

Keep the sea
Plastic
Free



help save a
Turtle

News From The Field

October-December 2024 Vol 4



**OLIVE RIDLEY
PROJECT**

Our Mission

Sea turtles have existed on Earth for over 120 million years and there are currently seven species left in the world. These incredible animals grace the waters of all the world's oceans except the Arctic.

Oceans play a critical role in sustaining human life by providing essential resources such as food, freshwater and oxygen. Therefore, preserving and protecting our oceans is crucial for the survival of our species.

As "keystone" species, sea turtles play a vital role in maintaining the health of the ocean, including protecting fish stocks, keeping coral reefs healthy, and preventing sea grass meadows from overgrowing and dying.

However, sea turtles face many threats to their survival.

ORP is on a mission to protect sea turtles and their habitats through rescue and rehabilitation, scientific research, and education and outreach.

Olive Ridley Project is a registered charity:
1165905 England & Wales
CR/04/2022 Maldives
NGO-EPFPJ6 Kenya

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Our Work



Sea Turtle Rescue & Rehabilitation

We treat injured sea turtles rescued in the Maldives at our [Marine Turtle Rescue Centre](#), which has a fully equipped veterinary clinic and a resident veterinary team. We also operate a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre. Both are located in the Maldives.



Scientific Research

We conduct research on sea turtle populations, distribution, health and threats to improve scientific knowledge and inform sea turtle conservation policy.



Environmental Education

Education is a powerful tool to increase awareness, engage people and stimulate action. We educate school children, communities, divers, fishermen, tourists, resort staff, biologists, and the general public, in person and [online](#). We also offer [volunteer](#) and internship programs.



Collaboration & Community Outreach

To create long lasting change, we ensure that our conservation initiatives are practised from ground-up. We therefore collaborate with affected industries, communities, governments, local and International NGOs, in order to apply research to practice.

By the Numbers

Rescue, rehabilitation and scientific research



8,098

Sea turtles identified



>48.1K

Sea turtle sightings recorded in the Indian Ocean



893

Sites w/sea turtles sighted



1,972

Nests recorded



>57.8K

Hatchlings counted



248

Turtle patients admitted



94

Turtle patients deceased



6

Rehabilitated olive ridley turtles satellite tagged

Environmental education, collaboration and community outreach



14.34K

Kgs of ghost gear removed



58.44K

Square metres of ghost net repurposed



276

Volunteers hosted at the Rescue Centre



30

Sea Turtle Guardian Programme Graduates



45.3K

Individuals educated



2.4M

YouTube views



30

Publications



2.1K

Podcast Downloads

Highlights From the field



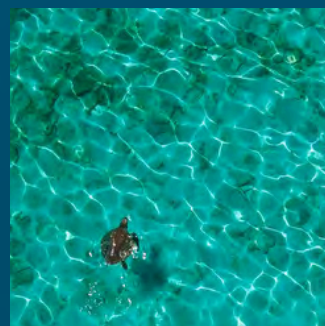
ORP Kenya showcasing the unique BMU programme at an international stage.

• Read more on page 07



New publication on the socio-economic value of sea turtles in the Maldives.

• Read more on page 10



Raa Rehabilitation Centre releases first patient Kurangi.

• Read more on page 12

The final few months of 2024 were packed with many fantastic achievements, from impactful community initiatives, to sea turtles releases, presentations on the global stage, and a new publication. We are proud to share these highlights with you in this report.

The ORP team in Kenya made good use of fantastic weather conditions at the end of the year, logging many turtle sightings including resighting an individual first identified in 2018! To boost Photo-ID numbers in the coming months, the team rolled out a new initiative, engaging directly with various dive centres in Diani for citizen science submissions.

Additionally, our sea turtle biologist intern Kelvin piloted an education study testing ORP's outreach materials for Kenyan school students, while our BMU programme celebrated another successful year by certifying new Sea Turtle Ambassadors. Our community-led conservation efforts also gained recognition on the international stage at two major conferences. Find more about our Kenya team's achievements on page 7.

In November, ORP Maldives joined the Noonu Atoll community in celebrating all things sea turtle at this year's Vaavoshi Festival. The vibrant three-day event, hosted on N. Kendhikulhudhoo in collaboration with the island council and Secret Paradise Maldives, drew enthusiastic visitors from schools across the atoll. Dive into the details of the educational sessions, competitions, and cleanup activities held during Vaavoshi on page 9. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all participants, our co-hosts, and partners, including Maldives National University and Atoll Marine Centre, whose support and involvement made the festival truly unforgettable!

At the end of the year, a much anticipated study led by ORP team members Emily and Julian was published. The manuscript presents findings from a pilot study assessing the socioeconomic value of sea turtles to the Maldives tourism industry. More exciting results on page 10!

Our veterinary team meanwhile, was greeted by a surprisingly calm start to the entanglement season and used the time for extensive training of our new veterinary surgeons Dr Naul and Dr Michelle, who we're happy to have on the team! Nonetheless, the eight sea turtle patients across our rescue and rehabilitation facilities kept everyone busy. In good news, we celebrated two successful releases of Bulbul and Kurangi - the latter being our first patient release from Raa Atoll Rehabilitation Centre! Find all updates on our patients and conservation medicine efforts on page 12.

Our Photo-ID research made significant strides following last quarter's milestones. By the end of the year, our database has grown to include 1,725 green turtles and an impressive 5,150 hawksbills. The surge in Citizen Science submissions added to our excitement, as these contributions not only extend our efforts beyond areas where our team is active, but also reflect a growing public interest and participation in sea turtle conservation.

The more favourable and cooler winter conditions in Oman brought on new opportunities in community engagement for our sea turtle biologist Jasmine, who continues to collaborate with the fishing community on monitoring sea turtle bycatch. The clear water conditions also boosted our Photo-ID project, bringing in nearly 100 new encounters in November alone! Find more about these achievements, as well as our school visits on page 14.

