessment grade, students are likely to take the research work very seriously).
- Send out requests for volunteers from local and overseas universities and colleges.
- Use simple, user-friendly monitoring forms.

Recommendations:

- WIDECAS T should facilitate (with training, standard guidelines and procedures, and fund-raising) a regional network of Index Nesting Beaches and Index Foraging Grounds for each species of sea turtle in the Caribbean basin.
- WIDECAS T should sponsor a regional database to facilitate access to information on national and regional trends in abundance for each species of sea turtle in the Caribbean basin.

Funding:

- Medium-sized GEF grant?

**- WIDECAST Annual General Meeting -  
22-23 February 2001**

**WORKING GROUP REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
“ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PRIORITIES”**

*Jennifer Gray (Bermuda), Chair*

The Group agreed that public participation is dependent upon and reinforced by the availability of, and easy access to, adequate and appropriate information. There was unanimity that WIDECAST should, as a matter of priority, do the following:

- Launch and maintain a comprehensive website on Caribbean sea turtles, as this may be the most useful educational tool of all and will reach large numbers of people with diverse backgrounds.
- Disseminate a multi-lingual slide show (as 35 mm slides, as well as CD format).
- Promote communication and collaboration *between* and *within* all sea turtle range states.

In addition, the Group agreed that all WIDECAST affiliates at the local level, as well as WIDECAST as a regional network, should cooperatively and skillfully offer education, awareness and training opportunities that:

- Impel a change in culture for those who exploit sea turtles.
- Impel improved data collection for those involved in research.
- Impel an increase in basic knowledge, for all people, about the biology, status, and economic/ecological roles of sea turtles.

Specific recommendations for project funding:

1. WIDECAST is viewed as the primary disseminator of science-based information on sea turtles in Wider Caribbean Region, and an important source of training in relevant languages and countries. In this role, WIDECAST should:
  - Develop a database of environmental education resources, whereby education needs, opportunities, and existing resources can be easily matched.
  - Post all available resources and training opportunities on WIDECAST web site.
  - Designate a member of the WIDECAST network to serve as Education Officer
2. WIDECAST is comprised of Country Coordinators in more than 30 nations and territories. Advantage should be taken of the incredible talent within the network., and each Country Coordinator should be asked to provide the office of the WIDECAST Executive Director (and/or the Education Officer) with the following:
  - A list of training opportunities available within their country.  
Each Country Coordinator should be encouraged to think about what possibilities might be put into place and not just what is already available. Training opportunities may include participation in research, eco-tourism, community projects, or teaching and do not have to be formal.

- A list of information resources available within their country, including research protocols, public awareness flyers, teaching kits/tools, etc.
  - A list of educational facilities available within their country (e.g. schools, universities, public libraries) to which resource materials are needed and should be sent.
  - A list of needs in the area of environmental education or research skill development.
3. WIDECAST should identify those range states that do not currently have an active Country Coordinator, or some level of participation in WIDECAST, and promote the designation of a Country Coordinator ... or at least a contact person to whom educational materials might be sent.
  4. WIDECAST should solicit money to fund the participation of at least three members of the network in a training/exchange opportunity (such as the Bermuda Turtle Project Course) every year.
  5. WIDECAST should produce two educational “turtle teaching kits” for teachers, one for ages 4-8 and one for ages 9-16, and make these available to educators throughout the region. The packets should be at least bilingual.
  6. WIDECAST should support the production of a video or document that could be used for presentation to policy-makers or government officials (it was agreed that Dr. Jack Frazier, Smithsonian Institution, USA would be a good “star”!). It is often difficult for NGOs and/or biologists to fully comprehend aspects of sea turtle legislation and how it can be used to effectively protect sea turtles, or at the very least reach a state of rationale sustainable use. Conservationists and biologists could use some tools to help “sell” the ideas to politicians and lawmakers.
  7. WIDECAST is an inclusive, apolitical network that is well represented throughout the region and therefore well placed to create, or reinforce, in the minds of people, the link between their existence and the issue(s) at hand. WIDECAST should put the diversity of its membership to work on ways in which to encourage greater awareness of these linkages.

## **APPENDIX VII**

**Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST)  
- RESOLUTION -**

**The members of the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST) assembled at South Padre Island, Texas USA, 1-2 March 1999, at our Annual General Meeting:**

*INSPIRED* by principles contained in the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;

*CONSIDERING* the principles and recommendations set forth in the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing* adopted by the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in its 28th Session (1995);

*RECALLING* that Agenda 21, adopted by the U. N. Conference on Environment and Development, recognises the need to protect and restore endangered marine species and to conserve their habitats;

*UNDERSTANDING* that, in accordance with the best available scientific evidence, species of sea turtles in the Americas are threatened or endangered, and that some of these species may face imminent risk of extinction;

*ACKNOWLEDGING* the importance of having the States in the Americas adopt an agreement to address this situation through an instrument that also facilitates the participation of States from other regions interested in the worldwide protection and conservation of sea turtles, taking into account the widely migratory nature of these species;

*RECOGNISING* that sea turtles are subject to capture, injury or mortality as a direct or indirect result of human-related activities;

*CONSIDERING* that coastal zone management measures are indispensable for protecting populations of sea turtles and their habitats;

*RECOGNISING* the individual environmental, socio-economic and cultural conditions in the States in the Americas; and

*RECOGNISING* that sea turtles migrate widely throughout marine areas and that their protection and conservation require cooperation and coordination among States within the range of such species;

**WE FORMALLY RESOLVE TO:**

**URGE** States in the Americas (North, Central and South America and the Caribbean Sea, as well as other States that have continental or insular territories in this region) to sign and ratify the **Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles**, which has as its stated objective “to promote the protection, conservation and recovery of sea turtle populations and of the habitats on which they depend, based on the best available scientific evidence, taking into account the environmental, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the Parties.” (Art. II).