



Nature Seekers

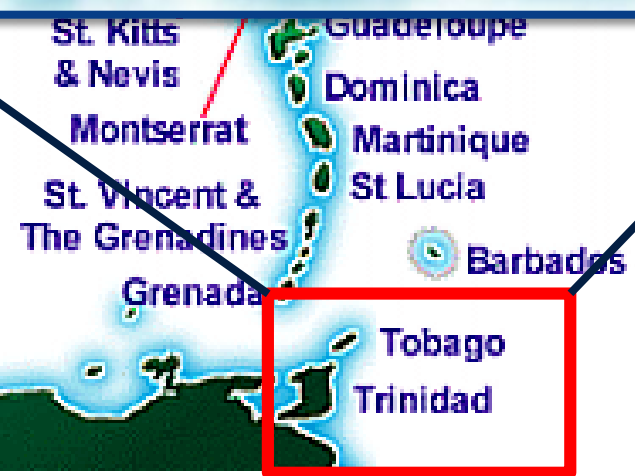
Background & History



WIDECAST Annual Meeting ... Matura, Trinidad ... March, 2018



Caribbean Sea



The Early Years

In 1970 and 1980 Matura beach was infested with rotting turtles.



Over 30% of all turtles were slaughtered

- Meat
- Eggs
- Bait
- Fun



Community Mobilization

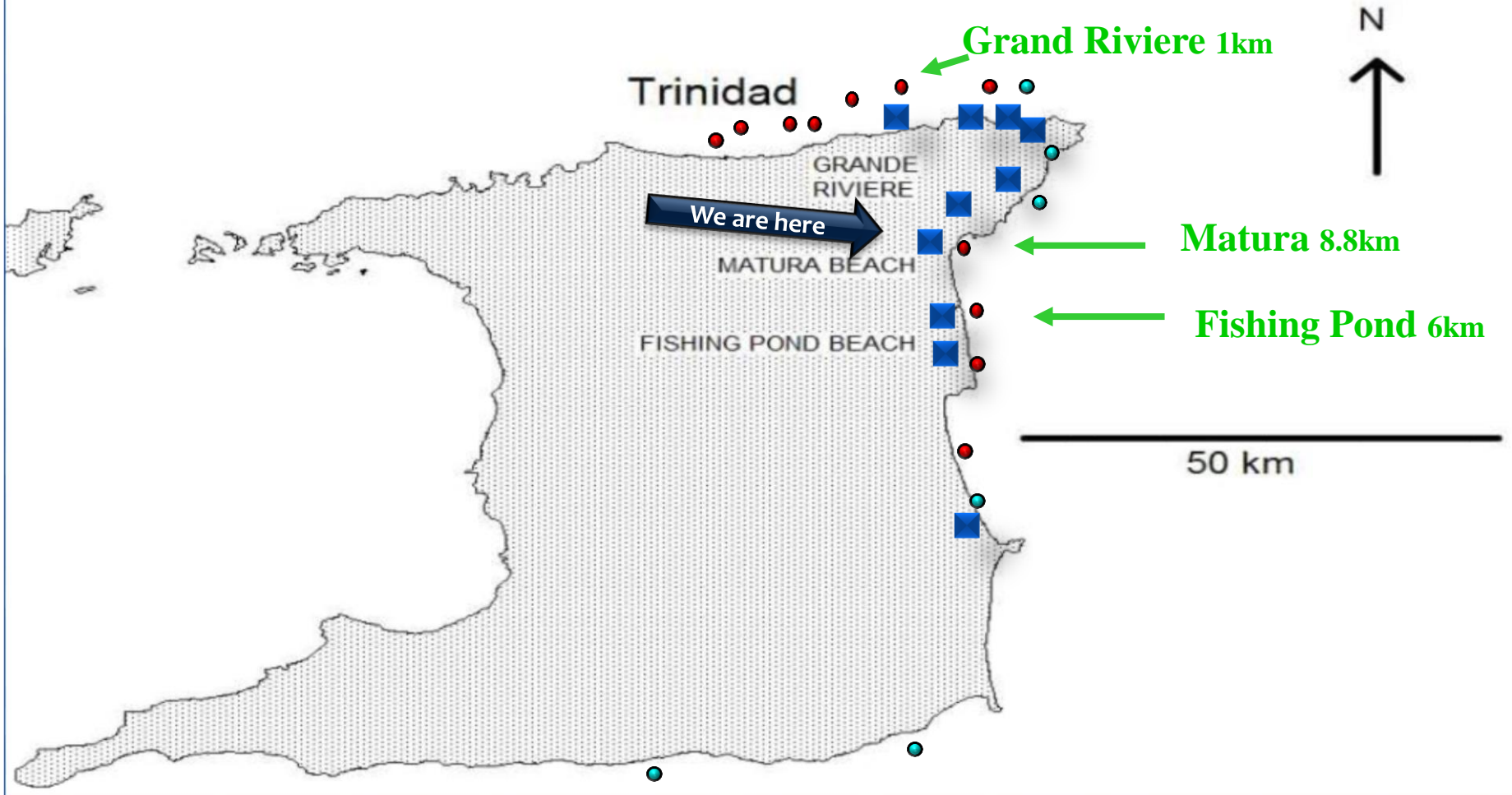
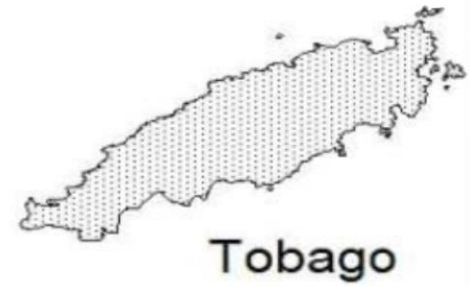
The Wildlife Section engaged the Matura community in turtle conservation and decision making process as they:

