

# TURTLE FOUNDATION

Protecting Sea Turtles and their Habitats

## Annual Report 2014



### **Boards of Trustees Chairmen**

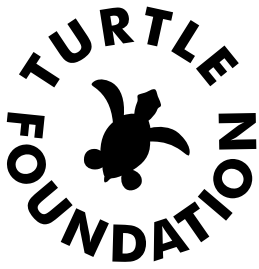
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### *Our vision...*

*...is a future where sea turtles and their habitats are sustainably protected, healthy, and safe from threat of extinction and destruction.*

### *Our Mission...*

*...is to contribute to sea turtle conservation at our own project sites by cooperating with local communities to create a future where both seaturtles and people can thrive.*

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**Cover:** Green sea turtle feeding on seagrass meadow (image rights: LauraD, [www.shutterstock.com](http://www.shutterstock.com))

## PREFACE

*Dear friends and supporters of the Turtle Foundation,*



*A good reason to celebrate: In 2015, the Turtle Foundation has its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Over these 15 years, with your support we have been able to achieve so much. In Indonesia, we protected more than 90,000 green turtle nests from illegal egg poaching and thus gave about 7.7 million turtle hatchlings a chance at life. Further, on Cape Verde we saved about 3,000 nesting loggerhead turtle females from being cruelly slaughtered, and thereby protected more than 11,000 turtle nests. Besides the direct protection work on the nesting beaches, Turtle Foundation has worked to raise awareness among the local population and to involve them into our project work. Over these 15 years, we employed many local people and gave them the possibility to earn their own money and to work on sustainable development of their homelands. In our successful "School in Nature" project in Cape Verde we taught more than 500 children, and to many more in Cape Verde and Indonesia we play-*

*fully conveyed the threats and dangers to the sea turtles and the whole marine life during educational campaigns, school visits, and other activities. Additionally, we welcomed more than 300 Cape Verdean and international volunteers who have supported us in our daily work and in turn collect great, life long lasting experiences on Cape Verde.*

*The 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Turtle Foundation is not only a reason for celebration, but also another opportunity to say Thank You. We sincerely would like to thank our supporters and friends that they gave us the opportunity to protect the sea turtles to save them from extinction. With your financial, energetic, and motivational support for the Turtle Foundation together we can contribute to leave our future generations healthy marine ecosystems. Only this way will our children and grandchildren have the opportunity to experience the majestic sea turtles in their natural habitats.*

*Dr. Frank Zindel*

*Board of Trustees Chairman, Turtle Foundation Switzerland*

## THE TURTLE FOUNDATION

The Turtle Foundation is an international wild-life conservation organization dedicated to the protection of sea turtles and their habitats. The Turtle Foundation is registered as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization in the following countries under the local legal requirements: Germany (since 2000), Switzerland (since 2006), Cape Verde (since 2012; local name: Fundação Tartaruga), and Liechtenstein (since 2014). The Turtle Foundation primarily conducts operational activities and cur-

rently runs two conservation projects in Indonesia and Cape Verde. Our aim is to prevent the imminent extinction of sea turtle populations, to enable re-growth of the depleted populations back to healthy levels, and to prevent mistreatment of sea turtles. We foster the sustainability of our conservation projects by accompanying environmental education activities and by programs to create alternative income opportunities for the local population, with a focus on environmentally compatible and sustainable use of coastal and marine habitats.



## SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2014

### Project Indonesia

The conservation project on the Derawan Islands (district of Berau, province of East Kalimantan, Borneo, Indonesia) started in 2000 and was the first project of the Turtle Foundation. Here is the world's eighth largest nesting area for the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) as well as significant feeding grounds of hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*). Since 1999, all species of sea turtles have been nominally protected completely under Indonesian law. Nevertheless, on the Derawan islands the local government had awarded concessions for collecting green turtle eggs for decades, only ending the practice in 2001. However, egg poaching continued since then illegally, thus endangering the population to be eradicated in the next decades.

