

# SYMPOSIUM & WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS



# Empirical & Evidence

2025 INTERNATIONAL CETACEAN & SEA TURTLE  
SYMPOSIUM CUM WORKSHOP

## ABOUT THE EVENT



# Empirical & Evidence

## 2025 INTERNATIONAL CETACEAN & SEA TURTLE SYMPOSIUM CUM WORKSHOP

### Organizers



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ABOUT THE EVENT

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## 2025 INTERNATIONAL CETACEAN & SEA TURTLE SUMMIT

**Welcome to the 2025 International Cetacean & Sea Turtle Summit!** We are thrilled to gather in the vibrant and biodiverse waters of Taiwan and Hong Kong, where the majestic finless porpoises, elegant Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins, and resilient sea turtles call home. This summit is more than just an event; it is a passionate collaboration born out of a shared vision among the **Taiwan Cetacean Society** and the **Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab at City University of Hong Kong**. Our journey began with a simple online conference call in January 2025, where our collective commitment to marine conservation sparked a powerful partnership.

Geographically positioned on the East Asian continental shelf, Taiwan and Hong Kong are not just neighboring regions; they form a crucial ecological nexus that supports an array of marine life. However, these vital habitats are under threat from diseases, vessel strikes, fishing gear entanglement, marine construction, and the pervasive issue of ocean pollution. Our summit, themed **"Empirical & Evidence"**, aims to confront these challenges head-on. We believe that through scientific rigor and shared knowledge, we can foresee and mitigate conservation issues before they escalate.

In this spirit, the summit serves as a dynamic platform for researchers, conservationists, and local stakeholders from over 10 countries and regions. Participants will engage in symposium, regional meet and workshops, share groundbreaking research, and explore innovative technologies in cetacean and sea turtle biology and ecology. We will foster an environment ripe for collaboration, discussion, and networking, all while addressing region-specific conservation issues and engaging with the public.

As we embark on this journey together, we invite you to immerse yourself in the rich tapestry of marine life that surrounds us. From keynote talks to social events and excursions to renowned marine localities, the summit promises to be an enriching experience filled with knowledge, passion, and camaraderie. Let us unite our voices and efforts to protect our oceans for generations to come. Welcome to the summit, where we will harness the power of empirical evidence to inspire change and safeguard our marine treasures.

Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab, CityUHK  
Taiwan Cetacean Society

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## 2025 ASIA REGIONAL MEETING AND WORKSHOPS ON SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION

The 2025 Asia Regional Meeting & Workshops on Sea Turtle Conservation was an inspiring and enriching experience held in Kaohsiung, culminating in a captivating sea turtle encounter excursion in Xiaoliuqiu. Over three days (30 September to 2 October), participants engaged in a series of enlightening presentations, delving into vital topics such as research, community engagement, rehabilitation, and conservation outreach. The enthusiasm and dedication shared by all attendees created a vibrant atmosphere where knowledge was exchanged and ideas flourished. As many emphasized, the importance of building stronger connections and regional collaborations cannot be overstated. We hope this event will serve as a catalyst for future partnerships, fostering a united front in our mission to sea turtle conservation. We are grateful to everyone who participated and contributed to making this event a resounding success!

As we carry this momentum and spirit into the next phase of our journey, we invite everyone to join us for the 2025 International Cetacean & Sea Turtle Symposium and Workshop in Hong Kong. The event extends the moral and collaborative vibes fostered in Kaohsiung, as we continue to unite experts and advocates dedicated to marine conservation. Together, let's build on our shared knowledge and passion to make a lasting impact on the preservation of our oceans and the incredible life within them.



Organizing Committee  
2025 Asia Regional Meeting and  
Workshop on Sea Turtle Conservation

ABOUT THE EVENT

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## 2025 INTERNATIONAL CETACEAN & SEA TURTLE SYMPOSIUM CUM WORKSHOP

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Welcome to the 2025 International Cetacean & Sea Turtle Symposium and Workshop! Since its inception in 2019, the **Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab at City University of Hong Kong** has been at the forefront of marine conservation, uniting experts and stakeholders through our annual symposium. This year marks a significant evolution in our journey, as we proudly present a symposium that encompasses both cetaceans and sea turtles, embodying our theme: "**Empirical & Evidence**".