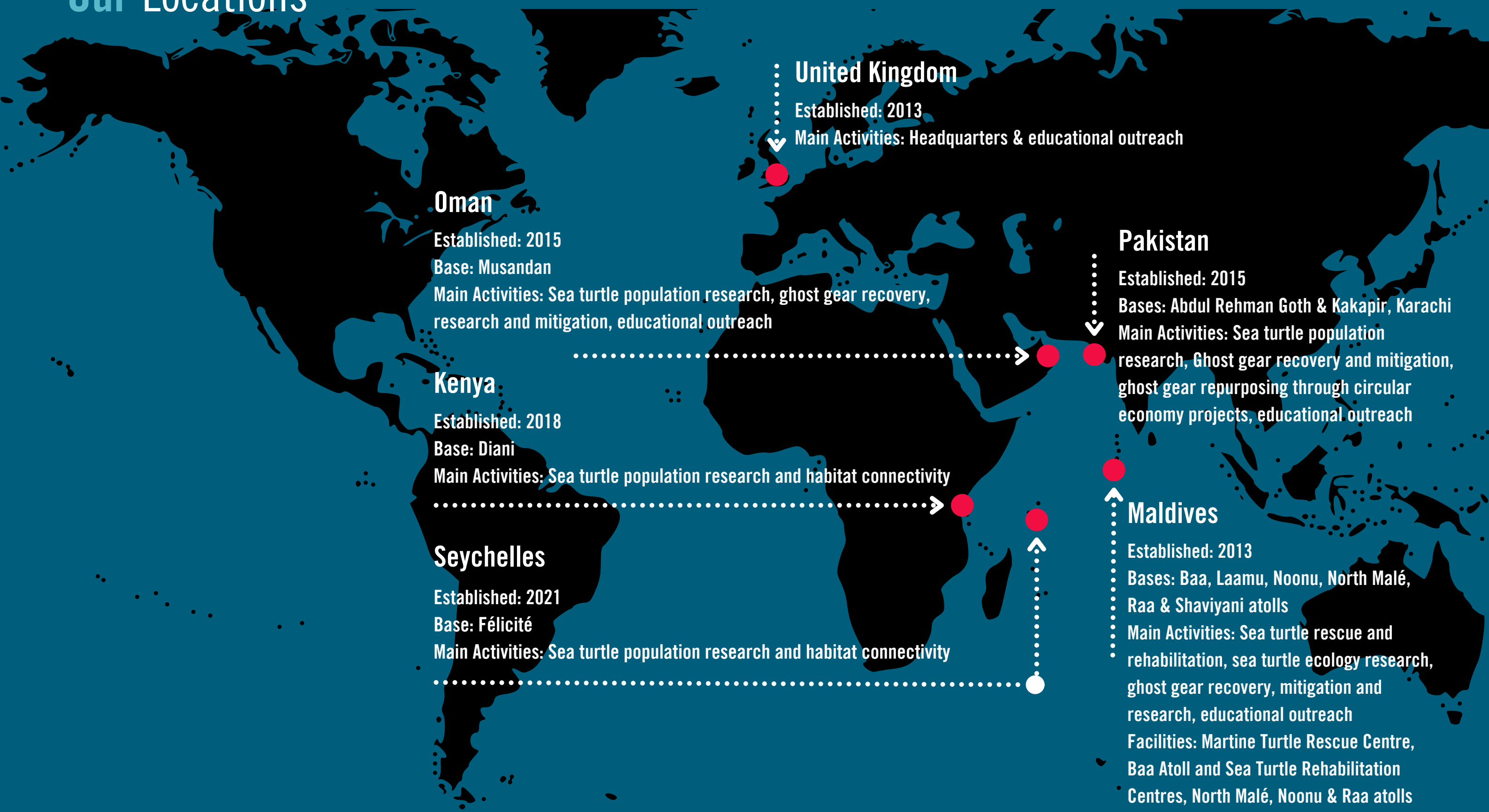
While a busy nesting season in Pakistan proceeded through some stormy days, our team is happy to report over 160 nesting activities on Hawke's Bay and Sandspit beaches over the past three months. They were also able to identify nine new nesting females, who we are hoping to see again in the coming years.

As part of our conservation efforts and circular economy programme, we removed 123 kg of ghost gear from beaches in Pakistan. This ghost gear will be readied for cleaning and repurposing into pet leashes and ghost net bracelets. Removing ghost gear benefits not only sea turtles, but also the broader marine ecosystem, safeguarding countless species from harm. Find more details on page 15.

In the Seychelles, the nesting season for critically endangered hawksbill turtles began with 25 new nests on Félicité's main nesting beach Grande Anse alone! As annual beach erosion and flooding events continued to pose threats to active nests, Sea Turtle Biologist, Jack, tirelessly worked on protecting the treasured egg clutches. We are excited to report that this season gave us the largest clutch ever recorded on Félicité - find out how many eggs it contained on page 16!

As we reflect on an action-packed and inspiring year, we are thankful for the hard work and dedication of our teams and supporters. With these successes as a foundation, we eagerly anticipate a turtley impactful 2025.

Our Locations



ORP Kenya

As the year drew to a close, we eagerly anticipated the improved sea conditions typical of the final months—and we were not disappointed!

The favourable diving conditions allowed us extended time for in-water monitoring surveys, particularly in November, when we documented over 120 sea turtles through the month.

While many sightings were of long-term residents, the highlight was G398, an adult female, spotted at Galu’s cleaning station. Last seen in February 2020, her return raised questions about her recent whereabouts. Is she back to nest along Diani’s south coast or returning after a successful nesting season thousands of kilometers away? In October, we also spotted Francisca, our fifth green sea turtle from the 2018 Diani-Chale database, marking her first appearance in two years.



Community Education and Outreach Officer, Juma at the 4th Africa Congress for Conservation Biology in Tanzania.

In October, we showcased our community-led conservation programme at two major conferences: the 7th International Marine Conservation Congress in Cape Town, attended by 800 participants from 72 countries, and the 4th Africa Congress for Conservation Biology in Tanzania, which welcomed 400 attendees. Project Manager Leah Mainye, represented us in Cape Town, while Community Education and Outreach Officer, Juma Gwerenya presented in Tanzania. Both highlighted our programme, "From Bycatch to Protection: How Fishers are Taking the Lead in Sea Turtle Conservation in Kenya," sharing successes and strategies from two years of work with nine fishing communities.

In December, we bid farewell to Kelvin, our six-month intern, whose accomplishments filled us with pride. Kelvin became the first intern in our programme to independently complete a project. Collaborating with Juma, he worked on an education pilot study conducted with two primary schools in Diani. The study tested sea turtle educational materials and activities designed for school children.

To boost our citizen science programme, we collaborated with five dive centres in Diani to provide training on sea turtle photo-identification (Photo-ID). We provided informative posters that encouraged guests to join a short survey and submit Photo-IDs. The response has been fantastic, with steady contributions from new divers coming in each month. By empowering dive teams to involve guests in sea turtle research, we’ve created a meaningful ripple effect—one we’ll continue building on in the new year.



BMU celebrations in Kenya, marking two successful years of the programme.

2024 ended with a celebration of our BMU programme's success in collaboration with nine fishing communities. In October, we held recap sessions for five new communities and end-of-year evaluations with the other four BMUs. In November, we celebrated the certification of 34 new Balozi wa Kasa (Sea Turtle Ambassadors) and honoured other 23 active members as assistants to the ambassadors.

This event was attended by over 100 participants, including fishers, community stakeholders, partner organisations, and government officials. The celebration showcased the essential role of fishers in sea turtle conservation through speeches, entertainment, and awareness activities. In 2025, we look forward to training more fishers to assist the ambassadors and introducing initiatives like bycatch data collection.



