

February 15, 1974

Mr. Jean Tapu
Chief Fisheries Officer
Papeete, Tahiti
French Polynesia

Dear Mr. Tapu:

I have read with great interest the article entitled "Development of the turtle project in French Polynesia" which only recently appeared in the South Pacific Island Fisheries Newsletter (No. 10 Nov. 1973). As a portion of my research deals with population ecology studies of nesting green turtles at French Frigate Shoals in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, I would be greatly interested in learning more about your project at Scilly Atoll. I was quite surprised to read that mature females were being captured and held in a pen for a considerable length of time before tagging and releasing. Would not this practice have an adverse effect on the nesting behavior of the animal? One might suspect that this would be particularly true if only a portion of the egg complements had been deposited for that season. In addition there may be cause for concern on releasing the animal at a time later than when the naturally occurring departure would take place from the nesting beaches.

Marine turtles hold a special interest to me and I look forward to hearing of any future plans you may have in this area. Thank you in advance for any information you may have to offer.

Sincerely,

George H. Balazs
Jr. Marine Biologist

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cc: R. H. Baird