Our partnership with the **Taiwan Cetacean Society** underscores a shared commitment to marine conservation across borders. Together, we aim to address the critical issues facing these magnificent creatures in our oceans. This year's gathering takes place on 18 and 19 October at City University of Hong Kong, where over 30 experts from more than 10 regions – including Brazil, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, and the USA– will share their invaluable insights and experiences.

Participants can look forward to a rich program covering vital topics such as diagnostic imaging, clinical assessment, stranding investigations, threats and pathologies, and ecological outreach. For those who will engage deeper in hands-on experiences with aquatic wildlife radiology basics, imaging case discussions, and even embark on a thrilling local wildlife encounter excursion, we will meet again from 20 to 22 October in small teams.

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## 2025 INTERNATIONAL CETACEAN & SEA TURTLE SYMPOSIUM CUM WORKSHOP

We are grateful for the generous financial support from various funders, including the **Marine Ecology & Fisheries Enhancement Funds Trustee Limited**, **CLP Power Hong Kong Limited**, **Hong Kong LNG Terminal Limited**, and the **Hong Kong Electric Company Limited**, all of whom have made this event possible. A heartfelt thank you to all supporting bodies for their unwavering backing on logistics and technical support.

Being born and raised in Hong Kong, we are deeply connected to the local culture and its rich traditions, as well as a strong sense of succession that binds us to our heritage. We are thrilled to have **Koon Chun Sauce Factory** as a sponsor this year, showcasing the authentic flavors of Hong Kong through their eco-friendly products. Their commitment to sustainability resonates with our values and enhances the cultural narrative of our event, which is focused on cetacean and sea turtle conservation. We truly appreciate Koon Chun Sauce Factory's dedication, as it perfectly aligns with our mission to protect the unique marine life that is an integral part of our local ecosystem.

As we embark on this exciting journey together, we encourage each of you to fully immerse yourselves in the events. Take advantage of the invaluable networking opportunities that this symposium provides. Engage with fellow participants, share your experiences, and forge connections that can inspire collaborative efforts in marine conservation. Let us commit ourselves to the protection of our oceans and the incredible creatures that inhabit them. Together, we can make a profound impact on marine conservation and pave the way for a sustainable future. Enjoy the symposium and workshop!

Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab  
City University of Hong Kong

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## AQUATIC ANIMAL VIRTOPSY LAB CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



Under Department of Infectious Diseases and Public Health and Department of Chemistry from City University of Hong Kong, we are the first Aquatic Animal Virtsopsy Lab established in the world, aims at applying cutting-edge technologies such as computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, 3D surface scanning and unmanned aerial vehicle routinely on stranded and free-ranging aquatic animals (in particular cetaceans and sea turtles) worldwide. In conjunction with the conventional necropsy, our research focus is on health and diseases surveillance investigation and biological profile evaluation, as well as the anthropogenic impact documentation on the animal well-being. Collected data will ultimately be beneficial to the scientific community by providing better understanding and insight into overall biological health, and thus generating a sound scientific basis for precise conservation measures, as well as policy and management decisions of the precious aquatic animals in Hong Kong and their inhabiting waters.

## TAIWAN CETACEAN SOCIETY



Established in 1998, TCS has been dedicated to cetacean conservation, focusing on stranding rescues, marine education, and promoting marine public awareness. In addition to our efforts with cetaceans, we have begun rescuing and promoting education about stranded sea turtles since 2020. In 2023, we established Taiwan's first privately run sea turtle rescue station. We are currently involved in habitat monitoring for sea turtles and finless porpoises, working to advocate for the survival rights of both cetaceans and sea turtles.

