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Marine Turtle Newsletter 60:27, © 2001

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A New Sea Turtle Information Centre in Zakynthos

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The Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece (STPS) conducts a monitoring and public awareness project in Zakynthos, Greece, with the objective to study and protect the most important nesting population of *Caretta caretta* in the Mediterranean. The project receives financial aid from the EEC (MedSPA) and WWF International. In the context of improving public awareness, a permanent information Centre was constructed in Vassilikos which hosts more than 75% of all nests found in the Bay of Laganas. The Centre is in the form of a pavilion with a permanent exhibition of sea turtle biology and conservation techniques in Greece. The Centre is staffed by international volunteers and in the evening it hosts slide shows in many languages for tourists. The pavilion has been constructed on land owned by a member of the local community and is situated alongside the road to Gerakas, one of the nesting beaches in the community of Vassilikos. The objectives of the Centre are:

1. To inform the increasing numbers of tourists visiting this area of the plight of *Caretta caretta* in Greece, and of sea turtles around the world;
2. To inform visitors of the protective legislation that regulates activities on the nesting beaches and at sea;
3. To further promote, within the local community, the need for a Marine National Park and the benefits that would result from it;
4. To support those within the local community who are pushing for "soft" and sustainable development in this yet unspoilt area.

The inauguration of the Centre was held on 18 July 1992 and it was attended by the local authorities, the Local Union of Municipalities and Communities, the Hotel Owners Association, and many local organizations and people. For further information on the monitoring and public awareness project you may write or phone us at:

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