



NOMINATION APPLICATION FORM

Section 1: Applicant Details:

Name: Maribel Escobedo Mondragón

Date: 30/11/2023 04:12:58

Email address: escobedo.mem@gmail.com

Nominated position: Board of Directors (2 x Positions)

Professional affiliations: 1. Departamento de Etología, Fauna Silvestre y Animales de Laboratorio, Facultad de Medicina Veterinaria y Zootecnia de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)
2. Asociación Mexicana de Veterinarios de Tortugas A.C. (AMVT)
3. Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance

Country of residence: Mexico

Geographic area of work: Yucatan Peninsula

Section 2: Applicant Response:

How would you describe your work with sea turtles?

Researcher and veterinarian

How many years have you worked with sea turtles?

8

Which Annual Sea Turtle Symposia, or Annual Workshops have you attended?

ISTS 39th-2019, ISTS 40st-2022, and ISTS 41st-2023

Have you been involved with any Symposium activities?

My participation in the ISTS has been as a workshop assistant and presenter of my research in poster format.

What would you like the Nominating Committee, Board of Directors, and membership to know about you as a candidate for your nominated position? In what ways would you like to contribute to the Symposium/ International Sea Turtle Society?

Dear Nominating Committee, Board of Directors, and esteemed members,

I am honored to be considered for a position within the Symposium/International Sea Turtle Society, and I would like to offer some insights into my background and aspirations for this role. As a veterinarian with a decade of experience in wildlife, my commitment to sea turtles is deeply ingrained. My professional journey has equipped me with a diverse skill set, from media & film production to veterinary medicine & research, allowing me to contribute meaningfully to the goals and initiatives of the International Sea Turtle Society.

I have been an active member, participating in the ISTS 39th-2019, ISTS 40st-2022, and ISTS 41st-2023 as a workshop assistant and presenter of my research in poster format. My dedication to addressing human-wildlife conflicts and combating marine pollution has manifested through active participation in various professional associations. Serving as an advisor to NGOs, government, and the private sector, I have gained a comprehensive understanding of the intricate challenges facing sea turtle conservation.

Currently, I lead the "Sea Turtle Biomonitoring Project at Yucatan Peninsula," a role that has provided me with invaluable hands-on experience in sea turtle conservation. Additionally, my involvement as a board member of AMVT, Latin America Chair of the Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance, and Research Chair of the State Commission of Sea Turtle Conservation in Quintana Roo has further deepened my commitment to the cause.

If given the opportunity to contribute to the International Sea Turtle Society, I aim to take advantage of my expertise to enhance the society's veterinary research initiatives, advocate for multidisciplinary conservation policies, and foster collaboration between different stakeholders. My extensive background in wildlife management and aquatic medicine positions, bring me a unique perspective to the Society, and I am eager to contribute to its mission of sea turtle conservation.

I am confident that my blend of academic qualifications, hands-on experience, and leadership roles within related organizations makes me a valuable candidate for this position. I look forward to the possibility of working closely with the Society in advancing its objectives and ensuring the longevity of sea turtle populations.

Thank you for considering my candidacy.

How do you envision using the Symposium to advance sea turtle biology and promote conservation?

The International Sea Turtle Society Symposium provides an invaluable platform for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the development of strategies to address the challenges faced by sea turtle conservation. In my envisioned role within the Society, I intent to promote:

1. Cutting-edge Research: The Symposium is an ideal forum to present and discuss the latest advancements in sea turtle research. I will encourage and facilitate sessions that highlight innovative studies, particularly those focused on veterinary research, to deepen our understanding of sea turtle health and inform effective conservation measures.
2. Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Conservation efforts require a multidisciplinary approach. I aim to organize sessions that promote collaboration between experts from diverse fields such as biology, ecology, veterinary medicine, and policymaking.
3. Engaging Stakeholders: Conservation is a collective effort. Driving open dialogue in a respectful environment, we can create more effective strategies. It is vital to involve the younger generations; therefore, I will actively encourage their participation at the Society in my mentorship programs during my role within the Society.
4. Education & Outreach: The Symposium is a hub for educational initiatives. I will propose and support programs that aim to train new and current “tortugeros” in the field of conservation medicine, and first response at remote areas. By bridging the gap between field biology techniques and the practical application of veterinary skills, we can empower individuals operating in remote areas with the tools they need to make a tangible difference in the field.

