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EXPERIENCES

Thanks to Javier Noriega for sending us the presentation of the turtle conservation system implemented by Pronaturaleza in Peru.

<http://www.pronaturaleza.org>

The conservation of sideneck river turtle in Peru PRONATURALEZA

Synthesis

Pronaturaleza developed a methodology with 7 key steps for the birth of sideneck river turtles and their liberation. A method who plans to build artificial beaches, respecting at the best natural living conditions.

Since the beginning of its work in the area, ProNaturaleza has liberated 500,000 newborn sideneck river turtles in different lakes and rivers of the Reserve.

Objective :

The sideneck river turtle, *Podocnemis unifilis*, is a grey aquatic turtle of medium size that inhabits the lakes, rivers and streams of the Amazon basin. The sideneck river turtle lays its eggs on sand beaches formed along the river banks during the dry season when rainfall is less frequent, causing the water level of the rivers to decrease (between March and September). Many years ago, in the Pacaya Samiria National Reserve, the population of this species was abundant, however, the irrational harvesting of its eggs, given its importance and appreciation in the local diet, caused the numbers to decline.

Methodology :



ProNaturaleza's work with the management of the sideneck river turtle is developed in the following manner:

* **Organization:** This step includes the coordination between the authorities and the communal organizations, capacity building, and organising and assigning the work and tasks.

You can look at the synthetic note of this programme :

Pronatureza
Conservation of aquatic biodiversity in Pacaya

On the Website of the
Fondation Ensemble
www.fondationensemble.org



* **Construction of artificial beaches:** The members of the local management groups construct an artificial beach with wood and sand in a protected space of the settlement, where they will nest the eggs that were collected in the natural beaches.

* **Egg recollection in natural beaches:** Once the people identify the turtle nest in the beaches, they collect, select and transport them to the artificial beaches. Usually this occurs between July to September.

* **Nesting of the eggs in the artificial beaches:** The nesting and placing of the eggs in the artificial beaches attempts to replicate the manner in which it is done by the turtles in natural conditions.

* **Monitoring:** During the nesting of the eggs in the artificial beaches, usually between August to October, the nests need watching and controlling to prevent being eaten or harmed by other animals and insects such as ants for example that tend to eat the eggs.

* **Marking the newborns:** The sideneck river turtles are usually born around October and November. The newborns from the artificial nests are then collected measured and marked in order to monitor the management activity within the Reserve.

* **Liberation of newborns:** Once the newborns have been marked and registered they are taken out of the artificial nests to be liberated. This must be done either in the streams of lakes considered safe to the species, or in areas inhabited by a small number of predators.