

presume that the leatherback was a sub-adult, although smaller adult leatherbacks have been documented nesting in various locations (Stewart *et al.*, 2007).

The District Forest Officer of Nellore, Andhra Pradesh, and the Assistant Conservator of Forests, Kavali Range came to the beach site and conducted a detailed enquiry with the local fishermen on the possible cause of the injuries to this turtle, and other injuries to all turtle species in the region. Most sea turtle mortalities in the area appear to be the result of fisheries interactions and there has been an alarming increase in turtle mortality along the Nellore coast, from 13 dead stranded turtles during the 2012 turtle nesting season (January to April) to 78 dead stranded turtles observed between 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2012 and 6<sup>th</sup> January 2013 alone. Concurrently, there has been an increase in the gill net fishery effort along the Paderu River estuary in the conservation area, with an increase from 34 to 54

boats operating in the area over the past 7 months.

The TREE Foundation's community based sea turtle conservation program is partly supported by the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department and The US Fish & Wildlife Service, USA.

#### Literature cited

Shanker, K. 2013. Leatherback turtles on the mainland coast of India. *Indian Ocean Turtle Newsletter* 17: 15-17.

Stewart, K., C. Johnson & M. H. Godfrey. 2007. The minimum size of leatherbacks at reproductive maturity, with a review of sizes for nesting females from the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific Ocean basins. *Herpetological Journal* 17: 123-128. ■

## HOW MANY HATCHERIES?

ANDREA D PHILLOTT<sup>#</sup>, JIBY MOL MATHEW & NIMISHA K.

Asian University for Women, Chittagong, Bangladesh

<sup>#</sup>andrea.phillott@auw.edu.bd

Sea turtle eggs in the Indian Ocean and south-east Asia are often collected for incubation in a hatchery to reduce natural and human threats to nests, including poaching, predation, and beach erosion. Hatcheries may be maintained by governmental and non-governmental agencies for protection and/or education and outreach, or to provide income to local communities through ecotourism. To better understand the practices of hatcheries and the contribution to sea turtle conservation, we are conducting a survey to quantify the number of sea turtle hatcheries in this region and determine the

location of hatcheries and proximity to nesting beaches, number and species of eggs collected, methods of egg collection and transport, density and depth of nests, and practices of head-starting or holding hatchlings.

Interested persons involved with sea turtle conservation and management of hatcheries in countries throughout the Indian Ocean and south-east Asia are requested to email Dr. Andrea D. Phillott at andrea.phillott@auw.edu.bd to receive a copy of the survey. A summary of results will be published in a later issue of IOTN. ■