

Project Update: December 2022

We have started with tissue sampling in the first location (Bangkaru island, Aceh). We spent 10 days in total in the field. The first field stay was conducted in a team consisting of the project leader, a field assistant, two students from Universitas Syiah Kuala (Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Faculty of Marine and Fisheries), and a local government representative from Nature Conservation Agency (BKSDA). The sample collection was conducted every night approximately from 8 pm till late night hours. As sea turtles can be sensitive to light, we used during the sample collection only red light. Furthermore, we were checking the beach early morning. Besides tissue samples, additional data on nesting activity and carapace measurements were taken from each sampled turtle. We also took photos of each sampled turtle (left and right side of the head). This data will later help to double-check that each sample was taken from a different individual.

In September 2022, it was necessary to start extending the research permit for the next year. The extension required a 2-week stay in Jakarta to apply for two letters. For other letters, it was possible to apply only. The administration is currently in the last phase, we regularly communicate with relevant Indonesian institutions, and we are waiting for the last letter. All paperwork is expected to be finished soon.

Meanwhile, we continued with the activities in awareness raising and building the network. So far, one lecture on the topic "*Sea turtle conservation through genetic approaches*" was conducted at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Universitas Syiah Kuala. Adela Hemelikova was invited as a speaker to the International Conference on Fisheries, Aquatic and Environmental Sciences and gave a presentation with the topic "*Contemporary insights into sea turtle use in Sumatra: Will we save them or lose them?*". Lastly, Adela was one of the guest lecturers for the Biodiversity Conservation course that was organised for the students from Andalas University (Department of Biology).

For the end of January or the beginning of February 2023, we are preparing the first workshop. For the purposes of the workshops, we have already prepared leaflets, posters, and booklets. The workshop will focus on conservation methodology and management. After the workshop, we plan to continue with the tissue sampling.

We would like to thank all Indonesian institutions and organisations who are helping us during our research permit application process, and provided us a highly valuable support, and professional and friendly service, especially to:

- BRIN.
- Indonesian National Police (Mabes Polri).
- Ministry of Internal Affairs of Indonesia (Kementarian Dalam Negeri).
- Indonesian Institute of Sciences (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia).
- Ministry of Environment and Forestry (Kementarian Lingkungan dan Kehutanan).
- Nature Conservation Agency of Aceh (Balai Konservasi Sumberdaya Alam Aceh)
- Ministry of Marine and Fisheries (Loka Kawasan Konservasi Perairan Nasional Pekanbaru)
- Nature Conservation Agency of Sumatera Barat (Balai Konservasi Sumberdaya Alam Sumatera Barat)

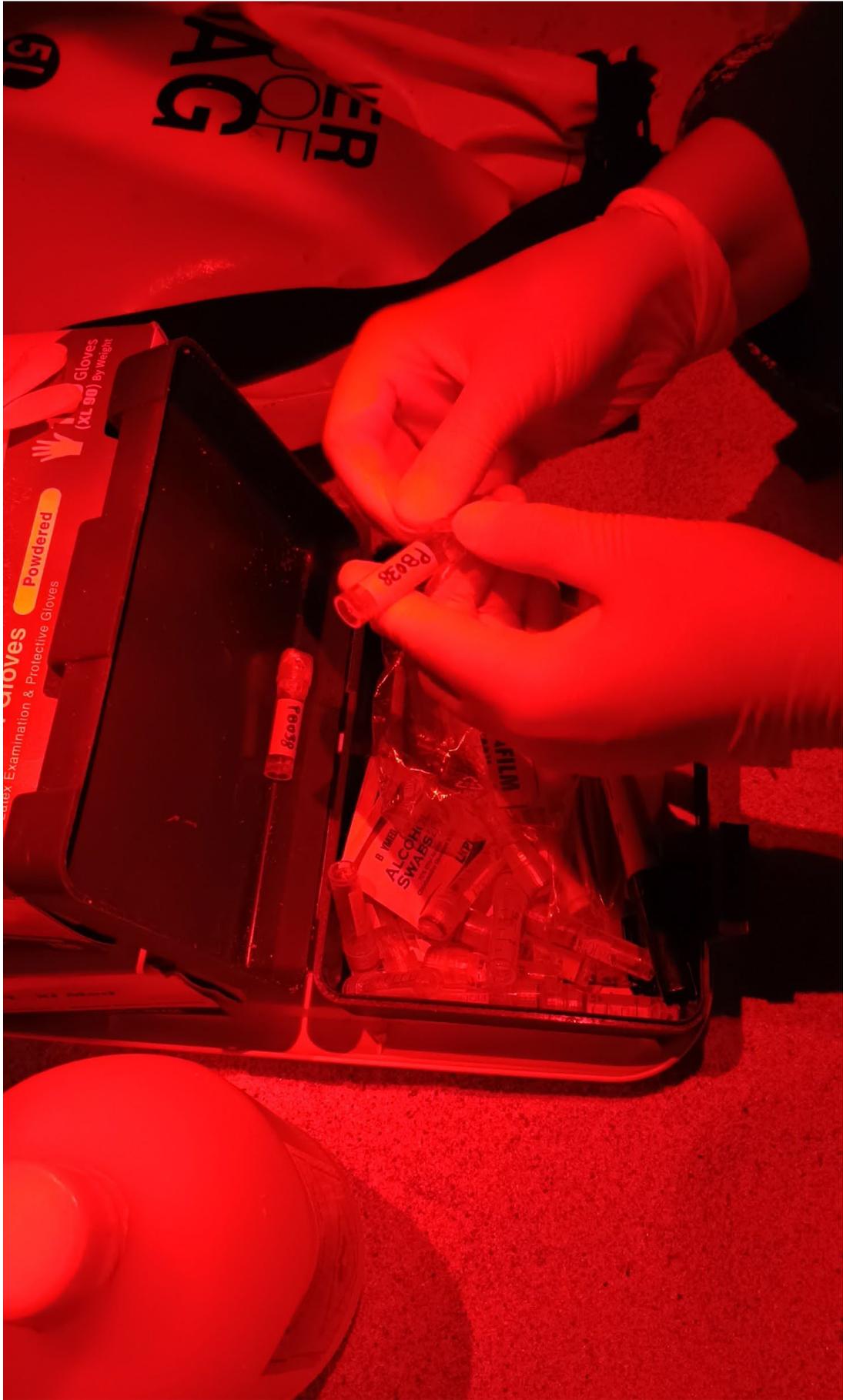
Finally, we would like to offer our thanks to The Rufford Foundation and other partners who support our conservation and research activities.



Additional data on nesting activity and carapace measurement are collected for each sampled turtle.



Preparations for the sample collection as sea turtles do nest during the night only red lights is used to not disturb nesting turtles



Collected sample in tube



Presentation at the faculty of veterinary medicine