Identified Sea Turtles Kenya

Green Turtles
697
Since 2018

Hawksbills
86
Since 2018

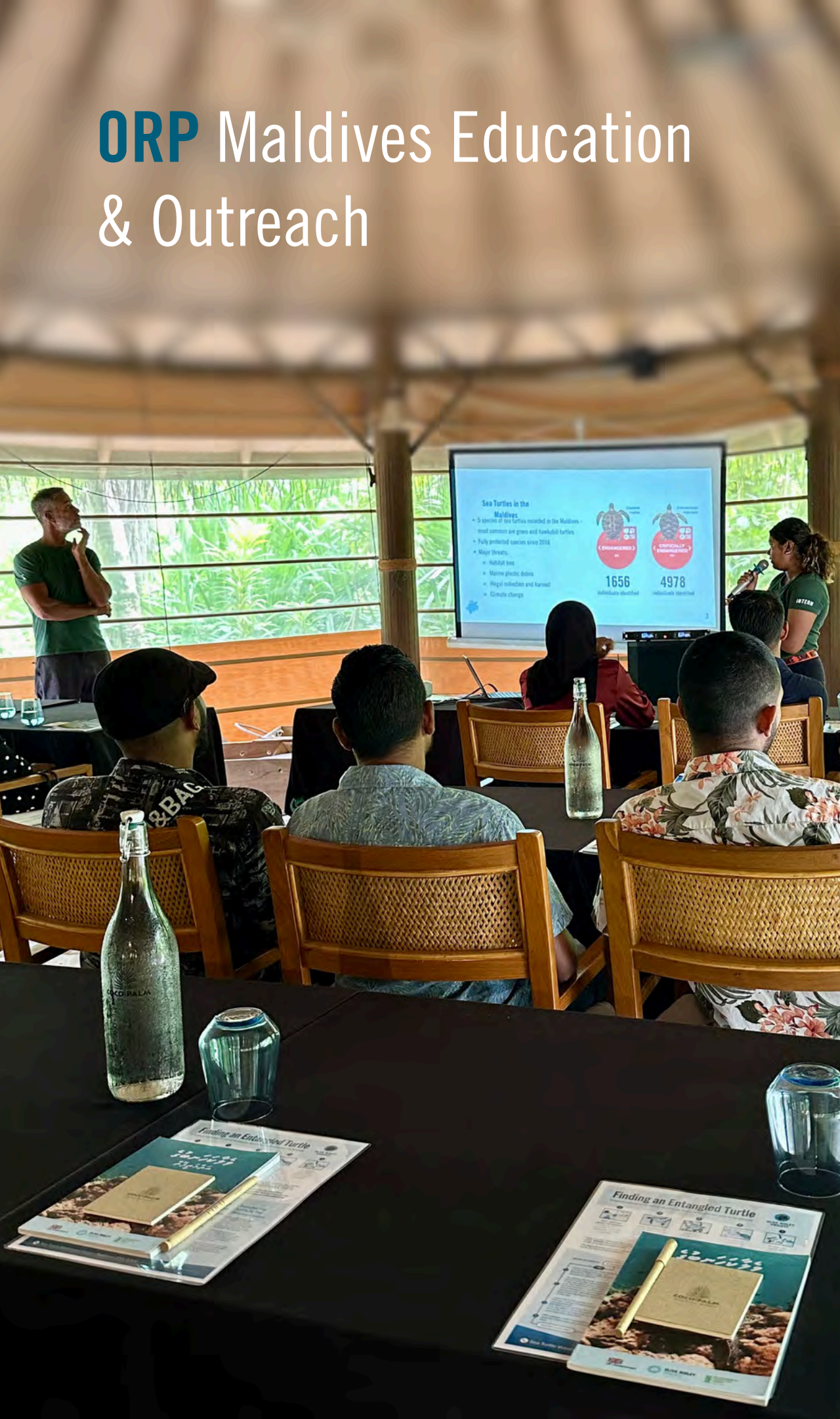
14
2024 Q4

1
2024 Q4

41 
Sites w/sea turtles sighted

798
Total sea turtles identified

ORP Maldives Education & Outreach




On 28 November, we conducted a landmark Police Force Training session in Baa Atoll. Chief Police Officer Ms. Afra and 16 officers representing seven local islands attended the session. Supported by Coco Collection, this first-of-its-kind initiative focused on equipping local authorities with the skills needed to rescue turtles, particularly during the critical ‘Turtle Entanglement Season’ of the North-East monsoon (Iruvai) transition.

As part of the training, the officers visited the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre, where they met our patients, learned about the causes of their injuries, and toured the clinic to observe the high standard of care provided. The afternoon focused on hands-on practical training, during which the officers practiced rescue and transport protocols for injured or surrendered turtles. Together, we also worked to establish key points of contact on each island, creating a robust network for future rescue efforts. We also collaborated to establish key points of contact on each island, ensuring a robust and efficient network for future rescue operations.

Additionally, the training showcased our broader conservation efforts, including research and outreach initiatives led by ORP Maldives across the atolls.

This milestone event represents a significant step in strengthening our collaboration with local authorities and enhancing turtle rescue efforts in Baa Atoll, fostering a shared commitment to protecting marine life.



 Educational and Volunteer Outreach Officer Risha leading a session for cub scouts in Hulhumale.

We had an amazing time at the National Cub Rally and Pre-Cub Meet held in Hulhumale on November 30th! This fantastic event brings together cub scouts and pre-cubs from all over the nation for a day filled with fun, learning, and adventure. At the Community Zone of the event, we transformed learning into play with our turtle-themed games. From a turtle version of snakes and ladders to a hatchling

maze game, the cubs had a blast while discovering the wonders of marine life. We also taught the cubs underwater dive signs for popular sea animals, ensuring they’re ready for their next ocean adventure! Each scout who completed our activities earned a special stamp, making their experience even more memorable.

With an estimated 800 cubs and pre-cubs participating, the energy was electric! We are thrilled to have connected with so many young ocean advocates and look forward to more exciting collaborations with the Scout Association of Maldives in the future.



 Sea Turtle Ranger and Community Officer Inaan taking guests through an educational session on the cruise.

In October, we collaborated with Secret Paradise Maldives over the first edition of the Sea Turtle Conservation Snorkelling Cruise—and it was a resounding success! Our Sea Turtle Ranger and Community Officer, Inaan, joined the Secret Paradise crew to host two guests from the United Kingdom, along with members from MWSRP (Maldives Whale Shark Research Programme) and MNU (Maldives National University), aboard the MV Felicity.