- * Supported and facilitated the growth of Nature Seekers.**
- * Provided opportunity for training in tour guiding and data recording**
- * Even assisted in fundraising activities.**

Demographics

- * **Presently, the community of Matura has a population of 1445 persons.**
- * **In Matura there are 753 (52.1%) are males and 692 (47.9%) are females.**
- * **1 Primary and 1 secondary school**
- * **Police station**
- * **Health Centre**

- ❑ Main Turtle Nesting Areas
- ❑ Other Spontaneous Nesting
- ❑ Developing Community Programs
- ❑ Protected Areas & Major Turtle Conservation Activities





Hawksbill Turtle

Photo courtesy: Blue Flag



Green Turtle

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Main Species of Marine Turtles Nesting at Matura

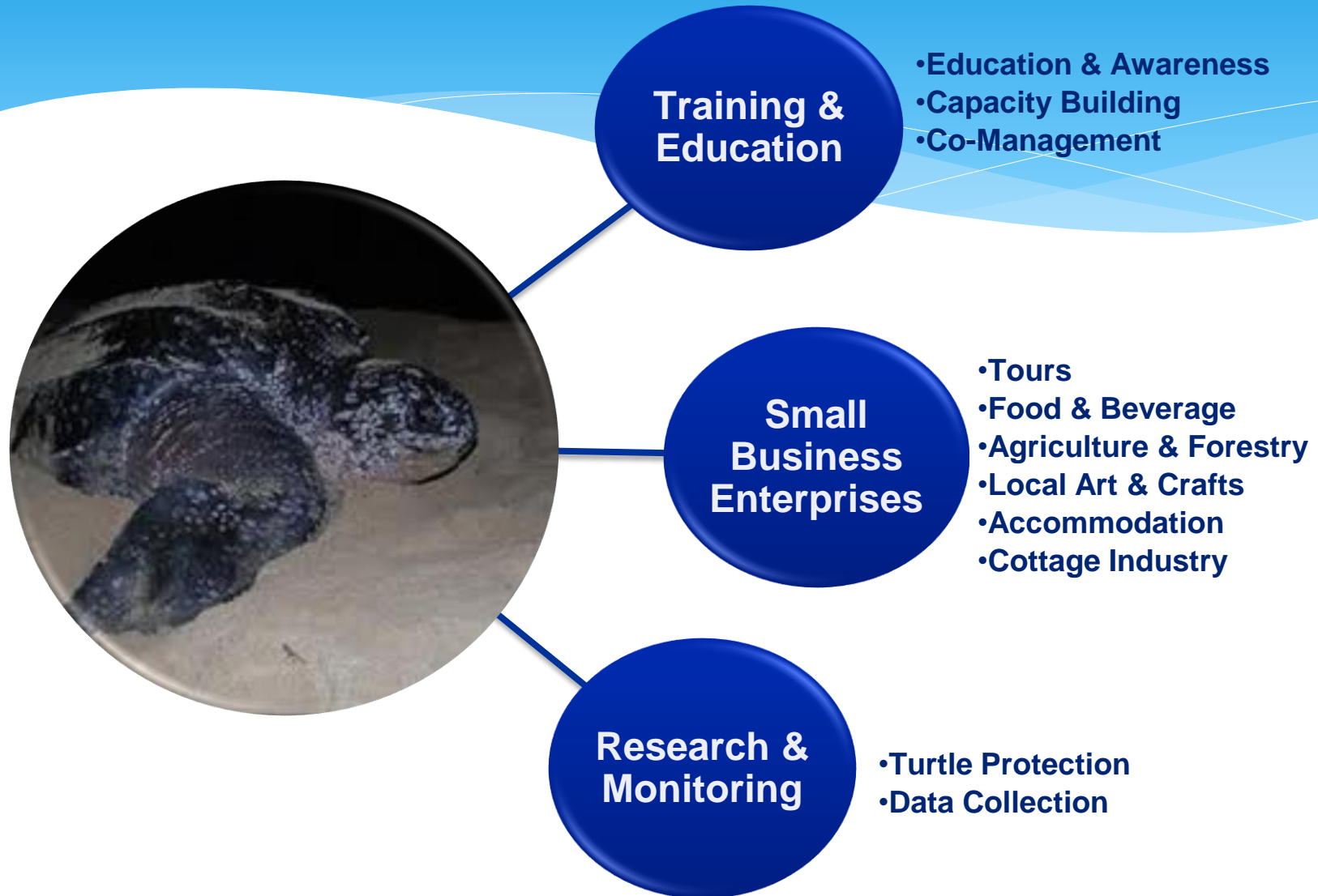


Leatherback Turtle

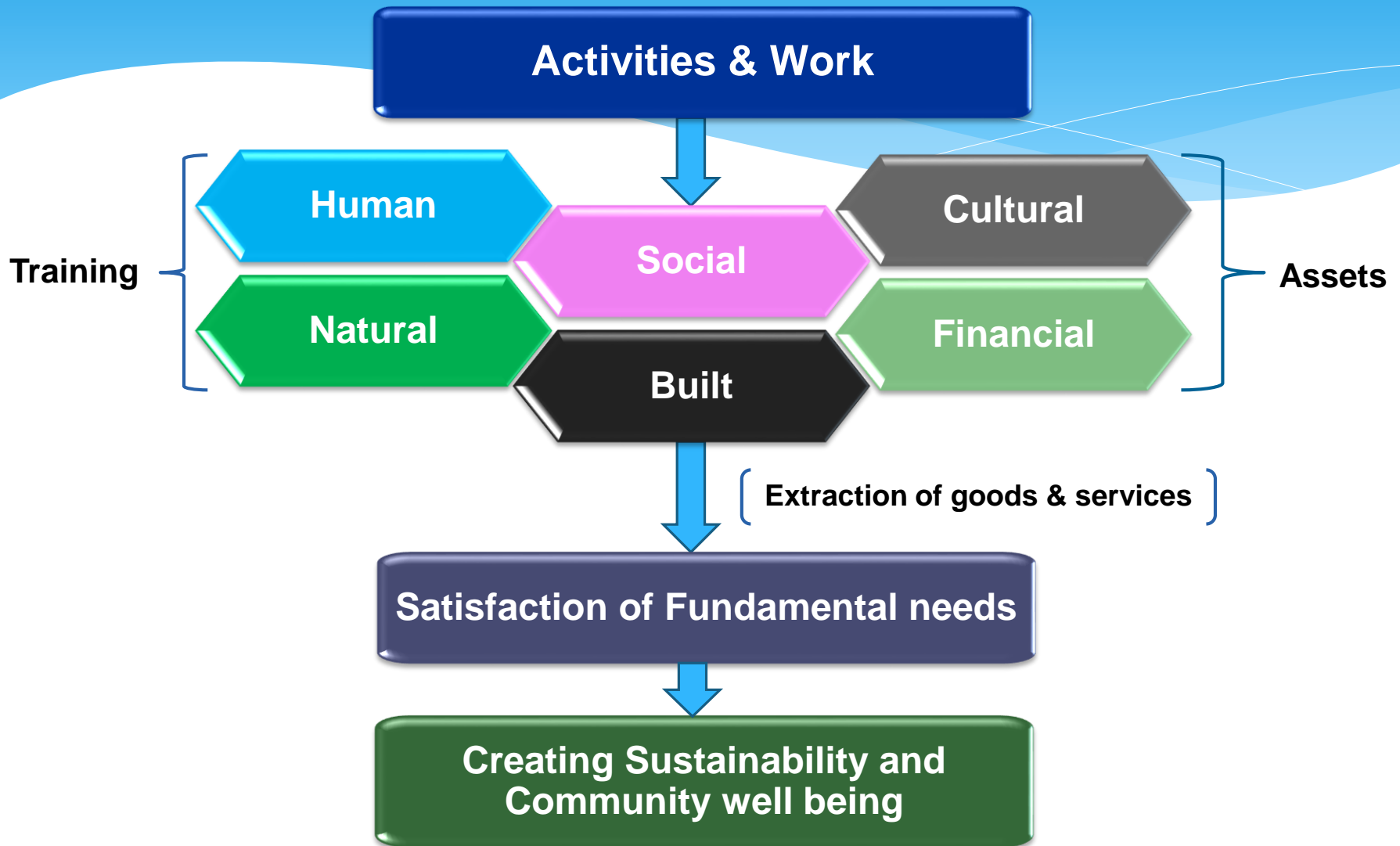


Our approach

Economic Linkages



Investment in the Community



Partnership Mobilization



Annual Beach Cleanup Event

The primary goal of this event is to clean 5km of the beach and remove all debris and litter that can prevent successful nesting. It is also done in order to provide a safe environment for our turtle viewing program



