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The National Gangkou Sea Turtle Reserve (NGSTR) in Guangdong Province currently is the unique nature reserve for sea turtles in China. NGSTR was called Sea Turtle Bay by local citizens, which is located in the east of Renping Peninsula, Guangdong Province, between Da Ya Bay and Hong Hai Bay. The whole area of NGSTR is 18 km². NGSTR was founded by Guangdong Province, China in June 1985, and upgraded to national reserve status in Oct 1992 by the State Council. The State Council authorized the Ministry of Agriculture, China to manage NGSTR. In 2002, the Reserve was included in international important wetland sites by the Ramsar Convention (the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat). In July 1993, it acceded to Biosphere Reserve Net of China National. In October 2003, Guangdong Provincial Fishery Administration was authorized to establish the Fishery Administration Station in NGSTR. NGSTR biodiversity is abundant, about 1300 living creatures are found. Annually from June to October, sea turtles swim to NGSTR for nesting and breeding. NGSTR have already succeeded to protect nesting sea turtles from 1985 to 2005 with 1,184 sea turtle emergences, 665 nestings, resulting in 75,319 eggs, and 62,188 sea turtle hatchlings. Of these, 53,203 sea turtle hatchlings were released. Since 1986, NGSTR conducted research on artificial hatchery techniques for green turtle nests. Satellite tracking was conducted by NGSTR in 2001. Swimming routes show that sea turtles can swim across Taiwan channel to Japanese coastal areas. During 2002-2003, NGSTR made use of a beneficial microorganism (EM) to increase sea turtle hatching rates from 40% to 80%. For public awareness, NGSTR Set up a sea turtle multi-function demonstration center, a rescue center, a specimen building, etc. With respect to education facilities, NGSTR built "the hands to hands global village for Chinese young children" and "Guangdong Province teenager education Base of science and technology ", which hold various environmental protection summer camp activities. NGSTR also invites people to participate in exhibitions on the protection of sea turtles. All of these activities help to raise public awareness on the protection of endangered wildlife. However, there are some problems for NGSTR. (1)The funds are short, much protection and management work can't be finalized; (2) lack of surveys on sea turtles and biodiversity; (3) Fishing by-catch affects sea turtles migrating to NGSTR; (4)The reserve scope is too small, only 18 square kilometers, it needs to be extended. To secure the future of sea turtles in China, the following recommendations are offered: surveys to identify critical habitat and better document population trends; the development of a long-term Action Plan to guide conservation and management efforts; enhance international, regional and national co-operation; improve public awareness and participation; stronger measures are needed to protect habitat; a science-based plan to restore populations is needed, effective mitigating of major threats is needed; and the reduction sea turtle by-catch by fisheries.



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