

PROPOSAL FOR APPENDIX II OF CITES

A. Proposal: Transfer of the Indonesian populations of the Green Turtle (Chelonia mydas) from Appendix I to Appendix II, with a quota of 3,000 for export.

B. Proponent: The Republic of Indonesia

C. Supporting Statement:

1. Taxonomy:

- 1.1 Class: Reptilia
- 1.2 Order: Testudinata
- 1.3 Family: Cheloniidae
- 1.4 Species: Chelonia mydas
- 1.5 Common name: Green turtle (English)
Penyu hijau (Indonesian)
Tortue verte (French)
Tortugo verde (Spanish)

2. Biological Data:

2.1 Distribution: The Green turtle is found in nearly all the Tropical and Sub-tropical seas around the world. Its nesting and feeding grounds are widely distributed throughout the Indonesian archipelago and in the neighbouring countries.

2.2 Population: The size and location of every population of the Green turtle is not yet known. However, it is estimated that between 68,000 and 122,000 breeding females are known from the ten principal populations from the West Coast of Sumatra, north-west coast of Kalimantan, south-east coast of Kalimantan, islands of north-east coast of Kalimantan, south-west coast of Java, south-east coast of Java, south coast of Sumbawa, Kep. Penyu and Kep. Lusipara in Maluku, Kep. Aru, north coast of Vogelkop in Irian Jaya and many other smaller populations.

2.3 Habitat: Green turtles feed on or near reefs and in shallow waters on algae and sea-grasses. They nest on sandy beaches.

3. Trade Data:

3.1 National Utilization: In Indonesia, the main uses of the Green turtle include the consumption of its eggs and meat and the sale of its carapace. Smaller specimens are often stuffed and sold to tourists. Data on egg and turtle harvesting is incomplete. It is estimated that most of the harvest is taken from mainly the populations in south-west Java, west coast of Sumatra, north-west, north-east and southern Kalimantan and Penyu-Lusipara islands in Maluku.

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3.2 Legal International Trade:

1981: 301 specimens
1982: -
1983: 500 specimens
1984: 3,000 specimens + 3,650 kg
1985: 11,264 specimens (including parts & derivatives)

3.3 Illegal Trade: Not usually reported but smuggling of eggs, meat and stuffed animals is one of the major problems that is being taken up by the Directorate-General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHPA).

3.4 Potential trade threats:

3.4.1 Live specimens: There is little or no trade in live specimens. However, there is some potential for export of live specimens to amusement parks such as Oceanaria.

3.4.2 Parts and derivatives: This includes the use of eggs and meat for consumption; bones as food and fertilizer; skin for leather industry and carapace for handicraft industry.

4. Protection Status:

4.1 National: Green turtle is not on the National list of protected species. Nevertheless, local authorities in some cases regulate the harvest of eggs and turtles. Green turtle nesting beaches are included in 21 Protected areas and a further 31 sites are proposed (see annex 1). Since 1981, the PHPA have initiated a programme to hatch and release turtles at two nesting beaches. So far, at least 99,239 hatchlings have already been released at Cikepuh nesting beach in West Java. A ranching programme started in 1982 now attracts several private enterprises. One of the private company was granted permit to establish ranching facilities under licence in Sulawesi with a target of 10,000 hatchlings to be ranched. The on-going tagging programme in co-operation with the WWF has led to the tagging of 300 females at nesting beaches.

4.2 International: Chelonia mydas is listed in Appendix I of CITES.

4.3 Additional Protection Needs:

4.3.1 Every population of Green turtle in Indonesia needs to be identified and its size and degree of exploitation must be determined.

4.3.2 Each major Green turtle population must have a specific management plan based on the principle of sustainable utilization.

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4.3.3 Specific management recommendations include:-

reduction of egg harvests to 30% of the eggs laid in each population.

limiting the number of turtles landing in Bali to those with a carapace length of between 60-85 cm.

prohibition of turtle harvest within 20 km of any nesting beach.

control of domestic turtle trade through a proper licensing system.

prohibition of the sale of turtle meat in public eating places.

ranching of turtles reared from eggs falling within the 30% quota to supply the demand for meat and handicrafts.

4.4 Legalised export within the quotas strictly enforced by the PHFA to the members of the Indonesia Fauna and Flora Trade Association (IFFTA) to help remove the incentives for smuggling.

5. Additional remarks:

Indonesia is a large country with over 13,000 islands and long, open maritime boundaries. Therefore a total control over such a vast area is almost impossible by a single agency such as the PHFA. Hence smuggling is rife and eliminating it is difficult. The PHFA are promoting the rearing of turtles by the traders with the view to removing the pressure on the wild stocks and also to controlling smuggling. Eggs for ranching programmes shall be obtained from the 30% egg harvest quota. Thus 70% of the eggs in each population will remain protected. Reared turtles will be used to supply the Bali market and to the handicraft industry. In this way, it is planned to phase out the harvest of the wild turtles and replace this with the capture of reared animals. As a further incentive for rearing programmes, it is intended that the export should be legalised of turtles reared in compliance with the PHFA regulations. An integrated Action Plan for the conservation of Green turtle in Indonesia is given (see annex 2).

In that respect, the proponent wishes to recommend the down listing of Green turtle from Appendix I to Appendix II given the following arguments:-

a. the reason for listing the Green turtle in Appendix I was mainly to avoid further exploitation in the wild.

b. there are strong indications that continuous harvesting of the wild populations is still going on and number of specimens are being taken illegally which suggest that the wild populations are able to withstand a certain degree of harvest.

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c. several habitats of the species are already protected as conservation areas.

d. the total ban on its harvest from the wild so far could not eradicate the illegal trade.

e. a limited and controlled harvest of the green turtle by down listing the species to Appendix II may have a better chance to reduce the on going uncontrolled exploitation.

f. the recommended measures could well result in two beneficial outcomes: i.e financial benefit to the proponent (which is currently being taken by illicit traders), and a wider public support towards conservation in Indonesia in general and that of the green turtle in particular.

Annex 1: Protected Green turtle nesting beaches in IndonesiaGazetted Protected Areas

1. Bukit Barisan Selatan
2. Krakatau
3. Ujung Kulon-Pulau Panaitan
4. Pulau Seribu
5. Cikepuh
6. Leuweung Sancang Cipatijah
7. Nusa Kambangan
8. Nusa Barung
9. Meru Betiri
10. Banyuwangi Selatan
11. Pulau Sabuyi
12. Tana Perdauh
13. Komodo-Padar-Rinca
14. Pulau Dana
15. Pleihari Tanah Laut
16. Pulau Semama
17. Pulau Sangalaki
18. Pulau Popaja
19. Sabuda-Tataruga
20. Karimun Java
21. Karimata

Proposed Protected Areas

1. Pulau Lengkuas-Pulau Kepayang
2. Kep. Lima
3. Teluk Bolok-Tanjung Rusa
4. Pangumbahan
5. P. Sepanjang
6. Nusa Penida
7. Lombok Barat
8. Sambas-Paloh
9. Tanjung Penghujan
10. Kelompok Hutan Kayan
11. Kelambau
12. Birah-Birahan
13. Maratua
14. Karang Muaras
15. Pulau Pasoso
16. PP. Togian
17. Bangai-Peleng
18. PP. Tiga
19. Tako Bone Rate (Gazetted)
20. PP> Penyu-Lugipara
21. Aru Tenggara
22. Raja Amapt
23. Aju
24. Asia
25. Mapia
26. Suasapor
27. Wewe-Koor
28. Jamuriba-Medi
29. Mubrani-Kaironi
30. Sidei-Wibain
31. Teluk Cendrawasih-Kep. Auri.

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Annex 2: Green Turtle Management Action PlanEgg harvest:

1. Indonesia will reduce all harvests of eggs from the wild to 30% and will allow the remaining 70% to hatch naturally in situ. This will increase the estimated number of hatchlings reaching the sea from 1.7 million to 5 million.
2. As an extra precaution against egg poaching, eggs will be collected only under the supervision of PHPA guards, and collection will be restricted as far as possible to clutches which would be doomed by flooding and erosion.
3. Each collection beach will be studied to determine the percentage of clutch survival and the hatchling rate per clutch throughout the nesting season.
4. On the basis of the findings from these studies, egg harvest will be concentrated in the period with the highest egg mortality.
5. PHPA will increase clutch survival by control of protected beaches, and incubation of the doomed eggs in hatcheries.
6. PHPA will protect additional important nesting beaches (e.g. those proposed reserves listed in annex 2). The aim of increased protection of eggs and beaches will be to lower natural egg mortality for each nesting population to an average of 20% of eggs laid and not collected. In combination with a 70% reduction in egg harvest, this will increase production of hatchlings reaching the sea to an estimated 4.2 to 7.5 million.

Turtle harvest and trade

1. PHPA will process a decree for signature by the Ministry of Forestry which will:-
 - a. prohibit the collection of turtles in pens pending transshipment or sale in markets.
 - b. ban all capture and sale of Green turtles that are less than 60 cm curved carapace length and those with carapace larger than 85 cm
 - c. ban the sale of turtle meat in all public eating places.
 - d. require that all turtle catchers and traders purchase licences from PHPA on a quota basis and
 - e. ban all capture of turtles off nesting beaches.
2. The wild Green turtle trade in Ujung Pandang will be stopped since the principal outlet for this trade is the export market.
3. The Green turtle quota for traditional ceremonial purposes in Bali will be set by religious leaders. However, it should not exceed a sustainable maximum. At the present state of knowledge, it would mean a maximum of 2,000 per year. (Note: this total would not allow export of turtle products).

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4. PHPA will institute a rigorous programme to monitor the turtles landing on Bali. This would require that all captured turtles be landed at one designated area to allow the PHPA authorities to inspect, count, identify, sex, measure and record all the animals that were landed. PHPA officials will also periodically inspect all the restaurants and eating houses in Bali for turtle meat.
5. Violators of regulations will be severely penalised:-
 - a. boat owners with illegal turtles will have to forfeit their licence, catch, boat and equipment.
 - b. dealers with illegal-sized turtles will forfeit their licences and all the turtles, and have their facilities closed down and pay a large fine.
 - c. proprietors of restaurants and eating houses that offer turtle meat will have their places closed down and pay a substantial fine.

Turtle rearing

1. PHPA will put a moratorium on the development of new private turtle rearing operations.
2. All current turtle operations will be inspected by PHPA and will be required to be licenced.
3. PHPA will undertake a study of the feasibility of rearing turtles and develop a well-planned pilot project in cooperation with a fisheries research institution to improve techniques.
4. A proportion of collected eggs will be purchased for rearing with the view to replacing local trade of wild caught turtles with those that are reared. Both eggs for market and rearing will come from the 30% quota.