Beach Cleanup Event

Before



After



During



Beach Cleanup Activities

Sand Turtle Competition



Education & Awareness



Sand Turtle Competition



Patrolling Efforts

Population Status Monitoring



Population Status Monitoring

PIT tagging



Scanning



Flipper tagging



Measuring



Threats to Sea Turtles



Seasonality

February – May

Males and Females

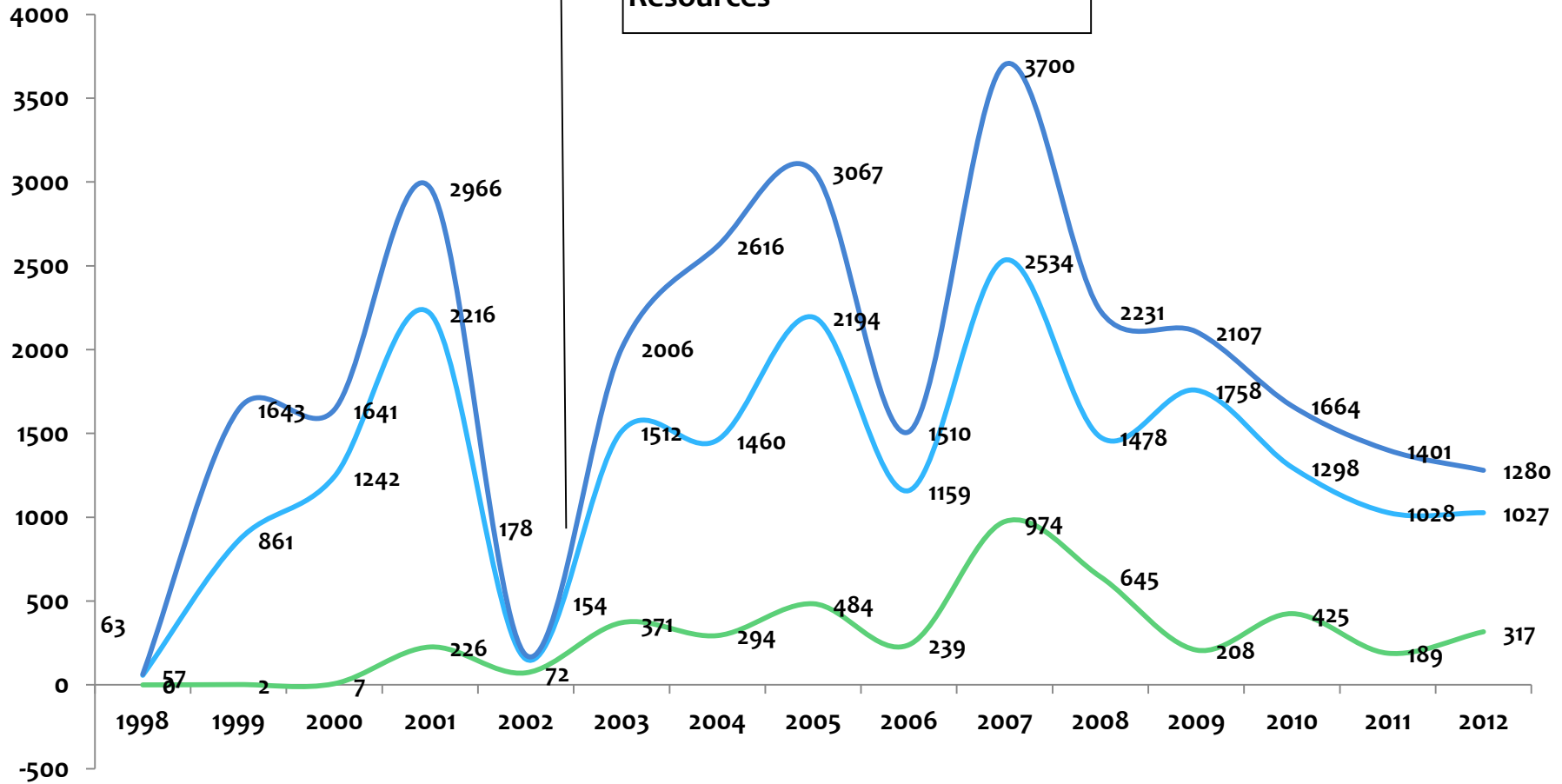


Four of nine leatherbacks which drowned entangled in a single gillnet at Matura Beach, Trinidad