In collaboration with Indonesian nature agencies and local organizations the Turtle Foundation erected a monitoring station on the island of Sangalaki for year-round protection of its nesting beaches. In 2006, the Turtle Foundation initiated the founding of the local organization Yayasan Penyu Berau (YPB; Turtle Foundation Berau), which since then was the local implementing partner of the Turtle Foundation carrying out protection work and public relations. Since 2008, further monitoring stations were built in the islands of Bilang-Bilangan and Mataha and run by YPB. After

2012 the protection program on Sangalaki was taken over by the local nature agency, and on Bilang-Bilangan and Mataha we were able to continuously and efficiently protect about 50 % of all turtle nests in the archipelago against egg poaching.

Unfortunately, during 2013 we discovered serious project and financial mismanagement by the leader of YPB, and we were finally forced to discontinue our collaboration with YPB in August 2014. At the same time all the field rangers of the YPB, who have always carried out the protection work on the islands with great dedication, passion, and reliability, also refused to work with the problem leader and left both the organization and the nesting islands. The YPB leader tried to maintain a rudimentary protection program on the islands with a few quickly hired but untrained rangers. However, it soon became apparent that the YPB could afford no adequate and sustainable funding and implementation of the project.

In the meantime the rangers who left the YPB founded their own conservation organization called "Perkumpulan Konservasi Biota Laut Berau" (BLB; Association for the Protection of the Marine Life in Berau), which was officially accredited by end of August 2014, and started its activity under the direction of Berlianto Daniel. The BLB works closely together with the Turtle Foundation, which is also funding it. Simultaneously, the Turtle Foundation deepened its cooperation with ProFauna ([www.profauna.net](http://www.profauna.net)), the largest purely domestic Indonesian nature conservation organization.



Left: The project islands Mataha (foreground) and Bilang-Bilangan (background). Right: Ranger station on Mataha; on the left side lies the fenced hatchery, in which we monitor turtle nests that we relocated because of danger of inundation.

It was decided by the Turtle Foundation to fund an office of ProFauna with two employees in Berau. Since then, ProFauna, BLB and Turtle Foundation are closely cooperating in Berau. The main objective was to restore a permanent and efficient conservation program for marine turtles on the islands Bilang-Bilangan and Mataha. Recently (as of February 2015) the local authority for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs issued to the BLB the necessary permits to protect the nesting islands, and the BLB entered the islands to take action. Together with BLB and ProFauna we now direct our greatest efforts on a successful restart of the conservation project.

To further expand our public relation, education, and outreach activities in the district of Berau, in March 2014 we hired the Czech biologist Hana Svobodová. Ms. Svobodová is responsible for the development of a volunteer program as well as for the development of school education events. She conducted a series of environmental education measures in local kindergartens and schools, where children are taught about the importance and beauty of the sea turtles and marine life in their homeland, which is supported by specially designed games and special teaching material.

Besides holding Indonesia's largest nesting population of green sea turtles, the Derawan Archipelago is also home to hawksbill turtles that are foraging in the large coral reefs of the archipelago. These animals are even more at risk than green turtles because they are

still being hunted for the production of tortoiseshell and stuffed specimens despite official bans. Turtle shell products (bracelets, necklaces, key chains, etc.) as well as stuffed turtles are either sold locally to tourists or offered in the markets of larger cities. Since this exploitation poses a serious risk of extinction to the local hawksbill turtle population, the Turtle Foundation launched together with the Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta (UGM) a combined research and conservation program for these animals. Research is urgently needed because, although hawksbill turtles in the region are regularly reported by locals and diving tourists, there are no reliable data about size, distribution, and biology of the local hawksbill turtle population. Likewise, the actual nesting sites of the archipelago's hawksbill turtles are unknown. In August/September 2014 we started a four weeks pilot project to address these questions, which was supported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the German Eva Mayr Stihl Foundation. In addition to getting first data on hawksbill turtle distribution within a limited area of the archipelago (mainly the waters around the island of Maratua), our main goal was to reveal necessary information about the general framework for continuing studies and for a comprehensive conservation management plan and applicable conservation measures for the archipelago's endangered hawksbill turtles. The study was led by Prof. Dr. Ali Imron of UGM Yogyakarta, an Indonesian expert for wildlife management. The study was very successful, the evaluations are still in progress,



*Left: After lessons in environmental education, pupils are deepening their knowledge about sea turtles and conservation in a specially designed board game, in which a young sea turtle must escape numerous threats. Right: A student of the University of Yogyakarta releases a young hawksbill turtle from board of the expedition ship after it was caught, measured, and tagged during a night dive expedition.*

and results will be published in separate project reports of the Turtle Foundation, in international scientific journals, and will be forwarded to the responsible authorities.

