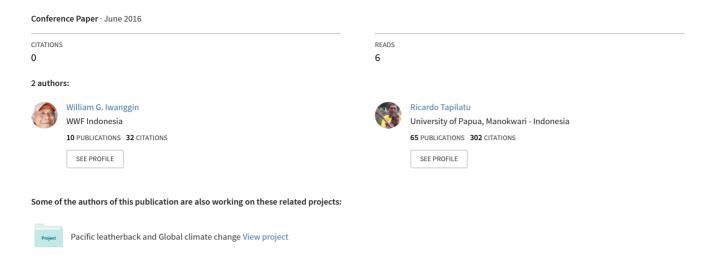
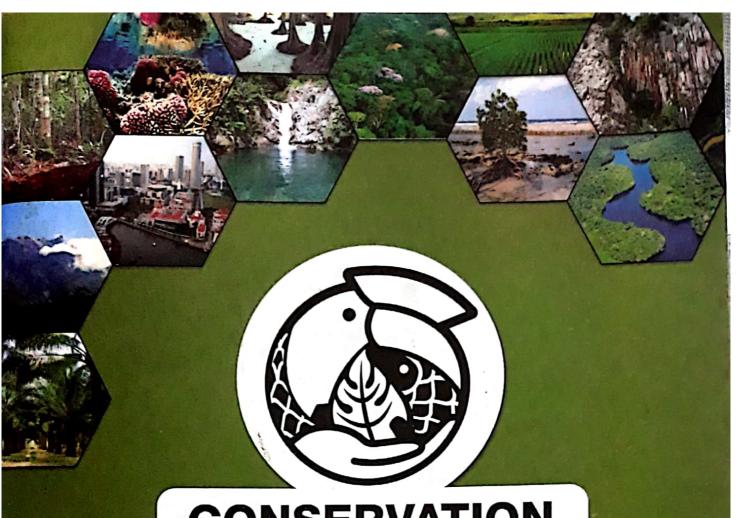
Improving Survival and Hatching Success of Leatherback Nests at Jamursba Medi Beach, Papua Barat – INDONESIA





CONSERVATION ASIA 2016

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES FOR PEOPLE, BUSINESS, AND BIODIVERSITY

Joint Meeting
Society for Conservation Biology Asia section
Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation Asia-Pacific chapter

National University of Singapore 29 June - 2 July 2016







CONFERENCE PROGRAM BOOK



ABSTRACT BOOK

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Table of Contents

S01: Socio-ecological Synthesis - Methods to Address Conservation Issues	4
S02: Are Protected Areas in Asia Failing?	7
S03: Amphibian Conservation in Asia: Approaching Standard Methods	13
S04: Elephant Conservation	17
S05: Too Little But Not Too Late: Conservation of Peatlands	20
S06: Managing Agro-industrial Tree Plantations to Enhance Sustinability - Linking Science to Practice	22
S07: Carnivore Conservation	31
S08: Conservation with Development on a Community Scale	36
S09: One Health - A Framework for Comprehensive Disease Management	40
S10: Ecosystem Services and Market-based Conservation - Challenges for the Tropics	
S11: Reducing the Biodiversity Impacts of Infrastructure Development in the Trop	ics
S12: Invasive Species - Meeting the Challenge	53
S13: The Future of Biodiversity in the Face of Climate Change	55
S14: Marine Conservation - New Methods and Best Practices	58
C15. Warn Wildlife Trade in Asia: Searching for Solutions	60
S16: Special Systems	67
S17: Discussing Science Democratization, Citizen Science & Community Engagement	
The Annual of Pas in South China Border Areas: Challenges and Prospects	/4
S19: Myanmar Biodiversity	80
S20: Progress and Challenges in Turtle Conservation in South and Southeast Asia	85
S20: Progress and Chantenges in Table S21: Anthropology of Wildlife Conservation	90
S22: Urban Biodiversity in Asia) (
S22: Urban Biodiversity in Asianana S22: Urban Biodiversity in Asianana S23: China's National Ecosystem Assessment: Patterns, Services and Conservation Policies	
ation	100
Concervation	103
S26: Botanical Gardens as a Major Avenue for Research and Conservation in the	107
S28: Open Session - Plants	114

Improving survival and hatching success of leatherback nests at Jamursba Medi Beach, Papua Barat, Indonesia

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Jamursba Medi (JM) beach located on the northwest coast of the Bird's Head Peninsula, Papua Barat, Indonesia hosts the largest nesting aggregation of leatherback turtles (Dermochelys coriacea) in the western Pacific. The Bird's Head nesting population is rapidly declining, and low hatchling output impedes population recovery. Increasing hatchling production by improving survival and hatching success of leatherback nests is the primary focus of our conservation program. Here we report results from our efforts after we implemented a strategic management plan, which identified high-risk areas. Primary threats to leatherback nests include predation by feral pigs and dogs, elevated sand temperatures, tidal inundation and erosion. We protected nests by enclosing nests facing predation risk, shading nests at-risk from extreme sand temperatures, relocating nests to safer areas, and a combination of these methods. In addition, members of local communities helped lower predation rate by snaring pigs in Warmamedi, one of JM beaches where nesting activity and nest predation by pigs are greatest. In 2014 and 2015, approximately 25% and 21% of the nests were protected, respectively, resulting in a higher average hatching success (64% in 2014 and 59% in 2015) than if nests were left unprotected. In both years, pig trapping by community members lowered the predation rate to nearly 0%. Effective pig trapping combined with individual nest protection has greatly improved survival and hatching success of leatherback nests in the last two years. If we, along with community members, continue this effort long term, we will help ensure that hatchling output of the population will be maximized.

Climate change and sea turtle hatchery management practices in South Asia.

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In-situ incubation of sea turtle nests is preferred, but threats including poaching, predation, and habitat loss can require eggs to be incubated in a hatchery. However, management practices that do not result in high hatchling productivity will negate the perceived benefits of incubating eggs in a secure environment. Using a mixed-methods approach to describe hatchery productivity in terms of eggs/nests protected and hatch success, I present detailed descriptions of hatchery infrastructure and practices for handling, transporting and incubating eggs, and holding, rearing and releasing hatchlings from hatcheries in Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Factors that are most likely to contribute to conservation of sea turtles in each country, and those with a potentially negative impact upon hatch success and hatchling survival, were identified. Of great concern is the low hatch success (as low as <10%), and holding and/or rearing of hatchlings. Rising nest temperatures due to climate change are also believed to contribute to low hatch success at some hatcheries; however, proposed mitigation measures do not consider the pivotal temperature or thermo-sensitive period relevant to temperature-dependent sex determination or temperatures experienced within in-situ and ex-situ nests. Strategies to improve hatchery management practices (e.g. annual renewal of sand; reduced holding time of hatchlings) and mitigate the potential impacts of climate change (e.g. shading) are reviewed for each country, depending on the most prominent threats, so as to ensure high productivity of hatcheries in South Asia and hatchling sex ratios that will contribute to the effective conservation of sea turtles in the region.

The challenge of sea turtle conservation in Cambodia: filling data gaps using community mapping and stakeholder interviews

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Five species of sea turtle have historically been found in Cambodia, however due to overexploitation and destructive fishing practices, numbers have declined with only the critically endangered hawksbill destructive fishing practices, numbers have declined with only the critically endangered hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata) and endangered green turtle (Chelonia mydas) reported in recent years. To date,