



Annual Report 2013



TURTLE FOUNDATION

Protecting Sea Turtles and their Habitats

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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 turtle hatchling at its first swimming attempts in the sea (image rights: www.aquamarine-pictures.de)

PREFACE

Dear friends and supporters of the Turtle Foundation,



The global decline of sea turtles is to one part the result of many years of relentless exploitation for their eggs, their meat, and their shell. Equally a problem is the increasing damage to our oceans by pollution and destructive fishing methods. Many thousands of sea turtles die each year from swallowed plastic, are poisoned by oil and chemicals, and drown on longlines and in the nets of fishing fleets. We often designate the sea turtles along with the whales, dolphins and sharks as “ambassadors of the seas”, but their suffering and their rapid disappearance also turn them into a highly visible symbol of the ruthless destruction of the oceans, on which almost all life depends.

But still there is hope that our offspring can also enjoy watching the majestic turtles roaming the seas. This requires a global rethinking for a sustainable treatment of the marine ecosystem in addition to the direct protection of the sea turtles and their habitats. In some areas where sea turtles have been tenaciously protected for decades, such as in Tortuguero in Costa Rica or on Hawaii, we even see a significant recovery of the depleted stocks. However, at most other places in the world it still requires a lot of work to reach this goal.

As co-founder of the Turtle Foundation and a passionate diver who has been excited about the sea turtles since the first encounter with them, it is a great pleasure for me to be able to contribute to their protection, and our successes demonstrate that we are on the right track. I want to thank all the people and organizations whose financial and other kinds of support has made our successes possible.

*Dr. Frank Zindel
Board of Trustees Chairman, Turtle Foundation Switzerland*

THE TURTLE FOUNDATION

The Turtle Foundation is an international wildlife 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), United States (since 2006), Indonesia (since 2006; local name: Yayasan Penyu Berau), and Cape Verde (since 2012; local name: Fundação Tartaruga). The Turtle Foundation primarily conducts operational activities and currently runs two conservation projects in Indonesia and Cape Verde. Our aim is to prevent the imminent extinction of 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 2013

Project Indonesia

The conservation project on the Derawan Islands, East Kalimantan (Borneo, Indonesia) started in



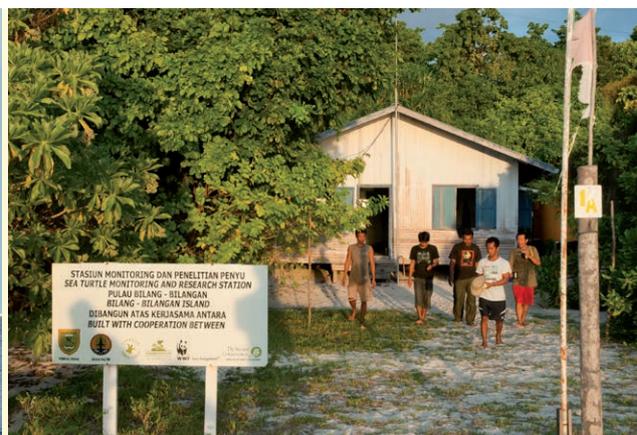
2000 and was the first project of the Turtle Foundation. The project area is part of the so-called Coral Triangle, the richest marine biodiversity hotspot in the world. Here is the world's eighth largest nesting area for the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) as well as significant feeding grounds of hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*). Since 1999, all species of sea turtles and their eggs and body parts (tortoise shell, etc.) have been nominally completely protected 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. The result of this massive and virtually complete egg exploitation since the 1940's has been the precipitous decline by more than 90% of the turtles and eggs. If this process continued unabated, the population would die out completely in a few decades. Other threats to sea turtles in the region include bycatch in local and foreign fisheries, habitat destruction (especially by illegal cyanide and bomb fishing), and environmental pollution (plastic waste, waste oils).

Currently, the Turtle Foundation runs two permanently manned ranger stations on the two otherwise uninhabited islands of Bilang-Bilangan and Mataha in the southern part of the Derawan Archipelago. This allows us to effectively protect about 50% of the turtle nests of the archipelago against egg theft. On both islands together we recorded

9,533 nests in 2013 (2012: 7,328 nests), which extrapolates to an equivalent of more than 780,000 turtle hatchlings. Without protection, these nests most likely would have been completely collected, as had been the case in earlier times, so these animals would have been lost to the population. The number of nests in 2013 comes very close to our "record year" in 2011, where 9,562 nests have been counted on Bilang-Bilangan and Mataha. Thus, since the beginning of our activity in the Derawan Archipelago, we have enabled over 7.4 million turtle hatchlings to start their lives in the sea.

