

**FINAL REPORT ON  
A PROPOSAL FOR TWO WORKSHOPS TO FACILITATE POSITIVE  
CHANGE AMONG INDIGENOUS FISHERS OF THE BAY ISLANDS,  
HONDURAS**

Held July 10-12 and 27, 2007

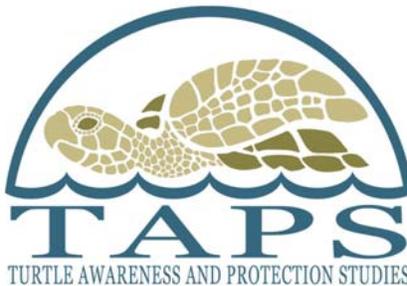
Submitted by  
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**Protective Turtle Ecology Center for Training, Outreach, and Research,  
Inc.  
(ProTECTOR)**



and the

**Turtle Awareness and Protection Studies Program  
(TAPS)**



to the  
**State of the World's Sea Turtle Report  
(SWOT)**

October 1, 2007

**Location of project:** Reef House Resort, Oak Ridge, Roatan, Honduras

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**Summary of proposed project and objectives:**

The project proposed to undertake two workshops among the indigenous fishing communities of the island of Roatan in the Bay Islands of Honduras. The workshops were designed to facilitate discussion among local fishermen, community members and the conservation/research organization ProTECTOR. Three goals of the workshops were: 1) to heighten awareness of the status and plight of sea turtles in the Bay Islands, 2) to link community-based conservation efforts on behalf of sea turtles (as representatives of the marine environment) with tourism interests and income and, 3) to develop specific plans for alternative means of income for communities who have previously relied on the harvest of turtles as an intermittent and supplementary source of revenue.

**Summary of project implemented:**

The Reef House Resort, located on the Island of Roatan, was the site of the Workshops to Facilitate Positive Change Among Indigenous Fishers of the Bay Islands held from July 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>. Local members from the communities of Camp Bay, Punta Gorda and Oak Ridge joined representatives of the Bay Islands Natural Resources Management Program (PMAIB), the Ministry of Tourism and the Assistant Director of the Roatan Marine Park, Lidia Salinas to discuss the plight of the Bay Island's sea turtles. Attendees at the "1<sup>st</sup> Fishermen's Conservation Workshop" varied in age from school children to retired fisherman, showing that interest in the conservation of these animals is not limited to one age demographic.

Participants of the workshop began by making critical links between tourism as the main income source for the islands, and the marine environment as the main resource of the islands. It was further agreed that sea turtles are a well-recognized representative of the marine habitat and that by developing a specific program of turtle conservation among the communities, local participants would see benefits at both environmental and economic levels in the near future. On the second day, fishermen at the workshop acknowledged that they recognized the number of turtles to be declining, but suggested that they were unaware of what other means were available to provide for their needs. This led to small-group discussions and open forums providing opportunities to discuss alternatives to taking turtles from feeding grounds and nesting beaches, and the harvesting of eggs as a source of personal income. Facilitators lead participants in developing several ideas for community-level alternatives that would link sea turtle conservation with potential revenue streams. The final day of the workshop was spent deciding on a specific community-level program that would include all three communities as stakeholders. Once the decision had been made for the development of a conservation-based craft market, sub-committees were sent into each of the communities, tasked with collecting specific information that would contribute to the development of a plan of action. Committee members reconvened on July 27, 2007 at which time the information gathered was formed into the first stages of a program proposal. The

reconvening of committee members constituted a deviation from the initial proposal. The workshop conveners considered a follow-up meeting to further detail the proposed plan of more immediate concern than to repeat the three day workshop for those who were unable to attend the first workshop. The proposal is currently under development of a budget and staging details and will be submitted to USAID (Honduras), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Honduran Social Investment Fund (FHIS) supported by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). Although opening the market is still some time in the future, the first steps toward actualization have been taken and the communities are now actively pursuing alternative sources of income than the taking of sea turtles. There is also a new grass-roots movement among attendees to facilitate a change from “poachers to ProTECTORS” within their own communities.

The number of people attending increased over the successive days of the workshop, as did the enthusiasm for a practical program through which both the local communities and the marine environment can benefit. The proposed program will facilitate the interface of local community capacity-building, sustainable tourism and community-based marine/sea turtle conservation efforts.

Other ideas (and possibly future projects) discussed were a conservation center, where both locals and tourists would gather to learn about turtles and what can be done to protect them, as well as the possibility of operating nesting/hatching beach tours once nesting beaches are located and populations begin to increase. Still other ideas included special community celebration days around the theme of sea turtles.

