

Project Update: November 2021

LAMPUNG

The Lampung area has a large Christian minority from Flores (Nusa Tenggara Timur) that drives sea turtle trade as well as consumption. The main peak of turtle use is around Christmas and New Year. During that time turtle meat is traditionally eaten and rings and bracelets are manufactured from tortoiseshell. Families usually buy raw scutes from sellers and then they manufacture the products on their own at home. Tortoiseshell is available at a few local stalls throughout the year, but it is usually only a limited amount as the sellers mainly focus on accumulating tortoiseshell stocks for the Christmas holidays. Based on the information, there is no significant nesting site of sea turtles in the area, the turtles are harvested directly from the sea. Turtles can be spotted in the sea throughout the year.



The prices of tortoiseshell products are following:

ring: 2 USD (25 000 IDR)
bracelet: 2,5 USD (35 000 IDR)
small raw scute: 1 USD (15 000 IDR)
large raw scute: 2 USD (25 000 IDR)

The price of sea turtle for meat is 35 USD (500 000 IDR) per individual, and fishermen directly sell the turtles to the families (consumers). Besides Christmas, sea turtle meat is also eaten during wedding ceremonies. Most of the harvested turtles are caught as bycatch (however cases when turtles are ordered can occasionally occur). As there

is no nesting area close to Lampung city, sea turtle eggs are not traded on local markets. In total 11 questionnaires and five market surveys were conducted.

BENGKULU

Bengkulu is the city on the southwest of Sumatra. The majority of the population is Muslim with a small Christian community. Fishing is still an important source of living for significant part of local population. Large fishing boats go fishing to the areas of Pulau Wunga and then continue to the south of Mentawai archipelago (Pagai islands). The fishermen usually spend up to 14 days on the sea and then come back.

The southern part of the city has several beaches and touristic areas. The sea turtle population declines had been reported us by during the community surveys by respondents (10 in total). The population declines were caused by both turtle egg trade and the coastal development (i.e., habitat destruction).

Turtle eggs are occasionally available in local markets. The price is 10 000 IDR per egg. The price is rather expensive compared to the other areas of Sumatra. Similarly, as in Padang, a strong belief that turtle eggs consumption is beneficial for health persists in Bengkulu too. In total 10 community survey was done with 10 respondents

SIBOLGA

The last visited area was Sibolga, one of the largest fishing and wildlife trade hubs in Sumatra. Large fishing boats from Sibolga can be seen across Sumatra from Aceh to the very south of Sumatra. Many boats also use illegal and destructive fishing practices such as blast fishing or bottom trawling. The largest boats stay on the sea up to 3 months, and the logistics of stocks and transportation of fish back to Sibolga is secured by smaller boats.



Sea turtles are mainly caught as bycatch in trawls and nets. Green turtles are usually thrown back into the sea. Hawksbill turtles are either kept alive and taken to Sibolga or have their scutes removed and then are thrown back to the sea. The origin of hawksbill turtles is variable and currently it is not possible to determine from which sites the highest volumes of turtles come from (previously the take of tortoiseshell by fishermen from Sibolga reported in Mentawai, Simeulue, Pulau Banyak).



The price of hawkbill turtles (or raw scutes) depends on the size. Juvenile individuals of approximately 50 cm carapace length are sold for 150 000 IDR. Individuals of 70-80 cm carapace length are sold for 250 000 IDR.

Tortoiseshell trade centre is on Pantai Pandan where eight trade spots were found. Sellers buy tortoiseshell directly from fishermen and then individually manufacture raw scutes into bracelets and rings. The stalls are open especially on Sundays and holidays such as Christmas and New Year, during the working days not all stalls are open.

The prices of tortoiseshell:
ring: less than 1 USD (10 000 IDR)
bracelet: 2,5 USD (35 000 IDR)

The prices of other illegally sold products:
coral decoration (*Acropora* spp.): (70 000 - 150 000 IDR)
other souvenirs made from molluscs and their shells (e.g., tiger cowrie/EN, giant triton/EN)

Fishermen are taking turtle eggs from islands where they rest during the fishing. Turtle eggs in Sibolga are sold mainly by the Chinese community but are consumed by Christian minority (including Chinese) as well as Muslim majority.

In Sibolga, we got 12 respondents and eight market surveys.