

turtles have an innate ability to disperse and travel like their wild counterparts when they are released into the wild. Acknowledgments: captive turtles for the study were donated by Underwater World Singapore Pte Ltd and the Port of Nagoya Aquarium. The ship MV Kota Hadiah of Pacific International Lines transported the tagged turtles to the South China Sea for release. The research was conducted with the approval of the university IACUC ethics committee and supported by the University Academic Research Grant RP 05/06 to the first author. The Satellite Tracking and Analysis Tool (STAT) at SEATURTLE.ORG was used in this study.

***RE-NESTING MOVEMENTS AND POST-NESTING MIGRATIONS OF GREEN TURTLES
TAGGED IN TWO TURTLE ROOKERIES IN SRI LANKA**

E.M. Lalith Ekanayake^{1,2}, Thushan Kapurusinghe¹, M.M. Saman¹, A.M.D.S. Rathnakumara¹, R.S. Rajakaruna³, P. Samaraweera⁴, and K.B. Ranawana³

¹ *Turtle Conservation Project (TCP), 11, Perera Mawatha, Panadura, Sri Lanka*

² *Post Graduate Institute of Science, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka and Department of Zoology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

³ *Department of Zoology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

⁴ *Department of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

Adult green turtles frequently travel long distances between feeding and nesting areas. Tagging and satellite telemetry of nesting females has provided insights into distribution and movements. We used conventional flipper tags to track re-nesting movements and post-nesting migrations of green turtles nesting in the Rekawa and Kosgoda rookeries in Sri Lanka. Tagging was initiated in September 1996 at Rekawa and in September 2003 at Kosgoda. Initially, plastic flexi tags (Dalton®) were used to tag the rear flipper of the turtles and from 1999 titanium tags (Stockbrands Co (Pvt.) Ltd., Western Australia) were used on the front flipper with an identification number and address. Tagged individuals were subsequently monitored during their re-nesting movements and post-nesting migration. A total of 1,506 green turtles were tagged at both sites with 987 from Rekawa (September 1996 to November 2006) and 519 from Kosgoda (September 2003 to July 2008). Re-nesting frequency was 78.9% at Rekawa and 54.3% at Kosgoda. Many females were found re-nesting on these two beaches and some on other beaches that were in close proximity to the original tagging sites. Of the tagged females, 55 (11%) were found re-migrating to nest at Kosgoda. Migratory patterns were determined for two female green turtles which were tracked away from the coastal waters of Sri Lanka. The first female (SL 3187) was tagged on 21 June 2005 at Rekawa and was found dead at the northern tip of the Agatti Island, Lakshadweep, India, on 31 July 2009 (four years after initial tagging). The second female (LK 0711) was tagged on 16 May 2008 at Kosgoda and was found dead on the beach in Phang-nga Province (north of Phuket), Thailand on 14 July 2009. The two individuals showed marked differences in their post-nesting migration patterns: the individual that was tagged at Rekawa migrated north to Indian coastal waters whereas the individual tagged at Kosgoda traveled northeast to coastal waters of Thailand. Both of these females were one time nesters; there are no records of them returning to the Rekawa or Kosgoda rookeries for re-nesting. Even though tag recoveries of re-migrating females have been made along the southern and western coast of Sri Lanka at Hambantota and Negombo, this is the first time that tag recoveries have been reported from outside the island, and with a travel distance of more than 2,000 km this is the longest green turtle track ever reported from Sri Lanka. Results provide evidence that Sri Lankan green turtles migrate outside the coastal waters of Sri Lanka and highlight the importance of incorporating regional coordination as recommended in the Marine Turtle Action Plan of Sri Lanka. Acknowledgements: the authors would like to thank Kajana and her colleague from Thailand and A. Koyssan, C.N. Abdul Raheem and B.C. Choudhary from India for valuable information about tag recoveries. This project is funded by the National Science Foundation and GEF/SGP of Sri Lanka. We also thank the symposium organizers for a travel grant.