

Project Update: January 2008

More Olive Ridley turtles washed ashore

Visakhapatnam: More and more Olive Ridley turtles, declared endangered under the Wildlife Protection Act, are being washed ashore near Thikkavanipalem beach in Parawada mandal in the district on Wednesday.

A team from Forest Department, led by an IFS officer, also visited the spot to take water samples for certain tests following allegations that several turtle carcasses reached the shore due to ocean pollution caused by some industries in the nearby vicinity and non-use of turtle exclusion device (TED) by the trawlers.

Fishermen of the area had alleged that effluents discharged by NTPC Simhadri Super Thermal Power Plant and another chemical unit located in the area could have been responsible for the large-scale death of turtles.

Visakha Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals president Pradeep Kumar Nath, who led a team of volunteers to Thikkavanipalem and nearby areas, said they had launched a survey of the status of turtles.

“We were shocked to see arrival of several dead turtles continuously,” he said on Wednesday.

Several turtles were getting killed due to failure of the authorities in enforcing the use of TED by trawlers and indiscriminate release of industrial effluents into the sea.

Pradeep Kumar Nath said they should conduct autopsy and chemical tests dead turtles immediately after they were found ashore and advised them not to take species, which were in a highly decomposed state.

The VSPCA has decided to survey the entire coastline from Thikkavanipalem and nearby areas up to Visakhapatnam to prepare an action plan for protecting the dwindling population of Olive Ridley turtles.

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