



# ***Baja California's Sea Turtles: Grassroots Efforts in Mexico***

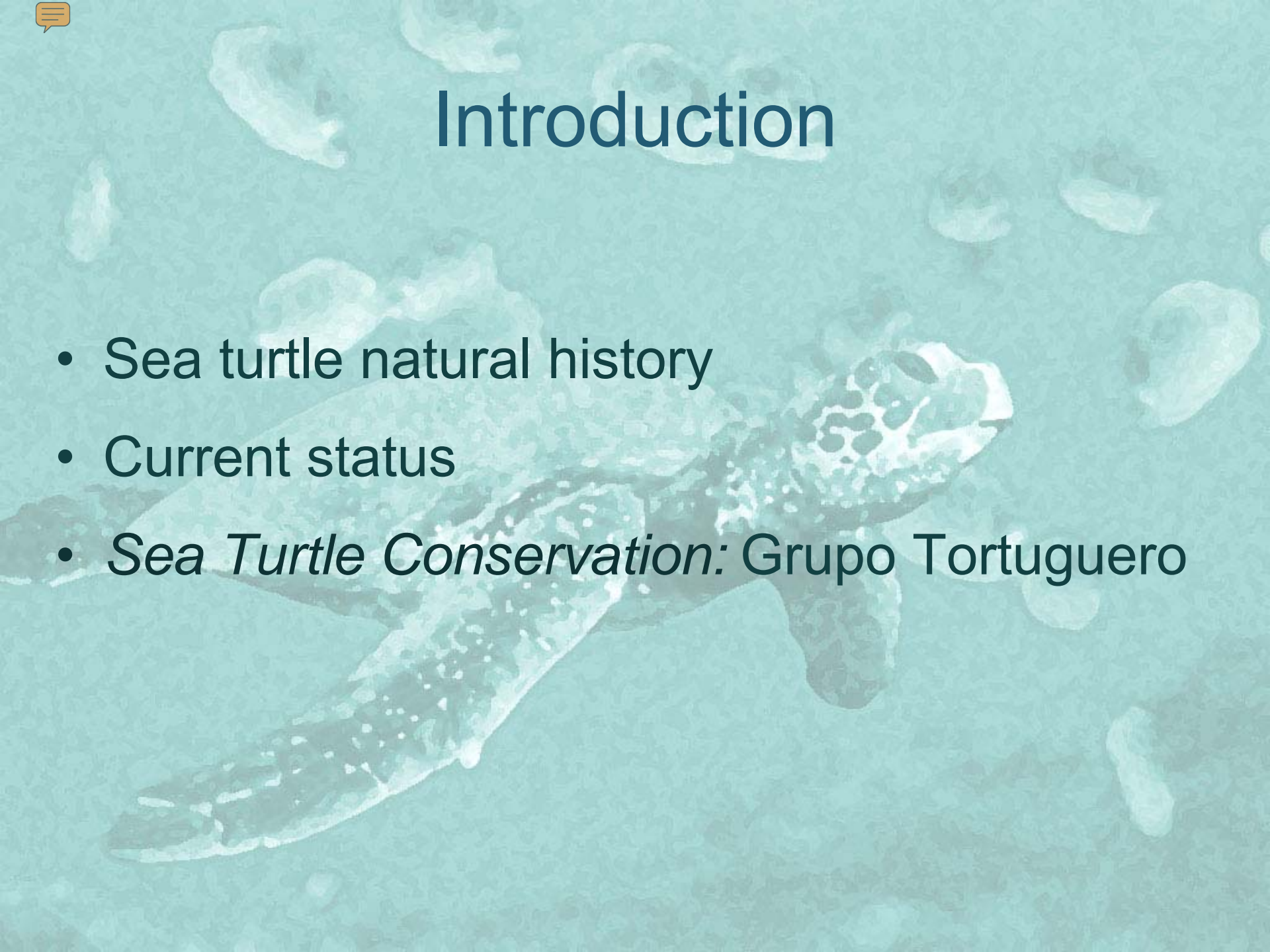
**Debra Valov**  
**ISSI, August 2015**