Although in the waters of the Derawan archipelago green turtles are only occasionally hunted for their meat, the critically endangered hawksbill turtle is threatened by hunting for its coveted tortoise shell. In order to extend our protection activities to the seagrass meadows and coral reefs of the archipelago, which are inhabited by sea turtles, we started, together with the Indonesian WWF, the organization and execution of sea patrols accompanied by local officials.

Our conservation project on the island of Sangalaki, continuously running since 2002, was taken over by the local conservation authority BKSDA in September 2012. This action was triggered by the increasing political influence and the agitation of the organizers of the egg trade, who in former times earned a lot of money with this business and who



Left: The project islands Mataha project (foreground) and Bilang-Bilangan (background). Right: Departure of the rangers for an evening beach patrolling tour on the Island of Bilang-Bilangan.

even now are still active in it. While it has always been our long-term goal to pass the duty of species conservation into the hands of the local authorities and communities, the current situation is such that due to lack of money and expertise, as well as local political pressure, the BKSDA is not equipped to maintain the level of protection that we were able to sustain. Formerly, we had eliminated egg theft on Sangalaki virtually completely, but now this activity again has drastically increased. Therefore, in 2013 we started an online petition against this situation, which we want to present to the responsible authorities in early 2014.

The overall experience is that not only we, but also other conservation organizations residing or working in Indonesia, suffer from increasing resistance from the politics and economics against much-needed measures of species and nature protection. To strengthen our position on the political level, we intensified networking with other organizations for sea turtles in Indonesia. To draw attention to the plight of the sea turtles in Indonesia, by end of 2013 we performed public demonstrations in three Indonesian cities (Jakarta, Samarinda, and Denpasar) in cooperation with the Indonesian conservation organization ProFauna.

In Indonesia, the so-called head-starting (rearing sea turtle hatchlings and juveniles under artificial conditions for later release) is increasingly popu-

lar as an alleged means to give the animals better chances to survive in the seas. However, there are many scientific statements indicating that this method does not function in the sense of increasing the rate of turtles surviving into maturity. In contrast, due to rearing in unnaturally crowded and unclean conditions hatchlings are nearly always injured and sick, with most of them eventually dying. Further, most head-starting facilities are rather intended as tourist attractions where conservation is only a pretext covering a new form of unsustainable exploitation of sea turtles. Moreover, the turtles are often fed with other protected species such as giant clams, doing further damage to the local reef. For this reason, we created an educational brochure against head starting for locals and tourists. We printed 5,000 copies of this brochure in Indonesia, which there we handed out via local partners.

To ensure the sustainability of our conservation work, the Turtle foundation conducts education programs for local students to teach the children about their wildlife and nature. In February 2013, we conducted school events in the coastal town of Batu Putih in the southern Derawan archipelago. At two elementary schools in two classes, respectively, lessons about sea turtle life history, threats to sea turtles, and about nature conservation were held in both playful and serious manner. The pro-



Left: Environmental education lesson held by the Turtle Foundation/YPB for school kids in an elementary school in Batu Putih. Right: Public demonstration of ProFauna and Turtle Foundation/YPB against the destructive exploitation of the sea turtles in Indonesia

grams took place with enthusiastic teacher and student participation and approval.

Unfortunately, the year 2013 was marked by a significant decline in financial contributions to our conservation project in Indonesia, which forced us to drastic austerity measures and even threatened the future of the project. Many planned activities for environmental education and the creation of alternative sources of income could therefore not be realized in favor of maintaining the basic beach protection program.

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 (Lacacão 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, soldiers, and local and international volunteers. In 2013, a total of nine Cape Verdeans were working in our protection project as paid rangers, in addition to 10 Cape Verdean and 50 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 11 killed turtles during the 2013 season, and in four cases we encountered poachers on the beach, which were immediately reported to the police. 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 2013, the Turtle Foundation again funded the group "Projeto Varandinha" from the community of Povoação Velha village, which was responsible for monitoring of approximately 5 km of the nesting beach Varandinha. The group sporadically integrated another nesting beach in the southwest of Boavista (southeast of Santa Monica) into its patrolling activities.

