

## Turtles tracked by satellite: a study by Te mana o te moana.

Our honu followed by satellite ..... Te mana o te moana supported by NOAA in its scientific programs.

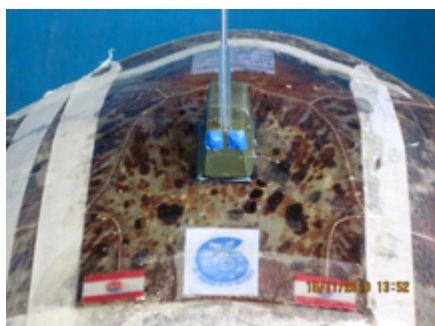


One of the many research programs on sea turtles carried out by the te mana o te moana association concerns the tracking by satellite of green turtles.

With the technical and financial support of NOAA, (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and Dr. George Balazs of Hawaii (Marine Turtle Research

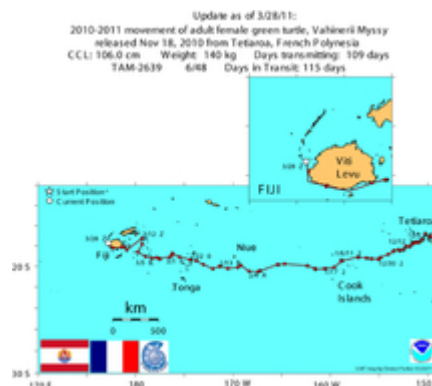
Program NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service) who was able to obtain the necessary authorizations from Diren, the association has been able to equip 5 green turtles with satellite transmitters and is currently collecting crucial information on their movements.

The first Tini turtle was marked by Dr. Balazs himself after the first Symposium on sea turtles on October 28th. This turtle was on sale by the road to Moorea for the consumption of its flesh (44 cm in curved shell length and 10 kg). After a short visit to the sea turtle clinic for wound healing, she was released off Opunohu Bay by international specialists who came to the Symposium (Dr Milani Chalupka, Lui Bell, Stéphane Ciccione, Dr Colin Limpus, Dr Françoise Claro, Dr George Balazs). It sent signals for 81 days on a route bringing it to the southwest coast of Tahiti, then more news ... so far.

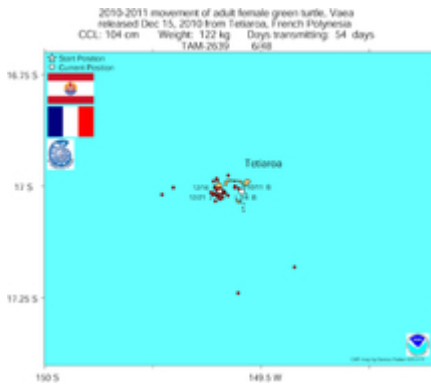


The other 4 turtles are female green turtles that have come to lay their eggs on Tetiaroa Atoll. The association has set up on this atoll, with private funding, a scientific program for monitoring spawning and emergence since 2005 with the support of the Brando family, Pacific Beachcomber SC, Brando Entreprise, the Conservation association. Tetiaroa, and the association Planète Urgences. The markings were made on site by the marine biologist Nicolas Leclerc, member of the te mana o te moana association, according to the technique taught by Dr Balazs (fixing using polyester resin).

The first, baptized by eco-volunteers from Planète Urgence Vahinery Missy (140 kilos for 140 cm of shell length, Argos 50159) was marked with a satellite beacon on November 18, 2010 (laying on motu Onetahi). Two rings were attached to its front fins (tags 974 and 975). In 115 days, she traveled 3,500 kilometers to reach Fiji. Its trajectory seems to be slowing down around the island of Viti Levu, no doubt in search of its feeding area. Dr. Balazs regularly informs our colleagues in the South Pacific in order to share this precious data as part of a regional plan to save sea turtles and SPREP (Regional Oceanic Environment Program).



