



# Transboundary conservation of sea turtles

**REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP  
FOR CMS NON-PARTIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA  
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# Two Turtle Island groups



## Turtle Islands Malaysia (3 islands)

**1977** - Turtle Islands Park  
(TIP) established

### **Objectives:**

Conservation and tourism  
development

### **Management:**

Sabah Parks

## Turtle Islands Philippines (6 islands)

**1982** – Baguan Island  
protected

**1999** – Turtle Islands  
Wildlife Sanctuary  
established

### **Objectives:** conservation

### **Management:**

Protected Areas and  
Wildlife Bureau; Protected  
Area Management Board  
after 1999

# Two Turtle Island groups – shared turtle population

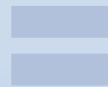


Photo: CI

3 Turtle  
Islands  
Malaysia



6 Turtle  
Islands  
Philippines



Turtle Islands  
Heritage  
Protected  
Area  
TIHPA-1996



# TIHPA: 1<sup>ST</sup> transboundary MPA for turtles

- **Instrument:** Philippine-Malaysia MOA signed in 1996
- **Basis:** linked nesting population of turtles
- **Governance:** Joint Management Committee for TIHPA (JMC-TIHPA) with Sabah Parks and Biodiversity Management Bureau as leads
- **Anchor:**
  - . ASEAN (Working Group on Nature Conservation)?
  - . Phil-Mal bi-lateral agreement ✓



Photo: CI



# TIHPA: objectives

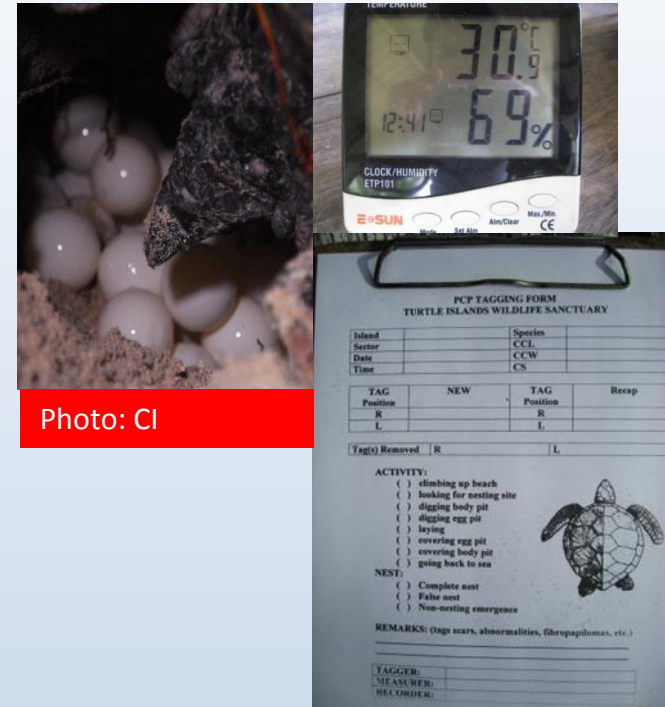
- **Objective 1:** integrated and uniform management
- **Objective 2:** joint research and conservation program



Photo: CI

# TIHPA: activities (examples)

- Standardized monitoring system and management approaches
- Peer-to-peer learning
- Access to capacity-building opportunities that strengthen both TIP and TIWS Management Units
- Identification of common issues and joint, coordinated actions to maximize benefits of outcomes
- Strengthens population studies, i.e. Increase in successful nestings; new recruits to breeding population; trends/projections
- Enforcement protocols that work



# TIHPA: partnership

- 3 IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group (Chan, E.H.; Limpus, C.; Pilcher, N.)
- NGOs – CI and WWF and local NGOs
- Academic/research institutions – Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Mindanao State University Tawi-tawi, Marine Research Foundation
- Development partners - USAID, ADB, GIZ



Photo: CI

# TIHPA: examples of NGO support

- WWF-Philippines - Integrated Conservation and Development Program (health & sanitation, education, livelihood) for Philippine Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary (wwf.org.ph)
- CI-Philippines: facilities, law enforcement support, livelihood, IEC, effective MPA management in Philippine TIWS
- CI-Philippines: Business Plan development, capacity enhancement, staff training module, IEC in Malaysian Turtle Islands Park (*partnership with Sabah Parks and WWF-Malaysia*)



Soure: [wwf.org.ph](http://wwf.org.ph)

