

# HOSTING PROPOSAL FOR THE 8<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles



By Aliko Panagopoulou, Ph.D.  
Research Coordinator, ARCHELON

# Athens, Greece

## October 2022

**Candidate for the presidency of the 8<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Conference:** Aliko Panagopoulou, Ph.D. (CV attached at the end of this proposal)

**Professional affiliation(s)**

- (1) ARCHELON, The Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece, Solomou 57, GR 104 32 ATHENS (Position: Research Coordinator Member of the Scientific Committee)
- (2) The Leatherback Trust, 5736 Kinlock Place, Fort Wayne, IN 76835 USA (Position: Conservation Scientist)

**Office address:** ARCHELON, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece  
Solomou 57, GR104 32 ATHENS, Greece

**e-mail:** [aliki@archelon.gr](mailto:aliki@archelon.gr)

**Country of residence** \_\_\_\_\_ GREECE \_\_\_\_\_

**Short biography:** I have been involved in conservation since 1994, when I joined a sea turtle conservation project run by ARCHELON, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece. I am experienced in managing sea turtle conservation projects, compiling and implementing management policies for important sea turtle habitats and running collaborative programs with fishermen. I received my Ph.D. in environmental science from Drexel University in Philadelphia. I have been a member of IUCN's Marine Turtle Specialist Group since 2005 and was appointed Regional Vice Co-chair for the Mediterranean in 2017. I have served in the Board of Directors of the International Sea Turtle Society and the National Marine Park of Zakynthos and am also a

member of ARCHELON's Scientific Committee. I am a recipient of the International Sea Turtle Society's President's Award in recognition of my lifetime accomplishment toward the study and conservation of sea turtles. Currently I am collaborating with ARCHELON as Research Coordinator (CV attached).

**Personal experience in running conferences:** I have vast experience running international meetings. I have been heavily involved in the organization of the Annual International Sea Turtle Symposium, serving from several posts that include: Program Chair, Session Chair, Travel Grant Chair, Student Judge, Nominating Committee Chair and Member of the Board of Directors. In addition, I was instrumental in the running of the 37<sup>th</sup> International Sea Turtle Symposium in Las Vegas, USA (Position: Operations Manager), working closely with Dr. Frank Paladino (ISTS President). The meeting was attended by 850 people from 75 countries.

I have also attended all but one Mediterranean Conferences and have taken several posts of responsibility. As a result, I am very familiar with the particularities of organizing an international meeting and the close collaboration with Bern Convention, Barcelona Convention (SPA/RAC) and Bonn Convention that is required for the successful running of the conference.

**Hosting organization:** ARCHELON, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece  
Solomou 57, GR 10432 ATHENS  
GREECE  
Tel.: +30 2105231342  
Web: [www.archelon.gr](http://www.archelon.gr)

ARCHELON, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece is a non-profit environmental NGO founded in 1983 aiming to protect sea turtles and their habitats in Greece as well as to raise awareness about turtles and the threats to their survival. Over the last 35 years, ARCHELON has been running conservation programs at the most important nesting sites for loggerhead turtles in Greece (Zakynthos, Peloponnesus and Crete), as well as a Sea Turtle Rescue Center in Glyfada, Athens. ARCHELON been instrumental in the compilation of management policies and the establishment of protected areas for marine turtles (e.g. the National Marine Park of Zakynthos and Southern Kyparissia Bay), and successfully undertaken several LIFE-Nature Projects, co

funded by the European Union. ARCHELON achieves its work through a vast network that includes a 7 member Board of Directors, its active members, an average of 500 volunteers per year and several collaborations with the local and national authorities, other NGOS and private foundations and companies. In 2006, under the Presidency of our founding member Dimitris Margaritoulis, ARCHELON hosted the 26<sup>th</sup> International Sea Turtle Symposium on Crete, Greece. The conference was attended by 700 people from 76 countries across the world. This was a meeting supported by local and national government, as well as several private companies. ARCHELON has agreed to act as hosting organization for the 8<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean conference. ARCHELON has a strong financial background and has the appropriate accounting and banking system to be able to handle revenue received and expenses generated as part of the conference. We are confident that our background, network of volunteers and 15 employees, available resources and accumulated experience of organizing international meetings will ensure a successful 8<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles.