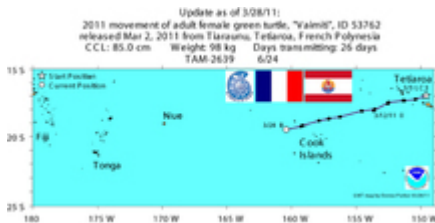
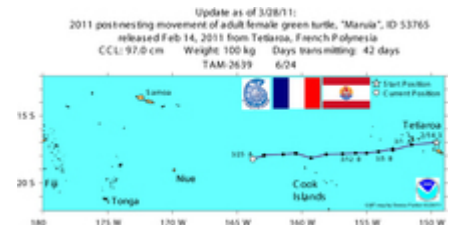
The second Vaea (122 kilos for 104 cm of shell length, Argos 50156) was marked on December 16, 2010 (laying on motu Onetahi). Two rings were attached to its front fins (tags 966 and 967). In 54 days of emission it remained around the atoll of Tetiaroa then stopped transmitting while it was on the east coast (technical problem the tag? Poached turtle? ... same questions as for Tini )



The third called Maruia by George Balazs (100 kilos for 97 cm of shell length, Argos 53789) was marked on February 9, 2011 (laying on motu Tiaraunu).

Two rings were attached to its front fins (tags 973 and 969). In 42 days, she traveled a straight line north of the Cook Islands and headed for

Niue more than 1,500 kilometers from Tetiaroa.



The fourth, called Vaimiti by Nicolas Leclerc (98 kilos for 95 cm of shell length, Argos 53762) was marked on March 3, 2011 (laying on motu Tiaraunu). Two rings were attached to its front fins (tags 896 and 110). In 26 days it traveled in a straight line almost similar to Maruia and passed the Cook Islands.

These three satellite transmitters should provide us with crucial information for several months. The association te mana o te moana and the scientists who collaborate in its actions to conserve sea turtles would like to warmly thank Dr George Balazs for his precious help and support in this project. Other projects are underway to better understand the migrations of mature male individuals as well as those of females laying eggs in other Polynesian archipelagos. Any observation of sea turtles is important for our database: contact us at 715.344!



The Moorea Turtle Clinic, authorized by ministerial decree, has been active since 2004 and has already collected more than 200 turtles. It is managed by the association Te mana o te moana, recognized as of General Interest, member of the French committee of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and approved environment whose sponsors are none other than Jean - Michel Cousteau, Ambassador of the Oceans and Jean- François Clervoy French astronaut fervent defender of the environment. It is currently the only care center for sea turtles in Polynesia which is managed by a veterinarian and qualified biologists including Dr Cécile Gaspar, veterinary doctor, IUCN expert. The Moorea Sea Turtle Clinic receives turtles from all Polynesian archipelagos at its own expense. To date, it has released more than 65 rehabilitated turtles. Only the turtles requiring care or medical supervision are present, the center is not a tourist park and it is obvious that swimming with the turtles is strictly prohibited.




Its new infrastructure has been fully funded by the Pacific Beachcomber SC group and its current operating costs are covered by private donations or local and international institutions, (Anneberg Foundation, Moorea Dolphin Center, Nicolas Hulot Foundation, Tahiti Legends, Schmitgall, Nature and Discoveries, Planet Emergencies,...) without any support from the Country. Veterinary procedures are voluntary. The association also offers structured educational programs on sea turtles at primary schools in French Polynesia and over 32,000 have been welcomed in 6 years. It is also developing a marine turtle observation network in order to be able to establish a database in partnership with other associations or local institutions, in particular

CRIOBE in Moorea, as well as research programs allowing a better assessment of the populations of turtles frequenting our falling reefs (with the support of Conservation International and the Ministry of Ecology).

For any information relating to sea turtles requiring care or even observations of turtles at sea or laying, the association can be reached 24 hours a day:

Matthieu Petit: 715 344, Cécile Gaspar: 70 60 66 or on the email addresses [matthieu .temana @ gmail.com](mailto:matthieu.temana@gmail.com) or [temanaotemoana@gmail.com](mailto:temanaotemoana@gmail.com) Our site: [www.temanaotemoana.org](http://www.temanaotemoana.org) .temanaotemoana.org

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