

- Do stay alert when boating and avoid sea turtles.

WHY?

- Propeller and collision impacts from boats and ships can result in injury and death in sea turtles.

- Don't anchor boats on seagrass beds and coral reefs.

WHY?

Coral reefs and seagrass beds serve as important feeding and resting grounds for sea turtles.

Let Us Know!

There are laws in Saint Lucia for the conservation and sustainable use of sea turtles.

So, if you witness:

- Sea turtle meat being sold when no open season has been declared by the Department of Fisheries.
- An undersized sea turtle, according to the Fisheries Regulations, is landed in Saint Lucia.
- Sea turtle eggs in someone's possession.
- A sea turtle in someone's possession as a pet.
- A sea turtle being slaughtered on a beach.

Please, alert the police at the nearest police station and inform the Department of Fisheries at telephone: 468-4135 or 468-4139.

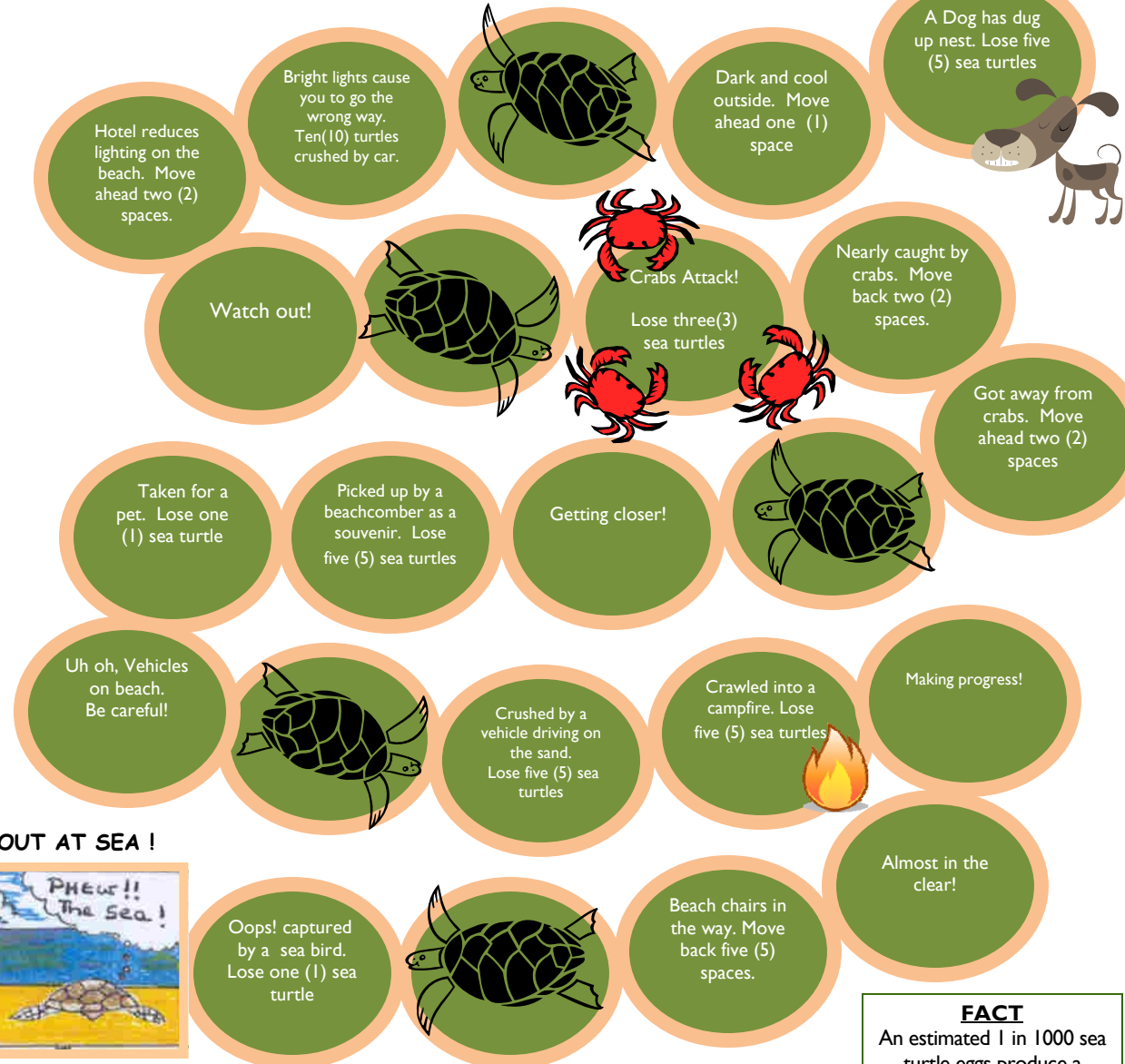
For more information about sea turtles contact:

