



Follow-up of Recommendations Nos. 182 and 183 (2015) on Presumed degradation of nesting beaches in Fethiye and Patara SPAs (Turkey)

PRESENTATION BY THE GOVERNMENT

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REVIEW

Mediterranean sea turtles: current knowledge and priorities for conservation and research

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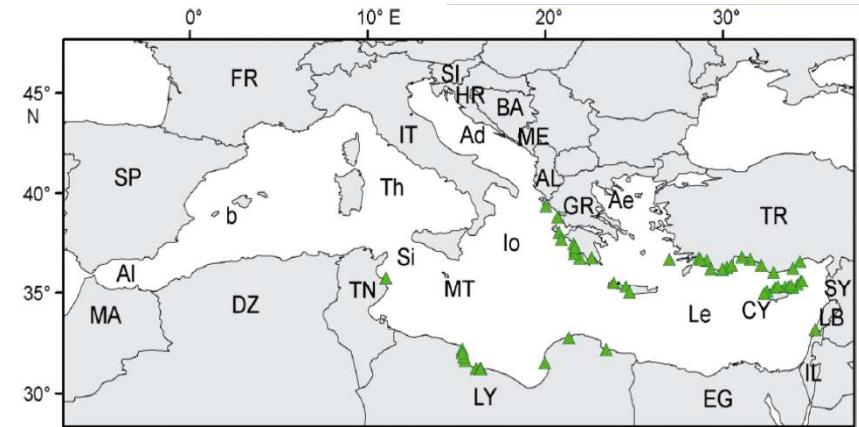
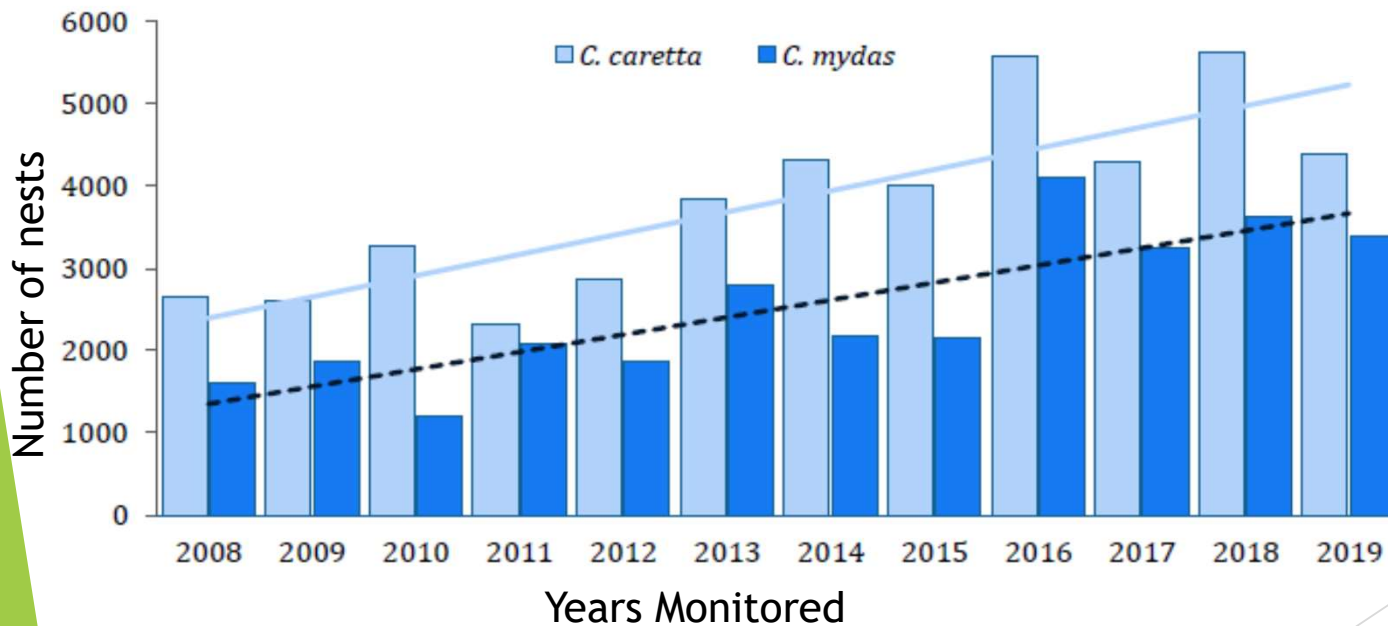


