

# Marine Turtle Newsletter

## Green Turtle Tagged in Brazil Recovered in Trinidad

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A green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) tagged off Volta do Rio, Almofala, State of Ceará, Brazil (02.50'S, 40.09'W) on June 6, 1996, was found washed ashore dead at Mayaro Beach, Trinidad (10.15'N, 61.00'W), on November 3, 1997, by Mr. Shastri Maharaj of Amoco Trinidad Oil Company. The turtle was identified by the Monel tag BR12087 and was described as approximately 60cm in carapace length, recently dead, showing no obvious signs of the cause of mortality.

This recovery indicates a minimum distance of approximately 2700 kilometres travelled with the Guiana Current and is the first recovery in Trinidad of a green turtle tagged in Brazil. Other recapture records of turtles tagged in Brazil include a loggerhead turtle recovered in the Azores Islands (Portugal) and a hawksbill turtle recovered near Dakar (Senegal). In addition a green turtle tagged in Ascension Island and a loggerhead turtle from Western Australia have been recovered from the waters of Brazil. Trinidad recoveries have also been made for olive ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) tagged in Suriname.

When the turtle was initially observed in Almofala (Brazil), it was trapped in a fishing weir at a sea turtle feeding site monitored by Projeto TAMAR-IBAMA, the national sea turtle conservation program in Brazil. It measured 48 cm curved carapace length and was double tagged and released at the same location.

Fishing weirs are structures used for catching fish and they exist along most of the Ceará coastline. They are non-selective traps, up to one mile long and 10 metres deep, made of wooden posts and wire mesh, and built in a semi-circular shape and positioned perpendicular to the coastline and closed on the seaward side. Sea turtles were being incidentally caught in these traps, which led to the establishment of a TAMAR station at this locality in 1991 to protect 12 miles (20 km) of coastline known to be a green turtle feeding area, working in tandem with the local

communities using such fishing methods (Marcovaldi *et.al.* 1998).

MARCOVALDI, M.Â., C. BAPTISTOTTE, J.C. DE CASTILHOS, B.M.G. GALLO, E.H.S.M. LIMA, T.M. SANCHES & C.F. VIEITAS 1998. Activities by Projeto TAMAR in Brazilian Sea Turtle Feeding Grounds. [Marine Turtle Newsletter 80: 5-7.](#)