



## TURTLE FOUNDATION INDONESIA

### Monthly Report May 2015



Dear TF board,

Greetings from Czech Republic.

Most of May, I was in Indonesia, so I can report to you what we did and what we plan for the future. I am really happy that during May there were **no egg poachers** on Bilang-bilangan and Mataha. I hope they will not try to come again. Rangers have done their best to protect turtle eggs and females on islands. The best merit award for our work now is the observation of newly hatched nesst, when small turtles are coming out from the sand. I love these moments 😊



It is nice is that **not only foreign volunteers wish to help us. Local Indonesian people** have started to be interested about our project too. Jerry, who was working for a sea turtle conservation program before and finished his work 3 years ago, had holiday in his new work and he spent his holiday by volunteering on islands together with us. Good news also is that finally we bought a **fridge to Bilang – bilangan**. There was no fridge since we return to island in February but we could not buy it sooner because of big waves. We get information that we have to be careful during transportation of fridge – 4 hours in car and 6 hours on the wood boat during bad weather is not good and a new fridge can be easily broken by it. We were waiting for good weather and in the beginning of May we finally bought and transported fridge to islands. After the journey we left the fridge noff for one week off as we were advised and now finally the fridge is working on Bilang-bilangan. Fridge is very important on islands. Even though we use the electricity only 4 hours a day, the fridge helps vegetable and fish, which guys catch, to stay fresh longer. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to buy it.





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Sad to say but there was also one bad news during May. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of May the guys on islands heard explosions. This was due to people fishing by using **dynamite**. Police found a person with 4t fish obviously caught by this illegal fishing method. But police did not arrest him because they did not catch him in the act ☹️ Police said that dead fish visibly caught by dynamite is still not strong enough proof, so the fisherman was dismissed for lack of evidence ☹️ Crazy. This makes the fishermen unafraid of any consequences, so they continue their illegal practices. Unfortunately not only fish are killed by dynamite - it also kills turtles, dolphins and any other life close to the dynamite. A few days after hearing the explosions, we encountered a **dead young green turtle** on the beach of Bilang-bilangan. There is a law to prohibit dynamite fishing just like there are laws for the protection of sea turtles in Indonesia. The problem is lack of enforcement of those laws. If the laws from government don't work, change has to come from different direction – from below resulting from a change of local people's thinking. This will take very long time but we have to try and do our best because maybe this is the only chance to help nature here in Indonesia.

In May we attempted to introduce turtles and our work to the local Berau **radio station MBS**. Kenny and I went on the radio May 22, 2015. We said that 6 of the 7 world sea turtle species can be found in Indonesia, that Berau is the 8th most important nesting site in the world for green turtles, and that this diversity is a gift which is necessary to save for future generations and not drive to extinction in the present. We mentioned that we protect the islands of Bilang-bilangan and Mataha, educate students about environment and we teach people who are interested in producing souvenirs from coconut shell. The broadcast transmission took 2 hours and more than 1000 people heard it so I hope it made people think about the topic. Through this broadcast we hoped to draw people's attention to **World Turtle Day**, which was May 23.



I was really happy that many Czech people were celebrating **World Turtle Day** (May 23) also and they help me to draw people's attention to sea turtle's problems.

Increasing awareness helps. I trust that people who know that the sea turtle population is declining in Indonesia will not eat turtle eggs or buy souvenirs from turtle shell during their holiday.

Alexandra Zdeňková, a who was in Indonesia during April, spoke about turtles in primary school Žatec 14.5.2015. Children from this school send **cuddly toy turtles to kindergarten** and now they were happy that they could help sea turtles. There is an article in local newspaper about Alexandra also [http://zatecky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/zatec\\_zelvicky\\_2015\\_0519.html](http://zatecky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/zatec_zelvicky_2015_0519.html). Pupils from **Janovice primary school** made a photo exhibition about sea turtles for the public starting on 15<sup>th</sup> of May and 23<sup>th</sup> of May there were big celebrations of **World Turtle Day** in ZOO garden in Ústí nad Labem. Now my



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photo exhibition is in ZOO garden in Ústí nad Labem and people can see the exhibition until mid of July. The last action about our sea turtle conservation program during May was **Children's Day** in ZOO garden Liberec in Czech Republic. **CCBC (Czech Coalition of Biodiversity conservation)** together with pupils from **primary school ZŠ Liberec Na Výběžku** gave information to visitors, children made a drawing of sea turtles there and they played games about turtles. I think people enjoyed all of this action, they get a lot of information and I hope they will look to websites and maybe they decided to sponsor us.



← Primary school Janovice

**World Turtle Day (23. 5. 2015)** in ZOO Ústí nad Labem →



← **Children's Day** in ZOO garden Liberec

**ZOO Ústí nad Labem**  
**SVĚTOVÝ DEN ŽELV**  
23. května 2015  
pavilon exotária  
13.00 hodin  
• vernisáž fotografií mořských želv Hanky Svobodové  
expozice gepardů  
11.00–16.00 hodin  
• ukázka africké kuchyně Mama Africa  
14.00 hodin  
• slavnostní otevření výběhu pro želvy ostruhaté  
• křtiny želv - kmořů a hosté polární cestovatelé  
• želví soutěže a aktivity

www.zoousti.cz  
www.morskazelvy.cz



I am also very happy that first **travel agency CK Karavela** has started to cooperate with our program. This travel agency makes trip to Indonesia and one of their regular trips is also to Derawan islands. CK Karavela has published on their websites next to all journey descriptions to Indonesia that they kindly ask tourist not to buy hawkbills products and sea turtle eggs during their travelling. There was one article published in Czech magazine – I have attached it to this email. Important news is also that 29<sup>th</sup> of May **Dr. Hiltrud Cordes** from Turtle Foundation come to Indonesia. Hilli will discuss with Berly, Bayu and all rangers about our project and I hope it will help to make the project better for future. Please keep your fingers cross for these discussions and also for our work. Hana Svobodová