Fig. 2. Major nesting sites (i.e. ≥ 10 clutches yr^{-1} and ≥ 2.5 clutches km^{-1}) of loggerhead turtles *Caretta caretta* in the Mediterranean. Countries: AL: Albania; DZ: Algeria; BA: Bosnia and Herzegovina; HR: Croatia; CY: Cyprus; EG: Egypt; FR: France; GR: Greece; IL: Israel; IT: Italy; LB: Lebanon; LY: Libya; MT: Malta; ME: Montenegro; MA: Morocco; SI: Slovenia; SP: Spain; SY: Syria; TN: Tunisia; TR: Turkey. Marine areas: Ad: Adriatic Sea; Ae: Aegean Sea; Al: Alboran Sea; Io: Ionian Sea; Le: Levantine Basin; Si: Sicilian Strait; Th: Tyrrhenian Sea; b: Balearic Islands (Spain)



Türkozan and Kaska (2010)-IUCN report -on 289,1 km beaches

- 769-3521 Loggerhead nests
- 452-2051 Green Turtle nest

Casale et al., 2018-review paper-on 152 km beaches

- 792-4682 loggerhead nests
- 498-2660 green Turtle nests

Monitoring history of Sea Turtles in Turkey

- ▶ 1988: A complete survey along the Turkish Mediterranean coast. A total of 17 beaches were identified (Baran and Kasperek, 1989).
- ▶ Not all of these beaches surveyed every year but only Specially protected ones monitored with the standard protocol developed by the Scientific Committee for Sea Turtle Protection.
- ▶ The number of beaches were increased to 22 with recent surveys. These beaches and their status given below. Additional beaches identified shown as

SPA Beaches
Every year since 1988

- Dalyan
- Fethiye
- Patara
- Belek
- Göksu delta

Regularly monitored beaches

- Dalaman-Sarıgerme
- Anamur
- Çıralı
- Alata
- ODTU Beach
- Davultepe
- Kazanlı
- Akyatan-Karataş
- Yumurtalık-Sugözü
- Samandağ

Irregularly monitored beaches

- Ekincik
- Demre
- Kumluca
- Tekirova
- Kızılot
- Demirtaş
- Gazipaşa

Monitoring teams-Universities-NGOs

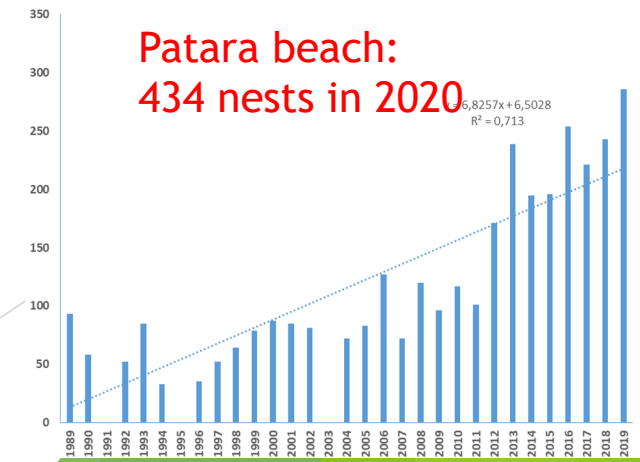
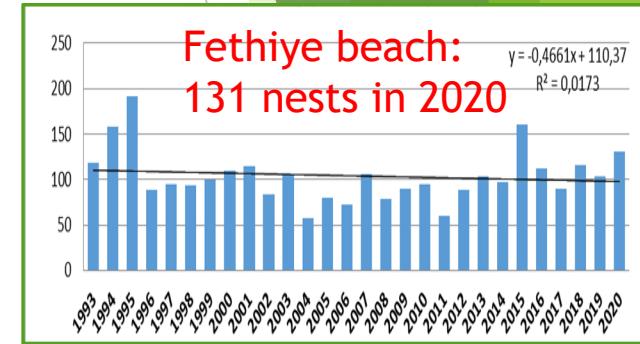
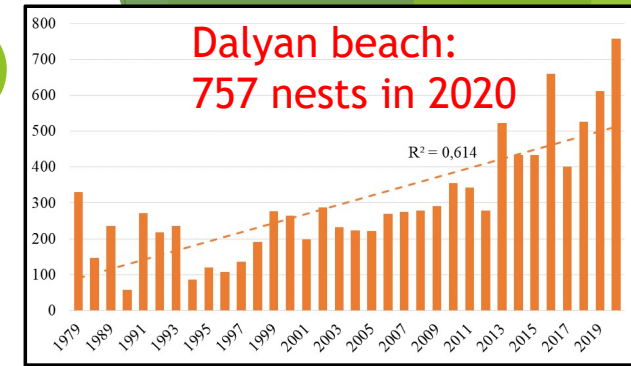