# Empirical & Evidence

**2025 INTERNATIONAL CETACEAN & SEA TURTLE  
SYMPOSIUM CUM WORKSHOP**



**18 OCTOBER (SAT)**

**LT-14, YEUNG, CITYUHK**

## Registration & Opening Remarks

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Prof. Patrick Butaye

*Head, Department of Infectious Diseases and Public Health, CityUHK*

**8:45 - 9:15**

Prof. Brian Kot

*Assistant Professor, Department of Infectious Diseases and Public Health & Department of Chemistry, CityUHK*

Mr. Cheng-Tsung Tseng

*Secretary General, Taiwan Cetacean Society*

## Session 1: Oceanic Insights

### Empirical & Evidence Spotlight

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Prof. Brian Kot, Dr. Tabris Chung, Mr. Henry Tsui

*Aquatic Animal Virology Lab, CityUHK, Hong Kong*

**9:15 - 9:25**

### From Anatomy to Conservations:

### The Expanding Role of Diagnostic Imaging in Sea Turtle Health

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Prof. Ana Luisa Schifino Valente

*Full Professor, Federal University of Pelotas, Brazil*

**9:25 - 10:05**

### Coffee Break

### Applications of *In-vivo* Micro-CT in Aquatic Organisms

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Dr. Takaomi Ito

*Veterinarian, Osaka Aquarium Kaiyukan, Japan*

**10:15 - 10:30**

### Rapid Field-Deployable Detection of Marine Pathogens Using Insulated Isothermal PCR: Applications for Cetacean Morbillivirus, Spirorchiid Blood Flukes, and Chelonid Herpesvirus 5

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Ms. Meng-Jung Hsieh

*Research Assistant, NTU, Taiwan*

**10:30 - 10:45**

**SYMPOSIUM RUNDOWN**  
subject to change

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**LT-14, YEUNG, CITYUHK**

## **Proteomics Unleashed: Safeguarding Sea Turtles Through Science**

Dr. Rangsimas Sujittosakul  
*Assistant Instructor, Mahidol University, Thailand*

**10:45 - 11:00**

**Coffee Break**

## **Session 2: From Stranding to Strength (Part 1)**

### **Empirical & Evidence Spotlight**

Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab, CityUHK

**11:10 - 11:15**

## **Lessons Learned from Post-mortem Studies in the Mediterranean Sea: The Pathology, Physiology and Ecology of Marine Species**

Dr. Jose Luis Crespo Picazo  
*Head of Conservation Programs, Fundacion Oceano Grafic, Spain*

**11:15 - 11:55**

## **Review on Marine Mammal Strandings at Coastline of the Mainland of Japan**

Dr. Chika Shirakata  
*Chief Veterinarian, Enoshima Aquarium, Japan*

**11:55 - 12:10**

## **Escalating Threats to Western Pacific Cetaceans: Spatiotemporal Stranding Dynamics in Taiwan, 2000-2023**

Prof. Wei-Cheng Yang  
*Professor, NTU, Taiwan*

**12:10 - 12:25**

**Q&A Session**

**Lunch Break**

# Empirical & Evidence

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## Session 3: Rescue, Rehab, Release

### Empirical & Evidence Spotlight

Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab, CityUHK

**13:45 - 13:50**

### Bridging Health Assessment and Aquatic Wildlife Conservation

Dr. Francesco Grande  
*Head Veterinarian, Loro Parque, Spain*

**13:50 - 14:20**

### Case study: Spirochiidiasis in Sea Turtle in Thai Waters

Dr. Watchara Sakornwimon  
*Senior Veterinarian, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Thailand*

**14:20 - 14:35**

### Strategies of Cetacean Stranding Response in Taiwan

Dr. I-Fan Jen  
*Director of Marine Department, Farglory Ocean Park, Taiwan*

**14:35 - 14:50**

## Coffee Break

### Brief Overview of Sea Turtle Conservation in Huidong, China

Dr. Zhong-rong Xia (*in Mandarin*)  
*Director of Sea Turtle Conservation Centre, Guangdong Huidong Sea Turtle National Nature Reserve Administration, China*