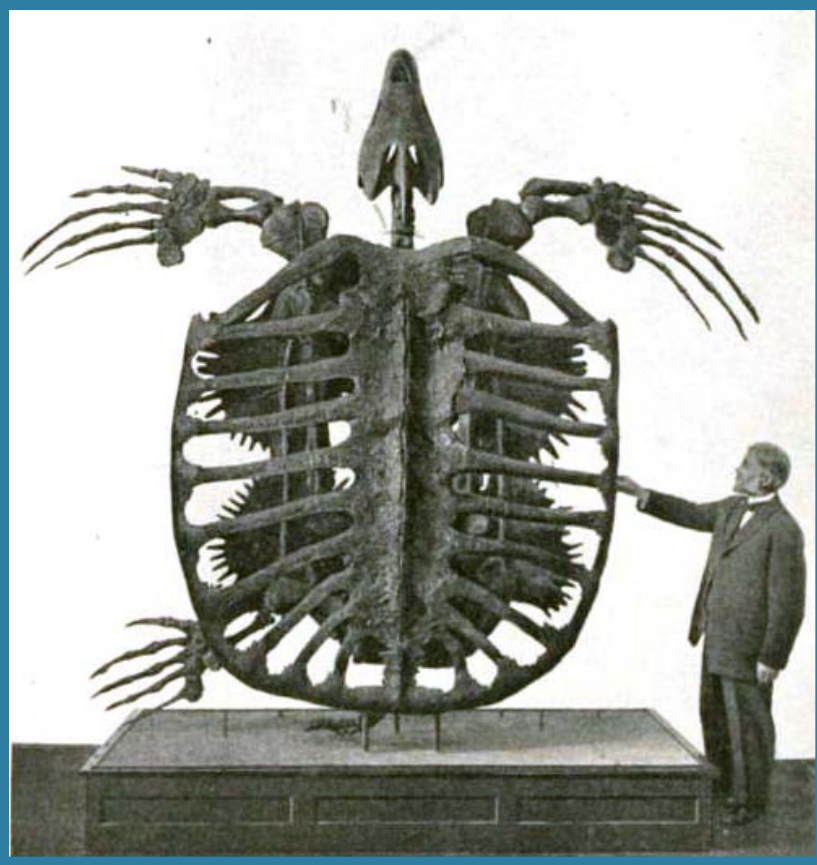
# Introduction

- Sea turtle natural history
- Current status
- *Sea Turtle Conservation: Grupo Tortuguero*