### Project Cape Verde

The Turtle Foundation started its conservation project on the Cape Verdean island of Boavista in 2008 in response to the massive, illegal slaughter of loggerhead turtles (*Caretta caretta*) at their nesting beaches. The Islands of Cape Verde are home to the world's third largest nesting population of this highly endangered species, and 90% of the overall nesting activity in Cape Verde takes place on Boavista. Since the beginning of the conservation project in 2008, the scope and quality of the protection measures have increased with each year. Currently, the project includes seven beaches with a total length of about 29 km, which are monitored during the nesting season (June to October) starting from two beach camps (Lacacção and Boa Esperança) and a field station (Fundo das Figueiras). Monitoring and protection of the beaches are conducted on site by a biologist/field coordinator and a camp coordinator. The direct protection work is carried out by local rangers, and local and international volunteers. In 2014, a total of 15 Cape Verdeans were working in our protection project as paid rangers, in addition to 19 Cape Verdean and 45 international volunteers. As a result of our efforts, the illegal slaughtering of turtles at their nesting beaches was largely prevented, as in previous years. Nevertheless, we found the carcasses of 10 killed turtles during the 2014 season, and mainly in the northeast of Boavista our night

patrols encountered people from the nearby villages on the beaches on several occasions. Our patrols observed and recorded suspicious activities completely as possible when encountered and reported them to the police when necessary. This demonstrates that the risk of poaching is far from over, and that intensive beach monitoring is still necessary at least for the next years.

In 2014, the Turtle Foundation again funded the group "Projeto Varandinha" from the community of Povoação Velha village, which was responsible for the monitoring of approximately 5 km of the nesting beach Varandinha. The group was able to integrate another nesting beach in the southwest of the island (south-east of Santa Monica) into its patrolling program for about two month after funding by the Cape Verdean Ministry of the Environment.

Since 2009, we have collected basic nesting data on the turtles, such as the numbers of nests, the numbers of unsuccessful nesting attempts, and the numbers of dead turtles found on the monitored beaches. Since 2010, biologists, rangers, and long-term volunteers of the Turtle Foundation have collected additional information: Marking and identification of the individual females, information on the movement of individually identified nesting females between their nesting sites, and biometric data of nesting females. In the 2014 nesting season we counted a total of 1,431 nests on our beaches; a large part of them would not exist without our protection measures. Thus, the nesting activity of the 2014 season was lower than in the two years before, but following comparison with 2009



Left: beach camp of the Turtle Foundation in Boa Esperança. Right: Hatchery for turtle nests on the beach of Lacacção

(1,602 nests) and 2010 (1,620 nests) we assume that this is the result of natural fluctuation in annual nesting activity.

In addition to the direct protection measures, the Turtle Foundation places special emphasis on supporting measures for environmental education and poverty reduction, to ensure the sustainability of our conservation projects. As in previous years we offered our successful “School in Nature” project to local schools, which in 2014 was joined by 175 participants (an increase of 63 % compared to the last year) from various parts of Boavista. There, school children participated directly in our sea turtle protection program, and took part in presentations, educational games, sports, and beach cleaning activities, and learned about the urgent needs to protect our marine and terrestrial environments and natural resources. Additionally, in 2014 the Turtle Foundation again organized a handicraft workshop that was offered to people from the poor parts of the island’s capital Sal Rei and from communities in the east of Boavista.

We draw much attention to the development of the tourism industry on Boavista, which often occurs without any concern for environmental sustainability. Sea turtles are threatened by beach development, excessive lighting of the beaches, destruction of nests

by unregulated car and quad driving on the beaches, and disturbance of nesting turtles by unprofessionally guided turtle watching tours.

