towards a comprehensive marine and coastal conservation and management policy framework, which will take into consideration India's international obligations under various conventions and regional instruments.

RESEARCH NEEDS IN SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION IN SRI LANKA

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In the past, sea turtle conservation activities in Sri Lanka were dominated by ex-situ conservation programs where sea turtle eggs were collected from the nesting beaches and reburied in a safe place away from the original nesting beach until they hatched. But since 1996 a few conservation projects have initiated some in-situ programs where turtle nests are protected at the nesting beach. This is more laborious and expensive work compared to ex-situ conservation. Safe entry of turtle hatchlings to the sea is the final goal of these hatchery activities. However, the sea turtles' conservation needs cannot be met only by releasing large numbers of hatchlings to the sea. Long-term studies on sea turtle nesting biology should be carried out in order to understand the turtles' conservation needs and promote their long-term survival. Proper understanding of their nesting behavior is essential to maintain ecologically effective hatchery management practices. A proper research program to monitor the nesting behavior of turtles has been conducted at Rekawa since 1996 and at Kosgoda since 2003. These activities should be continued and extended to other turtle nesting beaches in order to identify the nesting turtle populations in Sri Lanka. A research program was initiated in 2005 to study genetic diversity of green turtles nesting at Kosgoda rookery. During the project multiple paternity in green turtle hatchlings was also investigated. Monitoring the genetic diversity of adult turtles is a very important aspect of the turtle conservation program. Therefore, this study should be extended to the other turtle nesting beaches in Sri Lanka. The main problem faced by the turtle conservation programs in Sri Lanka is that monitoring and research is done only in a few locations due to the limitations of resources and trained personnel. Monitoring on the north and eastern coasts has not been carried out during the last 30 years due to terrorist activities in the area. However, with the defeat of terrorism, there are opportunities to extend turtle research activities to this part of the country.

COASTAL HABITAT PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF REGULATIONS – A PRIORITY FOR SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION IN BANGLADESH

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Increases in the magnitude of land-based activities, conversion and alteration of coastal land, disturbances, unregulated tourism and artisanal fishing are some of the concerns that need to be tackled by the Government of Bangladesh to conserve nesting sea turtles. The major nesting beaches of St. Martin's Island and Teknaf Peninsula – though they were declared as protected areas under the Bangladesh Environmental Conservation Act of 1995 – still need high-level government and political interventions to be managed effectively. Beaches of tens of off-shore islands still need to be explored as potential sea turtle nesting habitats. Seasonal fishing in the bay, particularly during the winter, coincides with the higher frequency of nesting sea turtles and most of the mortalities occur during that time. Nesting beaches located within the Sunderbans Reserve Forest are mostly disturbed by seasonal fishing villages. Physical changes in the landscape and beach sand dunes are affecting turtle nesting sites and also putting female turtles under immense stress in nest site selection. Moreover the reduction in the numbers of nesting females is also a cause of concern that suggests the need to address issues beyond the beaches. It is high time that policies give concrete guidelines and identify niches within the legally protected beaches for 'zero-tolerance' with full-fledged no disturbance labels. The paper discusses issues of tourism regulation, regulating land-based activities and recommendations from the Coastal Development Strategy, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the conservation of sea turtles in Bangladesh. Emerging issues like the impact of climate change on the sea turtle nesting habitat is also discussed.