# Turtles: Historically and Today

110 million years of evolution



***Archelon ischyros***

- 15 feet long, 4,500 pounds or more
- 74 million years old



2 to 9 feet long, between 50 and 2000 pounds



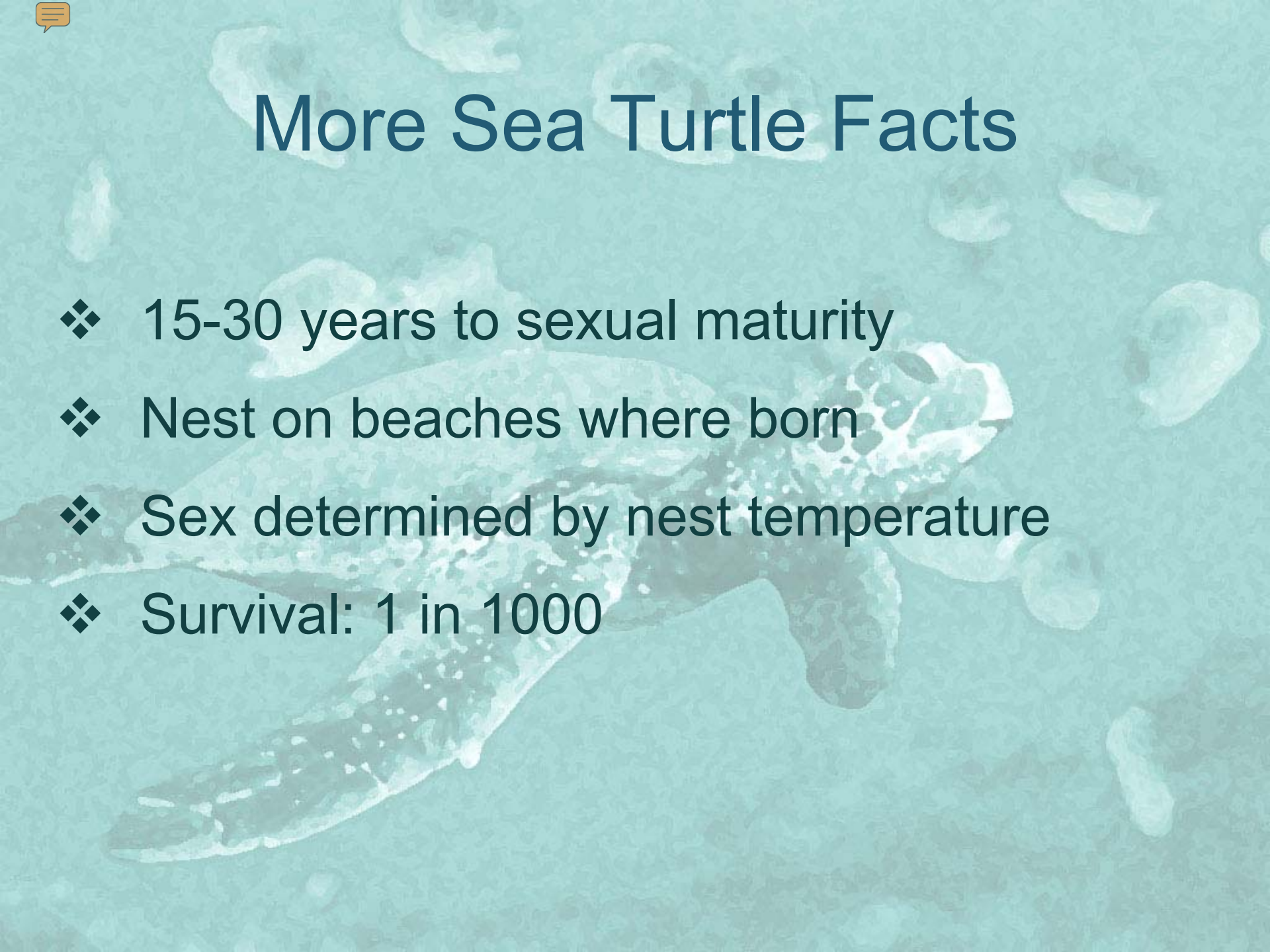
# Sea Turtle Facts

- ❖ Seven species worldwide
- ❖ Marine reptiles
- ❖ Outer shell (carapace), 4 flippers
- ❖ Lifespan of 100 years or more
- ❖ Varied diet



# More Sea Turtle Facts

- ❖ 15-30 years to sexual maturity
- ❖ Nest on beaches where born
- ❖ Sex determined by nest temperature
- ❖ Survival: 1 in 1000



# Baja's Sea Turtles

- Five species
- Feeding grounds
- Nesting beaches
- Cultural significance
- Traditional food source



*Cave painting—1000 to 1500 years old*



# Olive Ridley Golfina

*Endangered*

## *Lepidochelys olivacea*

- *most abundant species*
- *nest en masse—la arribada*





# La Arribada







# Loggerhead Caguama Tortuga Amarilla

*Endangered*



## *Caretta caretta*

- Named for their large heads
- Japan-Baja connection





# Green (Black) Negra or Prieta

*Endangered*

## *Chelonia mydas*

- Most widespread species
- Named for the color of its body fat



© Miguel Cortés



# Hawksbill Carey

*Critically Endangered*

## *Eretmochelys imbricata*

- Named for its pointed beak
- Feeds primarily on sponges
- Shell highly sought after for jewelry





# Leatherback Laúd Siete Filos

*Critically Endangered*

## ***Dermocheyls coriacea***

- *Largest species*
- *Can reach 2,000 lb. or more*
- *Carapace leathery, flexible*
- *Dives to greater than 3,000 feet*

[Leatherback Video](#)





# Conservation Status

- ❖ Endangered worldwide
- ❖ Protected worldwide under CITES
- ❖ Indicator species for ocean health
- ❖ Primary threat: Human activity



