

# The GOI UNDP Sea Turtle Conservation Project

**Source: Wildlife Institute of India**

*PO Box 18, Chandrabani, Dehradun 248001. India.*

*Email: undpturtle@wii.gov.in*

The Government of India – UNDP Sea Turtle Project is a national sea turtle conservation project which is being executed by the Ministry of Environment of Forests, with the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun coordinating the various sub-programmes within the project. The project, initiated in late 1999, has various components including extensive surveys along the coast, reviews of legislation and community based conservation, education and awareness, GIS studies of key nesting areas, TED demonstrations and implementation and training for wildlife and fisheries managers and field biologists.

## Surveys

While there is scattered literature for the entire coast on sea turtle nesting, no systematic survey has been carried out and many areas have been ignored. One of the objectives of this program was to extensively survey the entire coast for sea turtle nesting and mortality with intensive sampling of key areas. Another objective of the survey is to build a coastal network of organisations and individuals involved or interested in marine conservation and fisheries issues who can serve to disseminate and collect information. Surveys have been initiated in most of the states by the following organisations:

- **West Bengal** – *Nature, Environment and Wildlife Society, Calcutta.*
- **Orissa** – *Forest Department, Government of Orissa, Bhubaneshwar.*
- **Andhra Pradesh** – *Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.*

- **Tamil Nadu** – *Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Coimbatore.*
- **Kerala** – *THANAL Conservation Action & Information Network, Thiruvananthapuram.*
- **Maharashtra and Goa** – *Bombay Natural History Society, Bombay.*
- **Gujarat** – *Gujarat Institute of Desert Ecology, Bhuj.*
- **Andaman and Nicobar islands** – *Andaman and Nicobar Environmental Team, Port Blair.*

## Other projects

The Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun conducted a Rapid Assessment survey of the impact of the supercyclone (October, 1999) with special reference to sea turtle nesting habitats. A review of legislation is being undertaken by Enviro Law, New Delhi. Kalpavriksh, Pune is conducting a study of community based conservation in Kerala, Goa and Orissa. Orissa Remote Sensing Application Centre, Bhubaneshwar is using GIS and satellite imagery for the characterization of sea turtle nesting habitats in Orissa. The Centre for Environmental Education, Ahmedabad will be conducting a workshop to facilitate education and awareness programmes in various states.

The Orissa Forest Department and the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun plan to conduct a national workshop for sea turtle conservation and management in November, 2000. The project began in late 1999 and currently extends till December, 2001.