

RESOLUTION BY ICCAT ON SEA TURTLES

(Transmitted to Contracting Parties: **December 19, 2003**)

GIVEN THAT some parties are already reporting data on incidentally caught sea turtles to the SCRS;

NOTING the need to improve the collection of scientific data regarding all sources of mortality for sea turtle populations, including but not limited to, data from fisheries within the Convention area;

BEING AWARE that at the 24th FAO-COFI Session in March 2001, some Members advocated that FAO should take the initiative for the issue of sea turtle conservation and management, taking into account the necessity for a holistic approach;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RESOLVES:

- 1 To encourage Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities to collect and provide SCRS with all available information on interactions with sea turtles in ICCAT fisheries, including incidental catches and other impacts on sea turtles in the Convention area, such as the deterioration of nesting sites and swallowing of marine debris.
- 2 To encourage the release of marine turtles that are incidentally caught alive, and share all available information such as technical measures to reduce the incidental catch of turtles and to ensure the safe handling of all turtles that are released, in order to improve their survivability.
- 3 To seek, through the appropriate ICCAT body, the development of data collection and reporting methods for the incidental by-catch of sea turtles in tuna and tuna-like species fisheries.
- 4 To support efforts by FAO to address the conservation and management of sea turtles, through a holistic approach.