## By-Catch



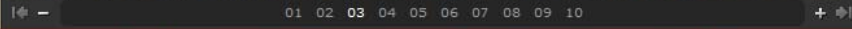


# Poaching



**Puerto Los Cabos**

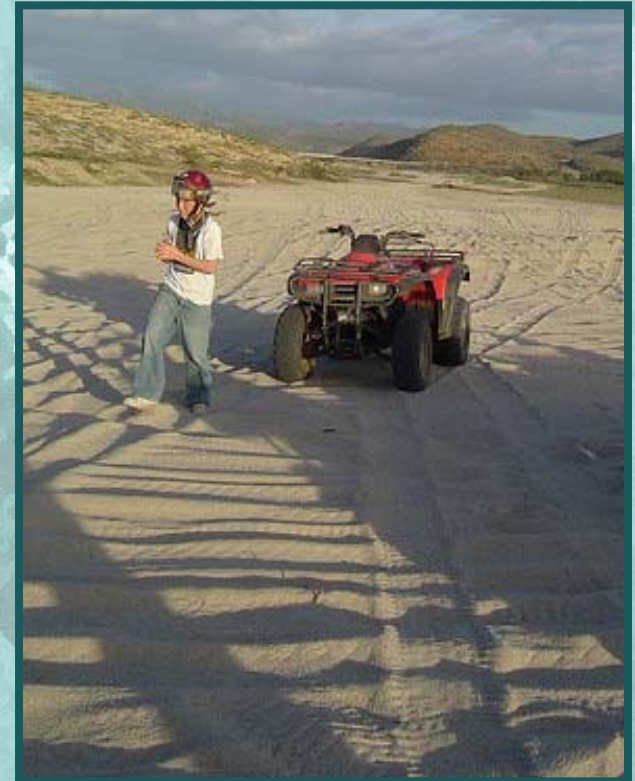
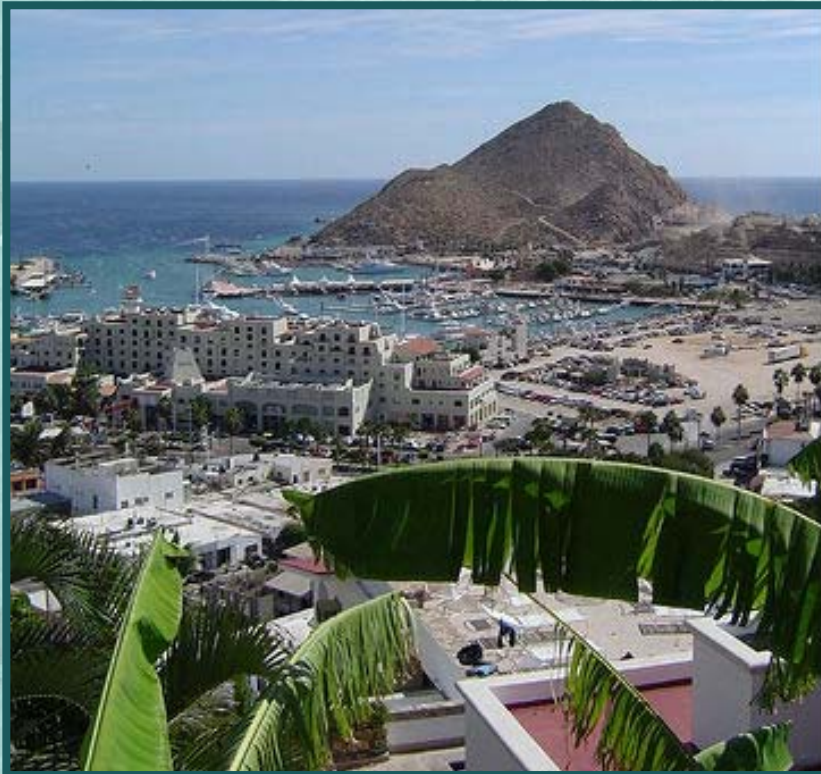
- Master Plan (pdf)
- El Altillo Lot Plan (pdf)
- Fundadores Lot Plan (pdf)
- La Noria Lot Plan (pdf)
- View all Plans (pdf)



