



FAX MESSAGE

FAX NO.: 1 808 943 1290 **NO. OF PAGES:** 1 (INCLUDING THIS ONE)
TO: Dr. George Balazs, NMI'S Honolulu Lab., Hawaii
FROM: A.D. Lewis, SPC, Noumea
DATE: 16 June, 1994 **FILE:** PRO 93/3/30
SUBJECT: CONTINUING TURTLE TAG SAGA

MESSAGE:

Dear George,

Back on deck, to report the latest developments in the saga of turtle tag no.S197.

More information from the very helpful Mme Marie Douperé, who ~~was~~ provided a series of measurements, which I shall mail separately to you. In brief, the carapace length seems to have been about 97cm. We have been in telephone contact with her, providing some of the basic details, but it would be best if you send the reward shirt and any more precise release details to her at the address below. It is indeed an interesting recovery, having moved more than 2,000 nm in the 18 months since release.

More importantly, she indicated that quite a few tagged turtles have been recovered in the past in the area (which is a nesting area), but no one knew what to do with them. The classic tagging programme "achilles' heel". Perhaps it would not be too late to send a few posters, even if they are in English.

Mme Marie Douperé
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Re the SPC leaflet and the turtle recipe, I can only note that turtle remains traditional and much esteemed fare in many parts of the South Pacific, even though its use (particularly in non-traditional contexts, such as export of shell for ornamental use) is appropriately being increasingly restricted. We of course exist only to serve the SPC member countries, and the SPC nutrition folks presumably are just reflecting the fact that turtle is still commonly eaten in many areas. Assuming harvest at traditional levels is sustainable, this seems far less reprehensible than some of the heinous crimes visited on turtle populations by our society in the past for far less valid reasons eg. canned turtle soup, calipee etc. Enough already - the values of the West imposed by hindsight on the developing world always depress me, even if they are correct.

With best wishes,

A.D. Lewis
Oceanic Fisheries Coordinator