



42nd International Sea Turtle Symposium

Workshop Proposal for ISTS42

Title of Proposed Workshop:

Photo ID - applications, challenges and technical solutions

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Names of All Organisers:

Stephanie Koehnke, Jane Lloyd & Mtalii Ochieng

Preferred Date for the Workshop: Monday 25th March 2024

Suggested Duration of Workshop: Full Day (8 hours)

Description and Justification of the Workshop:

Within sea turtle conservation there is a need for cost effective population monitoring; evaluating how sea turtles are using the environment, how sea turtle populations are developing and to evaluate the impact of turtle conservation measures. Photo identification provides a non-invasive method, which is easily learnt and applied to sea turtles in all habitats.

This workshop will provide an introduction to the basics of photo identification. Secondly, the potential applications and uses such as behaviour monitoring, disease progression, population studies will be demonstrated. We will identify and discuss the challenges and limitations of photo ID, such as image quality, the storage and management of raw data and the time required to complete data processing. The organisers together with the audience will evaluate this method in comparison to traditional tagging techniques and to establish if the audiences perceptions and attitudes towards photo ID as a tool to monitor sea turtles changes throughout the workshop.

Lastly, existing and developing technical solutions for these challenges will be presented by specialists. Easy to handle data management platforms will be



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introduced and discussed, with a specific focus on facilitating wider participation for people from all training backgrounds to allow for community contribution to sea turtle science and conservation efforts.

Expected Outcomes of the Workshop:

As a result of the workshop we would like more people to be trained in basic photo ID, with the confidence to apply the techniques that they have learnt to their conservation and research projects. Additionally, the organisers want participants to be able to identify potential sources of errors when using photo ID and know how to avoid them.

The workshop aims to provide people with the information needed to build robust datasets and to integrate photo ID with existing traditional tagging datasets. To establish how prevalent the photo ID method is within the sea turtle community, how it is currently being applied and how successful is it, polls will be carried out throughout the workshop. During the technical discussion session there will be a focus to determine the data and monitoring needs of the community, to identify outstanding needs which are not yet met.

The workshop participants feedback will be used to provide recommendations of what current platform providers potentially need to improve or implement. The information collated during the workshop will also be available to inform and support the potential development of a new platform so that it is developed in line with the communities needs. There will be a summary report provided to the participants of the workshop session.