DARWIN INITIATIVE

Madagascar Marine Biodiversity Training Project

Introduction

The organisation **Frontier-Madagascar** is running a *Marine Biodiversity Training Project* thanks to funding from Darwin Initiatives, UK Department of the Environment. The training programme was set up in the region of Toliara, South West Madagascar. Its aims are to aid marine resource security by providing 1) knowledge and awareness of marine ecosystems and their threats and 2) skills to monitor and manage marine biodiversity, for postgraduate students of the Institute of Oceanography and Marine Science (IH.SM), community representatives and fisheries officers.

The project will also produce a habitat monitoring plan for the area to add to the marine and coastal component of ONE (National Office for the Environment) and of the National Environmental Action Plan (PNAE) which will be based on permanent monitoring sites established during the project.

A lecture to villagers

Frontier Madagascar is a collaboration between the Institut Halieutique et des Sciences Marines, Madagascar and the Society for Environmental Exploration, United Kingdom.

The objectives

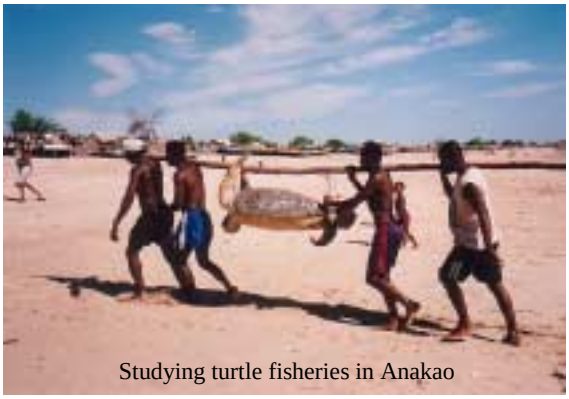
The objectives vary slightly with the category of people targeted by the training programme. The level of education, the interactions with the environment and the roles to play in the management process of the marine and coastal resources are different between students, community representatives and fisheries officers. Therefore, the approach to achieving these are different.

Objectives for Community representatives:

- provide simple but comprehensive knowledge of the different marine and coastal ecosystems and their interactions
- raise awareness of the threats to ecosystems and the socio-economic and ecological consequences of habitat degradation
- demonstrate the importance of community roles in environmental protection plans

Shark artisanal fishery and villagers

Objectives for IH.SM students:



Studying turtle fisheries in Anakao

training in survey/monitoring techniques
• provide a management approach to their background
• training in project set up and running
• demonstrate the connection between scientific survey and management planning

The three IH.SM trainees

Three IH.SM students took part in the first wave of trainees. The personal field projects undertaken by each of them went extremely well and they managed to obtain a considerable amount of data in only two weeks. The subjects were as follows:

Darwin Students measuring shark jaw during socio-economic surveys

M. MARTIAL Didi : 'The assessment of senne fishing and its impacts in Anakao and Soalara'.
M TATANGIRAFENO Sebastien: 'The socio-economic study of Beheloka'.
M. RABERINARY Daniel: 'The assessment of cephalopod exploitation in Beheloka'.

Objectives for Fisheries officers:

• provide additional knowledge in fish population dynamics and the different management strategies
• training in survey/monitoring techniques (especially for commercial species stocks)
• demonstrate the importance of collaborations with other entities in the process of information access
• provide awareness and methodologies for public education

Studying sustainable commercial fish stock management

The Workshop

On 18 March 2002, a workshop involving a presentation by the Frontier-Madagascar Marine Programme Co-ordinator, Chloë Webster, by the Darwin Training Coordinators, Gwenaël Hémery and Zalihanta Tananrely and by each of the trainees took place at IH.SM, in Tuléar.

The aims and objectives of the organisation Frontier-Madagascar Marine that is running the Darwin Initiative Madagascar Marine Biodiversity Training Programme were explained and so was the training programme itself. Thereafter, the students presented their work to the audience. The event appeared on regional television that evening and was also broadcast over the local radio.

The programme aims to train 24 Malagasy participants; students, community representatives and fisheries officers over a 12 month period. Now, that the programme is in place and running smoothly, an additional aim is to expand the existing activities for a longer period, funding dependent.