



## NOMINATION APPLICATION FORM

### Section 1: Applicant Details:

**Name:** Daniel Gonzalez-Paredes

**Date:** 04/11/2025 01:17:06

**Email address:** daniperilla@gmail.com

**Nominated position:** Board of Directors (2 x Open Positions)

**Professional affiliations:** Senior Sea Turtle Specialist, SHAMS – The General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Sea Turtles in the Red Sea (Saudi Arabia)

Research Fellow, Karumbé NGO (Uruguay)

Adjunct Research Fellow, TropWATER – James Cook University (Australia)

Scientific Advisor, S.O.S. Caretta Project – HyT Association (Spain)

Representative for the Middle East & South Asia - IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group (MTSG)

Representative of the Andalusian Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AACID)

**Country of residence:** Saudi Arabia

**Geographic area of work:** Red Sea (Saudi Arabia), Pacific (Australia, Costa Rica), Southwestern Atlantic (Uruguay, Brazil), Caribbean Sea (Costa Rica, Panama), Mediterranean Sea (Spain)

## Section 2: Applicant Response:

### How would you describe your work with sea turtles?

I am fundamentally a conservationist, with nearly two decades of experience leading sea turtle research and conservation programs across multiple regions. My career began at the grassroots level, working closely with local communities and NGOs to implement hands-on conservation actions, build field capacity, and promote environmental stewardship from the bottom up. These experiences grounded my understanding of the social dimensions of conservation and the importance of inclusive, community-driven approaches.

Later, my work expanded into academia, focusing on the impacts of anthropogenic threats on sea turtles, particularly plastic pollution, and how these pressures affect species and geographic regions unevenly. This research helped strengthen the design of standardized protocols that can be applied broadly to achieve more consistent global assessments of such impacts to inform science-based conservation decisions.

In recent years, I have been working within government departments, where I have focused on developing and coordinating large-scale monitoring programs, designing research initiatives, and integrating scientific findings into management and policy frameworks, supporting both regional and global efforts to protect sea turtles.

### How many years have you worked with sea turtles?

18 years, continuously since 2008

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

All the ISTS Symposia from 2010 to 2025 (except for the ISTS 2012)

### Have you been involved with any Symposium activities?

I have actively contributed to ISTS Symposia since 2010:

- Scientific Contributions: Presented over 20 studies as lead author and contributed as co-author to more than 25 additional works in symposium proceedings.
- Workshops and Chair Sessions: Organized and chaired multiple workshops on Plastic Pollution & Sea Turtles (2017 to 2023), Scientific and Intentional Capture of Sea Turtles (2016), and RETOMALA - Latin America Regional Meeting (2022).
- Social and Community Roles: Served as an event facilitator (Dj) for social activities such as the Live Auctions since 2013.
- Volunteer Contributions: Served as a volunteer during the years I received a Travel Grant, supporting symposium logistics, assisting in session coordination, and facilitating networking and social events.

This experience reflects my long-standing commitment to both the scientific and community dimensions of ISTS, and my active engagement across the international sea turtle community.

**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?**

Throughout all these years of participating in the symposium and being an active member of ISTS, my commitment to our society has remained strong and continued to grow. I have witnessed its many achievements and milestones, as well as challenging times that were overcome through collaboration, inclusiveness, and resilience. Having represented different regions over the years has also given me valuable insight into the diverse perspectives and needs of each part of our global community. This long-standing involvement provided me with a deep understanding of ISTS: its operations, governance, and core values. Such experience has led me to take a step forward and humbly offer my dedication, holistic vision, and service to the Board of Director of the ISTS.

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

I see the symposium as a unique platform for connecting science, management, and community action. I would work to promote cross-regional collaborations, facilitate

knowledge exchange between experienced researchers and emerging scientists, and support initiatives that translate scientific findings into practical conservation strategies. I also aim to help maintain the open and collaborative spirit that has always characterized ISTS symposia, ensuring it remains a space for inclusive discussion and collective problem-solving.

**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?**

ISTS has been central to my professional growth, providing a platform to present research, engage with peers, and build networks that have shaped my career. I would even go so far as to say that many of my professional achievements in sea turtle research and conservation have been possible thanks to the contacts and networking made through ISTS.

Over the next 5–10 years, I envision ISTS expanding its reach and impact by supporting early-career scientists, promoting regional engagement, and fostering innovation in research and conservation approaches. I also hope to enhance the visibility of underrepresented regions and communities, promoting a more decolonized and inclusive approach to global sea turtle conservation.

**Please include a 250-word bio**

Daniel Gonzalez-Paredes (aka Danny daFunk)

Daniel is a marine conservationist with nearly two decades of experience leading sea turtle research and conservation initiatives across Latin America, Australia, Europe, and the Middle East. His career began at the grassroots level, working with local communities and NGOs to implement hands-on conservation projects and promote environmental stewardship. Over time, his work expanded to research institutions and government departments, where he coordinated large-scale monitoring programs, advised management agencies, and fostered international collaborations.

Having worked across multiple ocean basins, he brings a holistic vision to conservation, one shaped by the diverse ecological, cultural, and social realities of each region. This perspective has given him valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities faced by different parts of the global sea turtle community. His approach to conservation blends science, management, and community engagement, always grounded in collaboration, inclusivity, and real-world impact.

An active ISTS member since 2010, Daniel has presented research, chaired sessions, volunteered to social engagement activities, and helped strengthen regional

representation and capacity building within the global network. His long-term commitment to ISTS reflects his belief in the society's power to connect people, share knowledge, and inspire collective action for sea turtle conservation.

[...and when conservation turns into celebration, you might just find him behind the decks as DJ Danny daFunk, setting the ISTS live auction dance floor on fire!]

**Photo:**

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1f\\_tdfNdE3anYWSMJPSIBsV1kMr5XqcwK](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1f_tdfNdE3anYWSMJPSIBsV1kMr5XqcwK)

## **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:** undefined

**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 a Board member physically attending a minimum of three mid year retreats during their 4-year Board term, attending online Board meetings consistently, serving annually on*

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***multiple Committees, completing assigned tasks, and being responsive to online communications and requests.***

***The 2025 Board retreat is 10th to 15th August 2025 in Washington DC.***

Daniel Gonzalez-Paredes