

2. Obstacles on the Beach



Recreational and work equipment (e.g. chairs, lounges, watercrafts, umbrellas, refuse cans); litter (e.g. plastic bottles, rope); structures (e.g. cabanas, shanties, fencing); other obstacles have the potential to entrap, injure, entangle and impede nesting sea turtles and their hatchlings. Hence, these items can deter nesting attempts and prevent nesting sea turtles from reaching the sea.

What can we do?

- Pull all recreational and work equipment off the beach at night.
- Remove potentially harmful debris off the beach regularly.
- Cabanas and shanties should be positioned away from areas where turtles nest.

3. Obstacles in the Water

Ropes or nets are commonly used to demarcate swimming and other areas in the nearshore of beach front properties. However, the installation of such devices can cause a sea turtle to become entangled causing it to drown or become strangled.



What can we do?

- Remove the buoyed off areas on evenings, especially during the nesting season (March to November).
- Remove excess ropes or nets suspended in the water.

4. Traffic on the Beach

Vehicular activity, foot traffic, and animals (e.g. livestock and horses) on the beach all have the potential to expose or crush eggs and hatchlings. Vehicular activity on the beach can also compact the sand, making it difficult for hatchlings to emerge from their nest and sea turtles to dig nests.



What can we do?

- Don't drive, ride horses or herd livestock on nesting beaches
- Keep clear of hatchlings and their nest
- Fill any holes left by tire tracks and sand castles

5. Marine Litter



Apart from acting as obstacles, litter on beaches attracts scavengers (e.g. birds, crabs) that can startle or attack hatchlings, eat them or the eggs. Also, sea turtles may mistake plastic bags, styrofoam, and trash floating in the water as food. If this is eaten, sea turtles will die when this trash blocks their intestines or gets stuck in their throat.

What can we do?

- Don't litter and properly dispose of your garbage.
- If you see litter on beaches, pick it up and dispose of it in designated areas.
- Participate in beach clean-ups.

Let Us Know!



If you notice anyone harassing sea turtles or their nests please alert the police at the nearest police station. Also, please report any observations of sea turtles and hatchlings to the Department of Fisheries at telephone: 468— 4135 or 468—4139

For more information about sea turtles contact:

Department of Fisheries

Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries

Point Seraphine, Castries

SAINT LUCIA

Tel. + (758) 468 4135/4139

Fax. + (758) 452 3853

Email: deptfish@slumaffe.org



"Share the Beach"

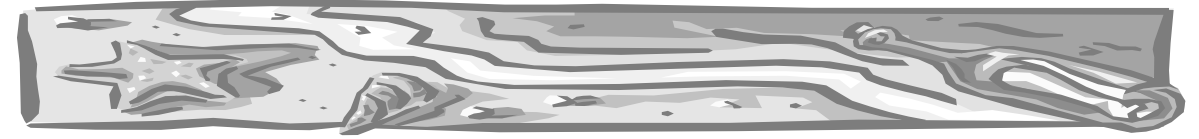
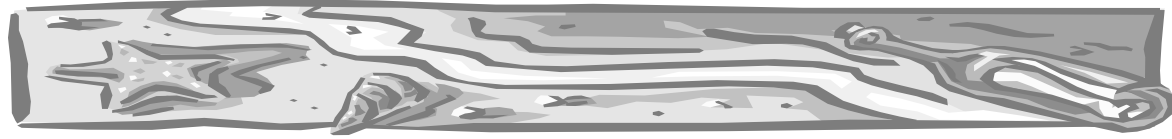


The beaches of Saint Lucia are particularly important nesting places for sea turtles.

Every year from March to November we share the beach with the Leatherback, Green and Hawksbill sea turtles.

These endangered animals are looking for a safe place to nest. Let us keep our beaches safe for our nesting sea turtles!

Here's what we can do to help!



1. Beachfront Lighting



On a natural beach, the lighter seaward horizon guides sea turtles to the water. However, artificial lighting near nesting beaches disorients sea turtles and their hatchlings preventing them from returning to the sea. Artificial lighting may also cause a sea turtle to return to the sea without nesting. Lost and disoriented hatchlings may die from dehydration, heat exhaustion, predation or may be crushed by vehicles on nearby streets.

What can we do?

- As much as possible keep beachfront lighting turned off during the nesting season, especially lighting used for decorative purposes.
- During the nesting season, reduce the number of lights on the beach to the minimum necessary.
- Reduce the light reaching the beach by lowering, shielding, recessing and/or redirecting light sources. Any light visible from the beach is likely to affect sea turtles.
- Place security lighting on motion-sensitive switches that keep lighting off when not needed.
- Move lamps away from windows, and close blinds and draperies in beachfront rooms at night to keep indoor lighting from reaching the beach.
- Avoid making beach campfires and barbecues on beaches at night, especially during the nesting season.
- Never shine a flashlight or take a flash photograph of a sea turtle's face.
- Do not use fluorescent, mercury vapour, high pressure sodium vapour, metal halide, white incandescent lighting as they are more disruptive to sea turtles. Instead, replace these with pure yellow LOW pressure sodium vapour light source.

Light shielding Techniques



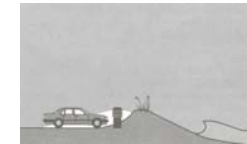
Poorly directed parking lot lighting



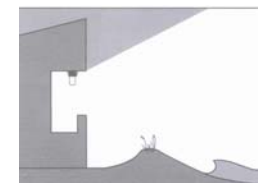
Better: Fixtures with a 90° cut off angle



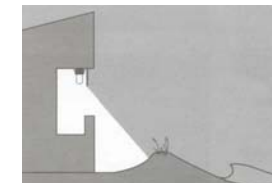
Much Better: fully hooded floods



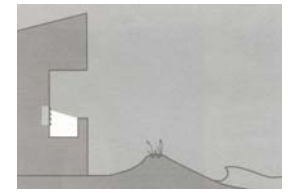
BEST: Low-mounted, louvered bollard fixtures



Poorly directed balcony light



Better: shielded fixture



BEST: Louvered step