In conclusion, my vision is to bring to the table a dynamic platform for driving positive change to the Society. By promoting multidisciplinary collaboration, we can collectively work towards sea turtle conservation.

Why is the ISTS as an organization important to you, professionally and personally? What is your vision for the ISTS over the next 5 to 10 years?

The International Sea Turtle Society holds profound professional and personal significance for me. Professionally, the ISTS represents a cornerstone in my journey as a veterinarian dedicated to wildlife conservation, specifically sea turtles. As an active member and participant, through the ISTS I had been able to share and presented my research, in which I have experienced firsthand the invaluable knowledge exchange and collaborative spirit that define the Society.

Personally, the Symposium/International Sea Turtle Society has provided me with a platform to connect with colleagues who have since become dear friends and collaborators. It has become an encounter bridge to share our achievements, challenges, and advances in sea turtle field, but ISTS has also been instrumental in strengthening the bonds of friendship among us. Is a time-space source of inspiration and collaboration that aligns with our passion for preserving sea turtle populations. My application to contributing to the Society's mission as Boar member is not just a professional aspiration, but a deeply personal commitment to ensuring the longevity of these incredible society of "tortugueros" around the globe.

Looking ahead, my vision for the ISTS over the next 5 to 10 years is rooted in the advancement of veterinary research initiatives, advocate for multidisciplinary conservation policies, and foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders. I am confident that my academic qualifications, hands-on experience, and leadership roles make me a valuable candidate, and I eagerly anticipate the possibility of working closely with the ISTS to advance its objectives and contribute meaningfully to sea turtle conservation strategies on a global scale.

Please include a 250-word bio

I am a Certified Aquatic Veterinarian dedicated to sea turtle medicine, research, and conservation. Currently pursuing an academic position in Marine Conservation & Aquatic Veterinary at the National Autonomous University of Mexico; and develop of a rescue and research sea turtle center for Yucatan Peninsula. My passion centers around the wildlife conservation, alongside research and medicine. At a very young age,

I start working on medicine field, and over time I decide to become a wildlife veterinarian. My zeal for ocean conservation has been a driving throughout my career, leading me to develop my research project on biomonitoring marine contamination using sea turtle as bioindicators.

In my capacity as wildlife researcher, I learn policymaking strategies, which had led me to played key roles of leadership for diverse professional organizations: Head of Research Commission for the State Committee for Sea Turtle Conservation at Quintana Roo (2021-2024); Regional Chair for Latin America of Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance; Student Support Subcommittee Leader for the World Aquatic Veterinary Medical Association; and “Sand souls” documentary producer for Yucatec Diving and Conservation.

I have conducted extensive multidisciplinary research, establishing over 30 national and international partnerships, secure grant fundings, publish four scientific articles as first author, and co-founding the Mexican Association of Turtle Veterinarians, and Sea Turtle Biobank Network for Latin America. Additionally, I’m constantly looking forward to sharing my knowledge to young and current professionals. I truly believe that together we can achieve more, for one cohesive and inclusive voice for sea turtle conservation.

Photo:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=18S19Ct94dl1aws1k5_rb7nuXsWhdVPCB

Section 3: Declaration

Circle your response to the below statements:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| I am a current member of ISTS | Yes |
| I have read and understand the ISTS by-laws and constitution | Yes |
| I have read and understand the terms of reference for the position which I am nominating for: | Yes |
| For Board of Directors nominees, I understand that the Annual Board Retreat is usually in the 3rd week of August: | Yes |

For Board of Directors nominees: Please read the following statement and add your initials below to confirm you understand the workload involved:

The Board is a working Board. All members of the Board are expected to carry the workload, share the responsibility of assigned tasks, and respond to written communications – this can typically be 40+ hours per year in addition to the Board meeting at the Symposium and the Board Retreat. If a Board member does not maintain their ISTS membership and demonstrate a high level of commitment to the ISTS as described in the Board members' TORs, they will be asked to resign from the Board. High level of commitment is defined as not missing two consecutive mid-year meetings, except under extenuating circumstances, and annually serving on 1-2 Board task forces, leadership roles, Committees, etc.

MEM