After a long campaign convincing local authorities of the damage done by quads on the beach, in summer 2014 we started to install signs prohibiting motor quads on turtle nesting beaches protected by the Turtle Foundation. The signs were designed by the Turtle Foundation and produced in Germany and now mounted at selected locations. Further, we expanded our activities in education of tourists, lobbying for turtle protection among governmental organizations, NGOs, and local tourism companies, and maintained partnerships. By end of 2014, the Cape Verdean Ministry of the Environment has begun to discuss new initiatives for turtle conservation with conservation groups on Cape Verde to rework and adapt the so far existing but often insufficient and unenforced laws.

On 10 May 2014 the Turtle Foundation was declared as the winner of the first edition of the Green Project Awards (GPA) in Cape Verde in the category “Natural Resources”. The GPA is a joint initiative of governmental and private bodies to promote sustainable and environmentally conscious projects. We consider this as recognition for the work of all turtle conservation projects in the Cape Verde Islands.



Left: “School in Nature” lesson for children in the Turtle Foundation camp on the beach of Boa Esperança. Right: Beach cleaning activity in Sal Rei, the capital of Boavista

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT 01-OCT-2013 – 30-SEP-2014

The Board of Trustees decided unanimously, due to administrative reasons, to move the closing date of the financial statements to September 30. Thus, the current fiscal year comprises the period 01-Oct-2013 – 30-Sep-2014

### Balance sheet as per 30-Sep-2014

ASSETS	30.09.2014 EUR	LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	30.09.2014 EUR
Cash and cash equivalents	288,183	Accounts payable	0
Receivables	1,247	Deferral	16,250
Accounts paid in advance	2,250	Accruals	50,000
<b>Current assets</b>	<b>291,681</b>	<b>Committed assets</b>	<b>66,250</b>
Tangible assets	2	Capital and surplus	211,758
<b>Fixed assets</b>	<b>2</b>	Expenditure surplus	13.675
		<b>Capital and surplus</b>	<b>225,433</b>
	<b>291,683</b>		<b>291,683</b>

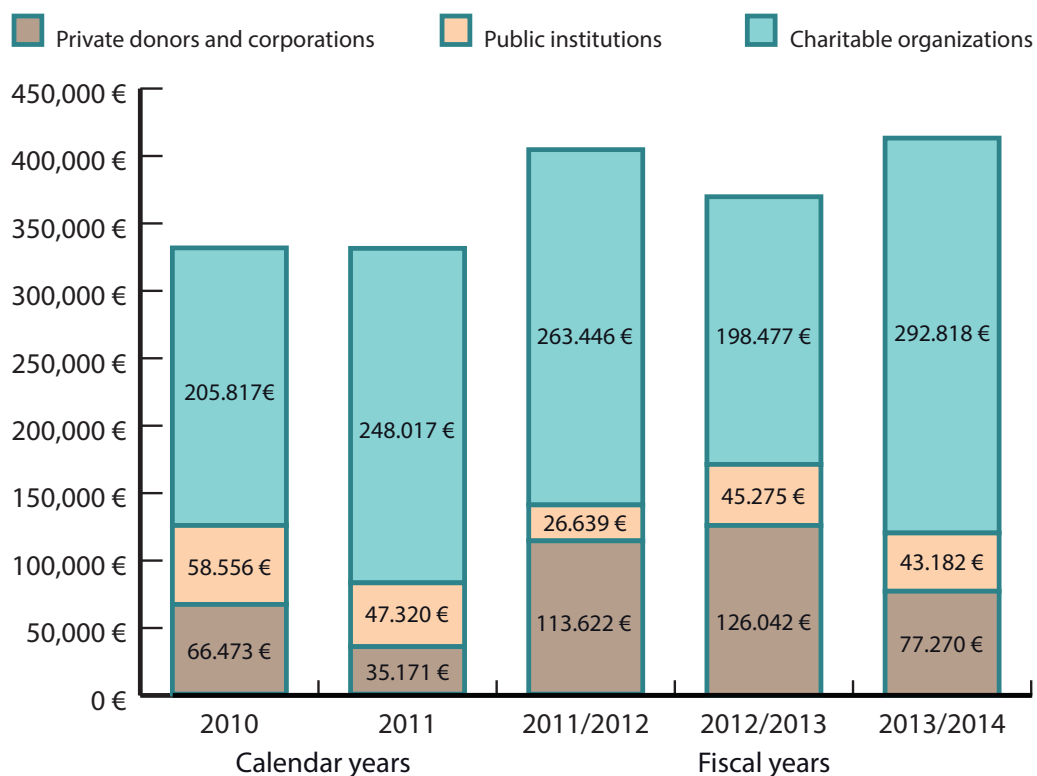
All members of the board of the foundation work on a volunteer basis without any salary payments.



