

Excerpt:

"And yet, somehow, these creatures survived ice ages and the extinction event that wiped out the dinosaurs. They're still holding on today—even recovering in many places. In fact, scientists increasingly suspect that the planet's marine turtles may be far more resilient than once thought. But they need our help."



ANIMALS

Sea turtles are down but not out

All seven species of marine turtle face obstacles, but sea turtles seem to respond to conservation efforts. Can we help them rebound?

Green turtles congregate near a dock at a fledgling ecotourism project at Little Farmer's Cay in the Bahamas. Greens were so numerous in the Caribbean during Christopher Columbus'... [Read More](#)

PHOTOGRAPH BY THOMAS P. PESCHAK

BY [CRAIG WELCH](#)

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS P. PESCHAK

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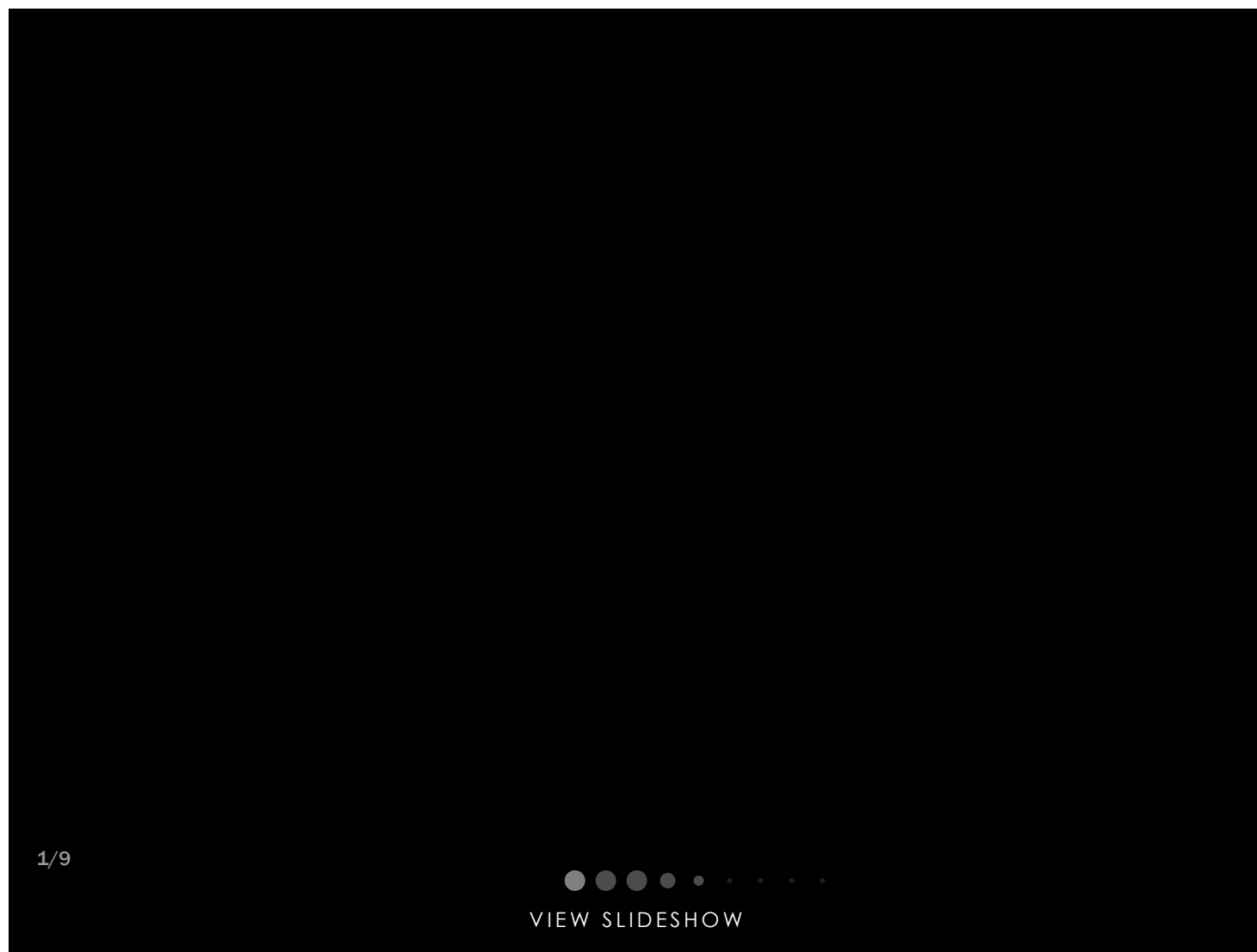
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WE'VE HUNTED THEM, hit them with ships, snagged them with nets and hooks, built beachfront condos on their nest sites, and choked them with plastic bags.

As the world struggles to confront climate change and biodiversity loss, six of Earth's seven species of [sea turtles](#) are considered threatened or endangered. The risks facing the seventh, Australia's flatback, are less clear.

And yet, somehow, these creatures survived ice ages and the extinction event that wiped out the dinosaurs. They're still holding on today—even recovering in many places. In fact, scientists increasingly suspect that the planet's marine turtles may be far more resilient than once thought. But they need our help.

National Geographic photographer [Thomas Peschak](#) recently spent more than a year photographing sea turtles around the world, hoping to bring more attention to turtle conservation. Now he's sharing a selection of images that will appear in a forthcoming magazine feature. [▶](#)



Blood seeps from a dying leatherback harpooned near Indonesia's Kei Islands. Each year indigenous hunters kill roughly 100 leatherbacks, whose numbers have been depleted by climate... [Read More](#)

PHOTOGRAPH BY THOMAS P. PESCHAK

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[Craig Welch](#) writes about the environment for National Geographic.

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