

INTERINSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FORMED FOR SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION IN THE STATE OF CEARÁ, BRAZIL

Eduardo H. S. M. Lima¹, Maria Thereza D. Melo¹

¹Fundação Pró-TAMAR, Acesso Projeto TAMAR, 151, Almofala, CEP: 62.592-000, Brasil ,
(E-mail: eduardo.lima@tamar.org.br)



In the past years, Projeto Tamar-ICMbio has supported conservation initiatives in partnership with several institutions working for sea turtle protection in areas that aren't monitored regularly. Since 1993, TAMAR has established a Protection and Research Station in Almofala, a small village in the West Coast of Ceará State, which is considered an important feeding and development area for sea turtles. The Station's operating area extends over a 40 Km coastline, where five species of sea turtles have been documented (green, loggerhead, hawksbill, olive ridley and leatherback). In the remaining 520 Km coastline there is no effective project performance.



Figure 1: Participants in the Lecture Series, in Almofala.

In 2014 TAMAR conducted three lecture series, with six debates and two workshops on sea turtle Rescue and Necropsy techniques, in which 81 participants from different Institutions (Universities, Environmental Departments of the State and City, Non-governmental Organizations and Environmental Police) attended.



Figure 2: Sea turtle necropsy training , with different institutions' participation (FAUNAMAR, Federal University, State University and CETAS-IBAMA).

In 2014, the Almofala Station started a lecture series on sea turtle conservation and the actual challenges to be faced along the West coast of Ceará State. These lectures brought up debates on major issues, such as, bycatch, sea turtle management and habitat protection, species status review, sea turtle stranding evaluation and standardization of sea turtle data collection.

The debates have provided a great opportunity for participants to exchange experiences. Moreover, workshops on a variety of topics have also been offered. For instance, "Guidelines to rescue sick and stranded animals", "Necropsy techniques" for identifying the cause of death. The participating groups are also invited to give lectures about their activities and future plans.



Figure 3: Debates about sea turtle conservation in Ceará State.

The results so far are encouraging. The partnerships among tamar and different institutions represent a major step forward for sea turtle Conservation in Ceará state. Several private and government organizations are currently engaged in stranding response activities throughout the coast of Fortaleza city. This model allows us to conduct large-scale data gathering outside TAMAR's monitoring area and to use a standardized protocol for rehabilitation procedures and necropsy examination .



FIGURE 4: Partners in contact with sea turtle.

Our thanks to Paulo Barata and Daphne Wrobel for their suggestions about the writing of the text. Created 35 years ago, the Projeto TAMAR results from the sum of efforts of Fundação Pró-TAMAR and Centro Tamar/ICMbio.