## Profit &amp; loss account 01-Oct-2013 – 30-Sep-2014

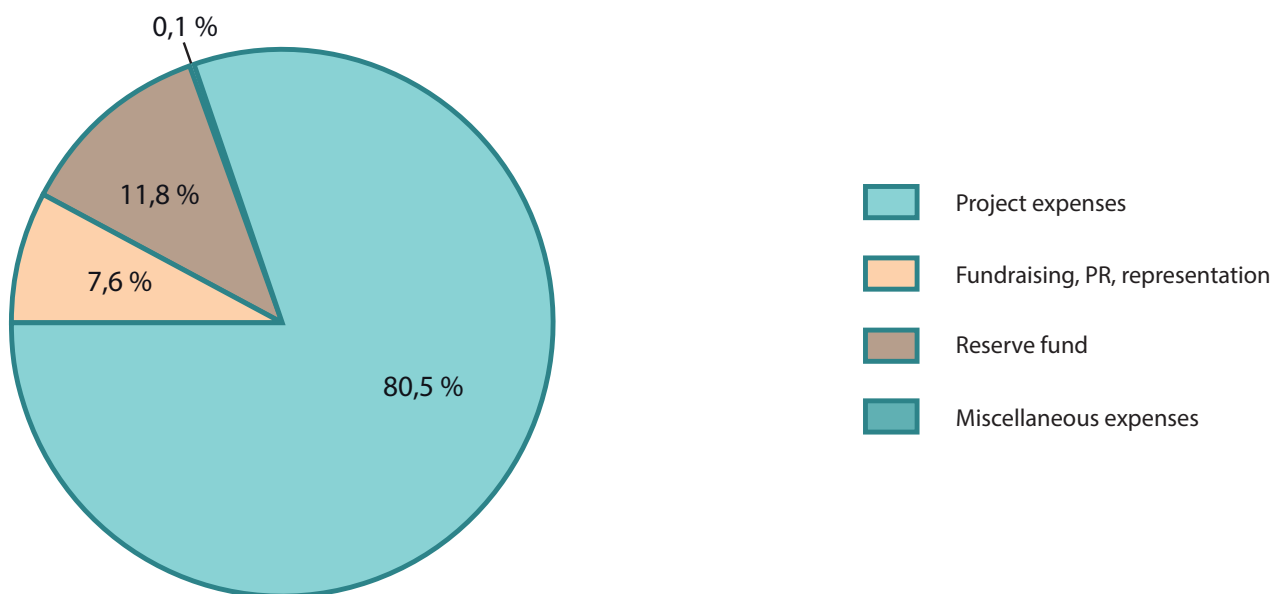
EXPENSES	30.09.2014 EUR	PROCEEDS	30.09.2014 EUR
<b><i>Project East-Kalimantan, Indonesia</i></b>		<b><i>Donations, grants</i></b>	
Direct project expenses	93,259	Private donors & corporations	77,270
<b>Direct expenses for Indonesia</b>	<b>93,259</b>	Public institutions	43,182
		Charitable organizations	292,818
<b><i>Project Cape Verde</i></b>			
Investments, acquisitions	2,071	<b>Total donations, grants</b>	<b>413,270</b>
Salaries and fees	90,970		
Costs of operation building, of- fice, camp	33,696	<b>Sale of products</b>	<b>17,446</b>
Costs of operation camps, gas food, water	33,820		
Costs of operation vehicles/ generators	14,879	<b>Interests</b>	<b>71</b>
Local protection programs/ Varadinha	9,776		
Travel costs	9,712	<b>Gain/loss on exchange</b>	<b>5,445</b>
Other, PR & advertising	3,975		
Patrols	2,778		
<b>Direct expenses for Cape Verde</b>	<b>201,687</b>		
<b>Support of foreign projects</b>	<b>45,020</b>		
<b>Capital expenditure</b>	<b>627</b>		
<b>Fundraising, PR</b>	<b>28,197</b>		
<b>Advertising, representation</b>	<b>3,767</b>		
<b>Allocation to reserve fund</b>	<b>50,000</b>		
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>13,675</b>		
	<b>436,232</b>		<b>436,232</b>

