

STATUS OF SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION IN ANDHRA PRADESH

Andhra Pradesh located on the East coast of India has a long coast line of 1000 Kms over looking the Bay of Bengal Olive Ridley Turtles arrive off the coast of Andhra Pradesh during the months of October to May and sporadic breeding takes place all along the coast off Andhra Pradesh beginning from Sriharikota island in the south to Srikakulam in the North. The following are the important breeding sites

- a) Sriharikota Island
- b) Vakadu beach
- c) Bapatla beach
- d) Nizampatnam port
- e) Krishna estuary (Repalle & Nagayalanka)
- f) Narsapur coast
- g) Sacramento Island
- h) Hope Island
- i) Pudimadaka
- j) Vizag coast and Bhemeli coast
- k) Kalingapatnam, Bharuva and Chilka coast

An estimated 20000 to 30000 Turtles nest along the shores of Andhra Pradesh in a sporadic manner with larger concentration at the above mentioned sites. Mating starts from mid October and extends to February, while nesting takes place from January to April and the hatchlings are seen upto May.

**CAUSES OF CONCERN:**

- ☒ Fishing related mortality due to increased mechanized fishing
- ☒ Disturbance to adults and disorientation of hatchlings due to lighting from industries, ports harbors etc ,
- ☒ Beach combing for prawn seed.
- ☒ Beach erosion and siltation
- ☒ Pollution and pollution related problems
- ☒ Damage by predators.
- ☒ Disturbance by local people.
- ☒ Changes in land use pattern along the coast

## MEASURES TAKEN FOR PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES:

- ✔ Collection of Sea turtle eggs banned under W.L (P) Act, 1972
- ✔ Nesting habitat being monitored during breeding season by engaging watchers
- ✔ Poaching of adults females and nest's/eggs etc , effectively protected through engaging protection watchers
- ✔ Local people and N G O's involved in data collection and monitoring
- ✔ Trade of adult turtles curtailed
- ✔ Public awareness campaign started through N.G Ø's, WWF and other voluntary organizations.
- ✔ Engaging research scholar through local universities to study nesting habits and habitats
- ✔ Seeking cooperation from coast guards, navy and other law enforcing agencies in implementing provisions of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
- ✔ Declaring 20 Kms sea ward radius from the important nesting sites as no fishing zones under CRZ

## PROPOSED ACTIONS TO PREVENT THE THREATS:

- ✔ Regulate fishing and trawling activities during breeding season.
- ✔ Check changes in the land use pattern by implementing CRZ regulations
- ✔ Prevent illegal encroachment of Sea turtle nesting sites.
- ✔ Monitoring and controlling pollution
- ✔ Control of predation of eggs, hatchlings and adults
- ✔ Check adult sea turtle mortality both onshore and offshore
- ✔ Create greater awareness for conservation of sea turtle and their habitat.
- ✔ Create a data base for providing necessary inputs for long term scientific management
- ✔ Making installation of TED devices mandatory in all fishing trawlers.