 **The Department of Fisheries**
 Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries
 Pointe Seraphine, Castries
 SAINT LUCIA
 Tel. + (758) 468 4135/4139
 Fax. + (758) 452 3853
 Email: deptfish@slumaffe.org

Torti has laid 35 eggs on the beach. How many of her hatchlings can you get safely to the sea?

Get a container of 35 items to represent the hatchlings. Start at the "nest". Roll a single die and move the playing piece (e.g. coin) to the corresponding number of spaces. Follow the directions written on the space. You will encounter situations that mimic dangers for sea turtles in the real world. The object of the game is to reach the sea with the most hatchlings. GOOD LUCK!

NEST Start Here



NEST Start Here

1. A Dog has dug up nest. Lose five (5) sea turtles

2. Dark and cool outside. Move ahead one (1) space

3. Bright lights cause you to go the wrong way. Ten (10) turtles crushed by car.

4. Hotel reduces lighting on the beach. Move ahead two (2) spaces.

5. Watch out!

6. Crabs Attack! Lose three (3) sea turtles

7. Nearly caught by crabs. Move back two (2) spaces.

8. Got away from crabs. Move ahead two (2) spaces

9. Taken for a pet. Lose one (1) sea turtle

10. Picked up by a beachcomber as a souvenir. Lose five (5) sea turtles

11. Getting closer!

12. Uh oh, Vehicles on beach. Be careful!

13. Crushed by a vehicle driving on the sand. Lose five (5) sea turtles

14. Crawled into a campfire. Lose five (5) sea turtles

15. Making progress!

16. Almost in the clear!

17. Beach chairs in the way. Move back five (5) spaces.

18. Oops! captured by a sea bird. Lose one (1) sea turtle

OUT AT SEA!

How many of Torti's hatchlings survived?

FACT
 An estimated 1 in 1000 sea turtle eggs produce a breeding-age adult!



YOU CAN HELP PROTECT

NESTING SEA TURTLES



Sea turtles are just about the closest things we have to dinosaurs! These ancient creatures have lived in the world's oceans for more than 150 million years and they have not really changed that much today!

Sea turtles belong to a group of animals known as the Reptiles. All reptiles are cold blooded, breathe air and lay their eggs on land.

Out of the seven remaining species of sea turtles found in the world, three of them nest on the beaches of Saint Lucia from March to November every year!

Saint Lucia's Marine Wonder : The Sea Turtle

Hawksbill Sea Turtles



The Hawksbill turtle is the smallest of the sea turtles nesting in Saint Lucia. As an adult, this turtle may reach up to three feet in length and weigh 60 to 200 pounds. The

Hawksbill turtle gets its name from its narrow face and distinctive bird-like beak. The adult hawksbill shell colour ranges from golden to dark brown with red, black and orange streaks on overlapping shell plates. Each flipper usually bears one claw. Adult hawksbill turtles tend to enjoy a meal of marine sponges!

Green Sea Turtles

An adult Green turtle can reach more than 3 feet in length and weigh 200 to 500 pounds. This makes it the largest of the hard shell sea turtles in the world. Although its shell is usually dark grey, it gets its name from the greenish colour of its fat. The body fat, in turn, gets its colour from the animals' favourite food item: sea grass. Like the Hawksbill, each flipper usually bears one claw. But, the shell plates do not overlap.



