



42nd International Sea Turtle Symposium

Workshop Proposal for ISTS42

Title of Proposed Workshop:

COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION: INSIDE THE COMMONLY
“UNDERSTOOD” WORDS AND ACTIONS

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Preferred Date for the Workshop: Sunday 24th March 2024

Suggested Duration of Workshop: Full Day (8 hours)

Description and Justification of the Workshop:

The concept “Community-based Conservation (CBC)” has grown rapidly in popularity and importance; by 1990 it was a common theme in publications and presentations about diverse aspects of biological conservation. On 9 July 2023, the Board of Directors of the ISTS announced a new project offering four grants to Members “relevant to community-based conservation actions...” Over time, the term CBC ballooned to be more closely coupled with the “sustainability” paradigm. However, despite early questions about basic assumptions and interpretations, use of CBC continued to burgeon, with relatively little attention paid to underlying assumptions. There is no question that fully involving and integrating community members in conservation planning and activities are essential for countless reasons. Yet without clarifying even basic assumptions and limitations, but continually applying the term as some sort of magic solution to complex, often poorly understood, problems, there is a danger that CBC will be relegated to the pile of past historic “good ideas” that in the end have lost their potential capacity to clarify and resolve major problems.

This workshop will advocate for participants to think and question beyond the commonly used words and actions presented as CBC solutions; the workshop will



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NOT “TEACH” participants about those issues: rather, it will simulate and provoke them to “peer behind the curtains” of scientific presentations. The organizers will NOT direct this process, rather they will FACILITATE reflection, open-minded questioning, and integration of information.

Workshop applicants will be asked to provide organizers with a summary of their thoughts (ideas, questions, doubts, proposals, etc.) in a written statement of 500 words by 10 March 2024. These summaries will be posted on a Workshop website for public availability. The organizers will invite approximately 20 participants to give individual presentations on their summary, each presentation of no more than 10 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of questions and discussion.

The last hour of the workshop will review and discuss topics and questions presented previously, and then discuss proposals for how to strengthen conservation planning and activities on marine turtles, particularly within the area of Community-based Conservation.

Finally, each participant will provide a brief (less than 5 minute) individual written anonymous evaluation of the workshop; the results will be shared with workshop participants and ISTS.

Expected Outcomes of the Workshop:

Workshop participants will be better informed on the pros and cons, strengths, and weaknesses of CBC; ISTS members and staff will be better informed on the pros and cons, strengths, and weaknesses of CBC; there will be a greater appreciation of the value of integrating CBC into diverse aspects of marine turtle conservation and research; initiation and strengthening of discussions and more in-depth evaluations of past and planned CBC activities; greater interdisciplinary communication and cooperation in marine turtle conservation and research.;