



Native Oceans—Loreto Transforms into an International Sea Turtle Town for a Week!

They came from the far corners of the planet, one thousand strong. Representing 70 nations and a dozen indigenous groups, the 28th International Sea Turtle Symposium (ISTS) celebrated our Native Oceans in Loreto's streets, plazas, restaurants, hotels, auditorium, and university with the style and warmth unique to this historic village.

The theme of the meeting was Native Oceans, recognizing the ancient connection between people and sea turtles both here and around the world. The Seri Indians of Sonora led the ceremonies which brought together Australian aboriginal, Venezuelan Wayuu, and Miskitu Indians from Nicaragua among others.

In a move towards something best called "adventure conferencing", events and sessions were held on the plaza, attendees walked across town between sessions and camping was allowed at



Loreto's mission to accommodate all comers. Participants brought their own mugs and water bottles and were treated to organic Mexican coffee and tequila. The event was even powered by solar panels. LIVBLUE Challenge awards were presented to those who did the most to minimize their "ocean footprint".

Baja's homegrown conservation organization, Grupo Tortuguero played host to the meeting and combined the ISTS with their tenth anniversary symposium.

Next year the event moves to Brisbane, Australia, and we hope to send several of the Grupo Tortuguero's leaders to represent Baja there. Of course, Grupo Tortuguero XI will be back in Loreto at the end of January 2009 as it has for the past ten years. ■

Wallace J. Nichols
Senior Scientist,
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Eco-Alianza de Loreto, A.C. is Founded!



January 20, 2008 - Wallace J. Nichols, PhD, world renowned marine biologist and President of the International Sea Turtle Society, 2007-2008, announced at a recent gathering of organizers and sponsors of the 10th Annual Meeting of Grupo Tortuguero and the 28th International Sea Turtle Symposium (ISTS), the launch of Eco-Alianza de Loreto, A.C, a new conservation group formed to serve the Loreto region of Baja California Sur. To support the ISTS, Eco-Alianza donated its downtown office as a command, communications and travel center; organized home stays and provided overall general assistance to the conference, including "turtle angels." The new office is located in the downtown historic area of Loreto across from the Mission and will be fully staffed by June, 2008. In the meantime, if you have questions or suggestions, you may contact Hugo Quintero at hugo@mybajaproject.com or the board members listed on the website at www.ecoalianzaloreto.org ■