Number of Turtles & Events

— Turtles — Events — Returning Turtle Events

Lack of Equipment & Human Resources



International Sighting/Stranding



Local Sighting / Stranding

Paria Beach

Grand Tacaribe Beach

Madamas Beach

Grande Rivera Beach

Matura Beach

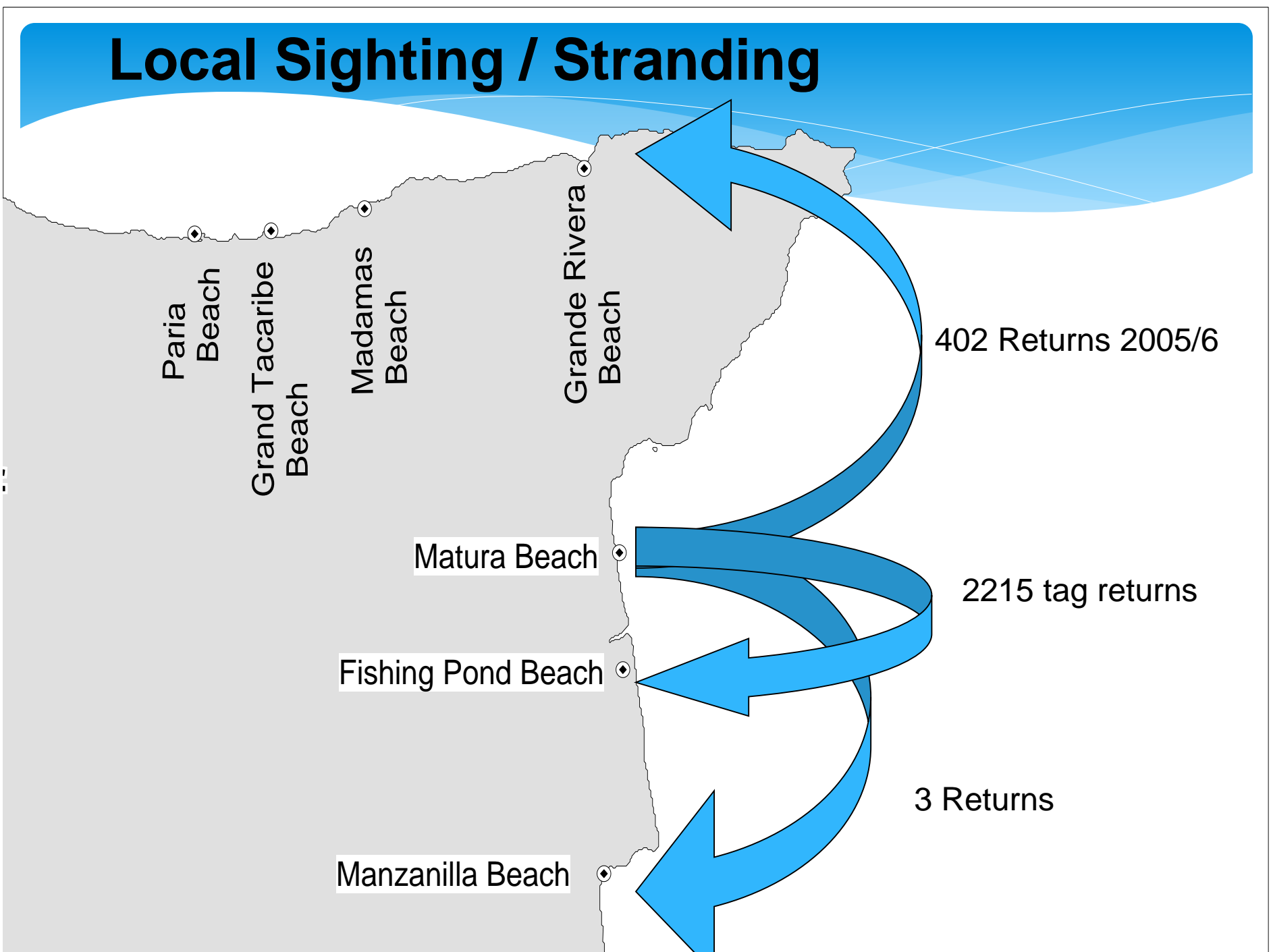
Fishing Pond Beach

Manzanilla Beach

402 Returns 2005/6

2215 tag returns

3 Returns



Tourism Impact

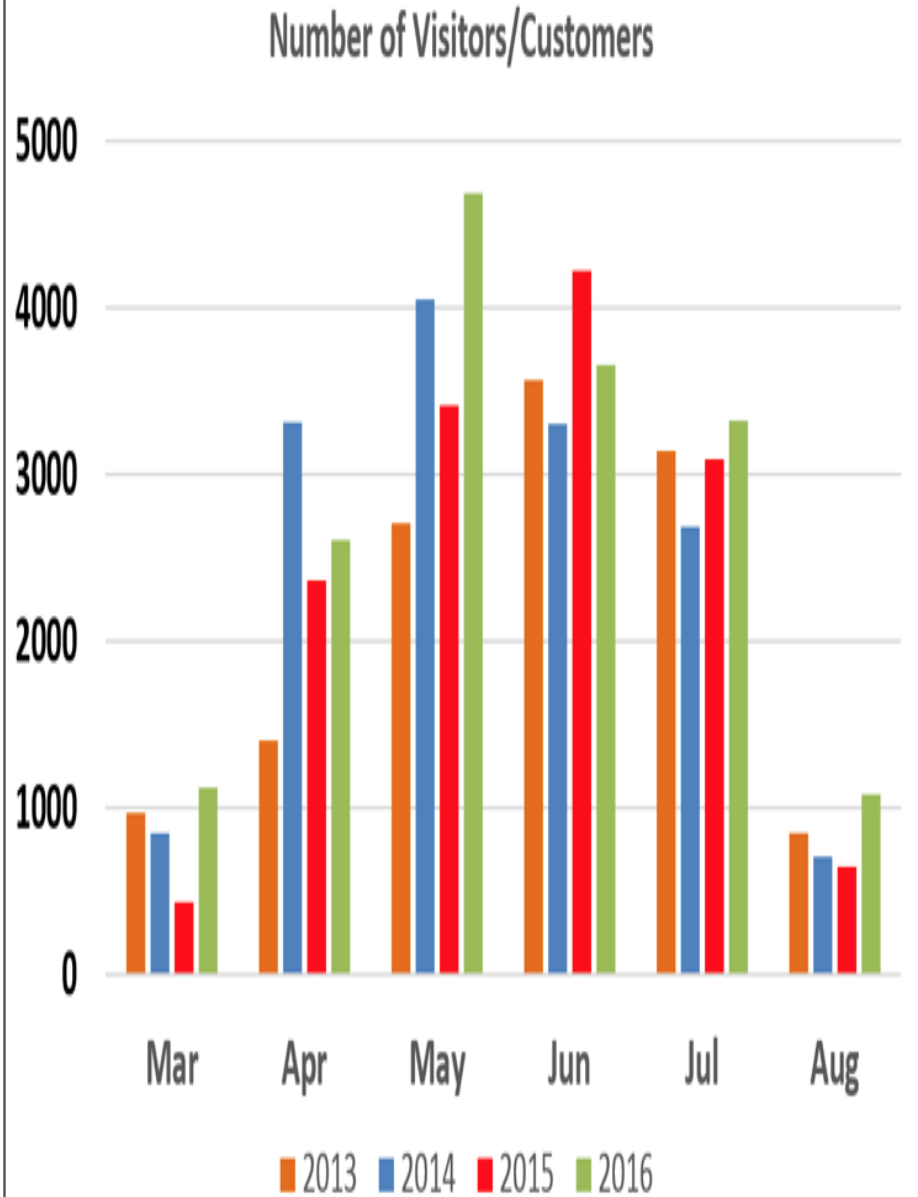
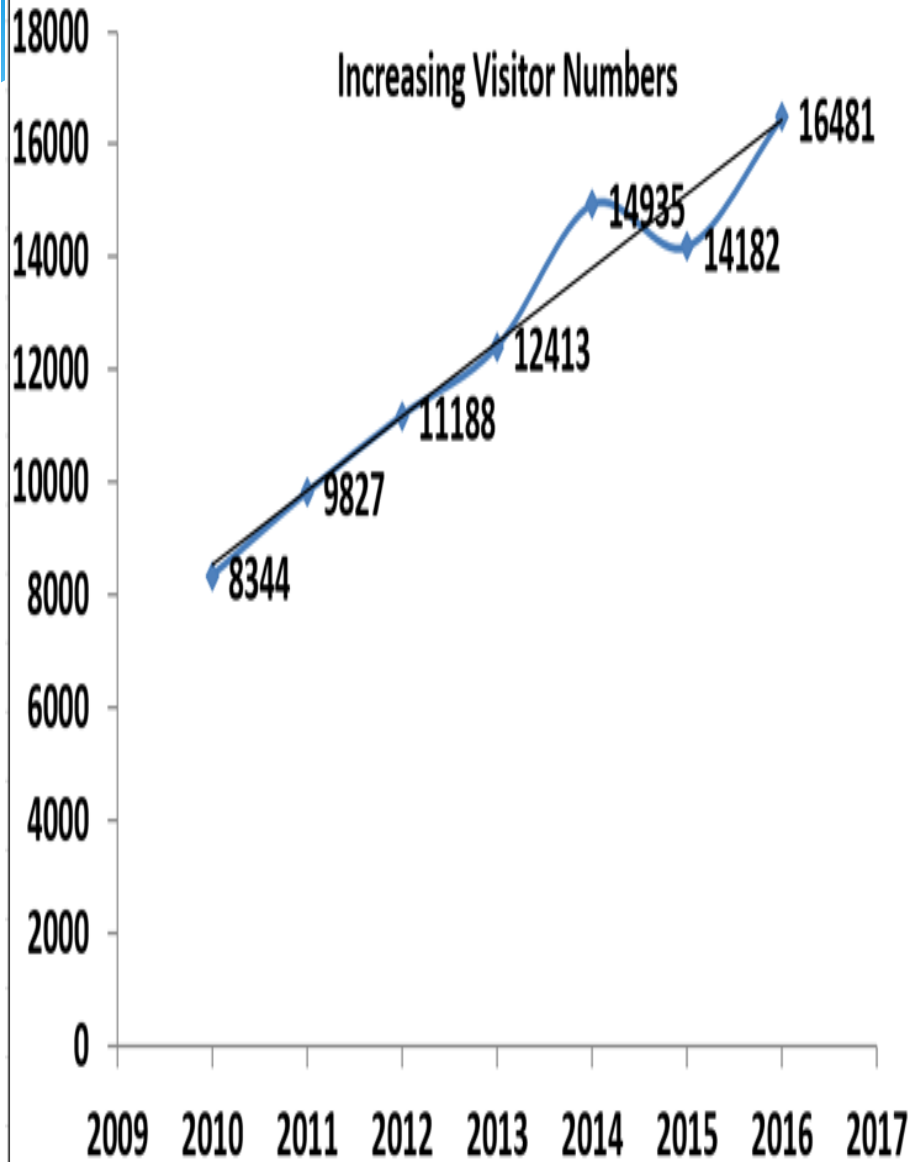
Nesting Duration of Leatherbacks