**Budget of project:**

Item	Total Cost	SWOT Contribution	Matching Funds	In-Kind Contributions
Workshop Posters	\$21.00	\$21.00		
Workshop Pads	\$318.31	\$200.00	\$118.31	
Workshop Pens	\$117.00	\$117.00		
Materials Shipment	\$178.00	\$104.00		\$ 74.00
Transport Assistance	\$450.00	\$450.00		
Meal Services	\$416.00	\$108.00	\$108.00	\$200.00
Venue Services	\$400.00		\$100.00	\$300.00
Travel/Salary	\$1,800.00		\$1800.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,700.31</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>	<b>\$2,126.31</b>	<b>\$574.00</b>

Some adjustments to the proposed budget were made once actual costs were finalized.

**Success of project rating:**

I would rate the success of the project as 9. I was very excited to see the enthusiasm of the people who attended the meeting the first day. They were eager to participate and passionate about what they were learning as they participated in both general and specific discussions. As these participants returned to their communities, they encouraged others in their communities to be present at the workshop. As a result, attendance increased on both the second and third days of the first workshop. In addition, the workshops resulted in the development of a specific plan for a conservation-based craft market that will combine community development, tourism interests and conservation of sea turtles, and the marine environment in general. The communities continue to be enthusiastically

involved as we further develop the budget and proposal to be submitted to potential project funders. However, I would like to have seen a much greater participation of local members. This may have been the case with more long-range advertising and planning. This assessment will be considered in planning for workshops in the future.

**Additional comments:**

I have already used the results of these workshops as a model for alternative livelihoods in other communities in Honduras. At Punta Ratón, in the Golf of Fonseca (Pacific coast), where communities heavily rely on turtle products for subsistence, ProTECTOR is working with SERNA (Ministry of Environment), DiBio (Department of Biodiversity), PROGOLFO (Conservation Organization for the Golf of Fonseca Region) and the Alcalde de (Municipality of) Marcovia to research sea turtles in the area and to develop plans for alternative, conservation-based revenue streams for local communities.

**Acknowledgements:**

ProTECTOR wishes to thank Larry and Carol Stevenson, owners of the Reef House Resort, who provided the venue and funding support for the workshops. Thanks to Melissa Berube who drafted presentation slides and kept notes throughout the entire process. We gratefully acknowledge Hyde Shipping for their assistance in shipping materials to Roatan. We thank SWOT for funding assistance and for providing the SWOT reports, which were an invaluable tool during the meetings.

**Photo captions:**

**Photo 1:** “Young Conservationists.” A group of young conservationists discuss practical benefits of sea turtle conservation for their communities.

**Photo 2:** “Gustav Bodden.” Long-time turtle fisher, Gustav Bodden, reads through the SWOT Report for insights on sea turtles at the 1<sup>st</sup> Fishermen’s Conservation Workshop held in Oak Ridge, Honduras.

**Photo 3:** “Community Leaders.” Representatives from local communities work together to develop specific plans for alternative livelihoods to marketing turtle meat and eggs.

**Photo 4:** “Johnny Collins.” Community leader, Johnny Collins, directs a small group in a discussion on the value of community-based protection of sea turtles.

**Photo 5:** “Steve Teaching.” Steve Dunbar uses the SWOT Reports to facilitate open discussions on links between community benefits and sea turtle conservation.

All photos taken at the Reef House Resort, Roatan, Honduras during Sept. 10 – 12, 2007.

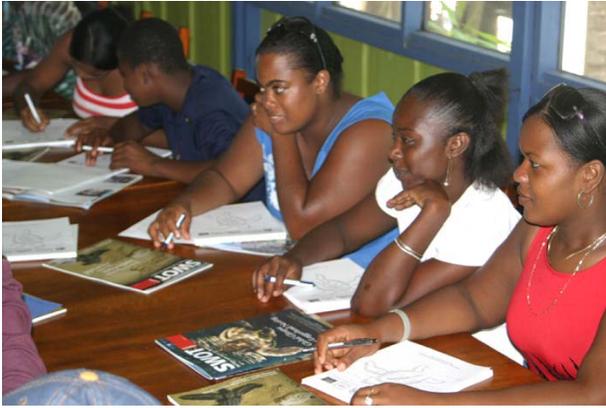


Photo 1. Young conservationists

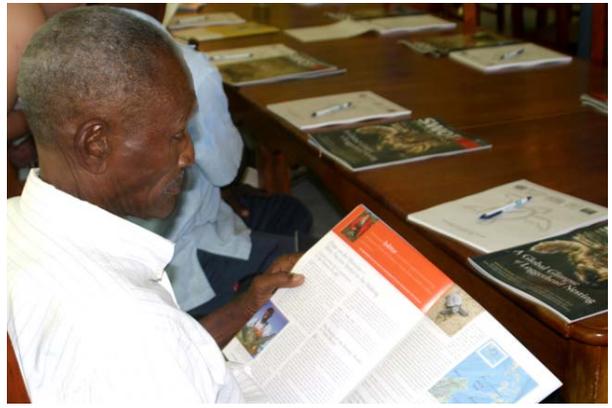


Photo 2. Gustav Bodden



Photo 3. Community leaders



Photo 4. Johnny Collins



Photo 5. Steve teaching