During the 7-night trip, participants enjoyed daily guided snorkels, collecting sea turtle Photo-IDs under Inaan’s guidance, and exploring sea turtle habitats like seagrass beds and coral reefs. The itinerary also included island hopping, a beach clean-up, and immersive experiences with Maldivian culture. Guests also enthusiastically participated in five educational presentations on topics such as sea turtle biology, research, and conservation. They particularly appreciated the opportunity to observe turtles and explore Maldivian waters ethically while learning about ongoing conservation efforts. We’re thrilled with the positive feedback and are eagerly awaiting the second edition of the cruise in March 2025. If you wish to join us on this adventure of a lifetime, [book your slot here](#).

VAAVOSHI Festival, Noonu Atoll

In late November, more than 2,000 students gathered on Kendhikulhudhoo, the "Mangrove Island" in Noonu Atoll, for the third edition of the highly anticipated Vaavoshi Festival. Dhivehi for olive ridley turtle - Vaavoshi, is a cornerstone of our efforts to raise awareness about the fragile yet fascinating lives of sea turtles and their habitats. Co-hosted by Secret Paradise Maldives and Kendhikulhudhoo Council, this year's event was more than just an educational experience—it was a call to action inspiring individuals to become active guardians of the ocean.

N. Kendhikulhudhoo, home to over 2,000 residents and renowned for its expansive mangroves and wetlands, proved to be the perfect backdrop. These protected ecological treasures are vital nesting grounds for sea turtles and seabirds, and they hold deep cultural and environmental significance for the local community. The Vaavoshi Festival sought to harness this connection, inspiring conservation efforts while fostering love for the marine world.

The three-day festival kicked off with educational sessions for Kendhikulhudhoo School students, conducted by experts from ORP, Atoll Marine Centre, and the Maldives National University. These interactive sessions covered topics such as the importance of sea turtles, mangroves, and seagrass habitats, while also offering career guidance, sparking curiosity and ambition among students eager to protect their island's natural heritage.

The festival included a colourful array of competitions. A poster contest, involving six schools from Noonu Atoll, highlighted students' creative expressions of marine conservation. Meanwhile, a sand sculpture competition, involving over 200 students, brought the marine world to life on the island's beaches, blending artistic flair with environmental awareness.

On the second day, the community united for mangrove and snorkel clean-ups, mobilising 145 participants to remove over 3,700 kg of waste from fragile ecosystems. The effort signified the power of collective action and the community's unwavering commitment to conservation.

The final day opened with inspiring speeches from local and national leaders. Council President Mr. Mohamed Rauf welcomed attendees, emphasising the collaborative efforts that made the event a success. ORP's Education and Outreach Officer, Risha Ali Rasheed, and Dr. Riyaz Jauharee, the Dean of the College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences followed. Finally, our esteemed chief guest State Minister for Climate Change, Environment, and Energy, Mr. Nashaath Rasheed, concluded by reaffirming the Ministry's commitment to supporting local conservation initiatives.

The day's events also included a lively debate competition between six schools from Noonu Atoll, with Lhohee School emerging victorious. All participants demonstrated critical thinking, professionalism, and an advanced understanding of the issues discussed.



 Vaavoshi Parade 2024.

The festival concluded with the Vaavoshi Parade, where students and community members marched with creative designs and pledges, calling for the protection of sea turtles and their habitats. Traditional music, dance, and a shared meal added a heartfelt closing to the celebrations, reflecting the island's rich culture and deep connection to its environment.

This festival is as a testament to the collaborative spirit of Kendhikulhudhoo and its partners. Local councils, schools, and volunteers worked tirelessly to make the event a success, turning the festival into a true celebration of community and conservation. Together, we are paving the way for a future where sea turtles, their habitats and people thrive.



ORP Maldives Research



The final quarter of 2024 was marked by the continuation of our long-term research projects and a strong finish with the publication of an exciting pilot study from the Maldives.

At the very end of the year, a new scientific manuscript titled “Assessing the socioeconomic value of sea turtles to the Maldives tourism industry in 2019 (prepandemic)” was published in Chelonian Conservation and Biology. This pilot study, led by team members Emily and Julian, assessed the perceived importance as well as direct revenue of sea turtle tours and trips in the country.

With the help of specially developed social-survey questionnaires, the team collected information on the value regarded to sea turtles alone by individual tour operators, as well as when compared to other marine megafauna. The study also looked at how often sea turtle encounters were requested, and worked out the estimates of direct spend and revenue generated from advertised sea turtle trips. Tour operators on tourist resorts, local islands, and liveaboards were included in the initial surveys.

Our findings suggest that sea turtle tourism in the Maldives is not seasonal and can occur throughout the year. Sea turtles were ranked among the top four marine species groups requested by tourists, alongside whale sharks, manta rays and sharks.

Sea turtles have become particularly popular among snorkelers as a species that offers captivating wildlife encounters without the need for prior in-water training such as SCUBA diving. Recognising this appeal, many tour operators now highlight sea turtles in their advertising and include dedicated sea turtle tours in their programmes.


Based on survey results from 21 operators, sea turtle tours generated a minimum direct revenue of USD 1.08 million in 2019. These findings highlight the significant socioeconomic value of sea turtles, showcasing their potential to support consistent ecotourism opportunities and serve as a sustainable source of income for the country.

The team is currently working on a more extensive follow-up study assessing the situation after the Covid-19 pandemic and including a larger number of tour operators in the data collection process. Studies like these can also help us identify less well-known sea turtle aggregation sites and map tourism pressure on specific sea turtle hotspots, highlighting areas which may require specific protection measures.

We finished our year of Photo-IDs with a large number of new encounters and fresh sea turtle IDs, thanks to submissions from our many dedicated citizen scientists, supporters, as well as our team members. With 42 new green turtles and 83 new hawksbills this quarter, our total number of identified individuals has now reached 1,725 and 5,150 respectively. Together, these 6,875 turtles have been recorded across nearly 800 different sites and over 41,763 encounters throughout the years. As regular collaborators greatly contribute to our Photo-ID efforts, we would like to thank them for their consistent support.

In the Maldives, a country with year round nesting activity, we recorded another 30 new nests in the last quarter of 2024. Laamu and Noonu atolls emerged as our most frequent nesting sites with 15 and nine nests respectively. A total of 1,479 green turtle hatchlings were observed, including a rare and special daytime hatching in Laamu Atoll. Sea turtle biologist Mikaela and intern Nauha, and a very lucky group of guests, cherished the rare opportunity to observe the atypical hatchling emergence closely.



 Green sea turtles hatching during the day at Six Senses Laamu, L. Olhuveli.




Vaarey was the final olive ridley turtle to be tagged and released from the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre in 2024 as part of our #ORPTrack programme. Until mid-October, Vaarey’s tag transmitted valuable data, revealing his journey past Sri Lanka into the Bay of Bengal. He continued on an eastward trajectory until the tag ceased transmitting. Over 93 days, Vaarey traveled more than 3,200 km and dived to depths exceeding 276 meters! The team is now working on a first scientific manuscript which analyses the tracks of our first batch of tagged turtles while also planning on tagging the next suitable #ORPTrack candidate in 2025.