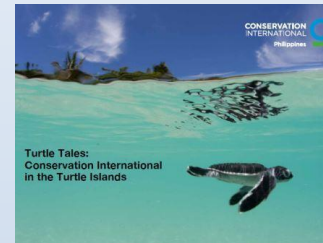


Photo: CI



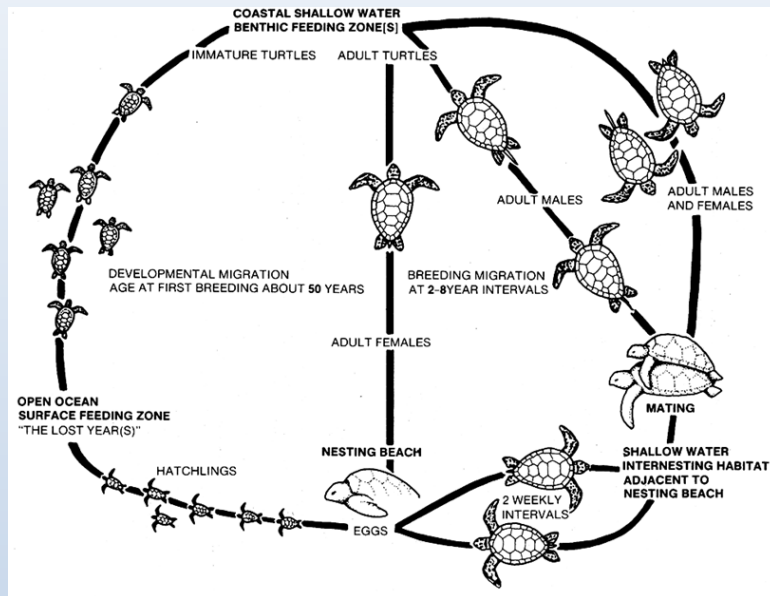
*NOTE: CI and WWF are members the TIWS Protected Area Management Board and of Philippine delegation to Joint Management Committee meetings of TIHPA*



# TIHPA: global significance

- One of the remaining major nesting grounds for green turtles in the world
- Protects a distinct nesting population of green turtles
- Baguan Island alone produces over a million eggs/year, up to 1.6 M in 2012.
- TIHPA – “...**single largest and most stable population of green turtles in all of Southeast Asia...**” - N. Pilcher, 2014
- Potential significant contribution to conservation targets to arrest population decline or recover population of endangered species

# TIHPA and beyond



Source: Figure after Lanyon et al. 1989 *In* Pilcher 2008

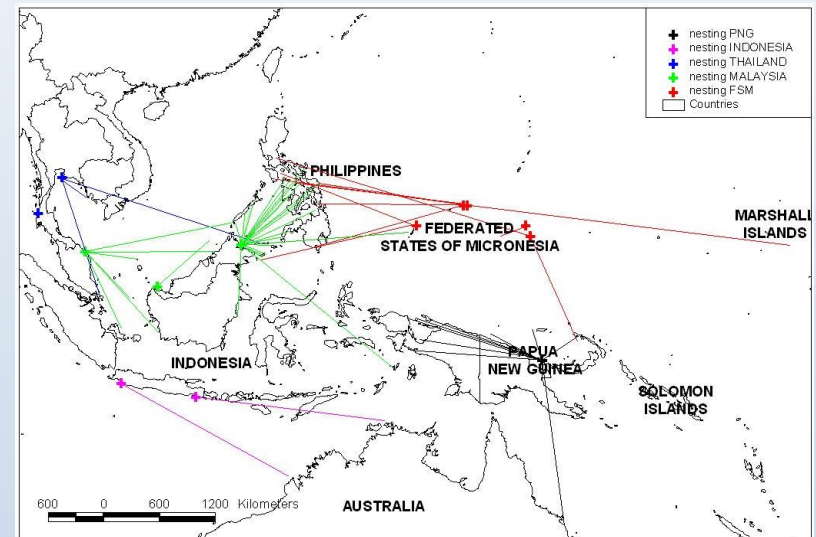


Fig. 2: Known migrations of green turtles in the Indian Ocean region, as an example of the distances traveled and international borders crossed by migrating turtles (courtesy of C. Limpus and numerous data contributors).

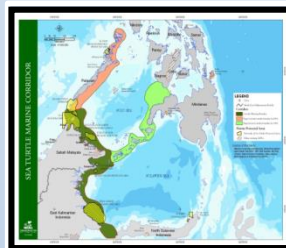
Source: Pilcher 2008

# Green turtle MPA network beyond TIHPA: relevant international platform

- Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion (SSME)
  - Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines
  - Ratified MOU, 2006-2016
  - Species, MPAs and networks, fisheries
  - Functional Tri-National Committee and sub-committees



• Trinational Sea Turtle Corridor, 2002



• proposed green turtle corridor, 2008

## More info...

- tag returns
- Satellite tracking
- Genetic studies
- Laparoscopy
- Stakeholder inputs

• BEYOND SSME

Maps: CI

# Green turtle MPA network beyond TIHPA: relevant international platform

- Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral reefs, fisheries and food security (CTI-CFF)
  - Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomons, Timor-Leste
  - Ratified agreement
  - 10-year Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) from 2009: *Sulu-Sulawesi, a priority seascape in CTI-CFF RPOA*
  - Species, MPAs and networks, fisheries, climate change adaptation and seascapes management

# Green turtle MPA network beyond TIHPA: relevant international platform

- *Sulu-Sulawesi, a priority seascape in CTI-CFF RPOA*
  - Framework for MPA network, 2004
  - Science-based design of MPAN for green turtles adopted by Tri-national Committee for SSME, 2009
  - SSME Comprehensive Action Plan for Threatened, Charismatic and Migratory Species, 2011
  - GIZ support for tri-national MPAN available
  - Technical aspects of SSME can continue under CTI-CFF framework by 2016
  - CTI mechanism for Sulu-Sulawesi – for discussion



# Transboundary MPAN for sea turtles, SEA: relevant international platform

