

**~ 2023 Annual General Meeting ~  
Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network  
(WIDECAST)**

**Hilton Cartagena Hotel ~ Guacamayo Meeting Room  
Cartagena, Colombia  
19-20 March 2023**

**MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Dates:**

The Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST) will convene its annual general meeting (AGM) on 19-20 March 2023 in Cartagena, Colombia, at the same venue as the 2023 International Sea Turtle Symposium (ISTS). Participants will fly into Rafael Nuñez International Airport (CTG). The [Hilton Cartagena Hotel](#) is 10 km from the airport. The hotel is located at the tip of El Laguito Peninsula, surrounded by the Caribbean Sea and just a few minutes from the historic walled city.

**Objective:**

The aim of the meeting is to share information on national and regional-level sea turtle research, management, and outreach programs; to learn from peer experiences; to facilitate networking and partnerships; and to strengthen science-based conservation programming. The agenda will include national reports, regional issue reviews, working groups, and technical presentations with related discussion. WIDECAST country coordinators, biologists, policymakers, and educators from throughout the Wider Caribbean region are welcome to attend!



**International Travel:**

Fly into Rafael Nuñez International Airport (CTG). Delta, Avianca, and American Airlines fly direct from the USA; other major carriers in the region include Copa, LATAM Airlines Group, KLM, and United Airlines.

**Airport Transport:**

Rafael Nuñez International Airport is a single-terminal airport situated approximately 2 miles northeast of the city centre. Typical taxi charge is COP\$ 23,000 (about USD\$ 5). Exchange

money in the airport in order to pay the driver in Colombian pesos (COP). The Hilton Cartagena Hotel is 10 km from the airport, travel time is about 12 minutes. The street address of the hotel is: Avenida Almirante Brión, El Laguito, Cartagena, Colombia 130001.

### Visas:

All passports must be valid for at least six (6) months from date of entry, so please check your passport and renew it if necessary. As far as I can tell, only travelers from Cuba, Haiti, and Nicaragua will need a visa to enter Colombia. See <https://www.visatraveler.com/visa-guides/colombia-visa-requirements/> for details. U.S. citizens do not need a Colombian visa for a tourist or business stay of 90 days or less. A complete list of Colombian Embassies [here](#).

### Health:

COVID: International travelers entering Colombia must present proof of completion of a COVID-19 vaccination scheme or either a negative antigen test taken within 48 hours prior to the originally scheduled time of embarkment or a PCR test taken within 72 hours prior to the originally scheduled time of embarkment. Wearing a facemask is required upon entry. You must complete Migracion Colombia's online Check-Mig form. Details [HERE](#), [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

As far as I can tell, it is not mandatory to have any other (non-COVID) vaccinations. EXCEPTION: A yellow fever vaccine, documented on the WHO International Certificate of Vaccination, is still required for travelers coming from Brazil (and a handful of African nations); the vaccine must have been administered at least 10 days before arrival in Colombia.

### Meeting Expenses:

Registration Fee: **None** 😊 (But there is a registration fee for ISTS, register [HERE](#).)

Hotel Cost: We have the same discounted room rate as the 2023 ISTS. Rates (per room, per night) can be found [HERE](#). Check-in at 3:00 pm, Check-out at noon. Buffet breakfast at Las Chivas Restaurant is included. Pay your hotel bill with a credit card, with Colombian currency, or with US\$ cash (according to the hotel exchange rate on the day of check-out).

As per Colombian regulations, a 19% VAT applies. However, as I understand it, tourists are exempted if your passport is stamped with a code (PIP3, PIP5, PIP6, PIP10, TP7, TP11, or TP12) upon entry through Immigration. Please make sure that your passport gets stamped! At check-in, you must present the passport at the hotel to verify the stamp and make a copy for the hotel management.

Meals: Breakfast is complimentary (included in your room rate). Lunch and dinner are served buffet-style on site at Las Chivas restaurant. Price per person: US\$ 23, which includes 8% consumption tax and 10% suggested service. As I understand it, the buffet is available at all hours; it can be charged to your room or paid by cash or credit card. Non-alcoholic beverages (soft drinks, juices) are \$3, including 8% consumption tax and 10% service charge.

Conference Room: The Conference Room is fully equipped with amenities, including a screen, beamer, laptop, microphone, and a service staff member.

### Currency:

The *peso* is the currency of Colombia. Credit cards are accepted in all major shops, hotels, and restaurants in Cartagena. Foreign visitors should be prepared to provide ID to verify a credit card transaction. Visa and MasterCard are most commonly accepted in Colombia. For additional detail, visit <https://colombia.travel/en/practical-information/currency-information>

### Electrical and Internet:

Electrical: In Colombia, the power plugs and sockets are of type A and B. Type B is similar to type A, but with an extra prong for grounding. This socket also works with plug A.



If your equipment doesn't have one of these plugs, **please have a travel adapter with you.**

Internet: It's my understanding that free Wi-Fi Internet is available in all rooms, but WIDECASST will be charged \$3 USD per person, per day in the conference room.

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