

## Project Update: December 2010

After 5 months working within the community the project is finishing. Each one of the actions had optimistic results and the whole project was a great beginning in this first step in community-based conservation. The close relationship we were able to establish with the different actors, children, fishermen and young women and girls, give us the possibility of realizing their idea of nature conservation and social development. These months living inside the study area, permitted us to see how much we can change their attitude to the environment. During this short time, we showed them a new way to be related with nature and they began to understand how the conservation of the natural resources is in their hands and how they can improve their life conditions protecting, more than harvesting.

The fishermen's committee realises the benefits of the project with each one of the strategies used. They found useful the new commercialisation scheme and feel the benefits of the improvement of their fishing gear. In our last meeting they expressed that it is a good way to improve their income and life condition while helping to protect one resource they know is harvested because of them. The nest protection is a reality for the 2011 season since the beginning, looking for find new allies among their colleagues on the next beaches in order to increase the impact.

The recycled paper workshop showed its impact. The photos of the products were shared with many people via the internet, and some persons made their orders for Christmas. This was a wonderful thing for the alternative activities strategy, because in the beginning they saw commercialisation as a difficult thing, so, now they realise the possibility it's true. Besides these Christmas orders, we sold a lot of things they had made during the workshop and they expressed to us their desire to continue the activity next year, looking to improve the technique and the quality of the products.

The result of the recycling programme was amazing. It was our first experience making a turtle in bottles; in fact, we don't know of any other one. In the beginning the children didn't see the turtle anywhere; they looked at the sculpture and said to us "ok, that is not a turtle!" Anyway, they keep helping us in what we asked them, and when finally they see the turtle, they absolutely loved it! After we finished, they "identify" the "species" and draw its favorite food, which was a really nice situation for us; we realise how much they have learnt in this short time. After it was finished, playing on the turtle is one of favorite activities in the school. For the next year our first objective is to build a space to allow them to eat in a comfortable place, so, they already began collecting the bottles and in that way, continue their new recycling lifestyle.