**15:00 - 15:15**

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## **The Method and Challenge of Removing a Marine Foreign Body from Sea Turtles**

Dr. Patinan Rookkachard  
*Veterinarian Manager, Marine Safari Bali, Taman Safari, Indonesia*

**15:15 - 15:30**

## **Traumatic Spinal Injury as a Cause of Positive Buoyancy Disorder in Stranded Green Sea Turtles (*Chelonia mydas*)**

Dr. Jessica Li  
*Veterinarian, Ocean Park Hong Kong, Hong Kong*

**15:30 - 15:45**

### **Coffee Break**

## **Case Report: Management and Rehabilitation of Sea Turtles Affected by Oil Spill in Thailand**

Dr. Patcharaporn Kaewmong  
*Marine Veterinarian, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Thailand*

**15:55 - 16:10**

## **Entanglement Injuries in Wild Sea Turtles: A Case Study from Northern Taiwan's Rescue and Rehabilitation Program (2021-2025)**

Dr. Shun-Ting Hsiao  
*Veterinarian, Taiwan Cetacean Society, Taiwan*

**16:10 - 16:25**

## **Discussions on Sea Turtle Rehab & Release Criteria**

*Closed Meeting for Speakers*

**16:25 - 17:25**

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**19 OCTOBER (SUN)**

**LT-14, YEUNG, CITYUHK**

**Registration**

**8:45 - 9:00**

## Session 4: Marine Life in Peril

### Empirical & Evidence Spotlight

Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab, CityUHK

**9:00 - 9:10**

### Practical Tips and Tricks Related to Antemortem Diagnostics in Veterinary Parasitology: Challenges and Opportunities Encountered in Cetacean and Sea Turtle Medicine

Dr. Ashley McGrew  
*Associate Professor, Colorado State University, USA*

**9:10 - 9:50**

### Reproduction of Sea Turtles in Indoor Facilities at the Port of Nagoya Public Aquarium

Dr. Takashi Kamio  
*Veterinarian, Port of Nagoya Public Aquarium, Japan*

**9:50 - 10:05**

### Long-term Wild Recovery and Resilience of Green Turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) to Various Anthropogenic Injuries

Dr. Chia-Ling Fong  
*Researcher, TurtleSpot Taiwan, Taiwan*

**10:05 - 10:20**

**Coffee Break**

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**LT-14, YEUNG, CITYUHK**

## **Antimicrobial-Resistant Bacteria in Small Cetaceans in Japan**

Dr. Naomi Ohta  
*Assistant Professor, Okayama University of Science, Japan*

**10:30 - 10:45**

## **Ecological Overview and Skeletal Asymmetry in Korean Finless Porpoises**

Ms. Hyun Na Lee  
*Researcher, Marine Animal Research and Conservation, South Korea*

**10:45 - 11:00**

## **Marine Wildlife Rehabilitation in Southern Brazil: Threats and Challenges for Turtle and Cetacean Conservation**

Dr. Alice Teixeira Meirelles Leite  
*Veterinary Doctor, Federal University of Rio Grande, Brazil*

