

Montserrat Sea Turtle Management Program

*Developing and implementing an achievable Governance framework
to improve Management and Conservation of Marine Sea Turtle*



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Our story

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1. Montserrat at a glance

- Geographically located in Eastern Caribbean
- United Kingdom Overseas Territory (UKOT)
- Full CARICOM & OECS Membership
- 39 ½ mile² & Growing
- Est. Population: [2016 -5,267] [1995 - 13,000]
- The island is self-governing, however HMG responsible for foreign affairs, internal security, defense, the public service and the offshore financial sector
- Party to various UN convention through UK
- Volcanic, rugged lush green mountains
- Rugged 40km coastline & deep waters
- New nesting beaches due to volcanic related activities

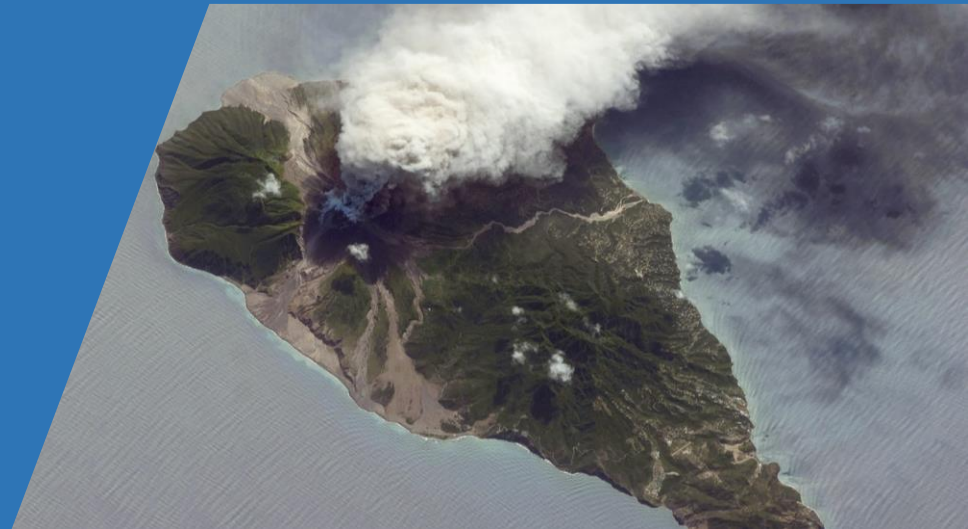


Photo Courtesy; NASA



Management Responsibility

1. **Ministry of Agriculture, Trade, Lands, Housing and the Environment (MATLHE)**
2. **Department of Agriculture/ Fisheries Unit**
3. **Turtle monitoring have been undertaken for over 30 years**
4. **The Turtle Act Revised Edition 1 January 2002**
5. **The Beach Protection Act Revised Edition 1 January 2002**
6. **Annual closed season 1 June – 30 September**
7. **13 Beaches to be monitored**
8. **Monitoring of Greenback & Hawksbill sea turtles**

3. Challenges

Some Sea Turtle Management Challenges in Montserrat

1. Outdated legislation & policy to support and strengthen the governance and management program framework of sea turtles.
2. Limited human capacity, evidence-base data & finance to support management program
3. Natural and man-made hazards
4. Competing human activities, overlapping jurisdiction and national priorities
5. Turtles disturbing/destroying other nest
6. Adequate and dedicated accredited staff
7. Changes in the composition of the texture of the sand and associated beach profile
8. Inaccessible existing and new beaches
9. Pollution from both land and sea

Evidence base challenges

Steep beach profile



Annual rough seas



Human activities



Birds, animals, etc



Lizard destruction



Challenges Nesting



Evidence base challenges

River outflow after heavy rainfall



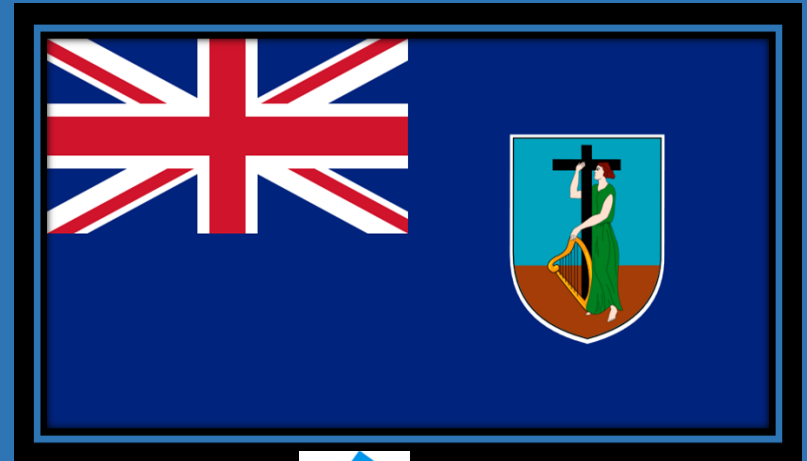
Volcanic deposit on some nesting beach



4. Development Partnership Project

Development of a
Project in Collaboration
with The Joint Nature
Conservation Committee
(JNCC)

(from dedicated DEFRA
funds for Overseas
Territories conservation
projects)



Step One

Approved funding
for the
implementation of
the Marine Turtle
Conservation
Project

The project aim
was to amongst
other things

To protect
green/hawksbill
turtle population

Set up a secure
hatching area,
potentially
increasing
survivorship of
hatchlings

Microchip and
tag turtles to
establish
number of
returning
females

Raise public
awareness of
the marine
environment /
conservation in
Montserrat

Step Two

Construction of
an artificial
marine sea turtle
hatchery in the
safe zone

Beach Signs

Media
communication



Step Three

Annual beach
monitoring and
collection and
re-nesting of
eggs



Step Four

Release of
hatchling on
various
beaches



Results

Hatchlings Released

	Green	Hawksbill
2011	669	356
2012	536	772
2013	538	418
2014	515	435
2015	755	165
	3013	2146

To date a total of 5159, greenback and Hawksbill turtles were released into the wild

Increased community awareness in sea turtle management and conservation

Increase community participation in nightly beach monitoring. This also include several schools

The turtle watching aspect has become a major source of recreation and tourism product at nights,

5. Conclusion and Recommendations:

Turning challenges into management & conservation opportunities

Challenges

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Management and Conservation Opportunities

1. Review, revise and update the legislative framework to improve management and conservation
2. Prioritize and strengthen human capacity and increase staffing so as to the annual monitoring systems
3. Explore new and existing sources for most appropriate and available financing mechanisms to support management;
4. Strengthen cohesive partnership amongst all stakeholders and the national data collection systems to enhance the socio-economic development of the country
5. Aligning national priorities objectives and values with potential partnerships in order to work together harmoniously to achieve desired strategic goals
6. Develop and implement an appropriate evidence-base road map for management in close alignment with international legal framework and best practices

6. Vision for the Future

Inspiring and supporting the next generation to be able to build capacity so as to drive the governance, management and conservation of marine sea turtles



Photo: Courtesy Alysia Ponteen

Building Resilience and Managing for Uncertainty

‘Looking forwards not back



Thank you for listening

