

Introduction

Welcome to our special issue focusing on the Western Indian Ocean! The following pages bring together information on a variety of initiatives and projects from this part of the Indian Ocean region.

Over the years, IOTN has carried overviews of research and conservation in South and Southeast Asia. We have been keen to extend this to the Western Indian Ocean to highlight sea turtle conservation issues and initiatives in the region.

Chloe Schauble & Kartik Shanker
Editors

In the early 1970s, George Hughes and Jack Frazier highlighted to the scientific community that the South West Indian Ocean was an important region in the world for sea turtles. Since that time a lot of work has been done, and is still ongoing, on sea turtles in this region. For example, long term monitoring programs implemented in South Africa, French Eparses islands and Seychelles have allowed us to learn more about the long term trends in nesting activity of several species of marine turtles. However, there has been a general lack of communication regarding the huge effort that is undertaken around the status, conservation and management of sea turtles in most of the countries of this region.

In recent years, the IOSEA memorandum and its South West Indian Ocean Marine Turtle Task Force have done a fantastic job to help and structure turtle teams spread across the region. This has

We hope that this will serve as an impetus for more regular contributions and updates on sea turtle work from this part of the world.

We would very much like to thank Jérôme Bourjea and Stéphane Ciccione for their key coordination role in bringing this special issue of IOTN to fruition.

Happy reading!

occurred through provision of assistance in regional cooperation and exchange of experience. Newly helped by the South West Indian Ocean Fishery Project, we expect that the creation of a reliable research and project network dedicated to sea turtles will provide the regional dynamic needed for the implementation of reliable local and regional mitigation measures in management for sea turtles, which can be compatible with local lasting development.

This special issue is thus an excellent opportunity for numerous teams that work isolated in Western Indian Ocean countries to showcase the valuable work that is done. Most of the time this work is done with few resources, but hand in hand with other teams, creating a network of knowledge and field experiences dedicated to the conservation and management of sea turtles.

Congratulations to you all for this effort!

Stéphane Ciccione (Kelonja, Reunion) & Jérôme Bourjea (IFREMER, Reunion)