**Fundraising possibilities:** Besides the support expected by Bern Convention, Bonn Convention and Barcelona Convention (RAC/SPA), and revenue generated through participant registration fees, we will actively seek funding for the meeting from the local and national authorities. We expect to receive support from the Greek government (e.g. Ministry of Environment, regional government) as they have committed to supporting an international meeting as part of the Action Plan for the conservation of sea turtles, which was officially adopted in August 2021. We also expect to receive funding from the private sector including private foundations (e.g. Kostopoulos Foundation, Niarchos Foundation, etc), companies (e.g. Grecotel, TUI). We expect the meeting to be 100% financially solvent through our fundraising possibilities.

**Proposed country to host the 8<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Conference:** GREECE

**Proposed dates:** Second half of October 2025. Alternate dates: April 2025, October 2024.

**Proposed Conference Theme:** Protecting turtles in a changing world

**Alternate Conference Theme:** Connections

**Proposed locations:**

- Athens
- Crete (e.g. Herakleion, Rethymno)
- Western Greece (e.g. Kyparissia Bay)

All three locations have several venues with facilities suitable for meetings of ~200 participants, and as a result of our work, existing collaborations (e.g. Grecotel, Costa Navarino, TUI) will be easy to negotiate good deals with. Based on our previous experience, Athens and Crete hold an advantage over Western Greece as they have access to an international airport that greatly facilitates participant travel to the venue. All three locations offer unique opportunities for field trips after the end of the conference, Western Greece (Kyparissia Bay) has the added advantage of being close to unique sea turtle nesting habitats (Kyparissia Bay, Kotychi Lagoon, Pylos) as well as important archaeological and historical sites. Final selection of location and venue will depend on accessibility, cost effectiveness and places where participants may get the most fulfilling experience.

**ALIKI PANAGOPOULOU, Ph.D.**

**CURRICULUM VITAE**

**Research Coordinator, ARCHELON**

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**Contact Information**

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**Education**

2015 Ph.D. Environmental Science, Drexel University, Department of Biodiversity, Earth & Environmental Science, Philadelphia PA.  
1989 Bachelor of Science, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

**Dissertation**

*Sea turtles and small-scale fisheries: Designing conservation policies for a marine area on the island of Crete, Greece.*

Supervisor: Dr. James R. Spotila, Betz Chair Professor of Environmental Science.

**Professional Experience:**

2022 – Research Coordinator, ARCHELON, Athens, Greece  
2016 – Conservation Scientist, The Leatherback Trust, Fort Wayne, IN and Philadelphia, PA  
2015 – Visiting Research Associate, BEES Dept, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA  
2015–2016 Post-doctoral Research Fellow, The Leatherback Trust, Fort Wayne, IN and Philadelphia, PA  
2011–2015 Teaching Assistant, Drexel University, Department of Biology, Philadelphia PA  
2010–2011 Betz Chair Predoctoral Research Fellow  
1998–2010 ARCHELON, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece:  
2004–2010 Projects Coordinator and Conservation Officer  
2002–2003 Coordinator for ARCHELON’s Project of Crete  
1998–2002 Assistant Project Coordinator, Crete

1989–1998

Foreign Language Teacher

## Other appointments

- 2018– Co-PI, “Protecting Sea Turtle Populations of the Eastern Pacific Ocean” [Earthwatch]
- 2018– Coordinator, Action A2\_ Action Plan for the Protection of Sea Turtles in Greece (LIFE Euroturtles LIFE15NAT/HR/000997)
- 2017– Regional Vice-chair for the Mediterranean, Marine Turtle Specialist Group, IUCN/World Conservation Union – Species Specialist Committee
- 2013– External scientific consultant, “Evaluating priority species and habitat types for sea turtles within NATURA 2000 Areas”, funded by the Greek Ministry of Environment.
- 2009– Member, Scientific Committee - ARCHELON, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece
- 2005– Member, Marine Turtle Specialist Group, IUCN/World Conservation Union – Species Specialist Committee
- 2011–2016 Member, Board of Directors - International Sea Turtle Society
- 2007–2010 Member, National Marine Park of Zakynthos Board of Directors
- 2006–2007 Member, Marine Turtle Specialist task force for the revision of the Mediterranean Action Plan for Marine Turtles, adopted by the Barcelona Convention (UNEP/MAP) contracting parties in June 2008
- 2001–2010 Member, National Jury for the BLUE FLAG Environmental Award coordinated by the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature ([www.blueflag.org](http://www.blueflag.org))
- 2001–2010 Consultant on issues concerning beach management and coastal issues, Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature

## Student Mentoring

ARCHELON supervisor:

Nathan Hunt, Master’s Thesis: To what extent do anthropogenic impacts affect the nesting location preferences of loggerhead sea turtles *Caretta caretta* in Rethymno Bay? (School of Ocean Sciences, Bangor University, UK) (Thesis submitted 2017)

Irini Kasimati & Natalia Page, independent research: Effects of environmental enrichment on behaviour and diving condition of sea turtles in rehabilitation (2016 – 2018).

Bella Jack, Master’s thesis: “Exploring the practice of citizen science and volunteerism through a case study of sea turtle conservation in Greece.” (Department of Geography, University College London, UK) (Thesis submitted 2016)

Jack Suss, Ph.D. dissertation: “Biophysical and physiological ecology of loggerhead turtle nests in Zakynthos and Kyparissia, Greece” (Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA, USA - 2012) (Dissertation submitted 2013]



Jana Behnke, Master's thesis: "Competitive interaction of natural cues and human impacts during nest site selection by loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) in Rethymno Crete, Greece." (University of Hamburg, Germany - 2011) (Thesis submitted 2014)

Nima Moin, Master's Thesis: "Modeling Critical Coastal Ecosystems: A study on the marine turtle nesting habitats in the Mediterranean" (International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation –ITC, The Netherlands – Thesis submitted 2007)

## **Awards & Honors**

2022	Niarchos Foundation "Saving Critically Endangered Sea Turtles in Costa Rica" (\$150K)
2020	Goatie Foundation (\$50K)
2018	Disney Conservation Fund grant : "Conservation of Eastern Pacific Leatherback Turtles" (\$50K)
2017	President's Award, International Sea Turtle Society
2015	Archie Carr Student Award: Runner Up for Conservation (Oral paper), 35 <sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation
2015	International Travel Award, Office of International Programs (\$0.75K)
2015	Dissertation Fellowship, Office of Graduate Studies (\$2.5K)
2014	William L. McLean III Fellowship (\$12.5K)
2014	Archie Carr Student Award: Runner Up for Conservation (Oral paper), 34 <sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation
2014	Outstanding Presentation in "Books and Bagels – Conversations on interdisciplinary research" seminar series, Drexel Office of Graduate Studies
2013	Claudio T. Elia Memorial Fellowship (\$6K)
2011	International Travel Award, Office of International Programs (\$0.75K)
2010	Betz Chair Fellowship (\$50K)
2010	Lee Smith Travel Fellowship (\$2K)

## **Conference Presentations/Workshops**

Workshop Organizer: Taking the Plunge: A workshop on the basics of social science survey design. Southeast US Regional Sea Turtle Meeting, Corpus Christi, TX 3-6 February 2020

Small-scale fishermen & bycatch in Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea: What about the turtles? 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium in Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, Charleston, South Carolina, 2-8 February 2019

To restrict or not to restrict? Small-scale fishermen's perceptions on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). 6<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles, Porec, Croatia 16-19 October 2018

Using Satellite Telemetry to Optimize Protection of Loggerhead Turtles (*Caretta caretta*) Nesting on Crete, Greece. Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, New Orleans, LA 6-10 July 2016

(Workshop co-organizer) So you think you can survey? A workshop on the basics of social science survey design and implementation, with an emphasis on in-field applications for sea turtle research and conservation. 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium in Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, Lima, Peru, 29 February – 5 March 2016

Hook, line and thinkers: Understanding complex perceptions of fisher-turtle interactions in context (Crete, Greece). 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium in Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, Dalaman, Mugla, Turkey, 18-24 April 2015 (Oral)