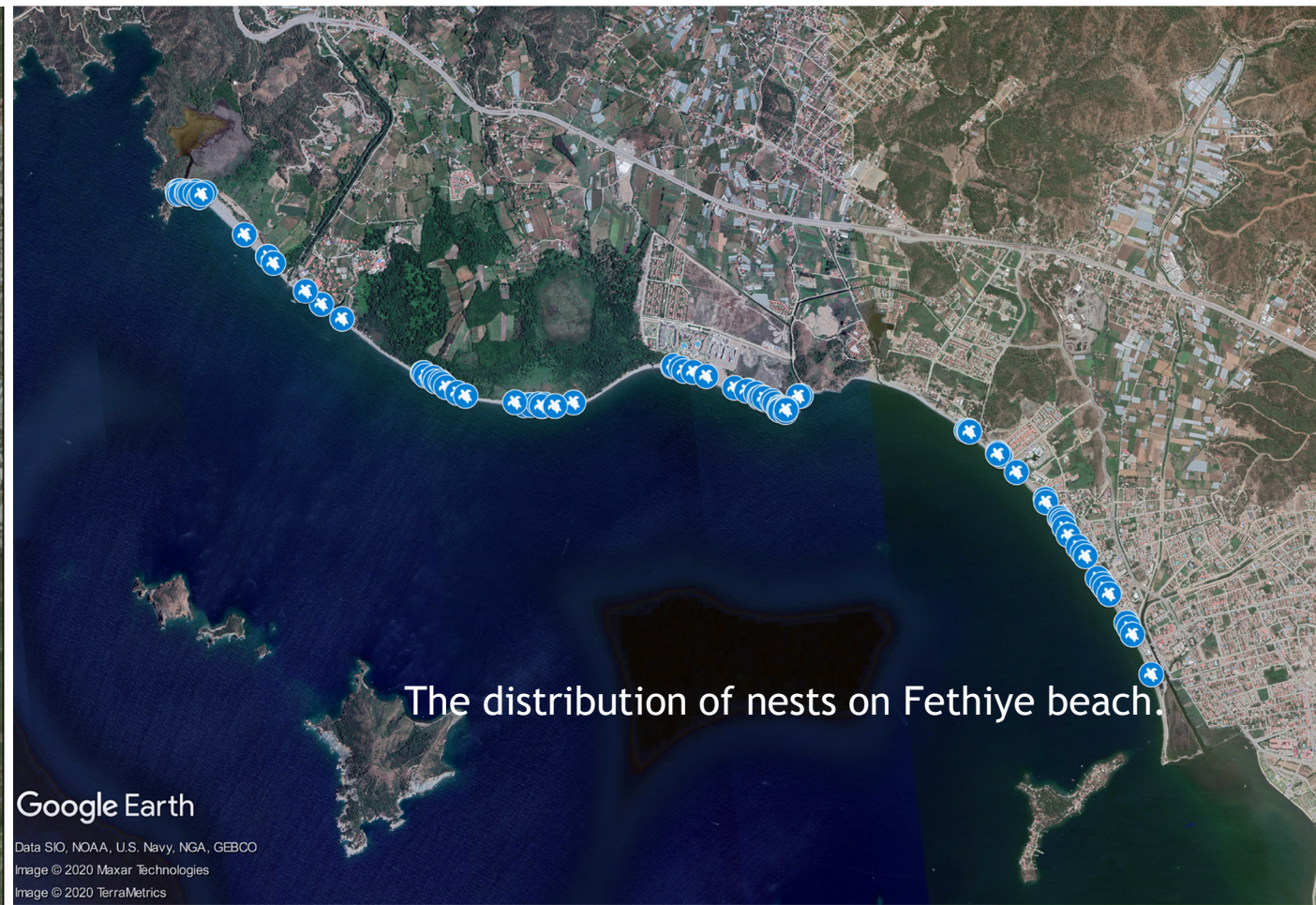
- in 2019 nesting season;
- 3378 green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) nests
- 4480 loggerhead sea Turtle nests were identified (*Caretta caretta*) on 15 beaches that monitored
- Data from irregularly monitored beaches not included

