

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

CBRM Database

Date:	04/15/2013	Entry Number:	1276
Case Study Name:	An exploration of a Mini-Guide Programme: Training Local Children in Sea Turtle Conservation and Ecotourism in Brazil		
Author:	Fernanda Pegas, Alexandra Coghlan & Valeria Rocha		
Document Type:	Paper in a Scientific Journal		
Year:	2012		
Language:	English		
Document Location:	Journal of Ecotourism		
Full Citation:	Pegas, F., Coghlan, A., & Rocha, V. (2012). An Exploration of a Mini-Guide Programme: Training Local Children in Sea Turtle Conservation and Ecotourism in Brazil. <i>Journal of Ecotourism</i> , 11(1), 48-55		
Region:	South America		
Country:	Brazil		
Ecosystem Type:	Coastal Marine		
Social Characteristics:	Urban Community		
Scale of Study:	Community		
Resource Type:	Ecotourism		
Type of Initiative:	Community Initiative		
Community-Based Work:	Conservation		
Keywords:	TAMAR; Brazil; Environmental Education; Praia do Forte; Sustainable Tourism		

Summary:

This study explores the mini-guide program delivered by the Brazilian Sea Turtle Conservation Program (Tartarugas Marinhas or TAMAR) in the fishing community of Praia do Forte, Bahia, Brazil. Established in 1995, this program lasts 1 year, training local children, aged 10–14 years, in guiding skills and learning about sea turtles and marine ecosystems. The children also receive a monthly stipend. In-depth semi-structured interviews with 77 local community members were conducted during 9 months of ethnographic research to assess perceptions about the program. The interviews also included seven former students who provided an evaluation of the program from their perspective. The results indicate community-wide support for the program, with locals focusing not only on greater environmental awareness of the children (or Tamarzinhos, as they are called), but also on the personal development as a result of participation. Former Tamarzinhos themselves agree with this assessment and demonstrate knowledge gain and positive behavior about conservation of marine species, new aspirations towards higher education, greater training and skill acquisition. As such, long-term environmental programs such as the mini-guide program at TAMAR can promote socio-economic and environmental changes that last throughout the youth and adult lives of the children.