

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2015 International Summit on Fibropapillomatosis (FP) was convened in Honolulu, Hawaii June 11-14, 2015. Scientists from around the world were invited to present results from sea turtle monitoring and research programs as they relate to the global status, trends, and population impacts of FP on green turtles. The participants engaged in discussions that resulted in the following conclusions:

1. Globally, FP has long been present in wild sea turtle populations—the earliest mention was in the late 1800s in the Florida Keys.
2. FP primarily affects medium-sized immature turtles in coastal foraging pastures.
3. Expression of FP differs across ocean basins and to some degree within basins. Turtles in the Southeast US, Caribbean, Brazil, and Australia rarely have oral tumors (inside the mouth cavity), whereas they are common and often severe in Hawaii. Internal tumors (on vital organs) occur in the Atlantic and Hawaii, but only rarely in Australia. Liver tumors are common in Florida but not in Hawaii.
4. Recovery from FP through natural processes, when the affliction is not severe, has been documented in wild populations globally.
5. FP causes reduced survivorship, but documented mortality rates in Australia and Hawaii are low. The mortality impact of FP is not currently exceeding population growth rates in some intensively monitored populations (e.g., Florida, Hawaii) as evidenced by increasing nesting trends despite the incidence of FP in immature foraging populations.
6. Pathogens, hosts, and potential disease and environmental cofactors have the capacity to change; while we are having success now, there needs to be continued monitoring to detect changes in the distribution, occurrence, and severity of the disease.
7. While we do not have clear evidence to provide the direct link, globally, the preponderance of sites with a high frequency of FP tumors are areas with some degree of degradation resulting from altered watersheds. Watershed management and responsible coastal development may be the best approach for reducing the spread and prevalence of the disease.
8. Future research efforts should employ a multi-factorial ecological approach (e.g., virology, parasitology, genetics, health, diet, habitat use, water quality, etc.) since there are likely several environmental cofactors involved in the expression of the disease, which is still thought to be caused by a herpesvirus.
9. Minimum FP data collection in new areas should include: individual identification (photo ID, PIT tags, etc.), standard measurements (length and weight), presence/absence of tumors, tumor severity, body condition, oral examination, method of capture, and effort.



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Stacy Hargrove, Thierry Work, Shandell Brunson,  
Allen M. Foley, and George Balazs

Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce