

Morjim

Olive Ridley Sea Turtle

Awareness & Outreach

Eco Festival

Project Report

November 2019 - January 2020



SUPPORTED BY
TATA TRUSTS

Why Olive Ridley Turtles

STATUS: Vulnerable

SCIENTIFIC NAME:

Lepidochely olivacea

WEIGHT: 75-110 pounds

LENGTH: 24-28 inches

HABITATS: Oceans

Sea turtles are a fundamental link in marine ecosystems and help maintain the health of coral reefs and sea grass beds. Olive Ridley turtles feed on invertebrates and play important roles in both open ocean and coastal ecosystems.



Why is this species important?

Olive Ridley Turtles are a priority species and as such are regarded as one of the most ecologically, economically and culturally important species on our planet. We are working to ensure such species can live and thrive in their natural habitats. WWF works to protect marine turtles throughout the world through specialist programmes and regional projects devoted to the conservation of marine turtles.



Photo courtesy WWF

Threats to sea turtles

The main threats which affect marine turtles are:

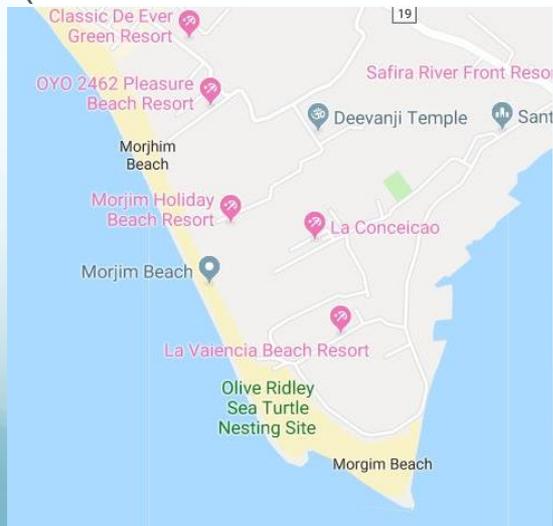
- Habitat loss and degradation
- Wildlife trade
- Collection of eggs and meat for consumption
- Incidental capture (by catch)
- Climate change
- Pollution

All stages of a sea turtle's life are affected by environmental conditions such as temperature—even the sex of offspring. Warmer sea surface temperatures can also lead to the loss of important foraging grounds for marine turtles, while increasingly severe storms and sea level rise can destroy critical nesting beaches and damage nests.

Why Morjim?

The Western coast of India mostly witnesses sporadic turtle nestings and hatchlings and these nesting sites are active between the months of October and June. Goa has four notified turtle nesting beaches under the Coastal Regulation Zone, 2011. The site is a demarcated turtle nesting zone with protection under The Wildlife Protection Act (1976) and the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notifications, 2011.

(Latitude: 15° 37' 27.59" N Longitude: 73° 44' 5.39" E)



The challenge

Absence of awareness among local and general people of the existing turtle nesting site in Morjim and the biodiversity of Olive Ridleys and Green Sea turtles thriving on Goa's coast.



Morjim Beach
Source: Sarita Fernandes, 2018

OBJECTIVES:

The Morjim Sea Turtle Festival 2019-20 was proposed by Sagarshakti under Vanashakti in collaboration with the Goa Forest Department

To re-start and scale up the Turtle Festival held in the past and increase the number of people witnessing hatchlings



Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

OBJECTIVES:

To raise awareness of the Morjim site and how the nesting takes place

To raise awareness about the hatchlings and their zoological behaviour in surviving in the vast ocean

To draw attention to the various threats to their survival in Morjim

To construct an awareness model for sea-turtle conservation that would acquire global recognition



Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

OBJECTIVES:

To highlight the efforts of the Forest Department to place the turtles into nests and reasons for doing so

To help expand conservation efforts of the Forest Department in protecting the sea turtle nesting site.



Mozjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

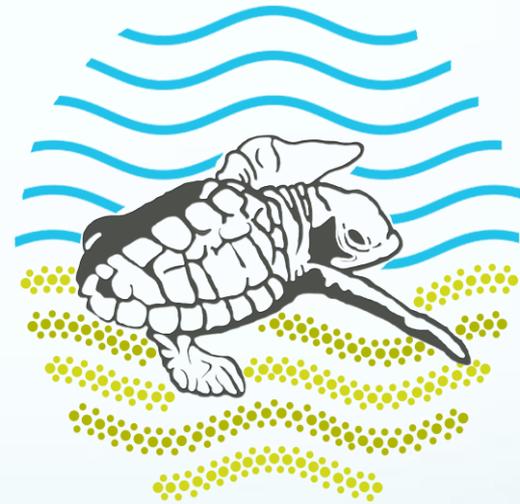
OBJECTIVES:

To educate local residents and tourists on the importance of Olive Ridleys and sea turtle conservation and citizen do's and dont's

To engage in capacity building among local residents about the criticality of conserving sea turtles

To train local residents to develop the skill sets and knowledge to independently implement conservation strategies and monitor biodiversity levels.

To involve children and the younger generation and build awareness on the importance of sea turtle conservation



Mozjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

Deliverables

- Awareness and Outreach Workshops.
- Community Beach clean ups.
- Festival venue arrangements: Library, screenings, logistics and equipment.
- Involvement and inclusion of shacks and owners as stakeholders in conservation.
- Stakeholder meetings.
- Outreach within local schools of Morjim.
- Outreach with shack owners on the Morjim sea turtle habitat site.
- Tourist involvement in workshops, beach clean ups and conservation.
- Village community outreach and workshops through the Morjim Panchayat.
- Sustainable and ethical hatchling observations: sessions on marine wildlife ethical code of conduct
- Skill development and training workshops.
- Cross departmental outreach: Department of Fisheries, Forest Department, CM's Office.

Inauguration and Opening Ceremony

November 28, 2019:

The Morjim Sea Turtle Festival was inaugurated by Vanashakti-Sagarshakti, the Goa Forest Department and the Goa Tourism Department.

Chief Guest: Mr. Vikas Desai, Deputy Conservator of Forests (Wildlife)

Dignitaries from the Tourism Department Mr. Yogesh Naik and Mr. Prasad Kavlekar.

Mr. Stalin Dayanand, Director, Vanashakti

Team Sagarshakti





Deputy Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Mr. Vikas Desai in his opening speech

Awareness Workshops

Awareness Workshops, one of the prime activities of the festival, were conducted by Sagarshakti in collaboration with the Goa Forest Department by various Marine wildlife enthusiasts, members of the Goa Forest Department, conservationists, local turtle enthusiasts

Forty-eight one - hour session workshops over **three months** **on:**

- Nesting-hatching behaviours of sea turtles
- Olive ridley life cycles
- Threats and extinction risk to sea-turtles (along the west coast and globally)
- Conservation efforts by Goa Forest Department
- Conservation efforts by various wildlife enthusiasts, organisations, colleges etc.

Awareness Workshops

At each workshop, various print media highlighting the issue in Morjim and other turtle nesting beaches of Morjim were distributed. Participants received

- Brochures, banners, notebooks and pamphlets
- Donor souvenirs

Goa Forest Department Workshop

November 29, 2019



29TH NOVEMBER / 4:30 PM

WORKSHOP:
GOA FOREST
DEPARTMENT GOA
MORJIM UNIT

THE DEPARTMENT (MORJIM
UNIT) WOULD BE SHARING
THEIR ON-HAND
EXPERIENCES AND
CHALLENGES

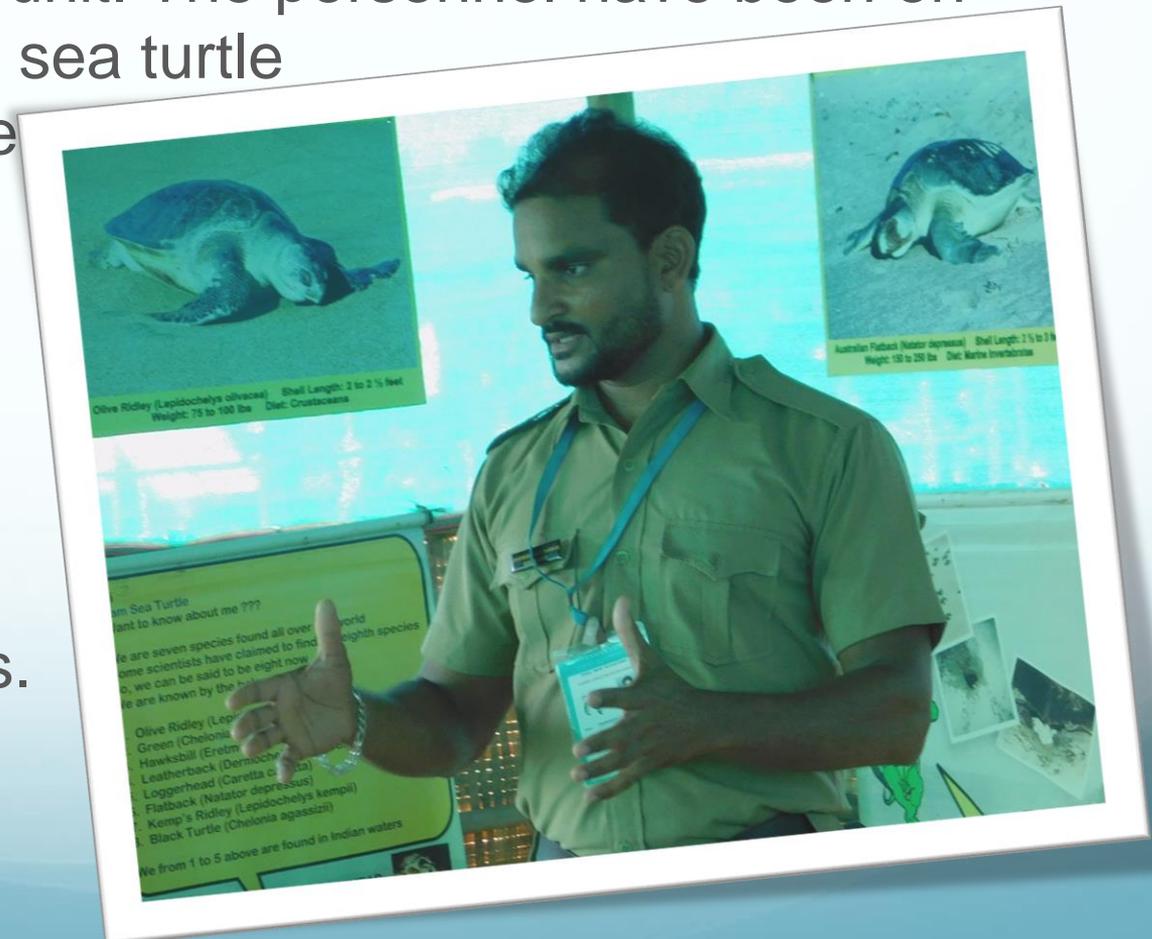


Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

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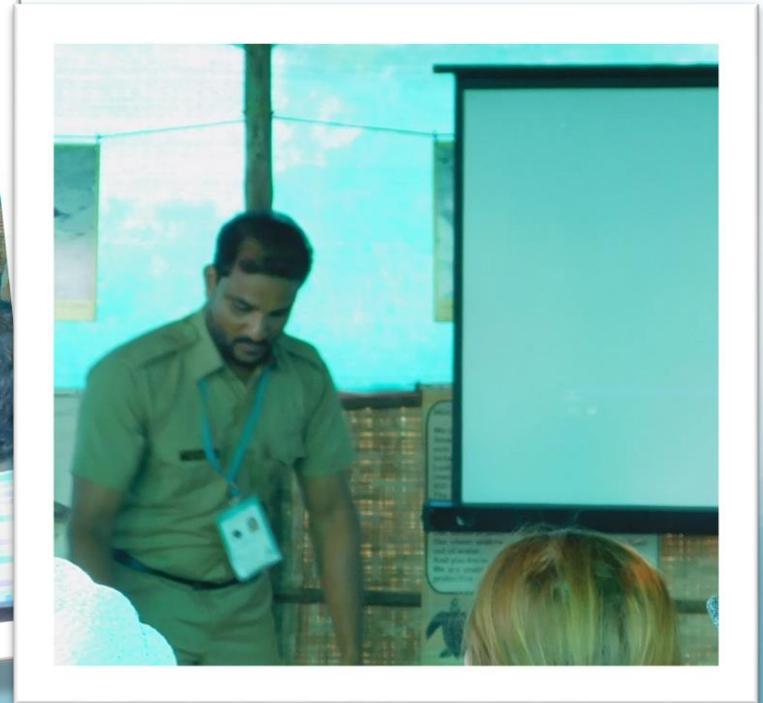
Goa Forest Department Workshop

Held by the Morjim Sea Turtle personnel of the resident Forest Department unit. The personnel have been on-ground, working on sea turtle conservation for the last 15 years. This was one of the few opportunities they have been given to present their stories, work and conservation efforts.



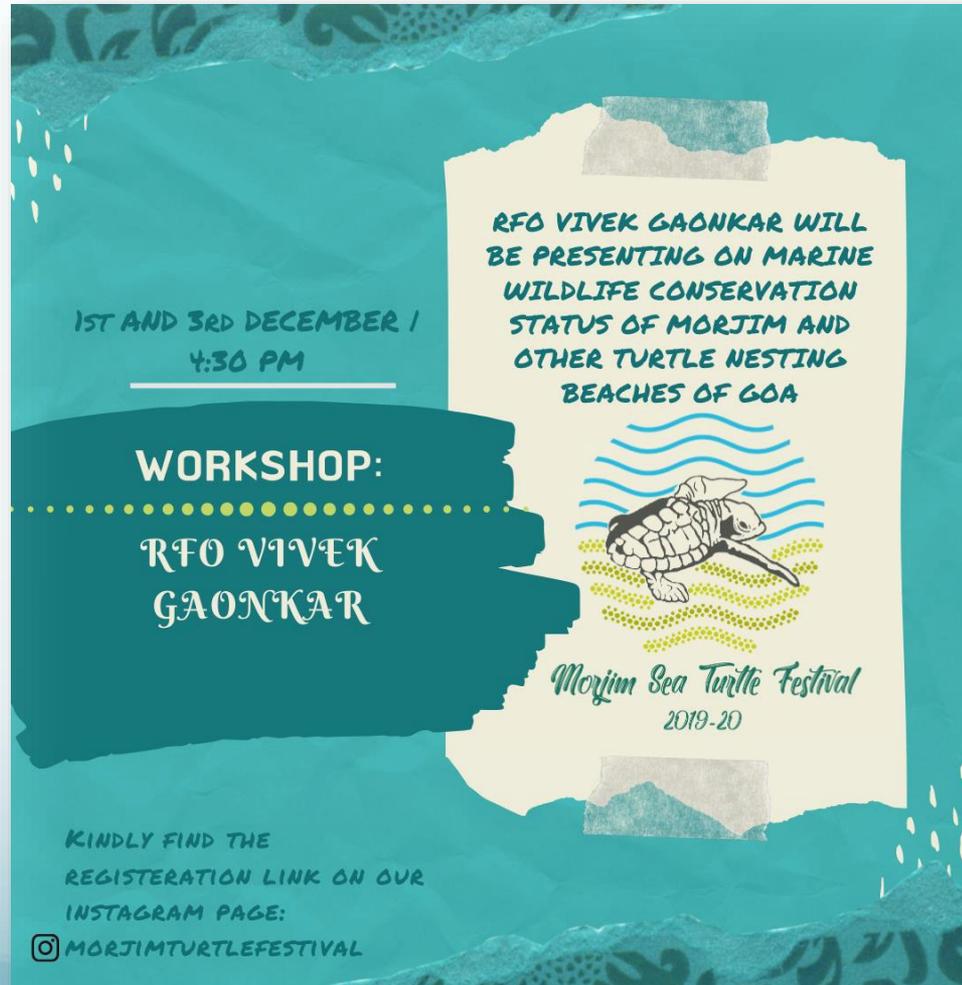
Goa Forest Department Workshop

Nyaneshwar, a temporary service labourer working with the Forest Department for the last 15 years, presented his workshop on the on - ground efforts and challenges of Morjim's sea turtle conservation.



Workshop by RFO Vivek Gaonkar

December 1 & 3, 2019



1ST AND 3RD DECEMBER /
4:30 PM

WORKSHOP:
RFO VIVEK
GAONKAR

RFO VIVEK GAONKAR WILL
BE PRESENTING ON MARINE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
STATUS OF MORJIM AND
OTHER TURTLE NESTING
BEACHES OF GOA

Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

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Workshop by RFO Vivek Gaonkar

Range Forest Officer Vivek Gaonkar, the previous presiding range forest officer, had brought about many positive changes and inclusions during his tenure at Morjim. He shared his experiences and challenges.



Goa Forest Department Workshop

December 3, 2019

December 3, 2019, PCCF Subhash Chandra and APCCF-Chief Wildlife Warden Santosh Kumar held a workshop on the importance of awareness of a marine wildlife habitat and Morjim's unique challenge of sharing its wildlife habitat with tourism.



Goa Forest Department Workshop



Introduction

There are seven known species of Sea Turtles that inhabit the world oceans. They are Olive Ridley, Leatherback, Green, Hawksbill, Kemp's Ridley & Flat back turtle. Most of the Sea turtles take long distance migrations. As hatchlings, only female will return to the nest.



Challenges Week Workshops

Dec 26/29, 2019

26TH AND 29TH DECEMBER
4:30 PM

WORKSHOP:
SARITA
FERNANDES

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN MARINE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION WEEK,
SARITA FERNANDES WILL BE SHARING
HER EXPERIENCES AND CONDUCTING A
SESSION.

Mojim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

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Workshop by Sarita Fernandes

Focus on challenges in Marine Wildlife Conservation in India with a special case study of Morjim beach.

To educate tourists, locals and workshop participants on why sea turtles are important in policy and marine ecosystems and the very real challenges the species and it's habitat are facing.

To highlight that Morjim beach is one of the rare places in the world where Olive Ridley sea turtles have chosen to nest and hatch and how important it is to preserve this marine wildlife habitat.



Sea Turtle Life Cycle week

January 3-9, 2020

9TH JANUARY 2020 AT
4:30 PM

WORKSHOP :

GOA FOREST
DEPARTMENT GOA
MORJIM UNIT

THE DEPARTMENT (MORJIM UNIT)
WOULD BE SHARING THEIR ON-HAND
EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES.



Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

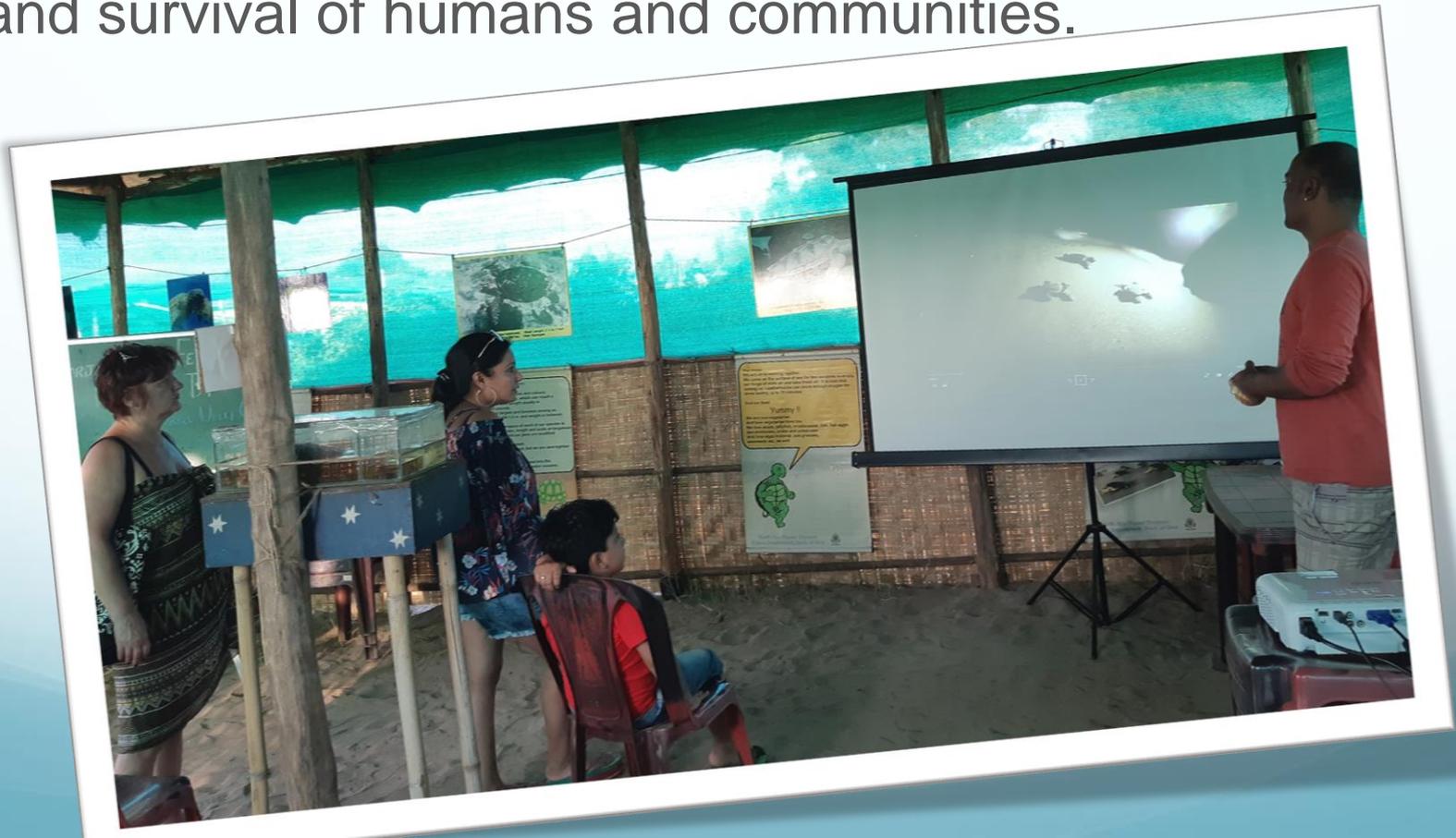
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Sea Turtle Life Cycle week

January 3-9, 2020

Workshops to explain why sea turtles are seen as apex species and the importance of their habitats to the health and survival of humans and communities.



Goa Forest Department Workshop

January 9, 2020

On the ground realities of sea turtle life cycles and changes over the years in Morjim. The Morjim unit of the Goa Forest Department shared their stories, challenges and the incredible work they have been doing for Morjim since a decade for sea turtle conservation.



Marine Science Department Students Workshop

January 10, 2020

10TH JANUARY 2020 AT
4:30 PM

WORKSHOP :

MASTER STUDENTS
OF MARINE
SCIENCE FROM GOA
UNIVERSITY

MASTER STUDENTS OF MARINE
SCIENCE FROM GOA UNIVERSITY
WILL BE CONDUCTING A SESSION
AND AN ACTIVITY ON SEA TURTLE
LIFE CYCLE.

Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

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Marine Science Department Students Workshop

January 10, 2020

Conducted by Masters students on the importance of sea turtles and their contribution to coastal habitat sustenance and health of fisheries and communities.



Workshop by Abhishek Jamalabad

January 11, 2020



11TH JANUARY 2020 AT
4:30 PM

CELEBRATING SEA TURTLE LIFE
CYCLE AND BIOLOGY WEEK,
MARINE BIOLOGIST ABHISHEK
JAMALABAD WILL BE CONDUCTING
A SESSION.

WORKSHOP :

ABHISHEK JAMALABAD
MARINE BIOLOGIST

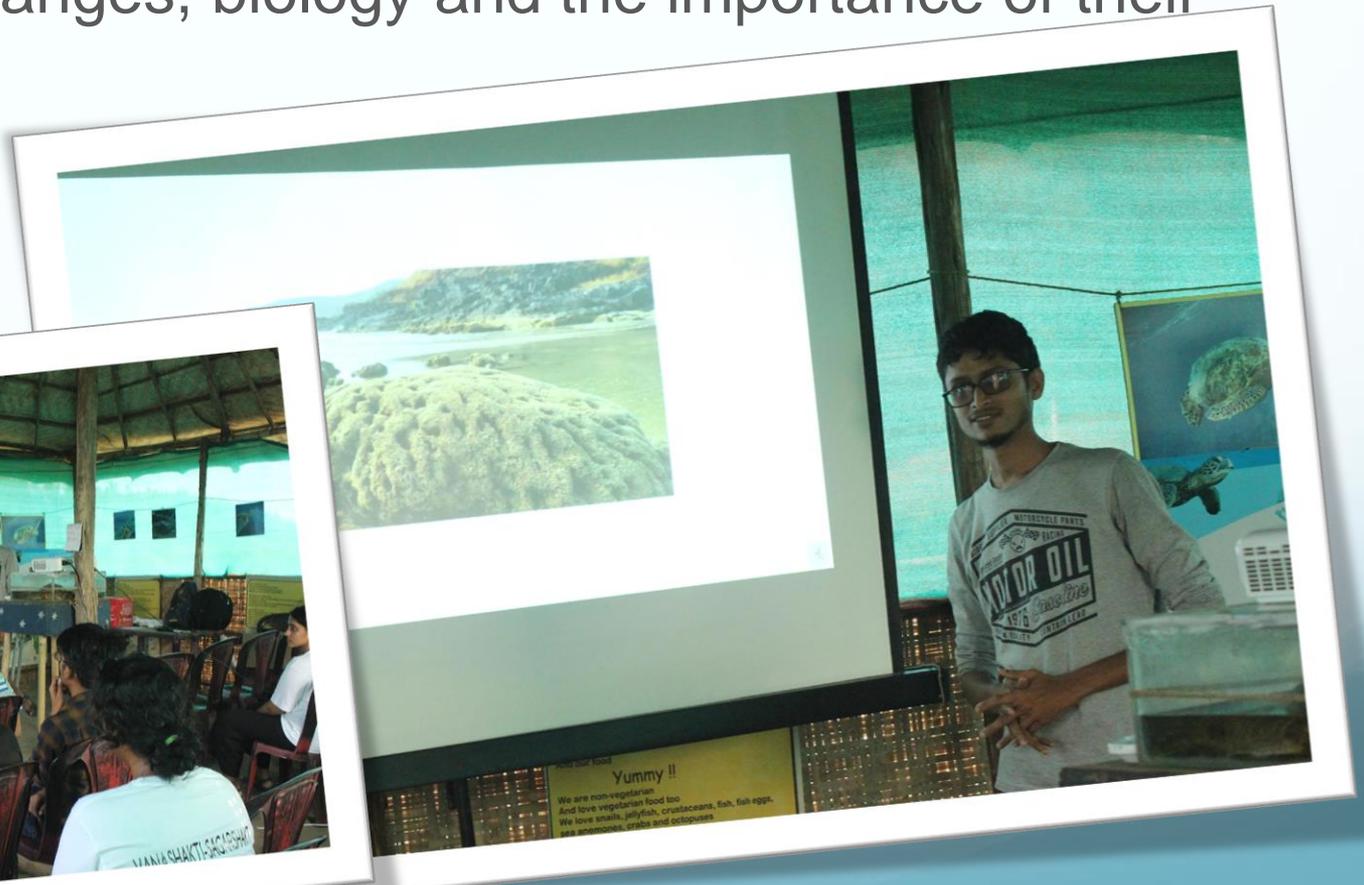
Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
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Workshop by Abhishek Jamalabad

January 11, 2020

Marine biologist Abhishek Jamalabad spoke on sea turtle life cycles, changes, biology and the importance of their habitat to the communities living near or in Morjim.



Threats to Sea Turtles Workshops

February 3-9, 2020



6TH FEBRUARY 2020 AT
4:30 PM

WORKSHOP :

STALIN DAYANAND
DIRECTOR VANASHAKTI

COMMEMORATING THREATS TO SEA
TURTLES WEEK, STALIN DAYANAND,
DIRECTOR VANASHAKTI WILL BE
CONDUCTING SESSION ON LEGAL
BACKGROUND IN MARINE CONSERVATION.

Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
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Workshop by Stalin Dayanand

February 6, 2020

Stalin Dayanand, Director, Vanashakti focussed on the legal aspects of sea turtle conservation in India and on policy protection of sea turtles and marine habitats.



Threats to Sea Turtles

Workshops

February 3-9, 2020



7TH FEBRUARY 2020 AT
4:30 PM

COMMEMORATING THREATS TO SEA
TURTLES WEEK, DR D'LIMA WILL BE
CONDUCTING A SESSION ON THE USE OF
TED (TURTLE EXCLUDER DEVICES) IN
ODISHA

WORKSHOP :

DR. CORALIE D'LIMA
SENIOR PROGRAMME COORDINATOR
WWF-INDIA (GOA OFFICE)

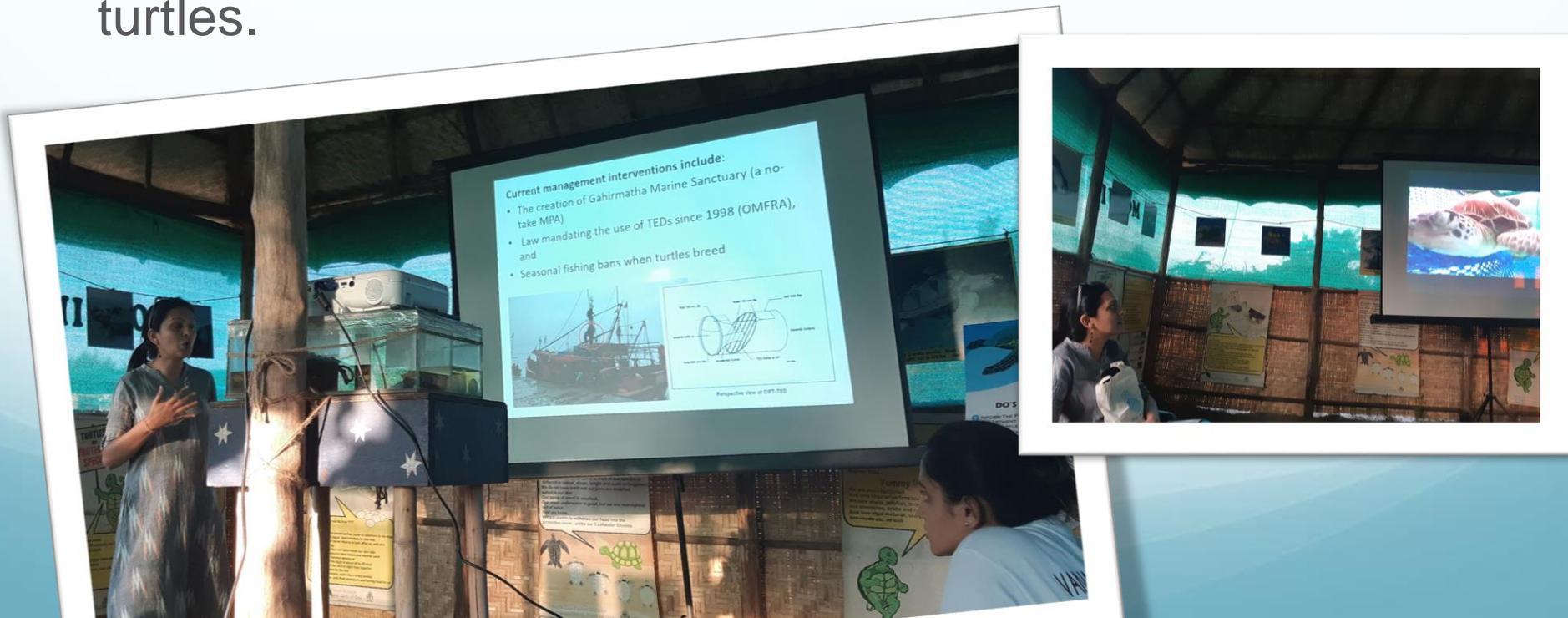
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Workshop by Dr. Coralie D'Lima

February 7, 2020

Dr. Coralie D'Lima, Senior Programme Co-ordinator, WWF INDIA, focused on TED devices (Turtle Excluder Devices) being used in Orissa and their on ground experiences regarding the impact of ghost nets on sea turtles.



Marine Wildlife Handling Week

February 10-15, 2020



15TH FEBRUARY 2020 AT
4:30 PM

WORKSHOP :

DR. DINESH VINHERKAR
MARINE WILDLIFE VETERINARIAN

DR DINESH VINHERKAR (MARINE
WILDLIFE VETERINARIAN) WILL BE
CONDUCTING A WORKSHOP ON SEA
TURTLE AND MARINE WILDLIFE
HANDLING

Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

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LIMITED SEATS ONLY

Workshops by Dr. Dinesh Vinherkar

February 10-15, 2020

Workshop on marine wildlife handling conducted by sea-turtle specialist and marine wildlife veterinarian
Dr. Dinesh Vinherkar



Skill development Workshops

February 14 - 15, 2020

An official skill development training workshop was held for the Goa Forest Department officers on sea turtle first aid and rescue and marine wildlife handling was held by Dr. Dinesh Vinherkar with another session for the general public



Workshop on sustainable livelihood

February 21-22, 2020

Durga Thigale, livelihood specialist from Mangrove Foundation, Maharashtra Forest Department, conducted a workshop on sustainable livelihood options for coastal communities based on their experience in Sindhudurg



Workshop on community conservation

February 28, 2020

Conducted by Nandakumar Pawar,
an inland marine fisherman
from Maharashtra, known
as a pioneer in coastal
community advocacy and
engagement in conflicted
marine conservation issues.



Workshop on community conservation

February 28, 2020

Nandakumar Pawar presented a case study of Uran, Maharashtra, where the fishing village faced a conflict between nesting bird grounds and development issues. Several members of the local community were invited to attend.



Marine Wildlife Documentary Week

December 1-8, 2019

Dedicated to wildlife filmmakers who have documented marine wildlife and the story of their challenges and survival through the art of film.

Renowned filmmakers Gautam Pandey and Doel Trivedy from Riverbank Studios held two workshops on their exemplary work in documenting marine wildlife



6TH AND 8TH DECEMBER
4:30 PM

WORKSHOP:
FILMMAKER
GAUTAM PANDEY
AND DOEL
TRIVEDY

CELEBRATING WILDLIFE
DOCUMENTARY WEEK, WILDLIFE
FILMMAKERS FROM RIVERBANKS
STUDIOS WILL BE SCREENING A
SHORT FILM AND CONDUCTING A
SESSION.

Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

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Marine Wildlife Documentary Week

December 1-8, 2019

They shared their experiences, stories and emotions of capturing endangered species like the Olive Ridley sea turtles through a special screening. Through an interactive and child-friendly workshop, they gave insights about the life cycle of Olive Ridelys and the very real threats they face from humans



Documentary week

December 8, 2019

A second workshop by Guatam and Doel.



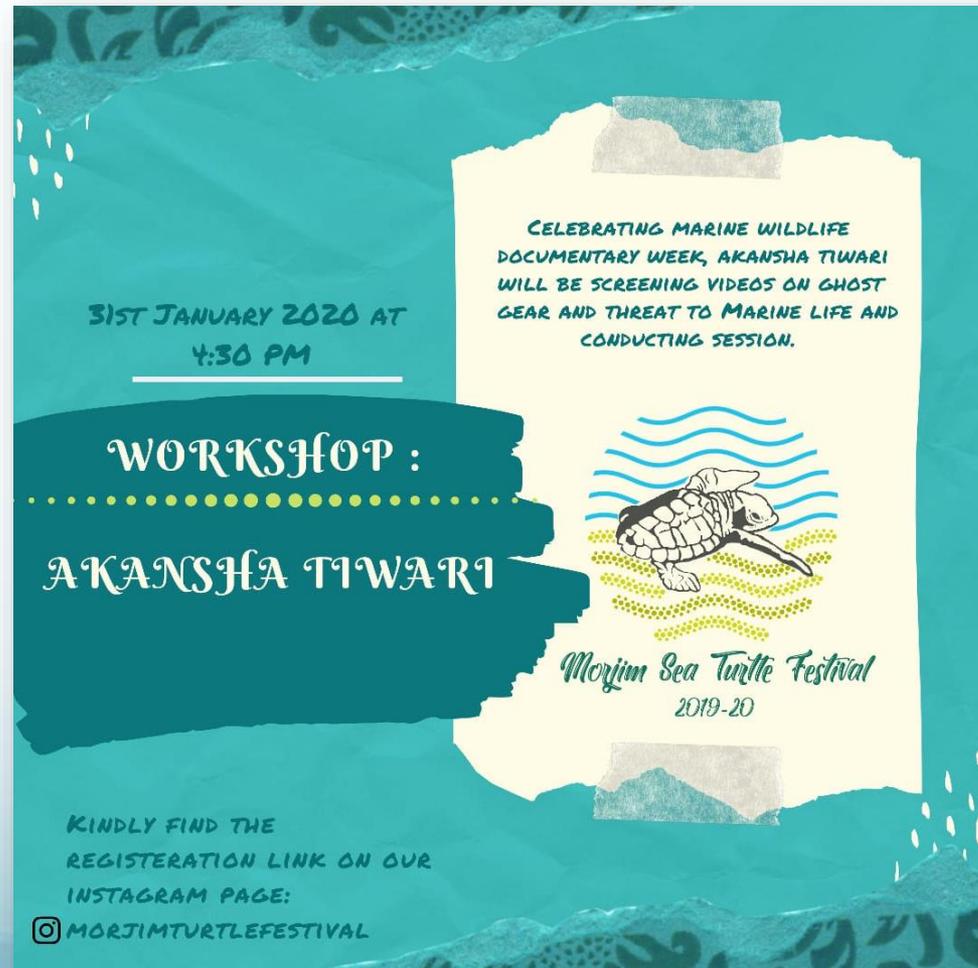
Marine Wildlife Documentary Week

January 27-February 2, 2020

Workshops focused on teaching the essentials of the art and skill required for documenting marine wildlife and the ethical code of conduct on the part of the filmmaker regarding use of equipment in wildlife habitats. These workshops were hosted by a marine wildlife and coastal community film maker.

Marine Wildlife Documentary Week

January 31, 2020



31ST JANUARY 2020 AT
4:30 PM

CELEBRATING MARINE WILDLIFE DOCUMENTARY WEEK, AKANSHA TIWARI WILL BE SCREENING VIDEOS ON GHOST GEAR AND THREAT TO MARINE LIFE AND CONDUCTING SESSION.

WORKSHOP :
AKANSHA TIWARI

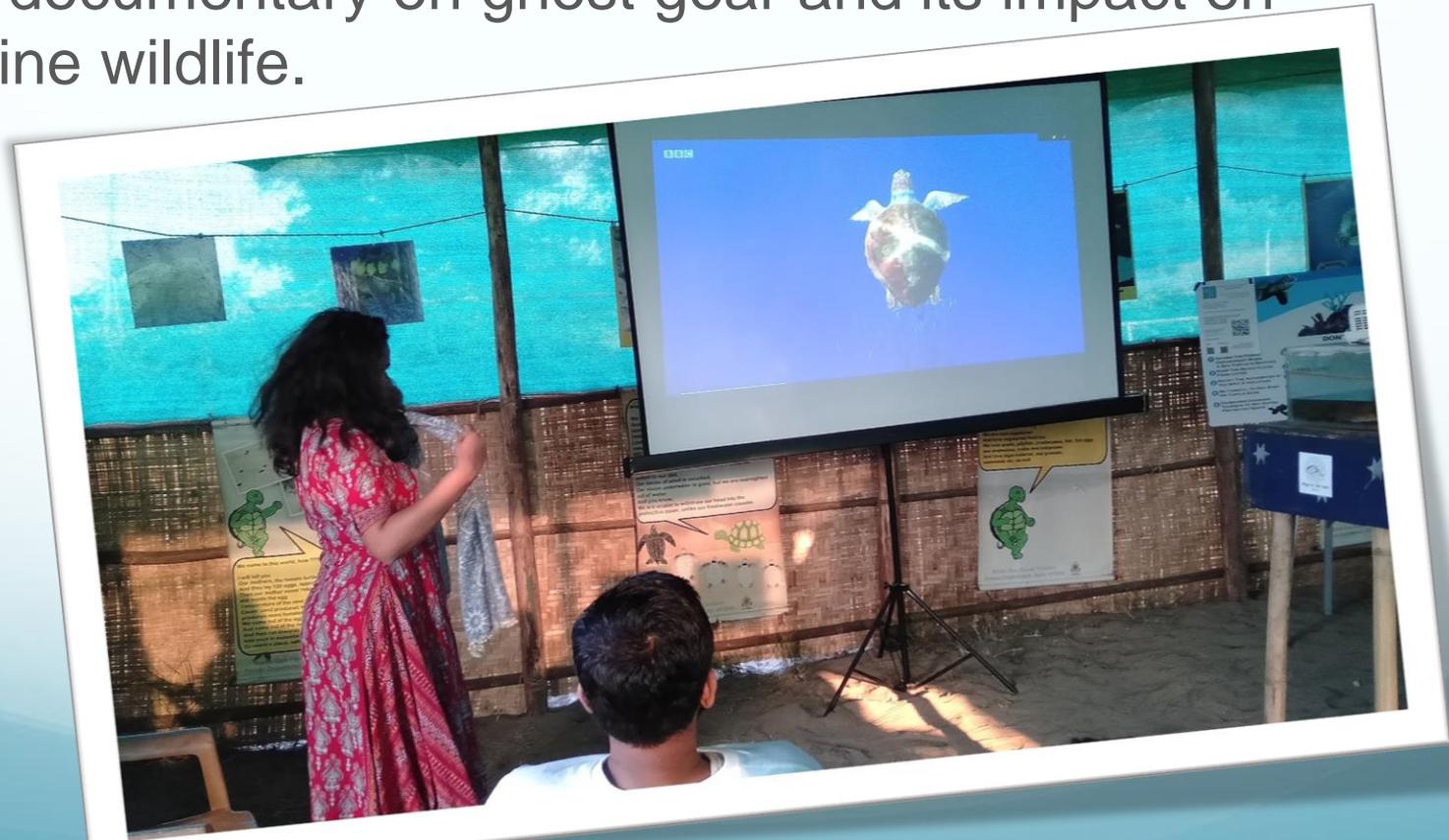
Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

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Marine Wildlife Documentary Week

January 31, 2020

Akansha Tiwari, wildlife film maker and director of India's first documentary on ghost gear and its impact on marine wildlife.



Beach Clean Ups

Studies done on other turtle nesting beaches globally have shown how single use plastics is one of the main pollution threats to sea turtles. Morjim has an evident amount of beach debris. It was critical to clean the beach of debris to ensure neither the mother turtles nor the hatchlings were harmed on their perilous journeys in and out of the sea. Beach cleanups were done to make citizens aware of the dangers of plastic and beach debris to sea turtles.



Beach Clean Ups

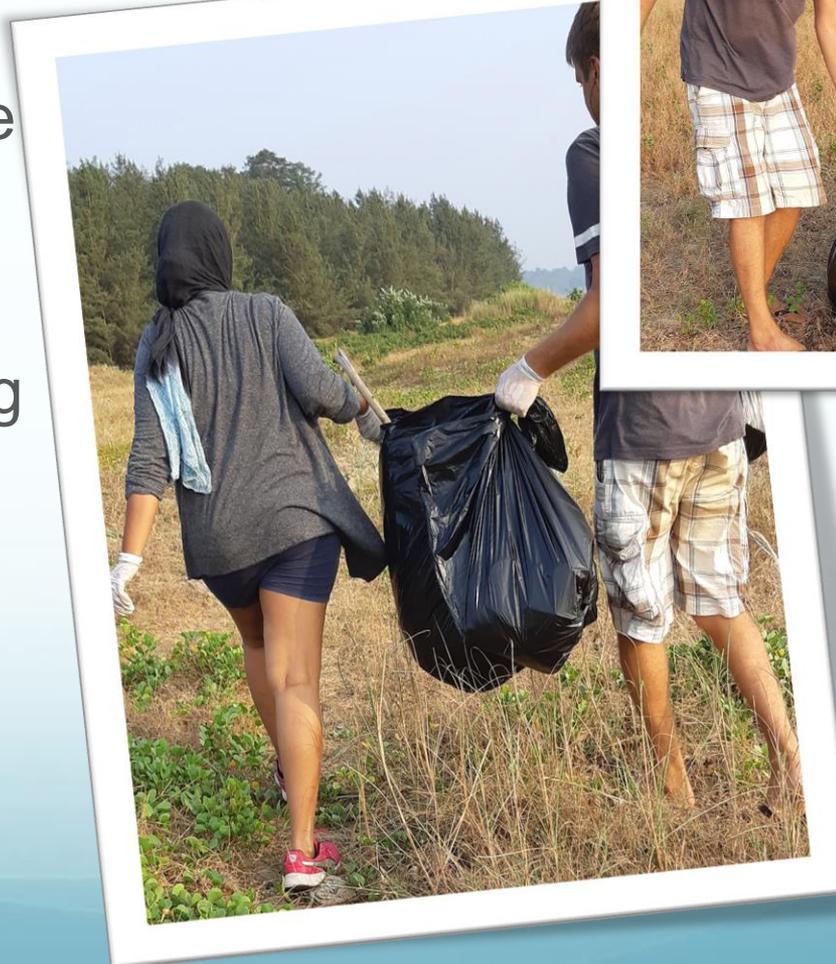
12 citizen driven clean ups, four times a month, were conducted during the 3 months of the nesting season. The clean ups were conducted in a way that they did not disturb the sea turtle nests. The debris collected was sorted and given to a credible re-cycler for recycling. Appropriate medical kits and clean up equipment like gloves and bags were provided.



Beach Clean Ups

December 7, 2019

The weekly community beach clean ups, which were open to all, were done on the nesting site to ensure beach litter did not pose a hindrance or survival threat to mother turtles coming on the beach to nest and baby turtles hatchlings leaving the beach.



Beach Clean Ups

December 15, 2019



Beach Clean Ups

December 22, 2019



Beach Clean Ups

January 15, 2020



Beach Clean Ups

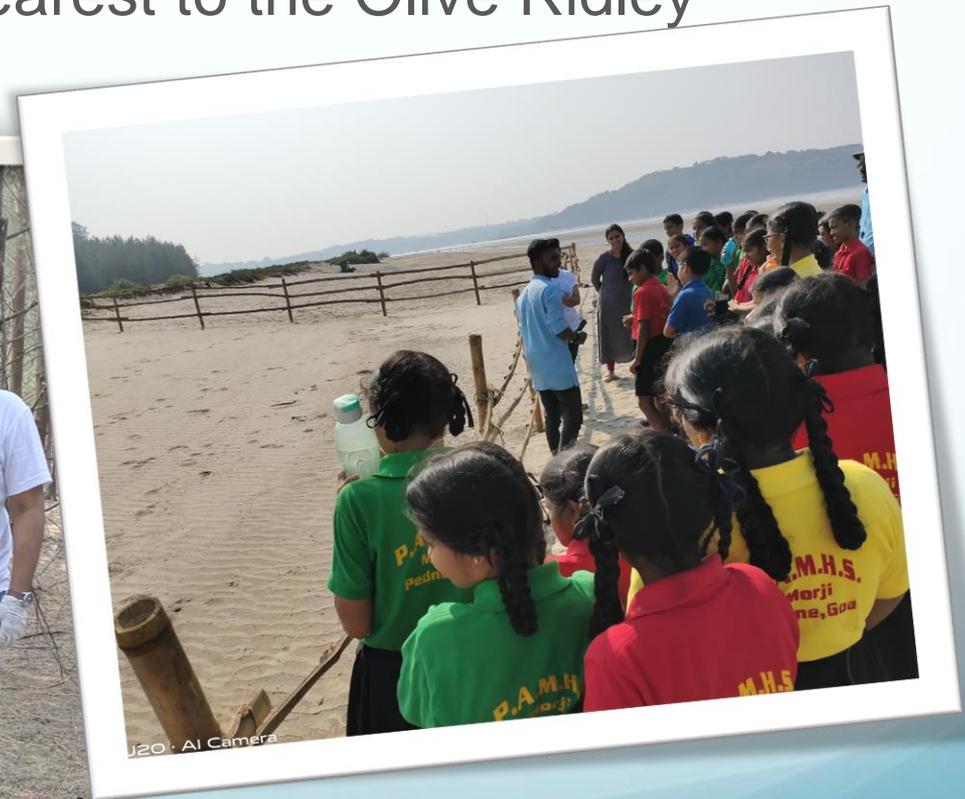
January 20, 2020



Beach Clean Ups

February 15, 2020

This beach clean up was organised with the public school “Kirti Vidyalaya” which is nearest to the Olive Ridley nesting site of Morjim.



Hatchling Observations

Hatchling Observations give citizens a first hand opportunity to observe sea turtles in their sensitive habitats and understand the need for conservation and protection



Hatchlings at Morjim- Source Sarita Fernandes, 2018

Hatchling Observations Protocol

Limited to 20 people per hatchling observation

Strict do's and don'ts explained by the Sagarshakti team and the Forest Department.

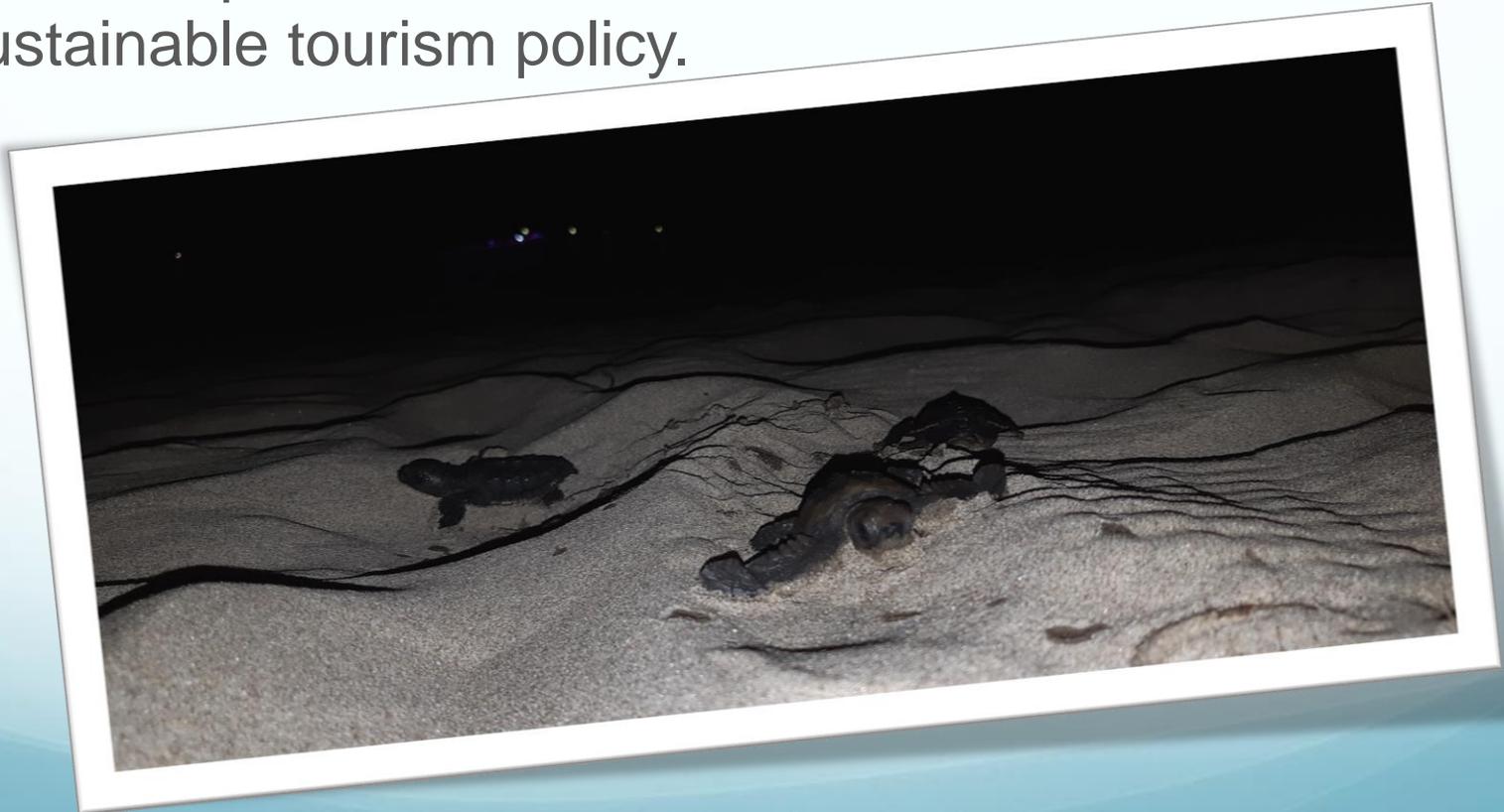
Pre-booking needed to witness the hatchlings. Pre-booked individuals were intimated 24 hours prior via sms and call.

Each person booked for observation had to participate in a beach clean up prior to the observation.

Strict rules laid down for photography and documentation by the citizens.

Hatchling Observations Protocol

Collaboration with the Forest Department would enable greater awareness of conservation efforts and could set a global example in conservation amidst lax and unsustainable tourism policy.



Hatchlings at Morjim- Source Sarita Fernandes, 2018

Outreach Initiatives

ADVOCACY

TOURISM

CHILDREN

COMMUNITY

Wildlife Advocacy Week

December 13-14, 2019

Dedicated to activists, locals, tribals and native residents who have contributed their service, time and resources in preservation of critical marine habitats like the turtle nesting beach of Morjim.

WE WANT TO HEAR YOU!
YOU COULD BE A 5 YEAR OLD OR A 95 YEAR OLD,
A STUDENT OR A DEAN
A HUMAN WHO THINKS, FEELS AND WANTS TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT
THE OCEAN!

COME SHARE YOUR STORIES , IDEAS, THEORIES, SOLUTIONS
THIS WEEK WITH US -
FRIDAY & SATURDAY(13-14 DECEMBER)
MORJIM TURTLE FESTIVAL, MORJIM BEACH (TOWARDS OLIVE RIDELY NESTING
SITE)

[THE PROJECTOR WOULD BE AVAILABLE]

**IDEAS | THOUGHTS |
SOLUTIONS**

MARINE ADVOCACY AND CONSERVATION WEEK



Drop a text for
answers, queries,
assistance:
9819572544

Wildlife Advocacy Week

December 13-14, 2019

Workshops and an activity to understand stakeholder responsibility towards common marine conservation issues like beach pollution, loss of marine biodiversity and unsustainable tourism.



Wildlife Advocacy Week

December 13-14, 2019

A sensitisation workshop was conducted with the participants in explaining what advocacy means in marine conservation and how everyone shares equal responsibility as a stakeholder in it.



Wildlife Advocacy Week

December 13-14, 2019

Marine science students from Goa university presented their ideas and research on possible solutions and avenues to marine conservation and advocacy.



Conservation and Tourism Week

December 16-22, 2019

With the objective of including the beach shacks which share the same beach space as the Olive Ridley nesting site in a conservation dialogue, outreach activities, stakeholder meetings, workshops and beach clean ups were held.



Conservation and Tourism Week

December 16-22, 2019

8 out of 11 shacks decided to partner the festival. 400 paper straws were distributed to each shack and a mini workshop was held with each of the shacks on phasing out plastic straws. Direct delivery of paper straws from a local distributor to the shack was arranged.



Conservation and Tourism Week

December 16-22, 2019

The Water Refill station idea was also pitched and a poster of “Partner in Conservation” was distributed to the partner shacks. The Goa Forest Department and IAS Jyoti Kumar accompanied the team for the outreach drive.



First ever Stakeholder meeting

December 19, 2019

**STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP WITH
THE MORJIM SHACK OWNERS,
FOREST DEPARTMENT AND
SAGARSHAKTI-VANASHAKTI**

Conservation and Tourism Week:
Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-2020
19th December, 4:30 pm

*Turning the Tide on inclusion of
Morjim's shacks into the
conservation dialogue.*



First ever Stakeholder meeting

The Tourism and Conservation week witnessed the first ever stakeholder workshop in the history of the turtle nesting site. Shack owners, the Forest department, the Tourism Department and NGOs like Sagarshakti came together to discuss the various issues each party faces in its approach to conservation of Olive Ridley sea turtles in Morjim



First ever Stakeholder meeting

Various new ideas and issues that had never been addressed were raised. Every stakeholder got an opportunity to speak and a platform to address these issues and discuss the way forward



Tourist resort participation

December 21, 2019

Padma Cottages, an eco-friendly, zero waste and sustainable tourism resort presented their story and journey for a workshop

21ST DECEMBER 4:30 PM

CELEBRATING CONSERVATION AND TOURISM WEEK, PADMA COTTAGE, MORJIM, WILL BE SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCES AND CONDUCTING A SESSION.

WORKSHOP:
PADMA COTTAGE,
MORJIM

Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
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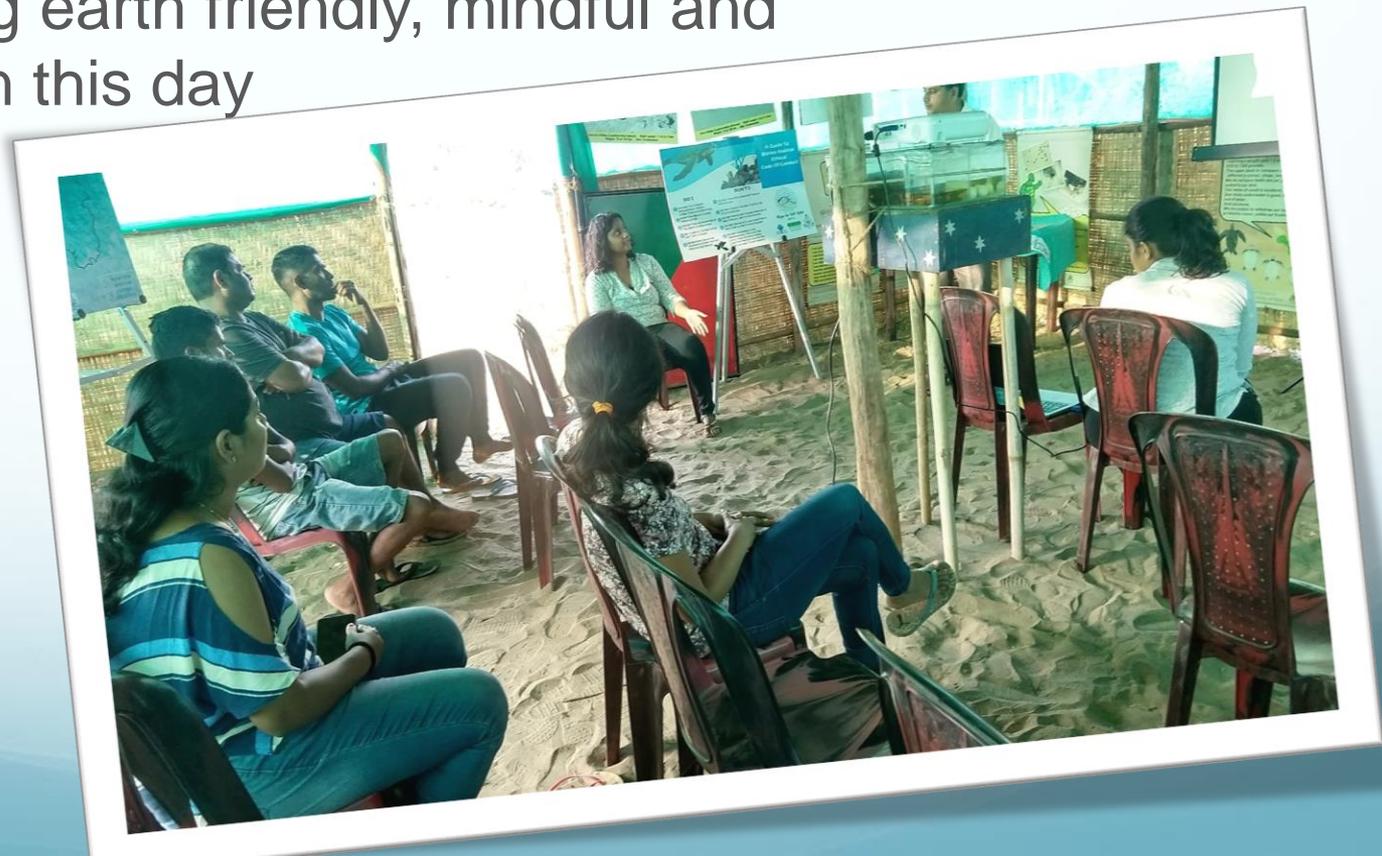
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Tourist resort participation

December 21, 2019

Mr. Kishore Shetgaonkar, owner of Padma Cottages spoke on his motivation to start a sustainable, earth friendly venture, commenting on how business can grow by being earth friendly, mindful and sustainable in this day

and age and how shacks on Morjim can replicate his concept to be “sea-turtle friendly”



Tourist Resort Workshop

January 24, 2020



24TH JANUARY 2020 AT
4:30 PM

WORKSHOP :

NIRMAL KULKARNI
DIRECTOR - ECOLOGY
WILDERNEST

COMMEMORATING MARINE WILDLIFE AND
TOURISM WEEK ON THE STAKEHOLDER
INCLUSION OF TOURISM AS A PARTNER AND
PARTICIPANT IN CONSERVATION.

Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

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Tourist Resort Workshop

January 24, 2020

Nirmal Kulkarni, Director, Wilderndest, an eco and wildlife sustainable resort and recipient of a NatGeo award, conducted a workshop with shack owners and a general audience on tourism sustainability in wildlife habitats.



Children's participation

December 12, 2019

ARDEE Global School's pre-primary section requested the Festival to conduct a special workshop as part of the Christmas outreach activity as the children were too young to come to the nesting beach in Morjim. Two batches of 30 students between the age groups of 4 to 6 years actively participated.



Children's participation

December 23, 2019

To familiarise children with the challenges in conserving Morjim's Olive Ridleys, Kirti Vidyalaya Secondary School, the local school closest to the beach, was given an opportunity to know, see and understand the turtle nesting beach.



Children's participation

December 23, 2019

A special workshop and activity was organised to demonstrate the basic biology and life cycle of sea turtles, the very real threats they face on Morjim and the deep sea and the challenges and solutions to them. The children also participated in a beach clean up organised exclusively for the 13 to 14 year-old future conservation warriors



Children's participation

December 23, 2019

Nyaneshwar, a member of the Goa Forest Department, and an alumni of Kirti Vidyalaya, demonstrated how the mother sea turtle nests towards the shack side and dense tourist areas of the beach



Children's participation

January 25, 2020



Children's participation

January 25, 2020

A special workshop for children was organised on popular demand from workshop participants and schools on the theme “ Why are sea turtles important?” The children along with parents were also taken for a tour of the nests.



Children's participation

February 8, 2020

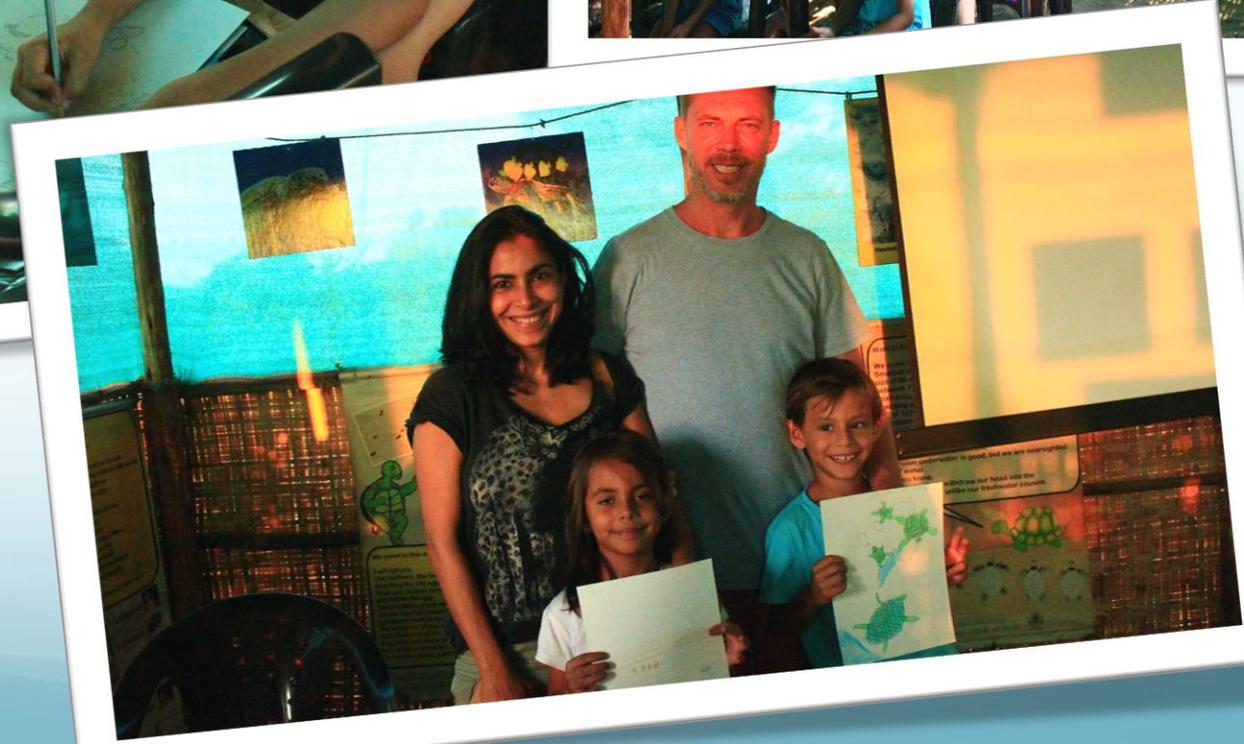
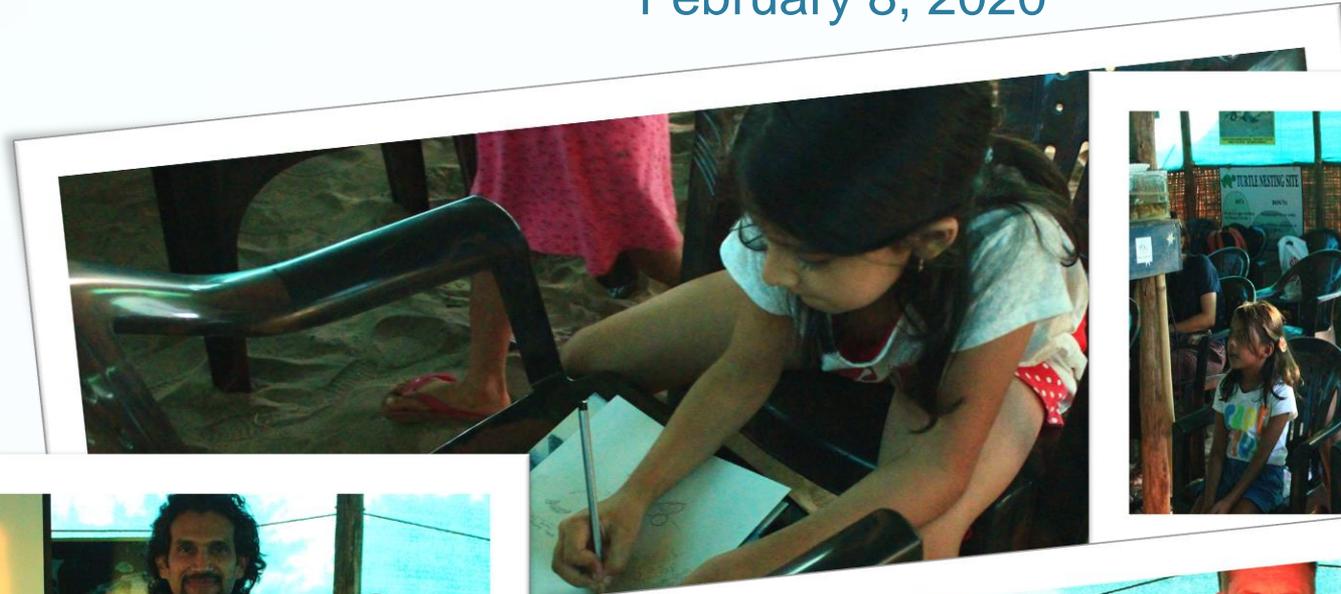


WORKSHOP

THE MORJIM SEA TURTLE FESTIVAL
WILL BE HAVING A SPECIAL
WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN ON
8TH FEBRUARY AT 4.30 PM

Children's participation

February 8, 2020



Children's participation

Mini Turtle Library

As part of the outreach activities for the festival, a mini turtle library was set-up for children entering the festival centre. The library grew with tourists and participants donating books



Community outreach

January 10-19, 2020

Morjim also has a large population of small scale artisanal fishermen and an active fishing village. The second week of January was dedicated to the community of Morjim and their participation in the conservation dialogue.

Two notables from the community were invited as speakers.



Panch Member Workshop

January 18, 2020

Morjim panch member Pavan Morje conducted a workshop on the way the community supports this habitat and why it is important to the village. He addressed villagers and tourists alike and stressed on the various challenges the village faces to preserve this habitat for conservation.



Fishworkers' Forum

January 19, 2020

As part of the community outreach initiative, Olencio Simoes, Vice chairperson of the National Fishworkers Forum (NFF) was invited to conduct a session on how fishing practices affect conservation.

19TH JANUARY 2020 AT
4:30 PM

WORKSHOP :
.....
OLENCIO SIMOES
VICE CHAIRPERSON
NATIONAL FISHWORKERS FORUM

COMMEMORATING COMMUNITY
AND CONSERVATION WEEK
THROUGH AN INTERACTIVE
SESSION WITH OLENCIO ON
CONNECTING THE DOTS AND
DIALOGUE IN FISHERIES AND SEA
TURTLE CONSERVATION EFFORTS.



Morjim Sea Turtle Festival
2019-20

KINDLY FIND THE
REGISTRATION LINK ON OUR
INSTAGRAM PAGE:
@MORJIMTURTLEFESTIVAL

Fish Workers' Forum

January 19, 2020

Mr. Simoes connected the dots between fisheries and sea turtle conservation. Ghost gear, discarded fishing nets from various types of fishing boats, is considered the primary cause of entanglement deaths across all species of sea turtles in India.



Community Outreach: Beach Shacks

Since the beach shacks share the same space and ecosphere as the Olive Ridley nesting site and have a huge impact on it, it is critical that they are part of the conservation dialogue.

Outreach activities, stakeholder meetings, workshops and beach clean ups were held.



Community Outreach: Beach Shacks

January 23, 2020

As part of the outreach initiative in the Conservation and Tourism week, table tents were distributed with infographics on reducing single-use plastic from the shack owner's end. The recent sea turtle nestings were shared.



Community Outreach: Video screening

The community ownership of the conservation project and the successful model created through the Morjim sea turtle festival 2019-2020 was documented and compiled in a short documentary. The community's take on the festival and how it was useful to them for their businesses and the village was shared



Link to the video:

https://www.instagram.com/tv/B9TZ6IWAKcw/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Community Outreach: School play

The students of Kirti Vidyalaya School, Morjim staged a play on 'MORJIM'S OLIVE RIDLEY SEA TURTLES'



Community Outreach

February 24-29, 2020

The last week of February was dedicated to the community of Morjim and a recognition of their participation in the conservation dialogue. A closing ceremony was held in the village community hall and the community of Morjim were invited. An awards ceremony for shack owners who participated with us over the course of three months was held. The on ground and IFS officers of the Goa Forest Department were felicitated for their collaboration with us.

