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ABUNDANCE, SIZE AND OVERALL BODY CONDITIONS OF JUVENILE GREEN TURTLES (CHELONIA MYDAS) IN THE EFFLUENT DISCHARGE CHANNEL OF TUBARÃO STEEL COMPANY, ESPÍRITO SANTO, BRAZIL

Juvenile and adult green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) are found in feeding areas along most of the Brazilian coast. However, information about this species on Brazil coast is scanty. The study is located in the effluent discharge channel of the Tubarão Steel Company, where there are a significant number of green sea turtles with and without fibropapillomatosis that utilize the place for feeding and growth. In the world, a lot of turtles are threatened by this disease. Abundance, seasonality, size classes, residency, growth, and corporal conditions of sea turtles were investigated from August 2000 to August 2003. A total of 354 green turtle was captured, tagged, measured, weighed, the presence of tumors assessed visually. One hundred sixty eight different animals were observed, where 37,5% had fibropapillomatosis. Seventy were captured two or more times with a mean interval from first to last capture of 203 days and ninety eight were captured just once. The curved carapace length ranged from 28,0 to 56,7cm. The growth rates of tumored turtles were 2,19 cm/year and non-tumored turtles were 3,47 cm/year. Catch-per-unit-effort was not correlated with water temperature, but there are indicatives that were positively related to the presence of food.

Population dynamics; Marine conservation; Conservation issues concerning amphibians and reptiles

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