Leatherback Sea Turtles



Growing up to nine feet in length and weighing up to 2000 pounds, the leatherback turtle is the largest of all sea turtles. This sea turtle is

quite unique because its 'shell' lacks scales! Instead, it has seven longitudinal ridges running along its dark gray or black leathery 'shell', where it gets its name. There are no claws on its flippers. Leatherback sea turtles are the most common sea turtles to nest on Grande Anse beach in Saint Lucia. This sea turtle feeds mainly on jellyfish.

Loggerhead Sea Turtles

Loggerhead sea turtles are not known to nest on the beaches of Saint Lucia, but they have been sighted in Saint Lucian waters. Their average weight is 200 pounds, but they can attain a weight of 400lbs! They are reddish brown in colour and have a very large head from which they get their name. The shell plates do not overlap and each limb has two claws. Loggerhead turtles are not picky eaters, but prefer crabs.



How You Can Help Protect Sea Turtles During the Nesting Season

THE DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Do** minimize lighting on beaches:
 - keep beachfront lighting to a minimum during the sea turtle nesting season (March to November) by turning off lights, shielding or redirecting lights away from the beach.
 - close blinds and draperies in oceanfront rooms at night to keep indoor lighting from reaching the beach.
 - dim car headlights when nearing beaches, to minimize disturbance to nesting sea turtles and hatchlings (baby sea turtles).
 - try to shield hatchlings if they appear confused by beachfront lighting. Try to block the light source or ask that the light source be turned off long enough for the hatchlings to reach the sea.
 - don't shine a flashlight at a sea turtle's face from any distance. Use your natural vision and moonlight when walking on nesting beaches at night.

FACT:
All three sea turtles nesting on Saint Lucian beaches or found in Saint Lucian waters are designated as Endangered or Critically Endangered under the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species

NOTE:
If you find a sea turtle with a tag clamped to its flipper, write down the information on the tag and contact the Department of Fisheries. Don't remove tag unless the sea turtle is dead

- avoid constructing beach campfires or barbecues on sea turtle nesting beaches during the nesting season.
 - never photograph sea turtles or their hatchlings using a flash or light source. Only take photographs of nesting sea turtles after they have laid their eggs and only from behind.
- WHY?**
Sea turtles are very sensitive to artificial light. Artificial light confuses sea turtles and their hatchlings preventing them from returning to the sea. It may also cause the sea turtle to return to the sea without nesting. The sea turtle hatchlings may also crawl into campfires and die.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Do** remove recreational equipment, such as lounge chairs, tables, umbrellas, recreational vessels or vehicles on the beach at night.

WHY?
These items can deter nesting attempts and prevent hatchlings from reaching the sea.

- **Don't** drive on sandy beaches.

WHY?
This compacts the sand and crushes eggs, thus killing hatchlings or making their emergence from the nest impossible. Driving may also create deep ruts that make it difficult for hatchlings to race to the water.

- **Don't** Litter! Properly dispose of your garbage!

WHY?
Litter attracts scavengers (e.g. birds, crabs) that can startle or attack hatchlings, eat them or the eggs. Litter can also injure nesting sea turtles or act as an obstacle to scrambling hatchlings. Also, sea turtles may mistake plastic bags, styrofoam, and trash floating in the water as food. If this is eaten, sea turtles will die when this trash blocks their intestines.

- **Do** alert the police at the nearest police station if you witness a nesting sea turtle being slaughtered on a beach, or eggs being collected or sold at anytime.

WHY?
Saint Lucia's Law protects nesting sea turtles their hatchlings and eggs, all year round. This ensures that every year, new hatchlings enter the sea turtle population.

DID YOU KNOW?
Sea turtle eggs hatch after 6 to 13 weeks of incubation in the sand. After hatching, the hatchlings dig the sand to reach the surface of the beach and crawl to the sea.

FACT:
Adult sea turtles are timid. These animals do not leave the sea for most of their lives, and hauling themselves out onto the beach is difficult and stressful for them, as well as dangerous!

NOTE:
Do you want to see nesting sea turtles? You can go on a sea turtle watch at Grande Anse beach in Saint Lucia by contacting Hertiagetours at Tel # 458-1454 or 458-1726