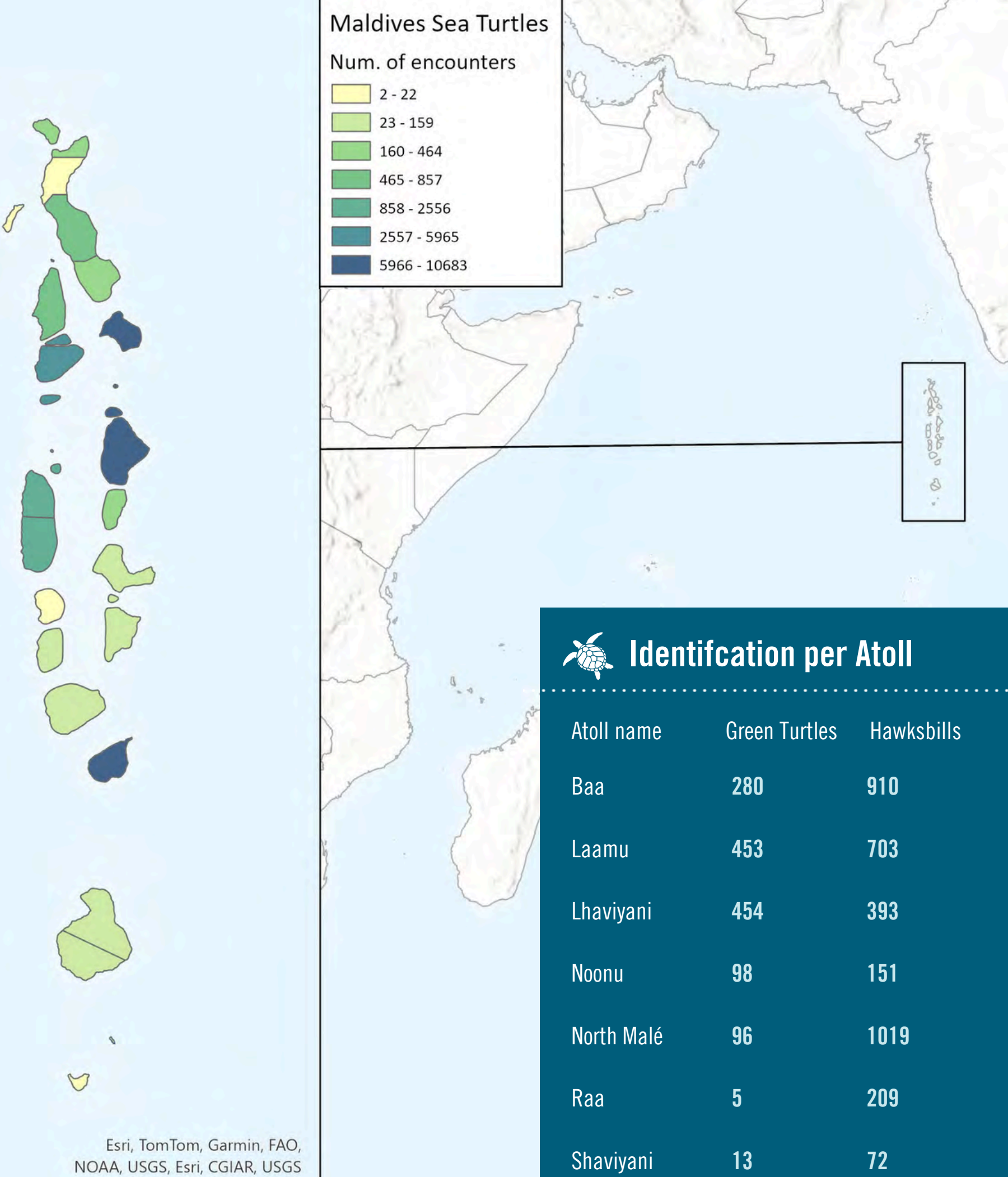
All research is conducted under permits issued by the Environmental Protection Agency of the Maldives.

ORP Maldives Sea Turtle IDs



Identified Sea Turtles

Green Turtles	Hawksbills	New Nests Laid
1,725	5,150	 30
Total	Total	2024 Q4
42	83	Hatchlings counted
2024 Q4	2024 Q4	 1,479
 794	6,754	
Sites w/sea turtles sighted	Total sea turtles identified	



ORP Maldives

Rescue & Rehabilitation



The final months of the year were calmer than usual at the Rescue Centre, giving us ample time to look after our patients while also training our new team members.

Over the past three months, we admitted one new olive ridley and one hawksbil turtle, Nahida and Dhon Kalo, respectively. Sadly, Dhon Kalo had suffered severe debilitation, with her condition so far gone that we could not help her. She shortly passed a few days after admission.

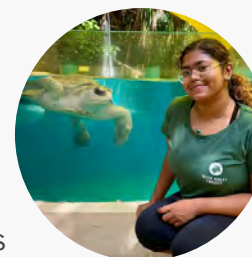


ORP Rescue Centre team along with Bulbul minutes before her release.

In happier news, we celebrated the successful release of two of our long-term patients, Bulbul and Kurangi. Kurangi (picture left) was the first turtle to be transferred to our new Raa Atoll Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre in JOALI BEING. Rescued from a ghost net in august 2023, Kurangi suffered from severe entanglement injuries to her front flippers. Her remarkable recovery, spread over 14 months, underscores the impact of our long term dedicated care and rehabilitation efforts.

October also brought a change in our interns at the Rescue Centre. Insha completed her 6-month internship, and we wish her all the best in her future endeavours. We are now pleased to welcome our new intern, Zaina Hafeez, from Malé, who will be with us for the next six months.

Zaina has previously interned with NGOs like the Maldives Whale Shark Research Project and Manta Trust. She's an enthusiastic diver with a Foundation Year in Marine Science, and she's eager to continue her studies in the field.



In October, we wrapped up our 2024 Veterinary Training Programme with a visit from Dr. Vimalraj, an Indian veterinarian currently practicing in Dubai. This year, we hosted seven veterinary trainees from Kenya, Indonesia, India, Spain, the US, the UK, and Colombia, offering them hands-on sea turtle care training in a teaching hospital setting. It was also the first year of our sponsorship programme for clinicians from the Global South, which ended on a high note!



New staff members: Veterinary Surgeon Dr Naul (left) and Associate Veterinary Surgeon Dr Michelle (right).






We're thrilled to welcome two new veterinary professionals to our Rescue Centre team. Dr. Hasnaulhusna (Naul), from Indonesia, first joined us as part of the Veterinary Training Programme in July 2024. A graduate of IPB University, Dr. Naul has worked extensively with aquatic animals like sea turtles and dolphins during her time at the Jakarta Animal Aid Network (JAAN).