(Dalyan, Fethiye, Patara, Belek, Göksu Deltası) Specially Protected Area (SPA) monitored by research groups from different Universities.

- ▶ Daily monitoring of these beaches and all nests are protected and the necessary scientific information were collected by the research teams and volunteers.
- ▶ All nests checked every day and after hatching all the detailed information regarding the hatching success were obtained.
- ▶ As a result of this conservation activities, Mediterranean population of *Caretta caretta* sea turtles was reevaluated by IUCN in 2015 and due to the increasing population trend, the redlist status of *Caretta caretta* was lowered from EN (Endangered) to LC (Least concern)

Beaches	No of nests	Number of hatchlings produced
Belek	3200	125.000
Dalyan	757	36.000
Göksu deltası	268	9.000
Fethiye	131	7.000
Patara	434	21.850

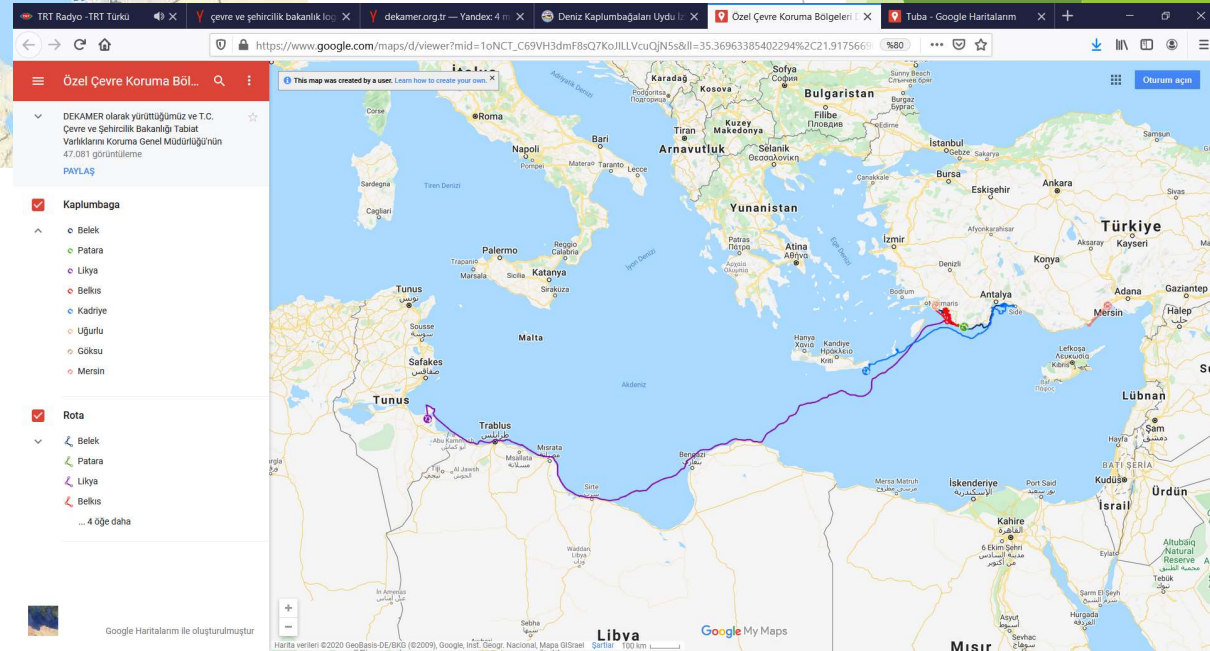
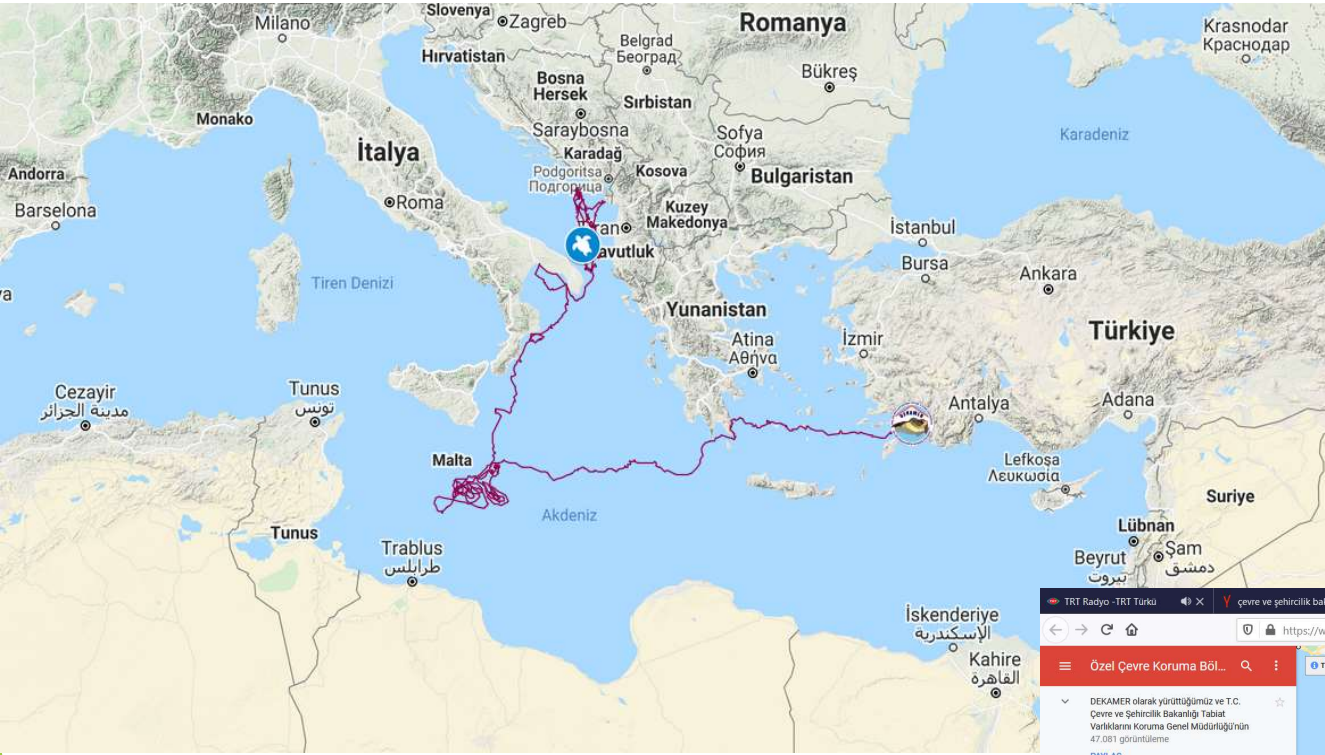




Every nest recorded, the GPS location were noted, the nests were caged and the fertilised eggs and unfertilised eggs, dead-in-Shell embryos, hatchlings were counted and the predation and hatching success data produced and reported.

Conservation priorities in the Mediterranean (Casale et al., 2018)

Priority	Actions taken by Turkey
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year-round protection of key feeding and wintering grounds	identification of such areas via satellite tracking and Capture-Mark-recapture studies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue current conservation methods at nesting sites	Continuous research efforts on the beaches, every single nest were caged and protected.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate fishermen on on-board sea Turtle handling best practices• Implement TED in bottom trawlers• Implement LED lights in set nets.	MED-BYCHATCH Project LIFE-MEDTURTLE Project There are activities under these projects. DEKAMER, WWF TURKEY and DD are carrying out such activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seasonal protection of main migratory corridors	identification of such areas via satellite tracking and Capture-Mark-recapture studies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trans-boundary large MPA in the Adriatic	MTSG is working on Important Marine Turtle Areas.



