

Multiple paternity in egg clutches of green turtles 1 in redang island and sabath turtle island park, malaysia

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Abstrak

The green turtle, *Chelonia mydas*, has suffered from population declines throughout its range, mainly due to a continuous over-exploitation of eggs and adults. To better understand the mating strategy of this endangered animal, paternity in egg clutches of 36 green turtles from two major rookeries in Malaysia were investigated using microsatellite markers. A high incidence of multiple paternity for the green turtles from Sabah was discovered, with 71% of egg clutches showing evidence of being sired by at least two different males. However, for the egg clutches from Terengganu, lower incidences of multiple paternity (36%) were recorded. This study also documents the occurrence of sperm storage in the green turtles from both sites. Similar patterns of paternity were observed across successive clutches, consistent with the hypothesis of sperm being stored from mating(s) prior to nesting and being used to fertilize all subsequent clutches of eggs for that season. These data provide the first examples of multiple paternity and sperm storage in the green turtle populations in Malaysia.