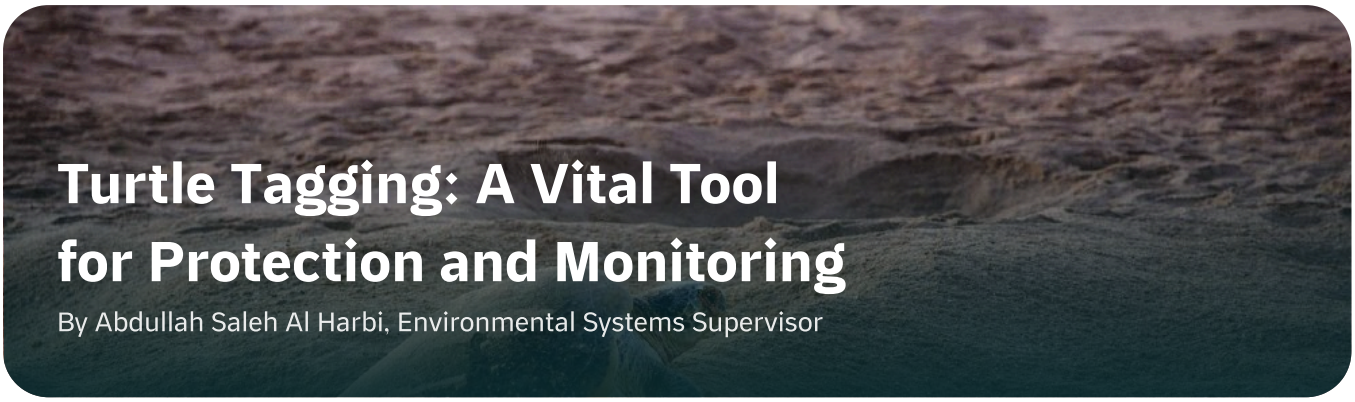


Turtle Tagging: A Vital Tool for Protection and Monitoring

By Abdullah Saleh Al Harbi, Environmental Systems Supervisor

Tagging sea turtles is one of the methods used in marine conservation. It helps researchers study and track turtles to understand their behaviour and life cycle, and it is an essential part of the global effort to protect endangered sea turtles and their habitats.

What is turtle tagging?

Tagging means attaching identification marks or numbers to a turtle using different techniques, such as metal tags. Each tag carries unique information recorded in a database, allowing researchers to track and study turtles over long periods.

Why turtles are tagged

1. **Tracking movements:** following turtles between feeding and nesting sites and understanding their migration patterns.
2. **Estimating numbers:** counting turtles in specific areas and monitoring changes over time.
3. **Studying behaviour:** such as how turtles choose nesting sites and interact with their surroundings.

Metal tags

Small metal tags are attached to the left front flippers. The method is common, low-cost and effective over the long term.

Why tagging matters for conservation

- **Preventing extinction:** tagging provides accurate data on the threats turtles face, leading to better decisions to protect them.
- **Developing protection strategies:** tagging data is used to create marine reserves and protected areas for turtles.

- **Supporting research:** it provides valuable information about turtles' life cycle and the effects of environmental change.

Tagging is a vital step in protecting these endangered animals, giving us deeper insight to develop effective strategies for their protection and for the balance of ocean ecosystems.

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