Since 2009, we have collected basic nesting data on the turtles, such as the numbers of nests, the



Left: Camp of the Turtle Foundation on the beach of Canto. Right: Measurement of a loggerhead turtle female after oviposition. Only rarely the animals are encountered on the beach at daylight.

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: 1. marking and identification of the individual females, 2. information on the movement of individually identified nesting females between their nesting sites, 3. biometric data of nesting females. In the 2013 nesting season we counted a total of 2,543 nests on our beaches; a large part of them would not exist without our protection measures. While this is significantly fewer nests than in our “record year” 2012 (3,618 nests), it was more nests than in previous years.

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 2013 was joined by 112 participants. There, school children can participate directly in our sea turtle protection program, and can take part in presentations, educational games, and beach sports activities. Further, with presentations in the villages, mural paintings, theater performances, poetry competitions, sports events, and beach clean-ups we tried to draw attention to the urgent need for protecting the environment and the sea together with its precious resources. In ad-

dition, the Turtle Foundation organized a handicraft training course for people from the slums (“Barracas”) of Sal Rei, the capital Boavistas. The workers fully received the proceeds from the sale of cloth bags embroidered with turtles and other marine motifs at our information booths.

We draw much attention to the development of the tourism industry on Boavista, which often does not happen with 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. To mitigate the negative outcome of tourism, we expanded our work begun in previous years (education of tourists, lobbying at governmental and non-governmental organizations and local tourism companies), and maintained partnerships. Directed by the local national park administration, we introduced important guidelines for an environmentally compatible regulation of turtle watching tours on the beaches of Boavista.



Left: Lesson of the “School in Nature” education project for children in the Turtle Foundation camp on the beach of Boa Esperança. Right: Women’s group in the Barracas producing crochet products to be sold on our information booths.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 01-OCT-2012 – 30-SEP-2013

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 01.10.2012 – 30.09.2013.

Balance sheet as per 30-Sep-2013

	30.09.2013		30.09.2013
ASSETS	EUR	PASSIVEN	EUR
Cash and cash equivalents	156'085	Accounts payable	244
Receivables	3'232	Accruals	0
Accounts paid in advance	7'663	Committed assets	244
Umlaufvermögen	166'980		
Tangible assets	2	Capital and surplus	187'666
Financial assets	0	Expenditure surplus	-20'928
Fixed assets	2	Capital and surplus	166'738
	166'982		166'982

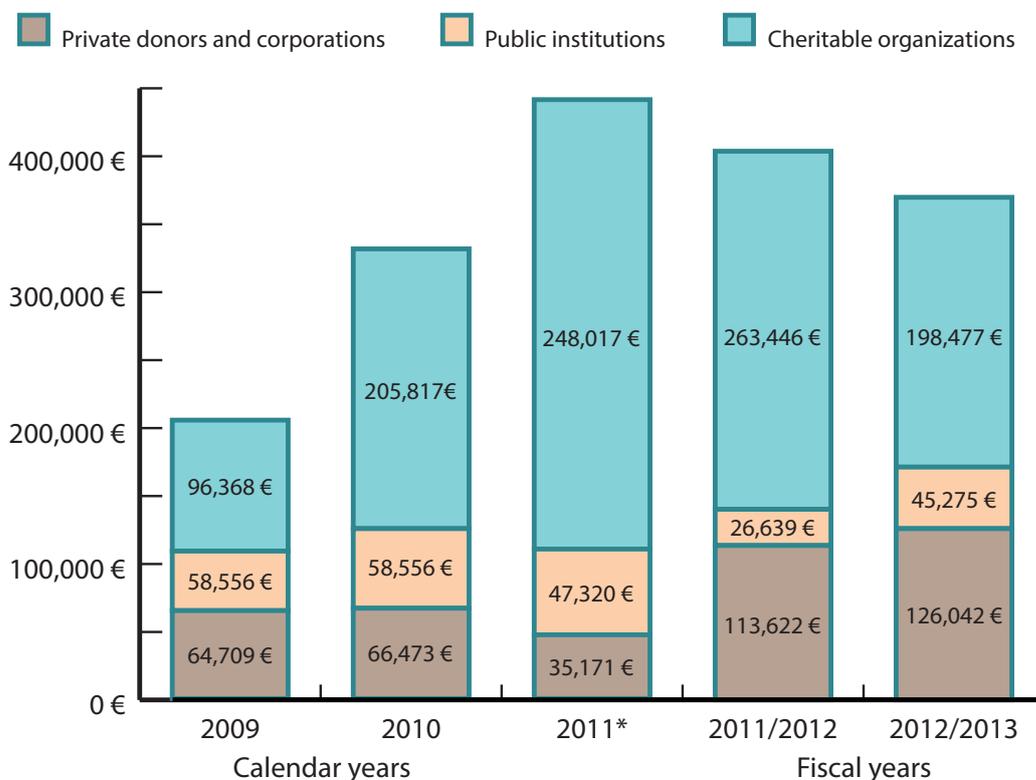
All members of the board of the foundation work on a volunteer basis without any salary payments.