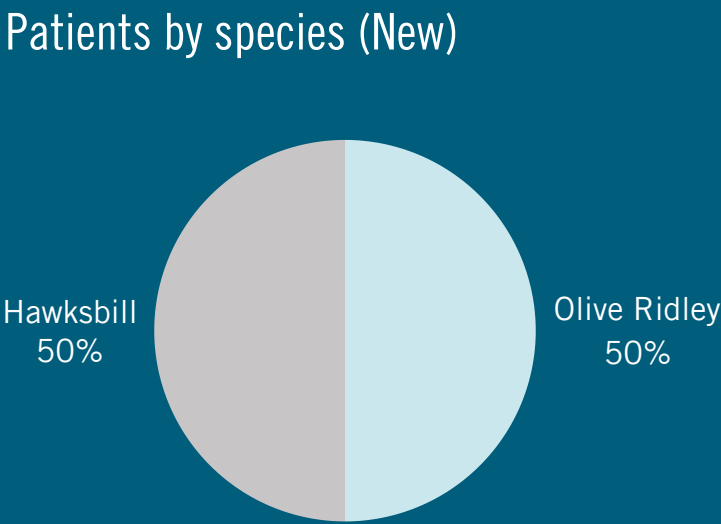
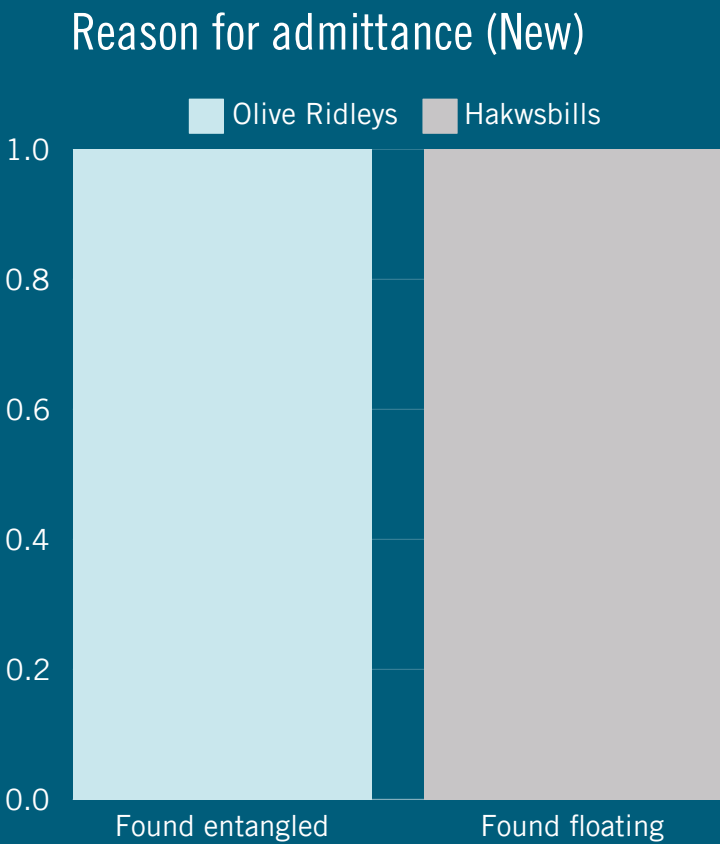
Joining her is Dr. Michelle, filling the newly created position of Associate Veterinary Surgeon. Born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya, Dr. Michelle's passion for wildlife led her to a career in veterinary medicine. With experience from Kenya Wildlife Service and a foundation in small animal care, she brings a unique blend of expertise to her role.

Dr. Naul and Dr. Michelle are taking over from Dr. Mariana and Veterinary Nurse Tristan. Over the past two years, their dedication has been instrumental in the care and release of countless patients, as well as improving clinical practices and logistics at the Rescue Centre. We're incredibly grateful for their contributions and excited to see how Dr. Naul and Dr. Michelle will build on this legacy!

All clinical activities are conducted under permits issued by the Environmental Protection Agency of the Maldives.

ORP Maldives Our Turtle Patients


	2024 Q4	2024	Since 2017
 New patients admitted	2	18	248
 Patients released	2	15	146
 Patients deceased	1	6	94
 Patients treated	10	28	248
 Patients still in care	8		




New Patients Admitted

Dhon Kalo, admitted 14 December.
Dhon Kalo, meaning "sweet boy" in Dhivehi, was a juvenile hawksbill found floating in Raa Atoll. Despite our best efforts, her condition—diagnosed as Chronic Debilitation Syndrome (CDS)—did not improve, and she sadly passed away on 19 December. A postmortem revealed she was female and suffered from severe intestinal disease. Deceased: 19/12/24

Nahida, admitted 10 December.
Nahida, an adult olive ridley, was found entangled in a ghost net in Raa Atoll. Her front left flipper was severely entangled and had to be amputated. She is now recovering from her surgery and is spending time in her tank healing and even diving occasionally.



Released Patients
Bulbul - 2nd October
Kurangi - 2nd November



Deceased Patients
Dhon Kalo - 14th December


New Approach To Turtle Care

You may have noticed that our patients are carrying a bit more organic growth than usual. This is intentional and reflects the latest understanding of the natural 'biofilm' that forms on their skin and shell during their stay with us. This biofilm contains important and beneficial microbes - a skin microbiome - that contributes to our patients' health and healing.


We have therefore reduced the cleaning of organic growth from our patients, also limiting the stress caused by the handling. This change reflects our commitment to continuously evolving our care practices based on the latest scientific insights, ensuring we give our turtle patients the best possible support on their road to recovery.

Case Study: Kihaa




 Kihaa, an adult female olive ridley turtle was found floating in Dhaalu Atoll and admitted to the Rescue Centre with injuries consistent with a previous ghost net entanglement, including a ligature injury around her neck.



 She also had partially amputated hind flippers, a missing right front flipper with the humerus bone protruding (picture above), and a fractured plastron. Kihaa underwent surgery to amputate the remainder of her right front flipper and recovered well from the surgery.



 Kihaa received specialised wound care including application of manuka honey, wound cleaning and cold laser therapy for the rest of her flippers. She is making good recovery and her injuries do not appear to be affecting her diving.

ORP Oman

Over the past three months, the arrival of cooler winter conditions brought an increase in fishing activity to Zighy Bay. Encouragingly, no incidents of sea turtle bycatch were recorded during this period. This is in part due to our consistent efforts in community engagement, which aim to foster awareness and adoption of sustainable fishing practices among local fishers.

The improved water conditions, characterised by calmer seas and enhanced visibility, significantly bolstered our monitoring initiatives. Over the quarter, we identified 60 turtles, with a record-breaking 93 green turtle sightings in November alone. 23 of these were newly documented individuals, marking a major milestone in our ongoing efforts to monitor and protect the local sea turtle population. Our most frequently observed turtle this quarter was GM120, a juvenile green turtle affectionately named Gorgi, who was spotted 14 times gliding over Zighy Bay’s mixed coral beds. Close behind was GM067, nicknamed Kai, with 13 recorded sightings.