### SOURCE OF FUNDS



\*The year 2011 is a short fiscal year from 1 January to 30 September 2011. For the sake of comparison, the graph was extrapolated to a full year for the fiscal year 2011, but the figure includes the actual values for the period from 1 January to 30 September 2011. Thereafter, the financial year runs from 1 October to 30 September.

### USE OF FUNDS 01-OCT-2013 – 30-SEP-2014



## AUDIT REPORT

The Turtle Foundation (Switzerland) is supervised by the National Supervisory Office for Charities, and is obliged to have its accounts audited annually. Translation of the original report (in German):

**PREFERA**  
Audit AG

Report of the statutory auditors on the limited statutory examination  
to the board of foundation of the  
**Turtle Foundation (Switzerland), 9470 Buchs**

As statutory auditors, we have examined the financial statements (balance sheet, income statement and notes) of Turtle Foundation (Switzerland) for the year ended 30 September 2014.

These financial statements are the responsibility of the board of foundation. Our responsibility is to perform a limited statutory examination on these financial statements. We confirm that we meet the licensing and independence requirements as stipulated by Swiss law.

We conducted our examination in accordance with the Swiss Standard on the Limited Statutory Examination. This standard requires that we plan and perform a limited statutory examination to identify material misstatements in the financial statements. A limited statutory examination consists primarily of inquiries of company personnel and analytical procedures as well as detailed tests of company documents as considered necessary in the circumstances. However, the testing of operation alprocesses and the internal control system, as well as inquiries and further testing procedures to detect fraud or other legal violations, are not within the scope of this examination.

Based on our limited statutory examination, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements and the proposed appropriation of available earnings do not comply with Swiss law and the company's articles of incorporation.

7320 Sargans, 23 January 2015

**Prefera Audit AG**



H. Bertsch  
Audit expert  
(Auditor in charge)



P. Guntli  
Audit expert

## PROJECT PLANNING 2015

### Project Indonesia

#### **1. Continued protection of important nesting islands**

The main target for 2015 is the complete recovery and continuation of our beach monitoring program on the nesting islands Bilang-Bilangan and Mataha, together with the collection of important nesting data. The modalities for our future collaboration with the local organizations will within 2015 be regulated in a legally binding framework agreement between BLB, ProFauna, and Turtle Foundation. In this new team, we will continue to fight for a restoration of a suitable turtle protection program on Sangalaki as well as for the establishment of a ranger station to protect the nesting islands Belambangan and Sambit.

#### **2. Environmental education**

We plan to continue our environmental education programs at local schools as far as our financial and human resources will allow.

#### **3. Anti headstarting campaigns**

Unfortunately, in Indonesia rearing sea turtle hatchlings in water tanks is still popular, although a large proportion of the animals die from diseases, and surviving animals released to the sea have nearly no chance to survive. In many cases this is superficially promoted as turtle protection, however often there are pure economic interests hidden behind those activities (tourism, pet trade). We are currently working together with the Indonesian conservation organization ProFauna on concepts for lobbying strategies for responsible authorities, and on strategies to raise awareness of other stakeholders such as tourists, hotel managements, etc. On the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Sea Turtle Society, which will be in April 2015 in Dalaman (Turkey), we will discuss these concepts with an international expert audience.

#### **4. Establishing a volunteer program**

In March 2014, we commenced the initiation of a volunteer program, in which we want both to incorporate our positive experiences from the Cape Verde volunteer project, as well as to take into account the specific local conditions. After a promising

start, the program had to be put on hold because of the discord with the YPB. Depending on the development of the resumed protection project on the islands and the restoration of the necessary infrastructure, we plan to restart the volunteer program in the second half of 2015. The revenues from the volunteer program are in the long run expected to cover at least parts of the costs of our conservation project.

