

## **Valorization Of Marine Resources In The Marine Park Of Moheli-Comoros**

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### **Submission:**

#### **Background**

The first marine protected area in the Comoros, the Mohéli Marine Park in the Indian Ocean, was created to meet the challenges of protecting biodiversity as well as sustainable development, in particular through the promotion of ecotourism. The Comoros archipelago is located in the northern part of the Mozambique Channel, equidistant from the African continent and Madagascar. It includes four islands, about 80 km apart between them and separated by depths ranging from 2,000 to 3,000 meters. The islands are named Grande Comore (1150 km<sup>2</sup>), Anjouan (425 km<sup>2</sup>), Mayotte (375 km<sup>2</sup>) and Mohéli (290 km<sup>2</sup>). The Mohéli Marine Park therefore covers a total area of 404 km<sup>2</sup> and extends from the shore of the island to the 100 m isobath, encompassing the southern half of the island (the coastal line is approximately 100 km ). Fishing is the main activity here, both as a means of subsistence and as a source of income. It is essential for the sustainability of the park's conservation measures. Marine resources in the marine park are under threat and species such as sea turtles have become prey.

Goals :

Based on the observation that the poaching of sea turtles *Chelonia mydas* and *Eretmochelys imbricata* presents a significant threat to biodiversity, I have therefore decided to carry out research and aiming for the following objectives: - Protection of the environment and more particularly the protection of the coast and the species that live there (sea turtles, birds from Ilot M'Chaco, the slopes of Lake Boundouni (RAMSAR site, UNESCO World Heritage) and any species or ecosystem that is now part of the Moheli Marine Park ); - Raising public awareness of the scientific and touristic importance of endangered or endemic species; - Strengthen and maintain the union and the spirit of solidarity within the villages of the marine park; - Contribute to the development of villages and the fight against poverty.

Specific objectives: protect sea turtles at all levels of their lives (eggs, baby turtles and adult turtles)

#### **Method**

a field trip to the 10 villages forming the Moheli Marine Park was carried out, documents were consulted, questionnaires were used and a door-to-door meeting was held during this research

#### **Results**

Results1: the number of carcasses of turtles killed increases from day to day in the beaches of the park;

Results2: 85% of turtle poachers are from the other islands of the Comoros and they are well equipped with speedboats, gas,

Results3: out of 120 baby turtles laid on the beach, only about fifteen manage to

cross the sea, because there are other barriers that they must cross, namely dogs, cats and birds.

Results: a special pond construction must be built to put the small turtles until they reach a certain age to be safe from predators

Results: Eco-guards must be trained and know the reproduction cycle of turtles

### **Conclusion**

Our research shows that measures to protect marine resources in general and sea turtles in particular must be a priority for the Comorian authorities.

The threats to sea turtles in the marine park are not all of human origin (anthropogenic), but also come from other sources, namely cats, birds and wild dogs. By 2030 if measures are not taken to combat this poaching, the rate of turtles within the marine park will be 3%, compared to the current state of which is 80%.