

Project Update: April 2011

Sea Turtle Conservation

The project held several meetings with fishermen to brief them on the continuity of the project after a successful implementation of the first funding. Fishermen were committed to ensure that turtles will be protected in the water and when they come out to nest.

Daily patrols have been conducted by the project staff and the local fishermen. Two nests were reported and areas nested were mapped out and monitored/protected. The sea turtle attendant kept monitoring the nest to the day when it successful hatched. After excavation, the nest had a 99% success rate. Out of the 150 hatchlings, only one egg was deformed.

The project has been engaged on fishermen awareness campaign meetings together with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) to encourage and inform the fishermen to be players in turtle conservation. With the participation of KWS, fishermen promised to ensure that they will give information as regard to sea turtles. KWS warden informed them of the illegal practices that may lead to arrests and he expounded to them about what the Kenyan law says about turtle protection. A total of nine sea turtles were received from fishermen, tagged and released back to the sea.

Mangrove Restoration

Mangrove planting was done where 2500 seedlings were planted at an area that had been depleted. This activity saw the great participation of stakeholders including schools, community members, Kenya Forestry Service (KFS), the local administration and the project staff.

This activity had a big impact with the presence of the forestry service which is the custodian of the government managed forestry resources. Community members present appreciated their involvement in practical conservation work and promised to mobilise more members to participate when such an activity is taking place next time. School teachers who accompanied their children requested the project to continue involving more schools as this activity is educative can help change the behaviors of the young ones at an early age.

Education and Awareness

The project conducted regular marine environment and sea turtle conservation education and awareness to fisher groups and 10 schools.

The project participated in an open day that was organised by KWS during the launching of the National Sea Turtle Strategy. The Project Coordinator was one of the team that developed the national strategy. The project stand was visited by different people including tourists, members of the local community and school children. Worth to note, the project stand was also visited by the US Ambassador who asked questions about our work and he was really impressed. During the open day, we distributed 200 stickers and 100 posters

The schools that the project engages were also present and gave informative sea turtle conservation poems and songs.

The project also featured in one of the local newspapers which published a photo of our project staff talking to visitor who visited our stand during the awareness day. More people got interested and have been enquiring more of what the project does.

The project has attracted local institutions who want to bring their students for internship. Moreover, international institutions like the St. Lawrence University in the US have started sending their students as volunteers. Another organization in the UK has also requested to market our project and recruit volunteers to participate and learn about marine conservation. This is a big achievement of the project and shows the importance of the work being done.