Sea Turtle Biologist Jasmine checking a juvenile green turtle rescued from a ghost net for injuries.

However, November also brought to light the persistent threat of marine debris as a ghost net was spotted in Zighy Bay. Upon inspecting the net, we discovered three juvenile green turtles ensnared by their flippers, struggling to free themselves. Acting swiftly, we untangled the sea turtles, evaluated their health, collected their Photo-ID and released them safely back into the ocean. With the help of divers from Six Senses, we retrieved the 25-kg net and disposed of it responsibly.

In October, the Environment Authority in Oman called on us to help them assess the health of an adult green turtle they had found floating during their routine patrols. Upon inspection (image right), we found that the turtle showed no external injuries, but exhibited buoyancy syndrome, preventing it from diving. The turtle was transported by boat to a marine veterinary clinic in Muscat, where it remains under care.




Jasmine conducting an awareness session at Sukina School for Girls in Dibba.

Additionally, October saw the resumption of our educational outreach programmes in local schools. At Sukina School for Girls in Dibba, we conducted an engaging session showcasing our sea turtle research and conservation efforts to 40 students. The interactive approach sparked curiosity and inspired the next generation of marine conservationists. We received enthusiastic feedback and have scheduled more education sessions for the coming year.

Looking ahead, our efforts will focus on strengthening collaborations with local communities and governmental agencies to amplify conservation initiatives. Key priorities include expanding educational outreach, promoting sustainable fishing practices, and enhancing our ongoing sea turtle monitoring programme. Through these initiatives, we aim to ensure that Zighy Bay continues to thrive as a sanctuary for sea turtles and a beacon of sustainable marine stewardship.





Identified Sea Turtles

Green Turtles	Hawksbills	Total sea turtles identified
184	9	196
Since 2020	Since 2020	
1	0	
2024 Q4	2024 Q4	
Sites w/sea turtles sighted		
13		



ORP Pakistan By The Numbers

Ghost gear recovered	Ghost gear repurposed	Pet leashes made
>6.7K KG	>58.44K SQM	762
Since 2018	Since 2018	
128 KG	4,075 SQM	Pet Leashes Sold
2024 Q4	2024 Q4	712
Flase Crawls	Nests Laid	Income generated
157	412	848.6K PKR
Since 2023	Since 2023	
30	0	Green Turtles Identified
2024 Q4	2024 Q4	13
		Since 2023

ORP Pakistan

The last three months of 2024 witnessed a flurry of activity, discoveries, and impactful conservation efforts in Pakistan, offering a glimpse into the remarkable resilience and fragility of the natural world. Each day in the field presented new opportunities to learn, educate, and act for the benefit of sea turtles and their habitats.

During this period, we conducted 16 field surveys, resulting in 168 sea turtle observations. These included five heartwarming sightings of hatchling emergence, a powerful reminder of the life cycles we strive to protect. We identified 132 true nests and recorded 30 false crawls. Notably, a significant number of false crawls occurred during the holiday season (late December), likely due to increased human presence on the beach after sundown, potentially disrupting the delicate nesting process.


However, the tracks left behind by these magnificent creatures provided valuable insights. The largest track, measuring 114 cm, revealed the presence of a mature female making her way up the beach to nest, while the smallest track, at 80 cm, likely belonged to a younger, perhaps first-time nester.

We were reminded of the challenges nesting turtles face on land when two female sea turtles were found entangled in fishing nets near beach huts in separate incidents. Thanks to the quick action and help from local community members, we were able to successfully free both turtles and guide them safely back to the ocean.

With the withdrawal of the monsoon in October, the rough seas finally calmed down, enabling us to conduct two offshore trips in December. We were delighted to observe a hawksbill, a juvenile green, and an adult green turtle thriving near Charna Island.

Our commitment to combating marine debris continued throughout the last three months of the year. In December, Field Coordinators, Asif and Hanif diligently removed 123 kg of ghost gear from local beaches. Asif alone cleared a substantial 64 kg of nets from Abdul Rehman Goth in early December, and, later in the month, the duo removed another two nets of 51 kg and 8 kg from Hawke's Bay beach. These efforts not only protect sea turtles but also contribute significantly to the overall health of the marine ecosystem.



 A green turtle laying her eggs on Hawke's Bay Beach in December 2024.

Educating the youth and inspiring future conservationists remain central to our mission. In October, we welcomed a group of 56 participants, including 29 children aged 14 and under, for a sea turtle tour at Hawke's Bay beach. The evening began with a walk along the shore, where the participants witnessed several nesting females. The children were mesmerised as they observed two turtles return to the sea, while one successfully nested before their very eyes, and two others completed their nesting journeys. Our team took this opportunity to help the participants learn about turtle nesting habits and the importance of using red lights to avoid disturbing these majestic creatures.

Similarly, in December, 18 university students visited Hawke's Bay beach to witness the wonders of sea turtles. They were fortunate enough to observe a nesting female and luckier even to observe a nest hatching. Our team highlighted the multifaceted threats facing turtle populations and the appropriate protocols to follow during nesting and hatching events. This immersive session left the students with a deeper appreciation for sea turtles and their conservation.

This quarter's successes, and indeed the accomplishments of the entire year, are a testament to the unwavering dedication of our team, volunteers, and community partners. From freeing trapped turtles and clearing harmful debris to inspiring future conservationists, every effort moves us closer to a world where people and nature thrive together.

Reflecting on these remarkable stories, we're reminded that conservation isn't just about saving turtles; it's about people and preserving the delicate balance of life that sustains our planet. Thank you for being an essential part of this journey. Together, we look forward to another year of driving change.

ORP Seychelles

The 2024-25 hawksbill nesting season officially began in October, marking the start of an exciting new chapter for Félicité Island. During the first month, we recorded 15 hawksbill nesting activities, including three confirmed nests on Grand Anse.

As the season progressed, nesting activity gained momentum through November and December, resulting in a total of 70 recorded nesting activities and 28 confirmed nests by the year’s end. Grand Anse continued to be the island’s primary nesting beach, hosting an impressive 25 nests.