Untangling fishermen-turtle relationships: perceptions of sea turtle interactions with small-scale fisheries, in Crete, Greece. 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium in Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 10-17<sup>th</sup> April 2014 (Oral)

Unfaithful females: interesting movements suggest alternative nesting strategies and nest site infidelity for loggerheads nesting in Rethymno, Greece. 32<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium in Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, Oaxaca, Mexico 6-12 March 2012 (Oral)

Loggerhead turtles (*Caretta caretta*) nesting in Rethymno, Greece, show a preference for the waters adjacent to their reproduction site during the inter-nesting period. 3<sup>rd</sup> Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles, Naples, Italy, 6-10 November 2011 (Oral)

Inter-nesting behavior of loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) in Rethymno, Greece 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, San Diego, California, 10-15 April 2011 (Oral)

Education and outreach: an important element in the protection of loggerhead sea turtles on the island of Crete, Greece. 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, Goa, India, 27-29 April 2010 (Oral)

Turtle deaths at sea undermine protection measures on nesting areas in western Peloponnese and Zakynthos, Greece. 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, Brisbane, Australia, 17-19 February 2009 (Oral)

Creating an effective sea turtle stranding network: the role of the coast guard in Greece. 3<sup>rd</sup> Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles, Yasmin Hammamet, Tunisia, 20-23 October 2008 (Oral)

Studying the reasons behind the decline of the loggerhead nesting population of Rethymno, Greece: lessons learned for the future. 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, Loreto, Baja California Sur, Mexico, 18-26 January 2008 (Oral)

Interactions with small-scale fisheries in Greece: an important factor for the reduction of turtle mortality. 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, USA, 22-28 February 2007 (Oral)

Volunteers and sea turtle conservation: why time equals money for an environmental NGO. 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, Island of Crete, Greece, 3-8 April 2006 (Poster)

Networking among rescue centres in the Mediterranean 2<sup>nd</sup> Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles, Kemer, Turkey, 5-8 May 2005 (Oral)

Can the tourism industry play a role in sea turtle conservation? The example of Crete, Greece. 24<sup>th</sup> International Sea Turtle Symposium on the Biology and Conservation of Sea Turtles, San Jose, Costa Rica, 22-29 February 2004 (Oral)

Tour operators, a potential ally in the protection of sea turtle nesting habitats: the case of Crete, Greece. 23<sup>rd</sup> International Symposium on the Biology and Conservation of Sea Turtles. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 17-21 March 2003 (Oral)

Five years of implementing management policies on Crete: an evaluation. 22<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on the Biology and Conservation of Sea Turtles, Miami, Florida, 4-7 April 2002 (Poster)

Involving local communities in a National Sea turtle Stranding Network: the case of Crete. 21<sup>st</sup> Interantional Symposium on the Biology and Conservation of Sea Turtles, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, 22-27 February 2001 (Poster)

## **Service**

2018	Student Grant Chair, 6 <sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles
2003–Present	International Sea Turtle Society Program Coordinator (2019- Present) Symposium Chief of Operations (2017) Program Committee Chair, Workshops Committee Chair (2017) Program Committee member (2006, 2009, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016) Proceedings Compiler (2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2013) Chair, Nominating Committee (2009)
2008	3 <sup>rd</sup> Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles, Program Committee
2004	Organizer, Mediterranean Workshop for the Rehabilitation of Sea Turtles, Glyfada Attiki, 19-20 November 2005
1994–1997	ARCHELON, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece 1994 – 1996 (summer): Volunteer in Rethymno, Crete
1995–1997	Volunteer at ARCHELON's Sea Turtle Rescue Centre
1992–1994	Greenpeace Greece, Volunteer

## **Professional Societies**

Herpetologist's League  
American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)  
International Sea Turtle Society  
American Women in Science  
Society for Conservation Biology

### **Special skills and certifications**

Software: Microsoft Office, Dbase, R Programming, Arc GIS, NVivo

Languages: Greek (native), English (Cambridge Proficiency in English, Grade A/  
TOEFL, Grade 112/120),  
French (Sorbonne I, Certificat de Langue Francaise)

### **References Provided Upon Request**