- Approaching
- Body Pitting
- Digging
- Laying
- Covering
- Camouflaging



Human Influence

- **Lights**
- **Photography**
- **Touching**
- **Size of Group**



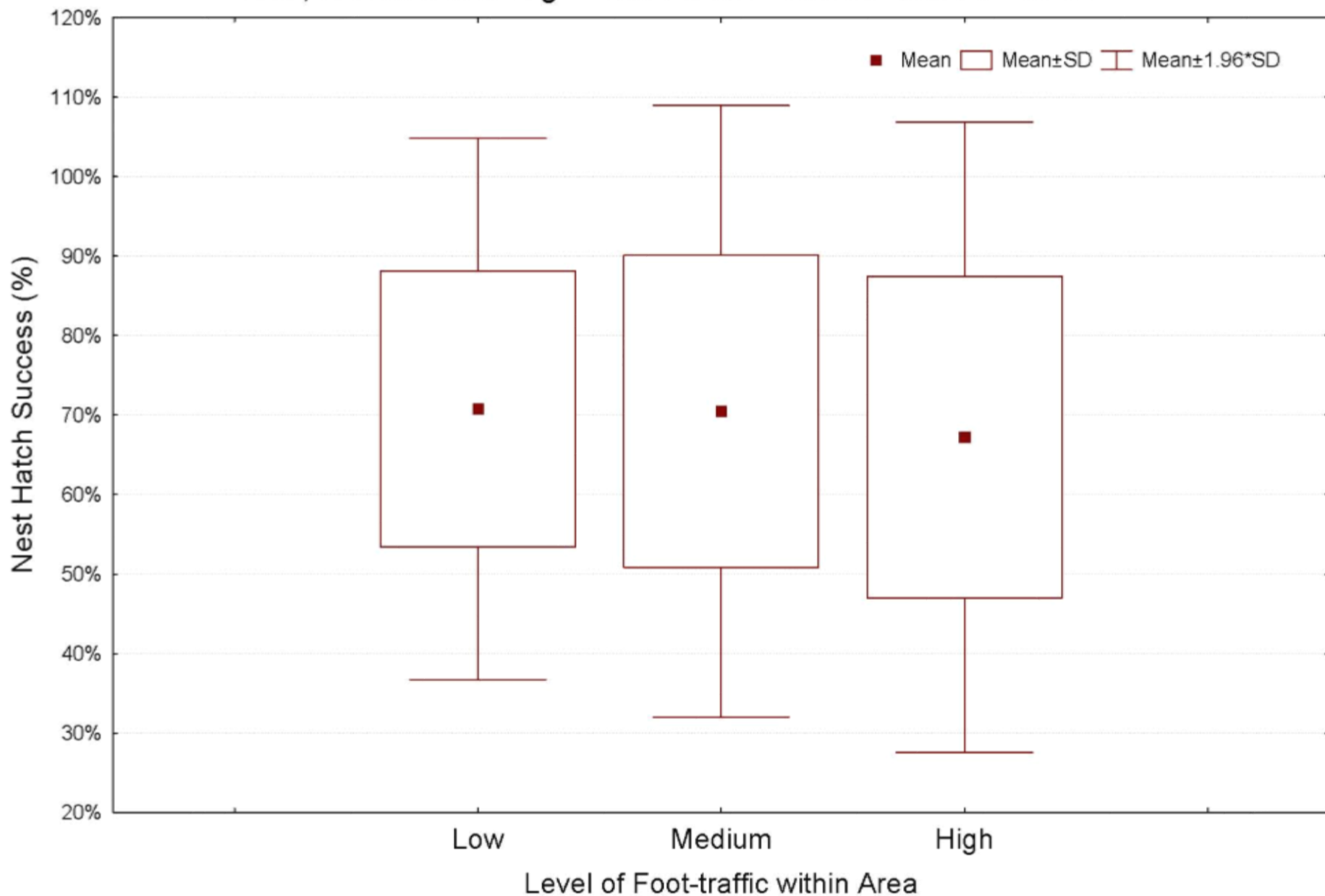
Tourism Impact

Nest excavation Program

- To determine the success rate of turtle hatchlings
- Determining the extent of beach/nest loss
- Evaluate the impact of human traffic on the beach.



Comparison of Mean Hatch Success for Leatherback Sea Turtle Nests Located Within Low, Medium and High Foot-traffic Areas on Matura Beach



Education & Awareness

- Over 15,000 visitors each year
- Schools groups
- Environmental clubs
- Local and Foreign Volunteers
- Social Media



Natural Craft Program

Our Natural Craft Program was introduced in **2009** and has since developed from basic training to a fully operational craft shop with **23 trained full-time employees** and a full production line of natural glass and bead jewellery.



Natural Craft Program



Over **20** residents in the community (mainly women) have been trained and employed in our Natural Craft Program



Glass Burning

Glass bottles are collected and recycled into glass jewelry.



Reforestation

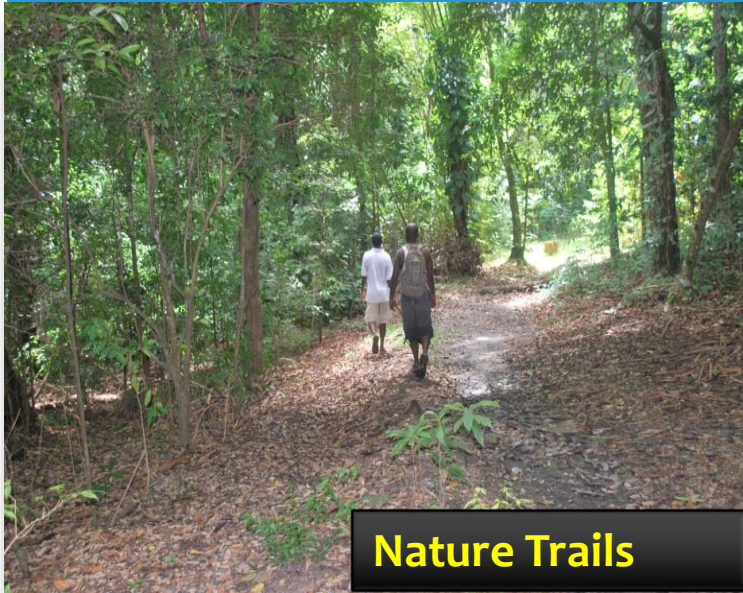


Our reforestation program has allowed many in the community to sustain their families for over **13 years**; As a result, this has created a number of positive attributes towards empowering the community;

- Reforested over **475 acres** of land
- **50,055 seedlings** produced
- Job security to over 20 households
- Home renovations and construction
- Financial savings & investments
- Forests conservation
- Community well being



Nature Tours



Nature Trails

Members of our community are equipped with the skills to contribute effectively and efficiently to society through tour guiding.



Turtle Viewing



Waterfall Tours



Kayak Tours

Visitor Facility & Training Center

Nature Seekers' meeting room and office facilities allow us to provide a venue that can host both formal and informal functions.

- * Meeting Room
- * Internet Café
- * Craft Shop
- * Information Center



Salybia Recreation & Water Sport Center

Salybia Recreation and Water Sport Centre is a partnership project between the Ministry of Tourism and Nature Seekers.



A tropical beach scene with palm trees on the left, a sandy beach in the foreground, and waves crashing on the shore under a blue sky with scattered clouds. The text "Thank You" is overlaid in the center in a large, dark blue font.

Thank You