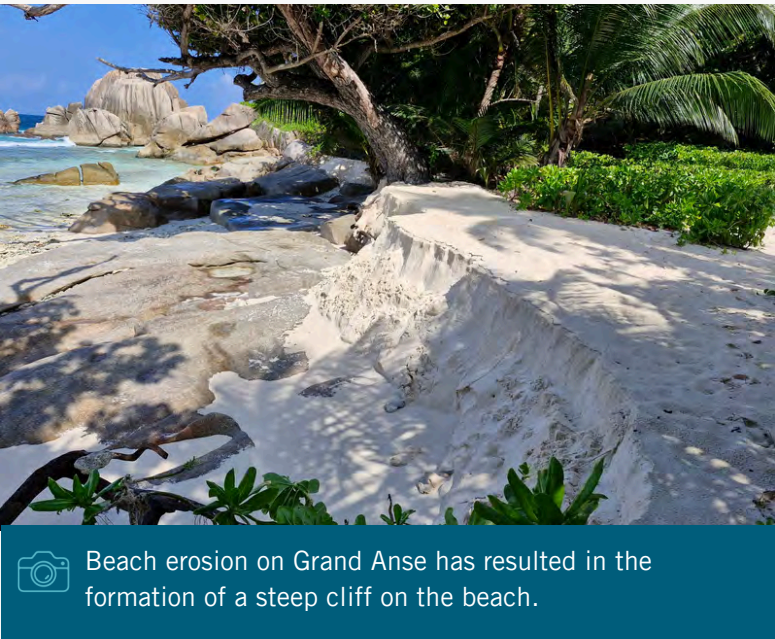
One of the season’s most remarkable moments was the discovery and relocation of a record-breaking hawksbill nest of 263 eggs—the largest we have ever documented on Félicité Island. We eagerly anticipate the emergence of hundreds of hatchlings from this nest in early 2025.



In addition to nest monitoring, photo identification remains a vital part of our research efforts. During nesting surveys, we encountered 33 nesting females, successfully identifying 16 unique individuals—all of which were observed nesting for the first time on Félicité Island.

Our in-water Photo-ID surveys also showed exciting results. We conducted over 57 surveys around Félicité and nearby islands, and recorded 64 sea turtle sightings with successful identifications, including 24 turtles spotted for the first time.

All in-water sightings during this period were of hawksbill turtles, with the exception of one male green turtle spotted at Petite Soeur. These findings highlight the importance of Photo-ID in understanding and monitoring our sea turtle populations, both on land and in the water.







December ushered in the Northwest monsoon season in Seychelles, bringing wet and humid weather to the inner islands. While Félicité typically experiences light winds during this season, the month saw persistent strong winds and swells, likely influenced by the passing of Tropical Cyclone Chido to the south. These conditions exacerbated erosion in the northern section of Grand Anse, necessitating the relocation of two nests to the southern section to prevent flooding of the eggs.

Did You Know?

Flooding is a significant threat to sea turtle nests, as it can wash away eggs or suffocate the embryos. A flooded nest reduces the capacity for gas exchange, affecting embryo development, even causing mortality.

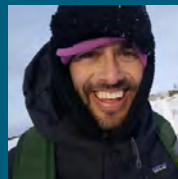
Guest participation increased towards the end of the year with 444 visitors joining in various activities, including snorkelling explorations, nest monitoring, and educational talks. These hands-on experiences allowed them to connect with and actively support critical sea turtle conservation efforts. The holiday season brought an extra touch of joy, as 12 of our identified turtles were adopted and given charming names like Lima, Lola, and Dancing Queen.



 Identified Sea Turtles & Nesting		
Green Turtles	Hawksbills	Total sea turtles identified
11	236	247
Since 2021	Since 2021	
1	23	
2024 Q4	2024 Q4	
New nests laid	Hatchings counted	Sites w/sea turtles sighted
 18	 101	 43
2024 Q4	2024 Q4	

Meet the Team

Charity Management & Operations



DR MARTIN STELFOX
FOUNDER & CEO



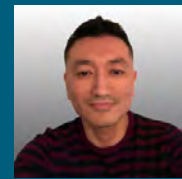
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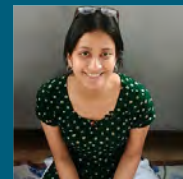
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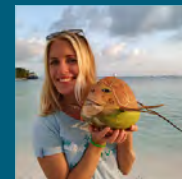
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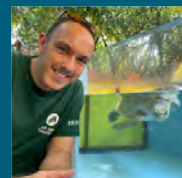
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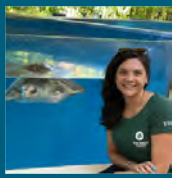


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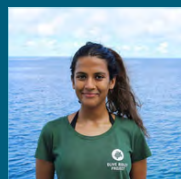
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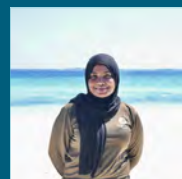
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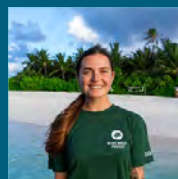
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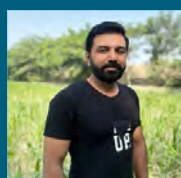


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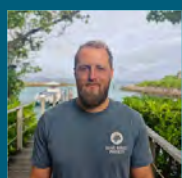
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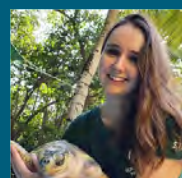


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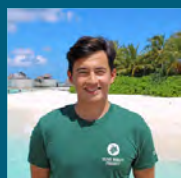
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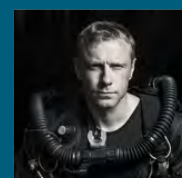
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Thank you

As we reflect on 2024, we express our deepest gratitude to all our donors, adopters, supporters, collaborators, and partners for their invaluable financial and logistical contributions throughout the year. We are especially grateful to the 11 incredible volunteers from five different countries who selflessly devoted their time to caring for our patients at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre.

A heartfelt thank you goes to Friends of Frontiers and an anonymous donor for their exceptionally generous support, which will have a significant impact on the year ahead. We also extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to our year-end Hope for Hatchlings campaign, and especially to our trustee, Professor Michael Sweet, who doubled the value of every donation, amplifying the positive change we can achieve together!

The 2024 Vaavoshi Festival would not have been possible without the incredible support of Kendhikulhudhoo Council, School, Development Committee, Women's Development Committee, FENAKA, Health Centre, Road Development Cooperation, and Magistrate Court. Special thanks to the volunteers for their creativity, the participating schools, the Kudafari Community for their boduberu performance and farivalhu eruvun, and the Noonu Atoll Police for their support. A big thank you to Atoll Marine Center (AMC), Maldives National University (MNU), Reefscapers, Manta Trust, Soneva Namoonaa and Kudafari Council for setting up super interactive and informative stall activities. We also extend our gratitude to the Ministry of Education, State Minister Mohamed Nashath Rasheed, Dr. Ahmed Riyaz Jauharee from the College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, Maldives National University, Secret Paradise, and everyone who contributed, including Ali Rasheedh, Ahmed Aslam Waheedh, Hamdha Ali, Fawwaz Ali, Ummivrs, Rafha Abdulla, Izuaan, and Razan Ali.

Partners & Collaborators





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