

TURTLE CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN AS A TOURIST ATTRACTION FOR BALI

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Abstract

Most sea turtle species around the world are threatened with extinction. The threat of sea turtle extinction is largely caused by humans for consumption, souvenirs, trade, medicine and religious activities as well as for commercial purposes such as the sale of eggs, meat and shells. This human behavior is threatening sea turtle populations. Preventing the decline of these threatened sea turtle populations requires changes in human behavior that are educated through conservation campaigns. This international service was carried out with the aim of recognizing local culture and local wisdom products and participating in painting traditional Thai pottery. This activity is a community service activity that collaborates between the Faculty of Economics and Business of Swadaya Gunung Jati University Indonesia, Panca Sakti Tegal University Indonesia, Suan Dusit University and Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management University India. Community service activities were carried out in Nong Noch Thailand, with a total of 25 participants consisting of 10 students and 15 lecturers. Sea turtle conservation is one of the community's efforts to preserve the environment and sea turtle habitat for the survival of sea turtles.

Keywords: Conservation Campaign, Turtle, Tourism Attraction, Bali

INTRODUCTION

Marine biodiversity is one of Indonesia's tourist attractions. One of the marine biodiversity in Indonesia is sea turtles. Sea turtles provide important ecological roles in marine ecosystems, including maintenance of coral reef habitats, distribution of aquatic nutrients, and increased fish diversity (Vieira et al., 2023). In addition, sea turtles are also utilized to support economic and cultural needs by coastal communities throughout Indonesia. Sea turtles can migrate long distances along the Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean and Southeast Asia. The purpose of sea turtle migration is to mate, look for breeding grounds and to find food (Swindall et al., 2019).

Sea turtles play an important ecological role in marine ecosystems, and their populations continue to decline every year on a global scale. In addition to maintaining the balance of the ecosystem, sea turtles are also utilized to support the economic and cultural

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needs of coastal communities throughout Indonesia. The utilization of sea turtles by the community is used as pets, or even as food and illegal trade. In addition to human influence, natural factors also threaten the existence of sea turtles such as predators, diseases and climate change. These factors contribute to the decline of sea turtle populations (Laura Thomas-Walters, 2020).

The existence of sea turtles in nature is endangered, from all forms of utilization and circulation must be controlled by the government so that the existence of sea turtles is maintained and protected. Therefore, based on PP No. 7 of 1999 concerning the Preservation of Plant and Animal Species and PP No. 8 of 1999 concerning the Utilization of Wild Plant and Animal Species, which means that all trade in live or dead conditions is prohibited. With the PP issued by the government, the government directly protects the existence of sea turtles.

To support the Government Regulation, sea turtles are one of the tourist attractions, so people who care about the habitat of sea turtle development conduct sea turtle conservation campaigns in the Bali area. Bali is an area in Indonesia that has its own tourist attraction, which still utilizes sea turtles for consumption, souvenirs, trade, medicine and religious activities as well as for commercial purposes such as selling eggs, meat, and shells (Fajri, 2021). This has led to the emergence of conservation campaigns by conservation organizations concerned with sea turtles. Sea turtle conservation campaigns are one of the activities with the hope of preventing the extinction of sea turtle habitat, as well as preventing the utilization of sea turtles (Rojas-Cañizales et al., 2022). This conservation campaign can also be a place to share knowledge to educate the public about the importance of sea turtle conservation to continue to participate in protecting sea turtle habitats in Indonesia so that sea turtles do not become extinct (Sahu, A., & Rajendran, 2022).

The purpose of this community service is to find out and add insight into the management and conservation of sea turtle habitat in Bali. This community service activity includes beach monitoring, relocation of turtle eggs to semi-natural hatching nests, raising hatchlings and turtles and providing education to foreign tourists. Observations were carried out with several activities including knowing the differences in turtle species, sand temperature, nest depth, nest diameter, nest distance and counting the number of eggs to see the success of hatching. With the insights gained in this community service, it is hoped that the participants will open their minds and participate in preserving sea turtle habitats.

RESEARCH METHODS

The community service activities began with an explanation of the turtle conservation campaign in Bali, making visits to turtle education and conservation sites, gaining insight into turtles and observing turtles. It is hoped that this community service activity will open up knowledge to participants and foster a sense of concern for protecting turtle habitats that will become extinct. This conservation campaign is expected to prevent the extinction of sea turtle habitat, prevent the utilization of sea turtles for commercial purposes such as selling eggs, meat, and shells (Nurhayati et al., 2022). This community service activity was carried out in collaboration between the Faculty of Economics and Business of Swadaya Gunung Jati University Indonesia, Panca Sakti Tegal University Indonesia, and Suan Dusit University, and Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management University. This community service took place in Bali Indonesia for the period of implementation from March 10 to 12, 2023. This international service activity is an effort to educate the public about the importance of protecting sea turtle habitats in Indonesia so that they do not become extinct.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This collaborative community service activity is an effort to increase knowledge about sea turtles and help maintain sea turtle habitats so that they do not become extinct (Ginal et al., 2023). This activity includes monitoring the beach, relocating turtle eggs to semi-natural nests, raising hatchlings and turtles and providing education to foreign tourists. Observations were carried out with several activities including knowing the differences in turtle species, sand temperature, nest depth, nest diameter, nest distance and counting the number of eggs to see the success of hatching.

