

**Native Oceans/Oceanos Nativos
Loreto, Baja California Sur, Mexico
International Sea Turtle Symposium, 2008**

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Symposium dates: *January 22, 2008 – January 26, 2008*

Venue: Loreto, Baja California Sur, Mexico

Meeting agenda: The 28th Annual Sea Turtle Symposium integrates the Grupo Tortuguero annual meeting with International Sea Turtle Symposium (ISTS), in order to introduce folks from both backgrounds, broaden networks, and facilitate research connections. Grupo Tortuguero operates as the heart of sea turtle conservation in and around Loreto, Mexico. Therefore their presence and participation at the symposium is very crucial.

Due to limited resources and space in Loreto, the two proposed meetings will be staggered; however, folks are welcome to stay for both meetings if desired.

Theme: Native Oceans/Oceanos Nativos

The emphasis of the 2008 Symposium is on Native Oceans. Indigenous conservation is a key component of international conservation efforts, as native peoples have some of the deepest cultural ties with sea turtles and other species and have a direct need to co-exist with animals such as sea turtles. Therefore, we are placing this issue at the forefront of the 2008 Symposium, and are hoping to include Indigenous populations from all over the world. The Native Oceans' theme will carry over into the symposium's scientific papers as authors will be urged to consider the historical composition of natural marine systems, pre-exploitation populations, and the shifting baseline concept as it relates to sea turtles.

The Comcáac, more widely known as Seri, tribe of the Sonoran coast and midriff islands of the Gulf of California will be an integral part of the meeting. They will perform a traditional four-day ceremony honouring the leatherback turtle, to which they have looked up to as an ancestor for hundreds of years.

Greening the Symposium: The 2008 Symposium, when combined with the Grupo Tortuguero meeting could be the largest to date.

To reduce the environmental footprint, we will be taking many measures to reduce waste, support the local economy, prevent pollution, and set an example for subsequent meetings. Participants will receive a traditional gift from the Seri and be given reusable mugs and sporks to reduce solid waste.

We will encourage tent camping to reduce energy usage and promote the purchase of carbon offsets for travel. In addition, we will feature local foods and bike rentals for transportation.

Abstracts and registrations: Participants are encouraged to sign up early and make travel and accommodation arrangements as soon as possible to ensure maximum efficiency and preparation time. The early registration and abstract submission deadline is September 15, 2007.

New this year: This symposium will be very different from previous years in an exciting and groundbreaking fashion. Posters will be displayed outside along the main street of Loreto, some folks may be camping or staying aboard boats, and the Loreto plaza, home of the oldest mission in the Californias, will host a traditional four-day

ceremony by the Seri Indians. People are encouraged to come early and stay back to explore the pristine local flora and fauna. We are asking folks to bring their sense of adventure and an open mind; and be prepared to have a lot of fun!

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