**11:00 - 11:15**

**Coffee Break**

## **Session 5: From Stranding to Strength (Part 2)**

### **Empirical & Evidence Spotlight**

Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab, CityUHK

**11:25 - 11:30**

### **A 11-Year Trend of Sea Turtle Strandings in Taiwan, 2014-2024**

Mr. Cheng-Tsung Tseng  
*Secretary General, Taiwan Cetacean Society, Taiwan*

**11:30 - 11:45**

### **Spatial-temporal Analysis of Sea Turtle Stranding in Hong Kong**

Dr. Virgilius Martin Kelake Kedang  
*Veterinarian, CityUHK, Hong Kong*

**11:45 - 12:00**

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**19 OCTOBER (SUN)**

**LT-14, YEUNG, CITYUHK**

## **Cetacean and Sea Turtle Strandings in Shikoku, Japan: A Regional Framework for Scientific Investigation**

Dr. Yu Okuda  
*Lecturer, Okayama University of Science, Japan*

**12:00 - 12:15**

**Q&A Session**

**Lunch Break**

## **Session 6: From Hatchling to Habitat**

### **Empirical & Evidence Spotlight**

Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab, CityUHK

**13:45 - 13:55**

### **Tiny Island, Big Hearts: Citizens Caring for Xiaoliuqiu's Green Turtles**

Mr. Chun Hung Lin  
*Project Manager, Taiwan Coral Island Association, Taiwan*

**13:55 - 14:10**

### **TurtleSpot Taiwan: Empowering Citizen Science to Uncover Taiwan's Sea Turtle Foraging Grounds**

Dr. Zhi Wei Daphne Hoh  
*Researcher, TurtleSpot Taiwan, Taiwan*

**14:10 - 14:25**

### **Entangled Trouble: Sea Turtle Rescue in the Indian Ocean**

Dr. Mariana Fragoso  
*Programme Manager, Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance, United Kingdom*

**14:25 - 14:40**

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## Coffee Break

### Stories of Sea Turtles I Have Witnessed

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Dr. I-Chun Chen (*Online, in Mandarin*)  
*Veterinarian, NMMBA, Taiwan*

**14:55 - 15:10**

### From Classroom to Coastline: An Internship Experience with Cetaceans and Turtles in Aquatic Animal Virtopsy Lab

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Mr. Terry Leung & Mr. Gerald Ho  
*Secondary Five Students, Diocesan Boys' School, Hong Kong*

**15:10 - 15:20**

### Genomic Insights into Marine Turtles: Understanding Population Dynamics and Climate Change

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Dr. Hie Lim Kim  
*Associate Professor, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore*

**15:20 - 15:35**

### From Beaches to Markets: Monitoring Sea Turtle Populations and Threats in Malaysia

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Dr. Seh Ling Long  
*Senior Programme Officer, TRAFFIC, Malaysia*

**15:35 - 15:50**

Ms. Sharifah Nur Shafiqah binti Syed Othman  
*Perhentian Turtle Project, Malaysia*

### Closing Remarks

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**15:50 - 16:00**

### Guided Tour to "Story of Ocean Giants" Exhibition

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**16:00 - 17:30**

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## WORKSHOP SESSIONS

**For speakers and workshop participants only.**

### Day 1 - 20 Oct (Mon) Ocean Park Hong Kong - Imaging Practical

08:40 - 08:50	Gathering at Ocean Park MTR Station
09:05 - 11:45	<b>Lectures and Presentations</b> Prof. Brian Kot Prof. Ana Luisa Schifino Valente Dr. Letizia Fiorucci Dr. Jose Luis Crespo Picazo Mr. Bosco Yuen Mr. Bernard Tsui
11:45 - 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 - 17:30	<b>Workshops and Demonstrations: Ultrasonography and CT</b> AAVL & Ocean Park Veterinarian Team

We sincerely acknowledge



for providing venue, equipment and technical support on the Imaging Practical

### Day 2 - 21 Oct (Tue) CityUHK - Imaging Case Discussion

09:50 - 10:00	Gathering at CityUHK Library
10:00 - 12:00	<b>Introduction of Image Visualization and Case Discussion</b>
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch Break
13:00 - 15:00	<b>Case Discussion</b>

We sincerely acknowledge



for providing technical support on the Case Discussion

### Day 3 - 22 Oct (Wed) Wildlife Encounter Excursion

08:20 - 09:15	Gathering at Hotel Lobby & Shuttle Bus to Tung Chung New Development Pier
09:15 - 12:45	<b>Dolphin Survey in Lantau Waters</b>
12:45 - 13:45	Lunch on Boat
13:45 - 15:00	<b>Cheung Chau Island Temple Visit</b>