Profit & loss account 01-Oct-2012 – 30-Sep-2013

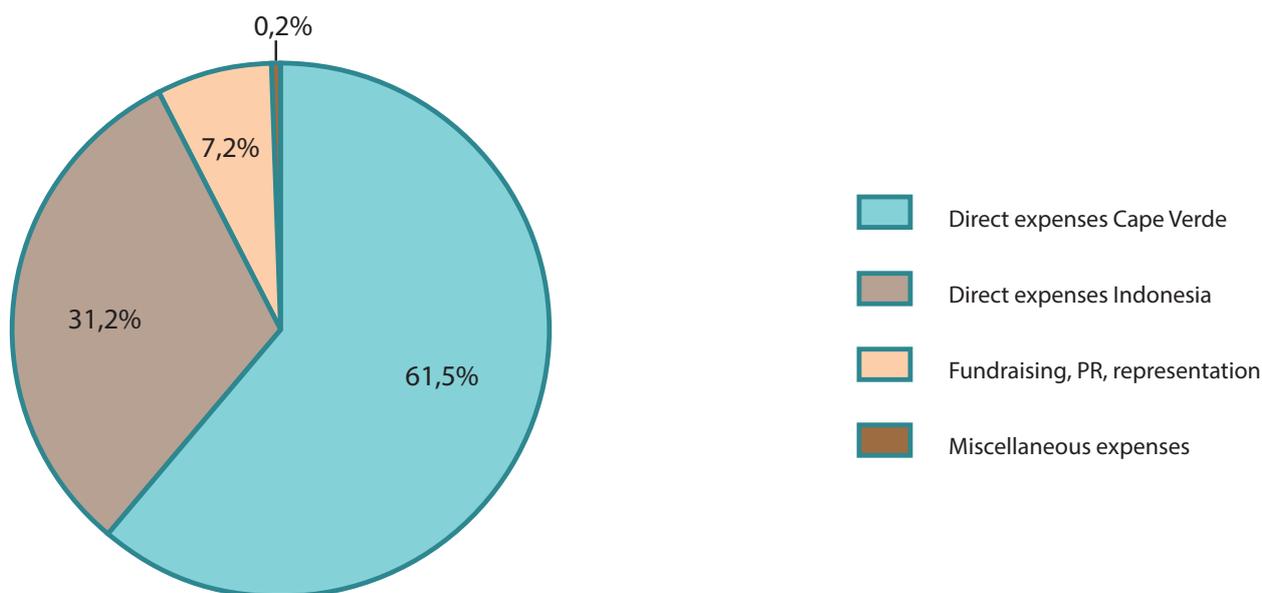
	30.09.2013		30.09.2013
EXPENSES	EUR	PROCEEDS	EUR
East Kalimantan, Indonesia		Donations, grants	
<i>Investments and cost of material</i>		Private donors and corporations	126'042
Boats: operation and maintenance	12'469	Public institutions	45'275
Car Costs	3'271		
Building: aquisit., operat.& maintenance	4'313	Charitable organizations	198'477
Material & equipment	1'040		
Project reserve, miscellaneous	17'414	Total donations, grants	369'794
Project Indonesia	11'030		
Direct Expenses for investment and cost of material	49'537	Sale of products	21'291
<i>Personnel, project cost, communication, representation</i>		Interest	202
Salaries	46'933	Gain/loss on exchange	-11'973
Housekeeping & Food for staff members	21'515		
Transport costs excl. boat transfers	299	Expenditure surplus	20'928
Operation & maintenance office	3'067		
Representation, lobbying, PR	3'516		
Direct Expenses for personnel, project cost, communication, representation	75'330		
Direct Expenses for East Kalimantan, Indonesia	124'867		
Cape Verde Islands			
Investments, acquisitions	37'941		
Salaries and fees	86'106		
Cost of operation building, office, camp	30'702		
Cost of operation camp, gas, food, water	32'152		
Cost of operation vehicles/generators	15'064		
Local protection programs / Varadinha	12'027		
Travel costs	8'925		
Other, PR & advertising	4'696		
Education program School in Nature	92		
LED Ranger training	10'624		
Patrols	3'197		
Research	1'025		
Workshop	0		
MTCA / TAOLA Meeting	3'458		
Settlement account costs Kapverden	0		
Direct Expenses for Cape Verde Islands	246'009		
Support of foreign projects	0		
Capital expenditure	696		
Depreciations	0		
Fundraising, PR	23'280		
Advertising, representations	5'391		
	400'242		400'242