- Year-round protection of key feeding and wintering grounds is very important. This is only possible with the satellite information.
- Seasonal protection of main migratory corridors is also possible with this information.



GENERAL FOLLOW-UP of RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Nests caged and screened against predation and human disturbance.
- ✓ Beach information signs were placed on each beach.
- ✓ Less touristic activity due to Covid pandemic in 2020 created an advantageous condition in the conservation activities.
- ✓ Injured sea turtles are sent to Sea Turtle Research Rescue and Rehabilitation Center in Dalyan for medical help.
- ✓ If any dead sea turtles are found, they are recorded by the local branches of the ministries and the reason of death is also detected.
- ✓ Foraging sites of sea turtles in certain regions under the sea are also monitored in regular intervals by professional divers.
- ✓ By means of brochures, posters, stickers and informative meetings, personnel from touristic enterprises, daily tourists and picnickers, local administrations and local people are educated about the life cycle of sea turtles.
- ✓ The migrating between their foraging, wintering and nesting grounds were monitored on 8 female turtles.



FOLLOW UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS (182)

- Patara nesting beach is a Special Environmental Protected Area since 1990. Continuous Turtle monitoring studies since then by a professional research team during the nesting season.
- Beach furniture is collected by the tourism facilities during the night. Development of permanent structures is not allowed on the nesting zone of the beach.
- Human settlement area, about 2 km far away from the beach, is within the boundaries of village settlement area.
- Sea turtle nests are located and all the nests that are detected are protected by grid cages against predation.

FOLLOW UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS (183)

- Fethiye beach is also monitored by a research team.
- Development of permanent structures is not allowed on the nesting zone of the beach. Seasonal prefabricated structures are built behind the nesting zone.
- The wooden structures blocking the passage of sea turtles on the beach were removed.
- Sand extraction is forbidden by the law and illegal sand extraction is subject to the fine.
- Beach furniture is only allowed on particular areas during the day time. Beach furniture are collected by the tourism facility areas during the night. (SEE PICTURES ON THE RIGHT).
- Less light pollution on the beach due to covid. The lights causing disorientation either asked to be painted in red or turned off.



Other improvements:

- ▶ Permanent barriers were built, and vehicle access is restricted and/or prohibited during the breeding season.
- ▶ Sea turtle monitoring and conservation projects are funded by the Ministry and the project has been conducted by sea turtle researchers from universities. The monitoring and conservation studies start by the 1st of May each year and the team remains on the site until the end of September. Conservation and monitoring studies have been conducted continuously for the last 20 years. Monitoring of turtles via satellite devices is also funded by Ministry this summer.
- ▶ Fethiye Beaches are being monitored by a team from Sea Turtle Research, Rescue and Rehabilitation Center (DEKAMER) during the nesting season. The Coast Guard is also helping protecting the bays around Fethiye. In addition, local branches of the Ministry Forestry and Water Affairs, The Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, and DEKAMER extend the monitoring area towards Göcek.
- ▶ Public awareness activities have been continuing in the area by the research team with our ministry's support during the monitoring and conservation project. Research team started "Turtle Friendly Enterprise" certification program.



Conclusion

- ▶ Thanks to Secretariat and MEDASSET for following up Turtle issues on those beaches.
- ▶ We are carrying out monitoring studies by University research groups and NGOs on 15 beaches.
- ▶ With the success of our conservation studies over the last 32 years, we see remarkable increase in nest numbers and the hatchlings produced.
- ▶ We are well aware of the importance of Turkish beaches for both loggerhead and green turtles in the Mediterranean, and therefore, we are doing our best in protecting every single eggs in every nests.
- ▶ We are following up the recommendation for conservation priorities suggested by Casale et al., 2018, which is the review of the Turtle information in the Mediterranean.
- ▶ We therefore kindly ask the Committee to close the files for Fethiye and Patara beaches, as we keep reporting our successful conservation activities on those beaches.



THANK YOU