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PROCEEDINGS OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM ON SEA TURTLE BIOLOGY AND CONSERVATION

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COMPARISON OF BEHAVIOUR OF THREE LOGGERHEAD TURTLES TRACKED BY SATELLITE IN AND FROM AMVRAKIKOS BAY, NW GREECE

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Three subadult to adult sized turtles were equipped with Sirtrack, Kiwisat 101 satellite transmitters in Amvrakikos Bay (NW Greece) in May 2003. The Bay is an important foraging area for loggerhead turtles with many large areas of shallow sea and lagoons. It is a Ramsar site and a proposed NATURA 2000 site in the context of the European Union's Habitats Directive. The telemetry actions were part of EU co-funded LIFE Nature projects. The transmitters functioned for 71 to 555 days and the three individual turtles displayed clear differences in behaviour. Turtle A was shown to utilise two separate areas of the Bay for foraging with short distance migrations between the two and did not leave the Bay during transmitter operation (71 days). Turtle B was shown to remain in a restricted region of the Bay close to the capture site for almost the entire duration (555 days) of its transmissions. Finally, turtle C, after spending its initial seven weeks near its capture site, departed the bay and migrated to the coast of Syria then it moved north and west along the coast of Turkey. It finally settled from November 2003 until July 2004 in a restricted area of Turkey, south west of Antalya. It is not known whether this turtle nested during the summer nesting season of June and July during which time the transmitter was functioning (423 days). This study confirms the international nature of turtle conservation and the need for improved regional cooperation in conservation and management efforts.

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