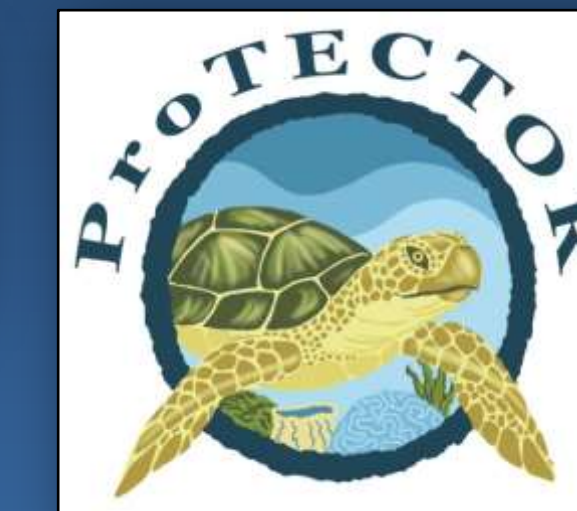




The ProTECTOR – GHI – SIMS Partnership:



A Multidisciplinary Approach; Saving Turtles, Helping People

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Introduction

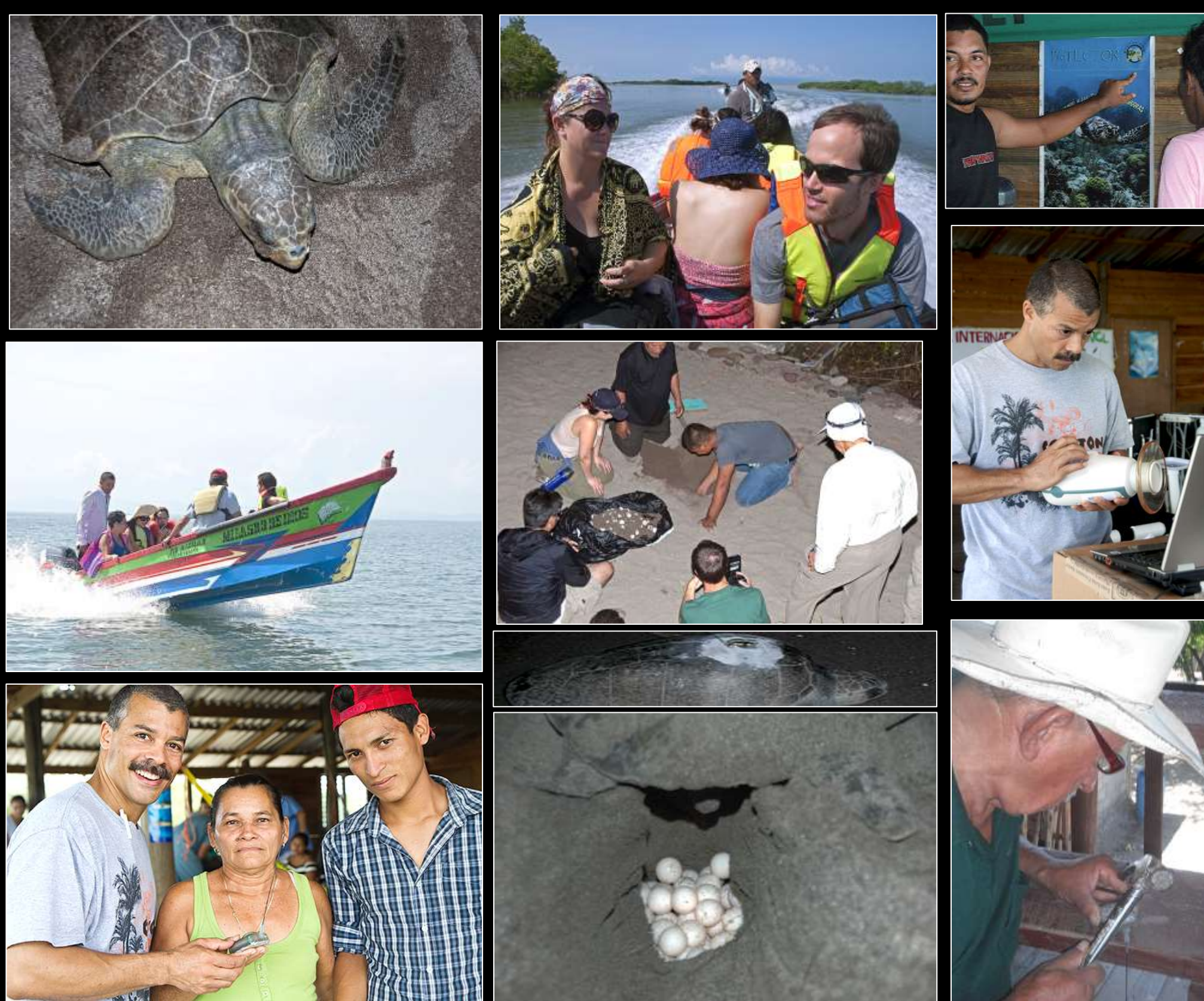
Wildlife conservation projects are often so concerned with species or habitat preservation that little attention is given to the felt needs of local communities involved. While economic incentives may be included in conservation programs, the physical health and well-being of individual community members may go unaddressed.

In 2011, the *Global Health Institute (GHI)* at Loma Linda University provided funding in partnership with *ProTECTOR* to support a community development project in the community of El Venado along the Gulf of Fonseca, Honduras (Fig. 1). With the purpose of developing infrastructure for eco-tourism in the community, the ProTECTOR-GHI partnership initiated the development of a rain water catchment system to provide running water to the El Venado Turtle Center. In addition, many health and wellness issues of the community were not being met. Thus, we initiated an additional partnership with the *Students for International Mission Service (SIMS)* at Loma Linda University. This intra-institutional partnership allowed us, from August 19 – 29, 2012, to address the community with a multidisciplinary approach, including community capacity-building, general health education, dentistry, nutrition, and medicine, all within the context of sea turtle conservation.



Figure 1. Outline of the country of Honduras with emphasis on the Gulf of Fonseca along the south coast of the country. The location of El Venado is shown in the right panel.

Results Conservation & Research



Community Development



Dentistry



Acknowledgements

We thank the wonderful people of El Venado and Punta Ratón for their hospitality, teamwork, and friendship. Working together, we are making a difference for the turtles and people of Honduras. Special thanks to Henrique Vijil, Nerys Zelaya, and the El Venado Turtle Conservation Committee. We thank all those involved from participating Schools at Loma Linda University. The School of Dentistry provided dental equipment, for which we are grateful. We also thank Shawn Plafker at the Student Activities Office, Jael Amador from the Chaplain's Office, SIMS, and Lidia Salinas in Honduras for logistical planning, as well as Jerry Daly and Jan Zumwalt at GHI for providing and packing medical supplies. Photos were provided by Steve Vodhanel and Carl Canwell.

Children's Education



Nutrition Education



Medicine

