



Conservation in ACTION

After five years of community efforts to protect endangered sea turtles and their eggs from poachers and predators on nesting beaches, last fall we decided to tackle another contributing factor to turtle mortality rates: fisheries bycatch.

For several months, we interviewed Nicaraguan fishermen, conducted on-board observations, inventoried fish species, and calculated marine biomass to estimate fish populations and fishing-related turtle mortality rates from San Juan del Sur in the north, to Ostional in the south.

Thanks to Allan Bolaños, Randall Arauz, and Jeffry Madrigal of the Costa Rican non-profit [PRETOMA](#), this spring we completed our first study to gauge the effects of small-scale fishing and turtle bycatch near the [La Flor Wildlife Refuge](#) where we focus our turtle conservation efforts. Our objective was to establish a scientific baseline and reasonable guidelines for our community-managed sustainable fishing initiative.

Over the course of the study, Paso Pacifico's team, along with the scientists from PRETOMA, also conducted a series of workshops for fishermen. The workshops provided a forum for net, line, and dive fishermen to learn about sustainable fishing, acquire new skills for rescuing turtles caught in their gear, obtain the vessel safety skills for the marine licenses required by law, and identify leaders to help spearhead the sustainable fisheries initiative.

There is still much work to be done in terms of understanding the seasonal patterns of fish populations, helping fishing boats upgrade to turtle-friendly fishing gear, and supporting the sustainable fisheries with continued training and tools as they develop sustainable practices, but we are excited by what PRETOMA and [DANIDA](#) have helped us accomplish thus far. We have already helped close the knowledge gap caused by the lack of bycatch information from small-scale fisheries described in the [first-ever study on global patterns of turtle bycatch](#).



Team member spotlight

Growing up in the beautiful fishing village of Ostional where tropical dry forests meet mangroves and rocky shoreline, Salvador Sanchez watched the wildlife and local landscape being degraded by deforestation, fires, and pollution. Determined to preserve the natural beauty of his home, Salvador decided to dedicate his life to helping his community protect sea turtles, slow deforestation, and minimize beach pollution.

Trained in protected areas management and turtle monitoring, Salvador coordinates our turtle ranger programs and incentive payments for conservation. Recently, he worked with PRETOMA scientists to conduct our fishing and bycatch study and organize our sustainable fisheries workshops.

He and his wife also run a small bed and breakfast for tourists visiting Ostional, where they and their neighbors have demonstrated that linking tourism to wildlife observation can be profitable.

ACT NOW!

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Paso Pacífico in the News

Our friends at [SEEtHeWILD](#) have launched their new publication, [Wild Hope Magazine](#). They will cover other wildlife conservation topics as well, but their [SEETurtles](#) trips take sea turtle conservationists to Nicaragua and help support our programs, and the inaugural issue has lots of information about sea turtles and the efforts to save them.



One of the important points Wild Hope editor Brad Nahill makes is that tourism and conservation are linked. In the Rivas province of Nicaragua, we rely on [ecotourism](#) to help the people of western Nicaragua flourish as they share the natural beauty of their home with visitors from around the world.

Committed to linking tourism and conservation, throughout this year SEEtHeWILD have generously sent contributions to Paso Pacifico. These funds were from the eco-tours they conduct in Nicaragua and from grants they were awarded for sea turtle conservation. Many thanks and congratulations to SEEtHeWild!

Partnerships make it possible

Next month, Nicaragua will host the International Surfing Association's [World Masters Surfing Championship](#). We are excited to partner with the [ISA](#) and [CANATUR Nicaragua](#), and companies like [GrayLine Nicaragua](#) to ensure that the beaches are free of trash during the event and that surfers and press participating in the event are aware of the important coastal conservation issues.

Surfing is a rapidly growing sport among Nicaraguans, and



As World Oceans Month draws to an end, you can still help us meet our last summer fundraising goal for ocean conservation.

World Surfing Championships Opening Ceremony

July 14

Goal: \$2500

To help budding filmmakers highlight the Nicaraguan surfing community's commitment to ocean conservation.

Support our [Surf Ambassadors program](#) by [donating today](#).

IN GRATITUDE



Over the past six months, Paso Pacifico employees and affiliated scientists have been working hard in the field to study and protect the [Yellow-Naped Amazon Parrot](#).

Without the generous financial and advisory support of the [Loro-Parque Foundation](#), this would not be possible. We are grateful to Loro-Parque, based in Tenerife, Spain, for their dedication to wildlife conservation and research worldwide.

international surfers have helped the local tourism industry grow immensely in recent years. Thanks to the support of the [Surf Industry Manufacturers Association](#) and their [SIMA Environmental Fund](#), we have worked within the local surfing community for three years to help infuse the love of the waves with a dedication to ocean conservation.

We are grateful that the global surfing spotlight will shine on Nicaragua for two weeks in July. Paso Pacifico surf ambassadors, the local surfing community, and the visiting international surfers will help us share our passion for the natural beauty of the Pacific and the importance of marine ecology.

Other project partners include [Parrots International](#) and the [USDA Forest Service International Institute for Tropical Forestry](#).

From parrots to turtles, from dry forest canopy to coastal mangroves, we work from ridge to reef to understand and protect critical wildlife habitat.

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