

Acting Globally

SWOT Small Grants 2013

Since 2006, SWOT small grants have helped field-based partners around the world realize their research and conservation goals. To date, we have given 43 grants to partners in 27 countries. SWOT grants are awarded annually to projects in each of SWOT's three areas of focus: networking and capacity building, science, and education and outreach. The following are updates from each of our five grantees in 2013.

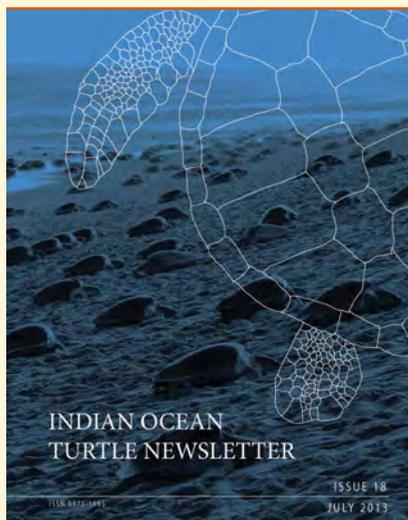
ECUADOR

Equilibrio Azul

Equilibrio Azul (EA) is a grassroots marine conservation group based in Puerto Lopez, a fishing town located within Ecuador's Machalilla National Park. EA conducts research on nesting and in-water activity of hawksbill and green turtles. EA launched Ecoclub to provide opportunities for local children to interact with and learn about the biodiversity that their shores boast. Most club members are children of fishermen, who are crucial stakeholders in marine and turtle conservation. In weekly meetings, Ecoclub enables participants to discover and appreciate local marine life. The 2013 SWOT grant will fund turtle nesting and hatching fieldtrips, as well as in-water observation trips. EA hopes to inspire its *guardianes de la naturaleza* (nature guardians) to lead conservation initiatives in the future.



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INTERNATIONAL

Indian Ocean Turtle Newsletter

A 2013 SWOT grant is covering a portion of the printing and mailing costs for the 2014 issues of the Indian Ocean Turtle Newsletter (IOTN), a semiannual publication distributed to an international network of biologists, conservationists, government officials, NGOs, and academics. In circulation since 2005, IOTN covers the biology, conservation, and management of the five sea turtle species found in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia (loggerhead, olive ridley, green, hawksbill, and leatherback sea turtles). Major threats to these populations are unsustainable hunting and egg collection, habitat destruction, and fishing operations. IOTN reports on research, advocacy, and education programs that address these issues, including coastal zone and fisheries management.

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GRENADA

Ocean Spirits

Levera, at the north end of Grenada, boasts a beautiful beach that serves as a primary nesting ground for leatherback sea turtles. The beauty makes it a tourist destination, but development threatens the natural habitat, and egg poaching is common in the local communities. Ocean Spirits, a conservation nonprofit based in Grenada, is teaching local children to be environmental stewards. A 2013 SWOT grant sponsors an afterschool environmental science club, which meets once a week and includes an evening field trip to watch nesting leatherbacks. The grant also covers summer camp sessions, each a full week of activities that focus on local conservation topics, including nest excavation and hatchling release.



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COOK ISLANDS

Dr. Michael White

Michael White, who leads a research team working on various atolls of the Cook Islands, has designed a community-based sea turtle conservation project in two villages of the remote northern islands. A 2013 SWOT grant is supporting the launch of an education and training component of the project. *Rahui* is the centuries-old traditional practice of selective harvest closures (*tapu*) that locals use to regulate seasons for food resources, from seabirds and clams to sea turtles and their eggs. White's initiative will present sea turtle conservation practices to the subsistence-based coastal communities. By encouraging islanders to report turtle sightings and takes, White hopes to improve research and raise local awareness regarding nesting green turtles and offshore populations of green, hawksbill, and leatherback turtles.



© MICHAEL WHITE

CABO VERDE

ADTMA SOS Tartarugas

Cabo Verde, a remote 10-island archipelago off the coast of West Africa, provides a crucial nesting area for loggerhead sea turtle populations. Major threats are hunting and sand removal tied to unregulated development. ADTMA SOS Tartarugas, a sea turtle conservation organization based on the main nesting island of Sal, has created a summer internship program for marine science students from the University of Cabo Verde, located two islands away. Their 2013 SWOT grant will help offset program and travel costs for two local interns who will gain theoretical and field training during the nesting season. ADTMA SOS Tartarugas hopes that the experience of working with research scientists and international volunteers will inspire future leaders in sea turtle research and conservation.



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MEXICO

Vida Milenaria

Vida Milenaria is a research nonprofit organization based in Tecolutla, Veracruz, Mexico, a nesting site for Kemp's ridley sea turtles. Fernando "Papa Tortuga" Manzano has made it his life's work over the past four decades to help bring this turtle population back from the brink of extinction. Manzano has now launched a project to tag and track Tecolutla's nesting females. The initiative promises to improve scientific understanding of the population and provide vital information for future conservation efforts. With a 2013 SWOT grant, the nonprofit has purchased flipper tags and applicators, as well as calipers to apply tags to adult females during the 2014 nesting season. Long term, the mark-recapture study should inform understanding of population dynamics and size, nesting site fidelity, and connectivity between populations.



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Visit www.SeaTurtleStatus.org to apply for a 2014 SWOT small grant!