#### **5. Research and protection project for hawksbill turtles**

Our pilot project in August/September 2014 revealed important insights and experiences into the feasibility and modalities for studies on biology and population of hawksbill turtles in the Derawan archipelago. Such studies need in future to be carried out on a larger scale and over several years to provide significant and essential results that are important to establish a sustainable protection program. For 2015, in collaboration with the University of Yogyakarta we are planning a four- to six-week expedition, during which we want to tag and measure about 100-150 hawksbill turtles. Also, the interviewing campaigns for locals and tourists diving should be continued and extended to other areas in the region. As part of our protection program, on Derawan, where turtle shell products are openly sold to tourists, we had begun to dissuade souvenir vendors from selling of turtle products. In return for promising not to offer such products any more (which we also control as far as we can), vendors receive T-shirts and craft products at very attractive prices for reselling. This measure will be continued and expanded along with the education of tourists about the problems of buying turtle products.

The implementation of all measures that go beyond the basic protection work will depend on the available funding.

### Project Cape Verde

#### **1. Protection of the sea turtles**

The protection and monitoring of the beach areas covered in 2014, which include Aqua Doce, Boa Esperança, beaches of the north coast, Canto, Curral Velho, Ponta Pesqueira and Lacacão, will



be conducted again in 2015 in the months of June to October. The ever increasing tourism activities in the Cape Verde islands, which particularly affect Boavista, lead to increasing conflicts between the interests of tourism and nature conservation. Together with different local stakeholders the Turtle Foundation develops concepts in order to meet these new challenges. In 2015 the Turtle Foundation will start to implement a project to build a software-based distribution center for turtle watching tours. This should facilitate for all stakeholder to perform turtle watching tours in compliance with the strict rules to prevent disturbing the nesting turtles and should, and help promote the participation of small local tour providers. As a part of this project we want to create official and generally accepted paths for motorquad tours in order to contain the progressive destruction of the dune systems by uncontrolled quad driving.

### **2. Environmental education**

The Turtle Foundation will continue and, if possible, further expand its successful „School in Nature“ program along with other established measures for environmental education such as presentations, public events, and competitions.

### **3. Establishing alternative sources of income**

The handicraft project for the production and marketing of locally produced souvenirs will be continued in the coming years. Additionally, we will work on the development of alternative sources of income in the areas of agriculture and tourism.

### **4. National and international partnerships**

The Turtle Foundation will continue to expand its networking activities and cooperation with national institutions and stakeholders to achieve better protection of the sea turtles on the Cape Verde islands, not only directly on the beaches, but also at the po-

litical level. The fact that the beaches guarded by the Turtle Foundation in the northeast and southeast of the island lie in officially protected areas will support our conservation efforts.

### **5. Scientific studies on sea turtles**

We will proceed with our cooperation with the German GEOMAR Helmholtz Center for Ocean research also in the nesting season 2015. Studies already started will be continued, and new studies are planned.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Our successes in our sea turtle conservation projects in Indonesia and Cape Verde were only possible by the solidarity and valuable financial support of private donors, corporations, foundations, and public and private institutions. Particularly we want to mention the following organizations: Aage v. Jensen Charity Foundation, Backhaus Foundation, Becker-Cordes Foundation, Crea Group, Community of Vaduz, Dangel Foundation, Deutsche Umwelthilfe e.V., Educasa Foundation, Eva Mayr Stihl Foundation, Fondation Conservation, Fondation Claude et Giuliana, Foundation for the Third Millennium, Fortenum Trust reg., GEOMAR Kiel, I+F Public Benefit Foundation, Jugalti Foundation, Liechtenstein Development Service, LOTEX Foundation, Malou Foundation for Animal Welfare, Margarethe und Rudolf Gsell Foundation, MAVA Fondation pour la Nature, Peace at Last Foundation, RHW Foundation, Seneca Trust, SOS Seaturtles, Sikamin Foundation, Fondation Temperatio, Styner Foundation, Turtle Foundation Friends Association, U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Valüna Foundation, VP Bank Foundation, Wölflli Foundation, Zürcher Tierschutz. To them and all other donors we say a great big Thank You!