

# JOURNAL NGOUVA



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Community Centred Conservation—C3-Comores



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1  
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## Welcome

Dear friends,

We wish you a warm welcome to Journal Ngouva, the C3-Comores newsletter. We are delighted that you are involved in our conservation efforts here in Mohéli and hope that you will follow our progress throughout the coming months.

As Director of Mohéli Marine Park (PMM), it is my pleasure to be working with C3 to

conserve the marine environment. It is our hope that together we can ensure a prosperous future for both the communities and wonderful biodiversity of the island.

We have many exciting projects planned for the coming year and the Journal Ngouva will be released each month to publicize our efforts.

We have already much news to present to you from our

first month in partnership with C3 and we hope that you find this newsletter interesting and informative.

Sincerely,

Kamardine Boinali  
Director  
Mohéli Marine Park



Kamardine Boinali,  
Mohéli Marine Park Director



## Poaching evident in Nioumachoua

C3 and local volunteers visited the islets of Nioumachoua to make a preliminary assessment of turtle poaching on the islets. The team visited three beaches on Ouénéfu and collected a total of ten carcasses as well as many remnants.

During the collection, the team discovered one live turtle on its back and hidden from view in the undergrowth and fortunately helped it make a safe return to the ocean.

The team included Patricia Davis, Sarah Freed, Melissa Hauzer, Mounlade Anli, Mouktafi Said, Ben Said Omar, and Soidridine. C3 would like to thank the Nioumachoua volunteers for their work and interest in conservation in their community.

This work will contribute to a complete assessment of threats to Mohéli's marine turtles as part of Operation Mohéli, funded by the BP Conservation Programme.



## The Ngouva of Mohéli

Ngouva is Comorian for the dugong, a marine mammal that has lately become more of a legendary creature than a common sight in the waters surrounding Mohéli.

C3 hopes to encourage conservation of this vulnerable species and make it more familiar to everyone on Mohéli. We will be studying the dugongs of Mohéli together with the seagrass that they eat.



Patricia Davis gives a speech at the Day of the Turtle.



## Day of the Turtle

In honour of IOSEA Year of the Turtle 2006, a Day of the Turtle celebration was held in Itsamia on 28th May. C3 helped organise the event and Director Patricia Davis

gave a speech and participated in the day's activities.

Celebrations included contests, singing, dancing, and a grand parade.

'...to develop conservation efforts worldwide by building the capacity of local individuals and institutions through grassroots research and training initiatives'



Volunteers collect shells and many other remains left by poachers.

## Assessment of surveillance and turtle monitoring in Nioumachoua

Turtle nesting sites are reported on many of the beaches of Mohéli, and this month we have been able to visit nesting beaches on islets near Nioumachoua. With evidence of heavy poaching on the islets, a surveillance and turtle monitoring programme is vital.

In response to this need, a team devoted one weekend in June to surveillance and turtle monitoring. C3 interns Melissa Hauzer and Charles Beaufrere, Nioumachoua volunteer Mounlade Anli,

PMM ecoguard Hamada Jssoufi, and gendarmes Abakare Jdayilani, Moholmede Bakar and Sadjidane Buena surveyed three beaches on the islet Ouénéfou, counting tracks, collecting remains from poaching, recording turtle emergences, taking measurements, and observing hatchings. No poachers were encountered, possibly due to the rough seas. One turtle was observed nesting and ten turtle hatchlings emerged on another beach. The team recovered nine

turtle shells as well as other remains from poaching.

Team members held a debriefing after the trip to present findings and make recommendations for future surveillance and monitoring efforts. In the coming month we hope to continue surveillance and monitoring led by the Mohéli Marine Park ecoguards.



## Sea turtle programme for Mohéli schools

In celebration of IOSEA Year of the Turtle 2006, C3 and PMM staff initiated a programme to inform students of the life history and conservation issues of Mohéli's sea turtles and encourage their involvement in conservation practices. The first presentation and drawing contest took place on the 16th of June. In attendance were 43 students (24 girls and 19 boys), primarily ages 10-15 from the CMI class in the école primaire of Nioumachoua.



Bounou-enche Moussa helps CMI students during drawing competition.

C3 staff Patricia Davis and Sarah Freed, and PMM ecoguard Hamada Jssoufi presented the programme with the assistance of community volunteers Bounou-enche Moussa, Houtoib Thabiti, and Ben Said Omar.

In addition to educating students about the turtles that they see almost nightly on the beaches during this time of year; one student's drawing will be selected to create a poster advocating turtle conservation, which will be displayed around Mohéli.

Visits to schools in four other villages are planned as well as work with other schools in Nioumachoua.



## Future Projects

This month C3-Comores hopes to visit all 10 PMM villages and meet with the village associations to introduce its work.

The school turtle programme and drawing competition will continue in the four remaining villages and winners will be chosen this month. Several materials are being prepared for distribution during visits to PMM and other Mohéli villages, including tourist questionnaires, incidental dugong sighting cards, village questionnaire about PMM, and village association discussion of ecotourism prospects. These projects are supported by the BP Conservation Programme and IOSEA Year of the Turtle 2006.

July promises to be an exciting month for C3, and we look forward to reporting our progress.



C3 holds a meeting with the village association of Hoani.

## The C3 team

- Patricia Davis, Director
- Chris Poonian, Projects Manager
- Ariana Arcenas, intern
- Charles Beaufrere, intern
- Sarah Freed, intern
- Melissa Hauzer, intern
- Kileken Ole-MoiYoi, intern