SOURCE OF FUNDS



*The year 2011 is a short fiscal year from January 1 to September 30, 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 January 1 to September 30, 2011. Thereafter, the financial year runs from October 1 to September 30

USE OF FUNDS 01 -OCT-2012 – 30-SEP-2013



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):



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 2013.

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, 19 December 2013

Prefera Audit AG

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Mitglied der Treuhandkammer



PROJECT PLANNING 2014

Project Indonesia

1. Continued work on the protection of Bilang-Bilangan and Mataha

The main objective for 2014 is the continuation of the protection of sea turtles and their habitats, including the collection of nesting data from the islands of Bilang-Bilangan and Mataha.

2. Sea patrols

Co-financed by the Indonesian WWF, we plan to perform at least three extensive sea patrols accompanied by local officials to reduce hunting of the turtles at the sea and to prevent illegal and destructive fishing activities.

3. Environmental education

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

4. Anti head-starting 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 happens only superficially for the purpose of protecting the turtles, often there are pure economic interests hidden behind those activities (tourism). Currently, together with the Indonesian conservation organization ProFauna we work out concepts to educate representatives of responsible authorities as well as other stakeholders including tourists, hotel managements, etc.

5. Human Capacity Development

Most members of our local team have enjoyed only a very basic education. A few of them have even learned to read and write only after they started to work with us. To provide them with a better development of their professional opportunities, but also to ensure the quality of the protection work, we work on a training program for rangers titled "Sea turtles and their habitats – biology and conservation".

6. Regional eco-tourism, development of a voluntary program

Tourism is expected to become increasingly important in the Derawan archipelago including our project area. On the one hand, this offers chances to improve the often precarious income situation of the local population, but on the other hand, also carries the well-known risks to nature and environment. We are working on concepts for sustainable eco-tourism in the region in a way that it benefits the people as well as the needs of nature conservation, which include the excellent conditions to observe the sea turtles. In parallel, we develop a volunteer program, where we incorporate our positive experiences from the Cape Verde project, but also take into account the special local conditions. The revenues from eco-tourism and volunteer program are in the long run expected to cover at least parts of the costs of our conservation project.

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 2013, which include Aqua Doce, Boa Esperança, beaches of the north coast, Canto, Curral Velho, Ponta Pesqueira and Lacacão, will be conducted again in 2014 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. The new guidelines for turtle watching tours that were worked out in cooperation with the protected areas management and local NGOs in 2013 must be monitored and enforced. Also for the vehicle traffic on the beaches ecologically compatible regulations must be found soon.

2. Environmental education

The Turtle Foundation will continue 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, which was started by the Turtle Foundation in 2011, will be continued in the coming years. Additionally, we 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 political 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. Already in 2013 our good cooperation with the protected areas management agency on Boavista led to significant achievements in several projects.

5. Scientific studies on sea turtles

We will proceed with our cooperation with the German GEOMAR Helmholtz Center for Ocean re-

search continuing several studies on the beach of Lacacão that started in 2012. These include studies on the effects of stress and disturbance of nesting and hatching turtles caused by the large RIU Touareg hotel, especially that caused by nocturnal beach illumination, as well as the assessment of additional threats that are imminent by planned beach construction activities in the area.

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, Crea Group, CV Telecom, FENACOOOP, community Vaduz, GEOMAR Kiel, Gerda Techow Charitable Foundation, I + F Public Benefit Foundation, Liechtensteinischer Entwicklungsdienst, Malou Foundation for Animal Welfare, Margarethe and Rudolf Gsell Foundation, MAVA Fondation pour la Nature, Pease at Last Foundation, RHW Foundation, SOS Seaturtles, Foundation for the Third Millennium, Foundation Sikamin, Turtle Foundation Friends Association, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, VP Bank Foundation, WWF Indonesia, Zurich Animal Welfare. To those and all other donors we say a great big Thank You!

