

# Acting Globally

## 2008 SWOT Outreach Grants

*SWOT Report* is a tool that is meant to be used and used plenty! In 2008, for the third consecutive year, *SWOT* has distributed small grants to organizations wishing to put *SWOT Report* to work in local outreach efforts. This year's five grant recipients have, once again, fused vision with determination to engage communities around the world in sea turtle conservation in new and exciting ways.



A young man reads *SWOT Report* after participating in a C3 workshop. © COMMUNITY CENTRED CONSERVATION / C3

### Community Centred Conservation— Union of the Comoros

The Union of the Comoros in the Indian Ocean has some of the most important green turtle nesting beaches in the world. A 2007 study evaluating the effects of bycatch on sea turtles and marine mammals in the Comoros revealed that these exceptional green turtle populations were under serious threat from accidental and intentional capture by artisanal fishermen. On the basis of those findings, Community Centered Conservation (C3) used its 2008 *SWOT* Outreach Grant to organize educational workshops in five of the villages found to have the highest capture rates on the island of Grande Comore.

Fishermen attending the workshops received copies of *SWOT Report* and waterproof stickers for their boats with the affirmation: "I don't eat turtles; they are an endangered species!" Additional *SWOT Reports* were distributed in village libraries, community centers, and fishing syndicate offices, thereby providing further opportunities for community members to learn about the importance of their local sea turtle populations.

### The Alliance for Tompotika Conservation— Indonesia

In Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, the Alliance for Tompotika Conservation/Aliansi Konservasi Tompotika (AITo) has taken a comprehensive approach toward protecting sea turtles along the Tompotika peninsula, while simultaneously confronting immediate and long-term challenges. In its campaign to stop poaching—the most urgent threat to local sea turtle populations—AITo hires former turtle poachers to patrol beaches, and works with village leaders to enforce turtle protection laws. At the same time, AITo seeks to foster long-lasting support for conservation efforts within the community through its Sea Turtle Conservation Awareness Campaign, which, to date, has reached more than 2,000 people.

In 2008, a *SWOT* Outreach Grant helped AITo hold educational meetings in schools and villages where it distributed information and worksheets to predominantly young audiences.

As one former turtle poacher said: "We now understand about the turtles and how we have to protect them. The children really loved the awareness meeting, and they are now all talking about sea turtles. Your conservation message has been received."



Children from Tompotika proudly show off their sea turtle coloring sheets after an AITo Awareness Campaign meeting. © AITo



Visit [www.SeaTurtleStatus.org](http://www.SeaTurtleStatus.org) to apply for a 2009 *SWOT* Outreach Grant!



ProTECTOR president, Stephen Dunbar, discusses sea turtles with schoolchildren on Roatan Island. Visit [www.SeaTurtleStatus.org](http://www.SeaTurtleStatus.org) to watch a video about Stephen's work! © ProTECTOR

## ProTECTOR—Honduras

Helped by a SWOT Outreach Grant, the Protective Turtle Ecology Center for Training, Outreach, and Research (ProTECTOR) launched an island-wide educational outreach initiative involving school children ages 6–15, on Roatan Island, Honduras, with the goal of promoting a Turtle Nesting Hotline.

Together with presentations on sea turtles, *SWOT Reports* were provided to schools as library references, and students were invited to assist in launching the Turtle Nesting Hotline by producing artwork and jingles to publicize the Hotline numbers throughout Roatan Island and the Bay Islands. From the materials submitted by the children, four art designs and one jingle were chosen. When fully operational, the Hotline will provide vital information about where turtles are nesting at any given time, thus helping to focus monitoring efforts on high priority beaches and establishing conservation measures for reducing human impacts at those sites.

## Sea Turtle Conservation Project—China

China's Hainan Province comprises some 200 islands strewn along the country's southern coast. The area boasts a successful fishing industry and beautiful, pristine beaches that attract tourists and sea turtles alike. Unfortunately, although business in Hainan has grown, sea turtle populations have declined. With the support of a SWOT Outreach Grant, Dr. Yamin Wang of Shandong University set out to educate visitors and residents about the importance of protecting the region's sea turtles.

During the three-month-long campaign, Dr. Wang and his colleagues distributed more than 150 copies of *SWOT Report* and 1,000 copies of related pamphlets, focusing, in particular, on speaking with fishermen. In addition, the team circulated a petition in Hainan's capital city of Haikou to draw greater support for conservation activities. The success of the initiative has brought a new level of attention to important local and global issues such as bycatch, poaching, and illegal trade.



Fishermen study educational pamphlets about sea turtles in Hainan Province. © WANG YAMIN



Community members peruse the University of Algarve's poster exhibition on Boavista Island, Cape Verde. © CHRISTIAN RODER

## The University of Algarve—Cape Verde

Just off the western coast of Africa, the Cape Verde archipelago provides significant nesting and foraging habitat for three species of sea turtle. In May 2007, the University of Algarve in Portugal, with the support of the Sisbon Oceanarium, began an ambitious sea turtle conservation initiative in Cape Verde that established the Sea Turtle House environmental education center; launched the Live Labs beach patrol and experiential education program; and produced an Environmental Education Package of lesson plans, activities, and posters for elementary and secondary school teachers.

In 2008, a SWOT Outreach Grant helped to strengthen the programs with additional educational materials and to create posters for a traveling exhibit aimed at influencing national authorities. The exhibit was displayed at the first Praia Environmental Fair and was visited by the Cape Verdean president; prime minister; and minister of the Environment, Rural Development, and Marine Resources.