Community Outreach: Felicitation

Officers of the Goa Forest Department were felicitated for their unwavering support and collaboration with the Morjim Sea Turtle Festival 2019-2020.



Community Outreach: Shack Owners' Awards Ceremony

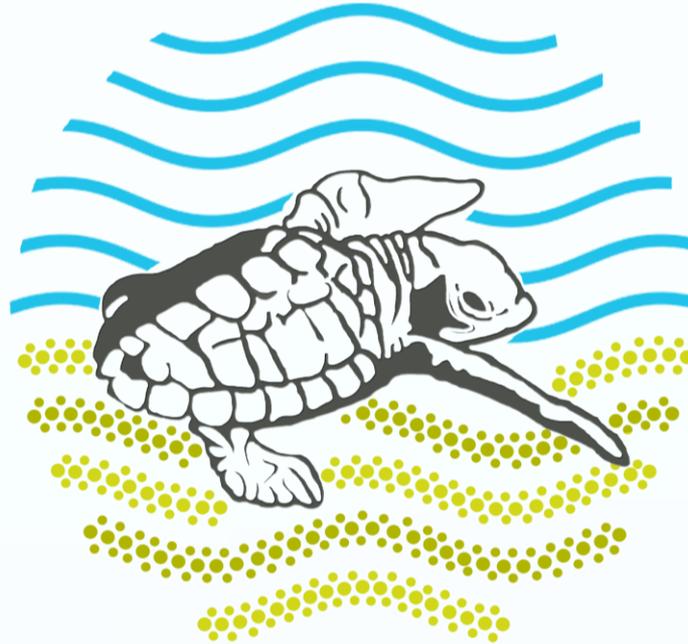
We held an impromptu awards ceremony for shack owners who participated with us over the course of three months in workshops, stakeholder meetings, beach clean ups and reducing their single-use plastics and beach violations with respect to light and sound.



Community Outreach: Closing Ceremony



Impact of the Festival



Morjim Sea Turtle Festival 2019-20

Many tangible and intangible impacts from awareness building, outreach, beach clean ups and applying the community-conservation model in Morjim were noticed.

Impact: Awareness

The end deliverable of each awareness session and the scheduled workshops was to ensure that every tourist or local entering the Turtle Interpretation Centre would leave knowing:

1/the basic difference between a sea turtle and a freshwater turtle

2/why sea-turtles have equal wildlife-policy protection as that of tigers

3/the very real threats on their habitat

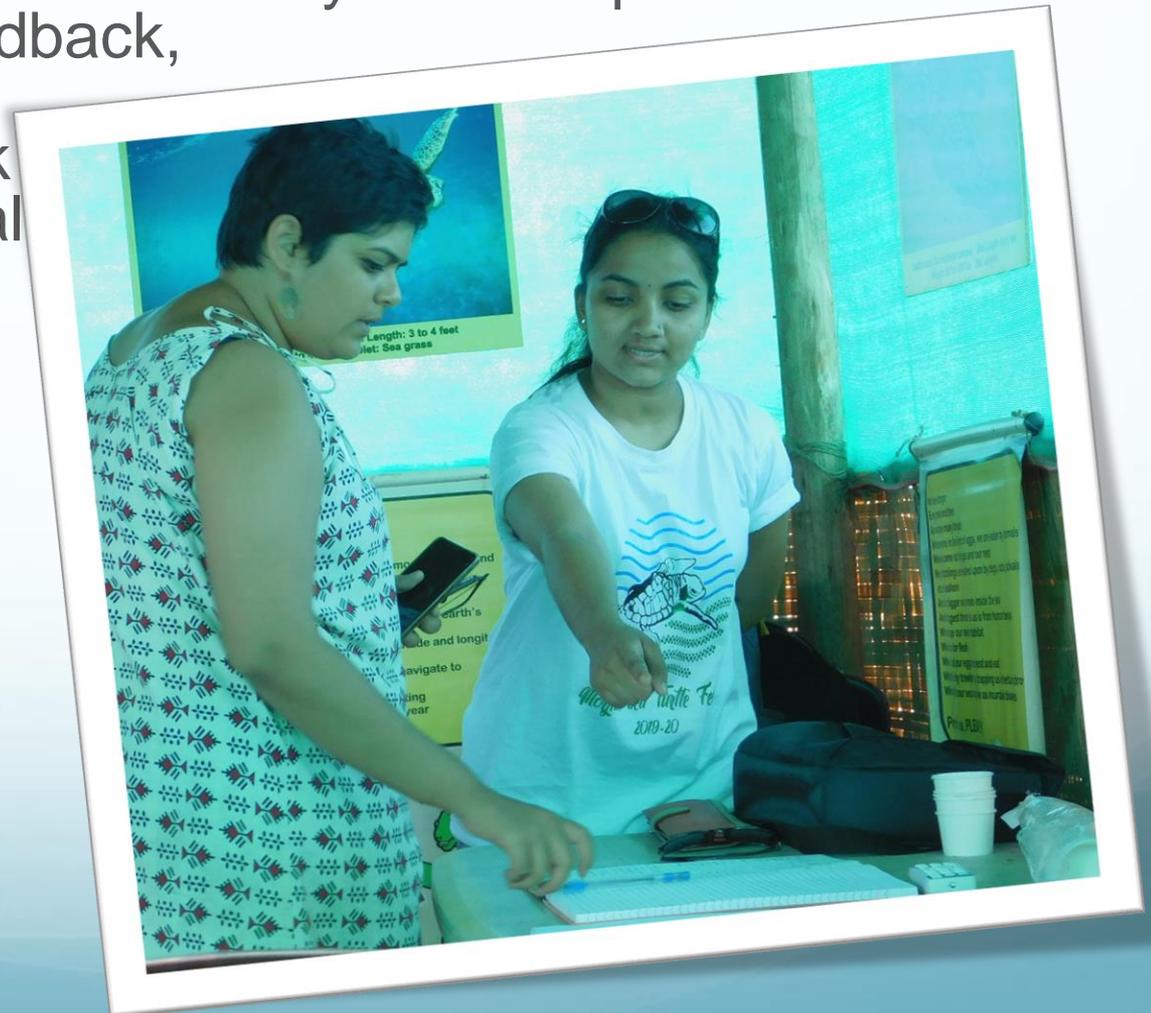
4/the significance of standing on a rare turtle nesting beach since very few exist in the world

All the deliverables were achieved.



Impact: Awareness

We received great responses, ideas and support from these awareness sessions. Every workshop received tangible feedback, recorded in our Festival register book and also on our social media handles. About 1500 people were impacted from these workshops, sessions and clean ups during the peak tourist season of December.



Impact: Awareness

Against the anticipated footfall of 250-300 per day, the Festival saw a **high footfall of almost 500 odd** per day. Extra outreach material had to be arranged.

Impact: Beach clean ups

Community beach clean ups included residents living around Morjim beach.

During these clean ups, various discussions and debates on how the waste, especially the source of single-use plastic from the shacks and tourists, could be managed better were held. These ideas have been communicated through clean up participants and the Sagarshakti team to the shacks.

The Panchayat also made provisions for the litter to be picked up and sorted immediately post the Sunday clean-ups.



Impact: Beach clean ups

There was an unexpected increase in the number of school children and volunteers wanting to participate in the clean up drives. 8 additional cleanup drives on top of the originally planned 12 had to be organised, which involved around 40 kids more participating each time. Extra clean up materials and equipment had to be arranged for these extra drives.

Impact: Outreach

The shack owners are the basic stake holders in Morjim who can influence the human impact on the Turtle nesting. The first month of the Festival, we focused on reaching out to the 11 shacks that are directly present on the beach. We also approached other resorts and hotels near the beach. Our outreach involved breaking the ice of resistance to our conservation efforts and initiating dialogue with the shack owners.



Impact: Outreach

The shack owners attended the first ever stakeholder meeting alongside the Forest Department and Sagarshakti. We addressed how being against the tide of conservation and sustainable tourism would in the long term hurt their businesses and do more harm than good. Since the outreach, the initial hostility and resistance changed to curiosity and cooperation. By the third week, **8 out of 11 shacks decided to be a part of the festival as our official “Partners in Conservation”.**



Impact: Outreach

Customised sunboards, saying 'Partners in the Conservation of Turtles' were also given out and these were proudly displayed at the outlets.

Extra informative literature was also given to them for use at their shacks on the beach.



Impact: Outreach

In order to curb the use of plastic straws on the beach, **paper straws were procured and made mandatory for the shacks and food stalls at the beach.** The shack owners complied with this. This too was a situation which had not been anticipated, and though it entailed a minor cost increase, was truly a great impact on the ground.

We also addressed how light and sound pollution harms mother sea turtles and hatchlings. Most of the shacks cooperated fully. The impact we have documented since the second week is the **complete shutdown of lights and music by 9 pm.** This unexpected voluntary action was a **big bonus** for the festival.

Impact: Community Conservation model

The most important and lasting impact of this month's activities, outreach and conservation efforts are the ones on the local and native Goan community of Morjim. The locals, through invitations, door to door workshops, Panchayat involvement and support from parishes in the village came and attended several workshops during the festival.



Impact: Community Conservation model

The locals having small businesses outside the beach also promoted the festival and have taken care of every team member of the Morjim Turtle Festival through support in logistics, equipment, food and catering. They have

been keen to ensure that the habitat is protected.

At the same time, they have opened a platform to debate on their challenges of running a 'sea turtle - friendly' tourism business, on sustainability and awareness of sea-turtle biology, life cycles and their threats.



Villagers from Morjim running small businesses near the beach entrance promoting the festival.

Morjim beach witnessed it's first turtle nest of the season on 4/01/2020

We thank the community and all the participants of the Morjim Sea Turtle Festival 2019-2020 for ensuring that the marine habitat and wildlife were protected



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Sagarshakti through Vanashakti would humbly with immense gratitude like to thank TATA TRUSTS & the GOA FOREST DEPARTMENT for the opportunity to make Morjim a case of participatory and inclusionary conservation for the glorious biodiversity of sea turtles that have made Morjim their nesting ground and home.