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News

Inspiring presentation by mr. Ricardo Tapilatu at MAE

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Mr. Ricardo F. Tapilatu, Head of the Research Center for Pacific Marine Resources at the University of Papua, Indonesia made time in his busy schedule to give a presentation at the Marine Animal Ecology Group. He talked about his long-term project on Pacific leatherback sea turtles, a topic clearly close to his heart.

Pacific leatherback populations are in serious decline due to a myriad of reasons, including shared area use with fisheries, climate change, and poaching. Two remote beaches located in the Bird's Head Peninsula in Papua Barat serve as their nesting grounds, and mr. Tapilatu has been highly involved in their protection. Since 2005, despite limited finances, dedicated Indonesians of the University of Papua (UNIPA), World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), and the National Marine Fisheries Service's Southwest Fisheries Science Center have led leatherback protection efforts.

Now, there is cooperation on the conservation of leatherbacks with institutes all over the world. UNIPA has been the leading Indonesian institution in these efforts. Mr. Tapilatu's inspiring talk showed what strategies are being used to protect the turtle nesting areas. We were very happy to host him, and happy to see many Indonesian students from different groups join us.

Currently, Mr. Tapilatu is also working together with Dr. Lisa Becking towards the [conservation of marine lakes](#) of West-Papua, Indonesia.