With the insights gained in this community service, it is hoped that the participants will open their minds and participate in preserving sea turtle habitats. Participants of this international service consisted of students and lecturers from Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management University, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati Indonesia, and Universitas Pancasakti Tegal Indonesia with a total of 30 participants consisting of 10 students and 20 lecturers.

This activity began with the opening of the event and gave a presentation on the importance of protecting sea turtle habitats presented by university representatives from India and Indonesia.



Figure 1. Opening of International Community Service Event

Habitat is an area that is suitable for living things to occupy. Components of sea turtle habitat include shelter and breeding grounds, food, and interactions with other animals (KALE, 2022). Sea turtles have different habitats. Hawksbill turtle habitats will be able to lay eggs on sandy beaches or lay eggs on pebbles under the shade of trees. Meanwhile, green turtles and Olive Ridley turtles will be able to lay their eggs on wide, open beaches without the shade of trees.

Sea turtles are very sensitive to movement and light disturbances, so they prefer quiet places to lay their eggs. If the turtle feels threatened, it will return to the sea (Fajri, 2021). In general, the large, sloping land area above the beach is the preferred nesting site for sea turtles. Sea turtle growth is on average very slow and takes decades to reach production age. Adults will live for many years in one place before migrating to mate. Migrations can cover long distances of up to 3000 km from foraging grounds to nesting beaches. Male and female sea turtles will migrate to their nesting grounds around their birth area when they are about 20-50 years old. Mating of adult turtles occurs offshore a month or two before the first nesting of the season. Of the hundreds of eggs laid by female turtles, at most 1-3% reach adulthood.



Figure 2. Turtle Conservation Campaign Presentation

One of the ways to conserve sea turtles is by using good husbandry techniques and preparing sea turtles to be used in traditional ceremonies by the Balinese people. The turtles kept in the turtle education and conservation institution have three species of turtles, namely the Olive Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*) and green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*). These turtles have different ages on average. The age of the Olive Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) is around 50 years old, the hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*) is 10 years old and the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) is 15 years old.



Figure 3. Implementation of Turtle Conservation Activities

Conservation is one way to maintain preservation, namely preserving or maintaining the carrying capacity, quality, function, and ability of the environment in a balanced manner (Alfianistiawati et al., 2023). The purpose of conservation is to realize the preservation of natural resources. With the existence of education and conservation places as a place for turtle conservation, a semi-natural hatchery of turtle eggs taken from their natural nests on

the beach so that the eggs can hatch safely without having to be disturbed by predators or humans. This is done to prevent people from taking turtles directly from the sea in order to preserve the turtle habitat. The turtles provided for the ceremony are limited in number and one year old. This facility is also used as an educational facility and as a tourist attraction so that local people and foreign tourists can get to know more closely about sea turtles and it is hoped that awareness will arise to preserve sea turtles from the threat of extinction.



Figure 4. Closing of International Community Service Collaboration Activities

In an effort to protect several species of sea turtles in Indonesia such as the Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), Hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricate*) and Green (*Chelonia mydas*) turtles, the turtles are cared for in concrete pools and rehabilitation ponds for a certain period of time, after which the turtles will be released to the sea. By taking part in preserving sea turtle habitats carried out by sea turtle education and conservation institutions, it is a special attraction for tourists visiting Bali.

CONCLUSION

This research revealed that international community service collaboration activities were successfully implemented with the participation of students and lecturers from various universities, aiming to expand knowledge about sea turtles and protect their habitat. In this activity, beach monitoring, turtle egg relocation, hatchling and turtle rearing, and counseling to foreign tourists were the main focuses. Participants consisted of 10 students and 20 lecturers, representing Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management University, Faculty of Economics and Business of Swadaya Gunung Jati University Indonesia, and Pancasakti University Tegal Indonesia. The results of the research included an understanding of sea turtle habitats, the different types of sea turtles, as well as important aspects of egg hatching. In addition, the research highlighted the role of conservation in protecting sea turtles through maintenance, education, and integration of sea turtles in Balinese traditional

ceremonies. It is hoped that these conservation efforts will not only improve participants' insights, but also trigger public awareness to preserve sea turtle habitats and support sustainable tourism.

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