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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

36th meeting
Strasbourg, 15-18 November 2016

Specific Sites - Files open

**Presumed degradation of nesting beaches in
Fethiye and Patara SPAs (Turkey)**

Patara nesting beach

- REPORT BY THE GOVERNMENT -

*Document prepared by
the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, Turkey*

GOVERNMENT REPORT ON RECOMMENDATION NO. 182 (2015) ON THE CONSERVATION OF *Caretta caretta* AND ITS HABITAT AT PATARA NESTING BEACH (TURKEY): ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT UNTIL AUGUST 2016 UNDER THE PROJECT “CONSERVATION AND MONITORING OF MARINE TURTLES IN PATARA SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AREA”

Conservation and monitoring activities for the year 2016 were initiated in May 2016 and all the activities carried out until August in marine turtle nesting beach were presented below:

Firstly, The General Directorate for the Protection of Natural Assets under The Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, put aside a budget for monitoring and conservation activities at the beginning of the current year, and this budget was and is still being used for monitoring and conservation activities of scientific teams working in the region.

These scientific teams had two main responsibilities in the field. First responsibility was to make conservation studies like spotting new nests, caging the nests against predation and other damages, relocating nests which are in danger of inundation. Other responsibility was educational activities. These teams also carried out educational activities for managers and employees of hotels, cafeterias and restaurants and also for domestic and international tourists and local people around the beach. New signs were posted in the field and existing signs were repaired.



Starting with the launch of the project in May 2016, some warning signs were posted on different parts of the region. Cages were prepared to inform people about the nest locations and to attract more attention pictures and logos were used on the cages.



A lodge on the beach was designed to serve as an information desk for local and foreign people. Previous year's studies and this year's study were told to visitors. The lodge was painted, a roof was constructed and it was covered with pictures, posters and warning signs to be more attractive.



A warning sign was also put at the enterprise on the beach. All these studies were conducted in cooperation with the scientific team and conservation studies aimed at reaching to a maximum number of people at the beach.



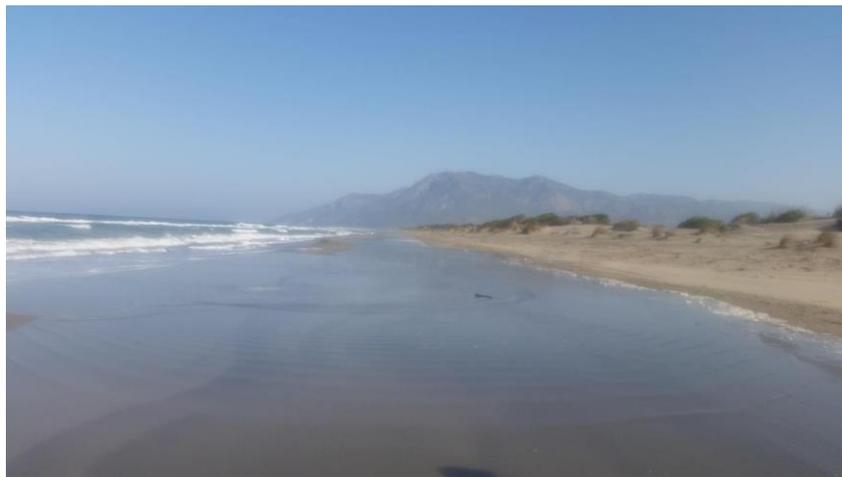
In specified days of the week, information desk remained open for domestic and international tourists and these people were told about the turtle ecology and behaviour.



Hand-outs and brochures were disseminated in Turkish and English and tourists were informed by the officers and volunteers.



Officers and volunteers also participated in field studies.



The scientific research team has made an assesment about the places of the nests and determined which nests should be relocated in case of inundation.



Caging of the nests in places where there is intense human activity is still continuing. As of August, there are still some new nests and these newly found nests are being protected by putting cages and by placing warning signs over the cages.



All the nest coordinates were recorded by GPS devices. The sticks used has information written on them. To prevent predation, 100 X 100 cm square cages that are put under the sand are used.



An Instagram account was created to share photos about the activities done in the project. The account is managed by the scientific team and mostly informative photos are shared.



Field studies are conducted together with the volunteer tourists. Visits are done in groups with a previously determined maximum number of people.



The enterprise at the beach keeps the beach clean by organizing people, usage of sunbeds and umbrellas are regulated by the enterprise.



Warning signs were put at the most attractive points, decided together by the scientific team and lifeguards.



In the releasing of juvenile turtles, tourists are also informed. This activity was also regulated so that tourists can observe the moment of juvenile's reaching to the sea without giving any harm to them.



Observing the mother turtles during egg laying is also regulated. Tourist groups are observing the turtles under the supervision of scientific team members.



In some days of the week, the scientific team is answering the questions of tourists about turtles and oral presentations are done.



Photo of people after observing juvenile turtle's walk to the sea.