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**GEORGE H. BALAZS**  
SEA TURTLE SCIENTIST

TURTLE RESEARCH PROGRAM / MTR



19 September 2014

NOAA Inouye Regional Center  
NMFS/ PIFSC/ PROTECTED SPECIES DIVISION  
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Professor CHANG Ching-fong  
President, National Taiwan Ocean University  
Department of Aquaculture  
NTOU, Keelung, 20224, Taiwan ROC

Dear President CHANG: We have never met in person, but I take this opportunity to introduce myself and send you my best regards from Hawaii. I have visited Taiwan 21 times over the past 25 years and have a great fondness and respect for the people of Taiwan, as well as Chinese culture overall. As a research professional, I also have the greatest respect and admiration for the National Taiwan Ocean University.

Having said the above, I deeply regret and apologize that this letter is being written under such unpleasant circumstances. The purpose of my letter is to make you aware of a dishonest, slanderous, vicious message written about me by one of your faculty members. Three months ago, - on June 23, 2014, - the enclosed message from Dr. I-Jiunn CHENG was transmitted by email in a mass-mailing to 15 of my science colleagues at my place of employment- the NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center- where I have worked for 32 years. As you will read, the message was sent by Dr. I-Jiunn CHENG using his personal email. In the message Dr. CHENG identifies himself as a Professor at your internationally-respected National Taiwan Ocean University. Twelve of the 15 NOAA scientists receiving this message, including my Division Chief, do not know nor have ever met Dr. CHENG. In addition, this same message was sent by Dr. CHENG to 16 of my colleagues of the Board of Directors of the International Sea Turtles Society. I am one of the elected Directors of that Board.

The distorted and untruthful accusations throughout Dr. CHENG's message represent an attempt of the most profound nature to damage my reputation, both professionally and personally, as a scientist and decent person of integrity. However, by writing and mass-mailing such a hateful false message, Dr. CHENG has inflicted embarrassment upon himself and, by identifying himself as an NTOU Professor, upon your fine university.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter to you, and the attached message sent by Dr. CHENG on June 23, 2014. I have waited three months to send this message to you with the hope that an apology of some sort might be forthcoming from Dr. CHENG, upon his realization of the extreme depth of his misbehavior. I regret that no such apology has been issued.

Sincerely,

George H. Balazs  
NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center  
and  
Regional Vice-Chair for Oceania Region  
IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group

1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176  
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