

**IUCN Species Survival Commission Marine Turtles Specialist Group
(MTSG)**

**IUCN SSC MTSG Fibropapillomatosis Vigilance and Mitigation Task Force
(FPTF)**

Terms of Reference

Description

Aware of the alarming spread of marine turtles' fibropapillomatosis - a contagious tumoral syndrome afflicting marine turtles on a panzootic scale -, and increased risks of outbreaks and/or spread of marine diseases due to climate change impacts; IUCN SSC MTSG FP Vigilance and Mitigation Task Force (FPTF) is established for the 2021-2025 quadrennium, participating to the implementation of [IUCN SSC mandate 2021-2025](#), [IUCN Species Strategic Plan 2021-2025](#) and [IUCN SSC MTSG objectives](#) by:

- ◇ building and catalyzing, dynamic diverse partnerships around the Globe to survey, research and mitigate marine turtles' fibropapillomatosis;
- ◇ providing scientific recommendations for the conservation of marine turtles and their ecosystems;
- ◇ influencing management practices of sea turtles and marine areas accordingly.

Scientific Targets

FPTF shall develop:

A scientific research and survey of sea turtles fibropapillomatosis

FPTF does not enforce any invasive procedures on sea turtles nor animal experiments.

Fibropapillomatosis global monitoring and research:

- ◇ FPTF develops a global scientific research and survey of the disease based on existing and novel literature, including but not limited to, published articles, reports, media communications, personal observations.
- ◇ The scientific survey of fibropapillomatosis includes the production of a global interactive database / multilayer monitoring map of FP.
- ◇ Fibropapillomatosis aetiology and pathogenesis research develops, but is not limited to:
 - . Unified global criterions of sea turtle's health monitoring
 - . Unified global criterions of monitoring of sea turtles' marine ecosystems
 - . Capacity building of veterinarians and/or environmental officers for the implementation of the global criterions defined of monitoring of sea turtles' fibropapillomatosis.

Fibropapillomatosis mitigation:

- ◇ Mitigation actions recommendations

FPTF is an interdisciplinary integrative platform of discussion and capacity building, via email, via phone, or any media as appropriate, articulating sea turtles' health with their environment health, providing, but not limited to:

Sea turtles' treatments, prophylaxis;

Field technical guides presenting recommendations of handling, management, and husbandry of sea turtles (e.g. Field guide for sea turtles' identification via flipper tags and PIT tags);

Marine environmental management actions; recommended to be implemented or enhanced, to mitigate the disease

FPTF develops or catalyzes any relevant project to tackle this sea turtles' disease.

A sea turtles' health monitoring

- ◇ FPTF intervenes to monitor any disease globally threatening sea turtles' or public's healths, as appropriate.

Partnerships

- ◇ Dynamic organisational partnerships with Universities, Sea Turtles Rescue Centers, Corporate sectors, NGOs, and any institutions as relevant, to uphold capacity and support for implementing research and survey actions of the disease;
 - ◇ Links with existing Commissions and Task Forces as appropriate (e.g. IUCN SSC MTSG Policy Task Force; IUCN Climate Crisis Commission; IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas; IUCN SSC Seagrass Species SG; Coral SG; Wildlife Health SG);
- are implemented.

Reports; peer reviewed articles

- ◇ FPTF convenes of a meeting annually and edits a yearly report. MTSG FP Task Force report to MTSG Co-Chairs is integrated to SSC Data.
- ◇ Peer reviewed literature is produced by FPTF in accordance to its findings, influencing sea turtles and marine areas' management practices.
- ◇ FPTF contributes to IUCN Red List of Threatened Species assessments.

Fundraising

- ◇ FPTF develops partnerships to provide any financial support needed to accomplish its objectives, as appropriate, in accordance with [IUCN Commissions Financial Rules](#).

Membership - Code of Conduct - Legal status

- ◇ FPTF shall be overseen by one or several Task Force Chair(s) who is (are) appointed by MTSG Co-Chairs.
- ◇ Scientists with expertise relevant to marine turtles' fibropapillomatosis, willing to contribute to FPTF, can apply by email at iucnsscmtsg.fptaskforce@gmail.com.
- ◇ FPTF Chair(s) can appoint additional members on a continuous basis as appropriate. FPTF Chair(s) concomitantly recommends additional members to MTSG Co-Chairs to be included as MTSG member, as appropriate.
- ◇ Membership to FPTF is geographically balanced and kept at approximately 20-30 members.
- ◇ FPTF members are willing to actively participate in the Task Force by dedicating time and effort toward the targets defined herein, under the direction of the Task Force Chair(s), and are expected to contribute in a substantial way to the overall objectives of FPTF.
- ◇ FPTF members abide to [IUCN SSC Commissions Code of Conduct](#) and [IUCN SSC MTSG members Terms of Reference](#).
- ◇ When an FPTF member is involved in a private consultancy, their reports should carry an explicit disclaimer to read: "The content and views expressed herein are those of the author(s), and do not necessarily represent the positions and policies of IUCN, SSC, MTSG, or MTSG FP Task Force."
- ◇ Members are authorized to comment or act on behalf of MTSG FP Task Force only when officially representing MTSG and MTSG FP Task Force with prior approval of MTSG Co-Chairs and MTSG FP Task Force Chair.
- ◇ Under IUCN Statutes, IUCN SSC MTSG FP Vigilance and Mitigation Task Force is not a legal entity, and for this reason MTSG FP Task Force nor its members have rights to enter into, or sign, any legally binding agreement or document on behalf of IUCN.
- ◇ Members of FPTF aware that a conflict of interest might arise and alter their participation shall report such a conflict to FPTF Chair and/or MTSG Co-Chairs.