



Lodging: Participants requiring hotel accommodations must make their own reservations.

Transportation: Travel assistance is available only to invited speakers.

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SEA TURTLE PROTECTION NEEDED AT THE CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

During my last visit to the Cape Verdes in summer 1977, I had a chance of obtaining information on the capture and trade of sea turtles. The Cape Verde Islands, lying about 500 km west of Africa, is an independent republic and includes about 15 reasonably sized islands, 9 of them inhabited. Hawksbill and loggerhead turtles are the species mostly caught. I talked with fishermen bringing in an adult female loggerhead at Boa Vista and they told me that they caught about 10-12 large sized turtles a month. Extrapolating from this figure for one island, probably about 1000 adult turtles are caught per year around the whole archipelago. This rate of exploitation does not take into account the losses in eggs resulting from daily searches made on the wide sandy beaches by inhabitants of the islands. The trade in turtle products is mainly accounted for by one European country, Belgium; preserved turtle shells and jewelry are frequently exported there. A turtle shell costs about \$20 USA.

Consultations have taken place with the Cape Verde's Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Bettencourt. He is agreeable to the idea of a protection plan for sea turtles, if international interest and assistance would be forthcoming. For planning this project, reports on successful sea turtle conservation systems, reprints of relevant papers and suggestions are wanted.

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STOP PRESS

About 75% of this season's Atlantic ridley hatchlings at Rancho Nuevo were released before the oil spill arrived. The air-lifting of hatchlings beyond the spill by Pemex helicopters is designed to prevent the last 25% from hitting the spill. The intention is to locate mats of Sargassum offshore well away from the oil and put the turtles down there.