

## Turtle conservation activities in Tambaldeg village, Sindhudurg district, Maharashtra

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Tambaldeg village in Devgad taluka is a famous tourist place in the Sindhudurg district. During a field visit to Tambaldeg beach on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017, six carcasses of adult olive ridley turtle *Lepidochelys olivacea* and one of green turtle *Chelonia mydas* were observed in decomposed state. This beach is a turtle nesting site and the Forest department of Maharashtra with the support of local fishers is undertaking awareness programs for turtle conservation including hoardings displayed on conservation of turtles along the beach. Protection of nesting turtles and eggs is also undertaken by the local communities.

The Forest Department of Maharashtra gives an honorarium of ₹ 500 per person for locating a turtle nest. Turtles entangled in ghost fishing nets and incidental catch by trawlers and gillnetters was also observed. However, fishers are reluctant to release turtles entangled in fishing nets since it is difficult without damaging fishing nets. They are well aware of scheduled status of marine turtles and deny poaching. The plan by Maharashtra Government for introducing incentives for release of threatened and endangered species of turtles is therefore being welcomed by all stakeholders.