# Loss of Nesting Habitat

## Nest Compaction

## Coastal Lighting





# Pollution



# Turtle Population Decline

## Number of Green Sea Turtles Nesting at Colola, Michoacan

~ 25,000  
in 1970



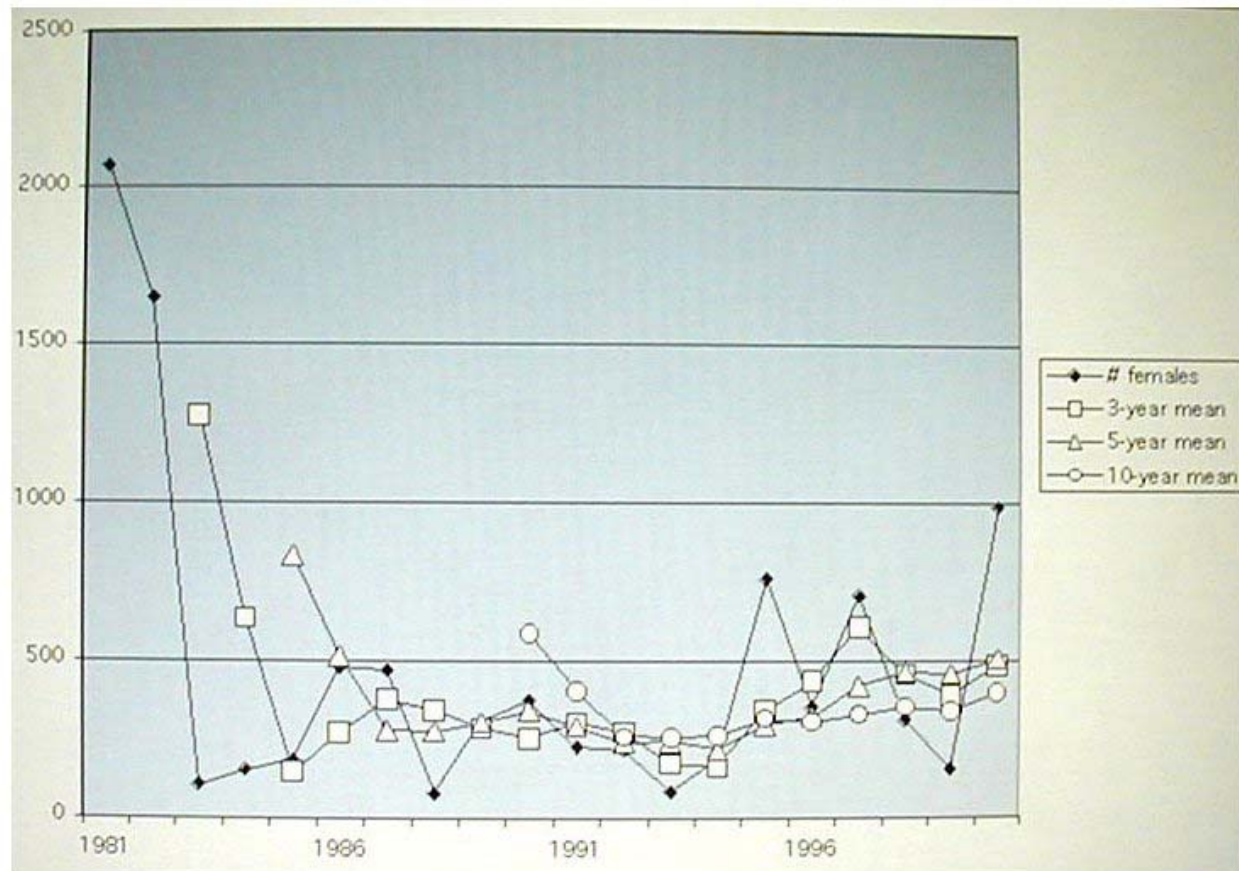
~ 7,000  
in 1979



~ 2,000  
in 1981

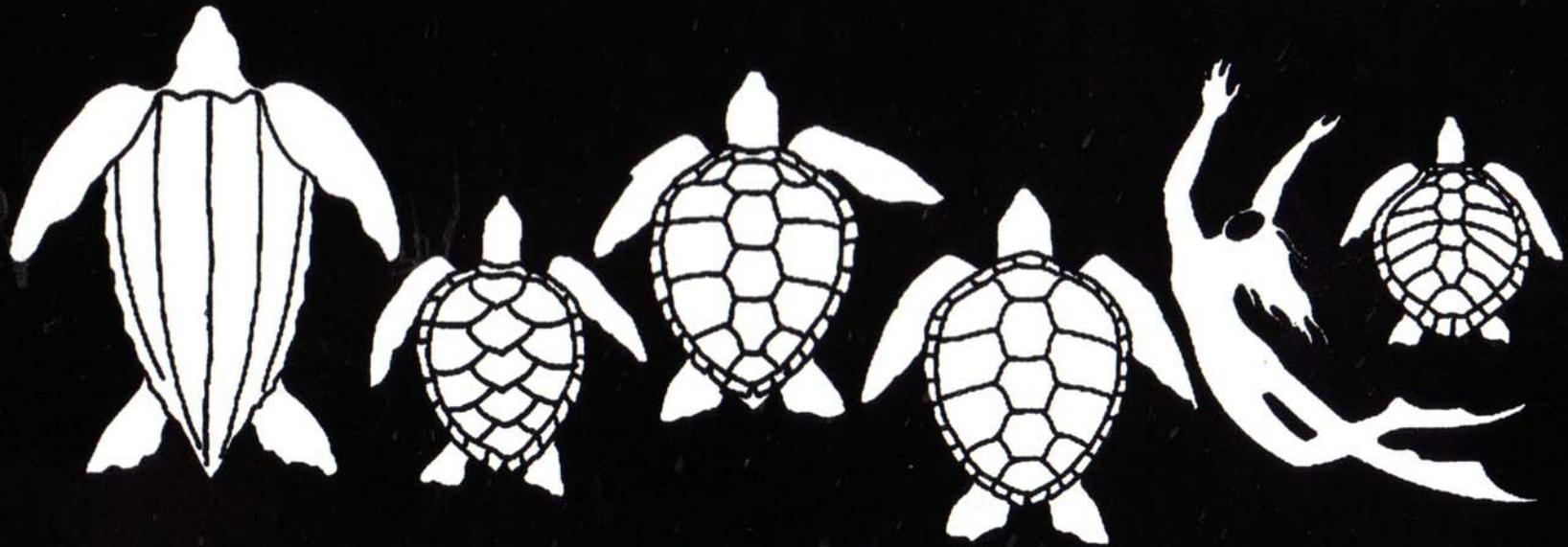


< 500  
in 2001



Source: Sea Turtle Conservation Network of the Californias, Loreto BCS, 2002

# GRUPO TORTUGUERO



[www.grupotortugero.org](http://www.grupotortugero.org)

# *Revolución Tortuguera*

- Founded 1999 in Loreto, BCS
- 40 communities in BCN, BCS, Sonora, Sinaloa and California
- 16 local and 10 international associations
- 18 institutions and universities
- 10 governmental agencies





# Research & Monitoring



# Monitoring Sites 2001-11

Six sites 2001

Forty sites in 2014



# ¿TE COMERÍAS UN PANDA?

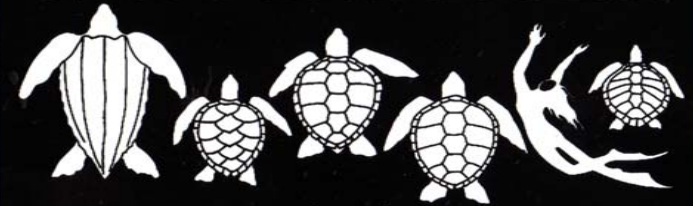
## ¡NO COMAS TORTUGA MARINA EN PELIGRO DE EXTINCIÓN!

### Media Campaigns



COMER CAGUAMA TE HACE LENTO

GRUPO TORTUGUERO

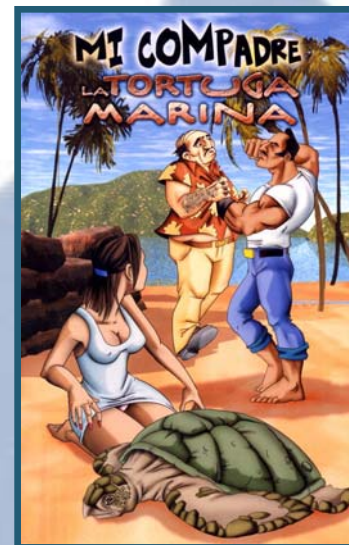
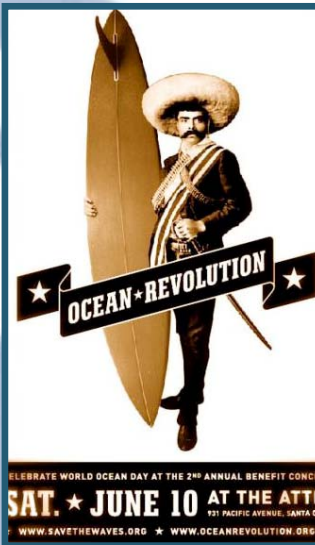


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# OCEAN



# REVOLUTION






# Community Outreach & Environmental Education





¡QUÉ VIVA LA  
TORTUGA!



**¡Gracias!**  
**See you in Baja!**

This presentation is available at:  
[www.lasecomujeres.org](http://www.lasecomujeres.org)

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