

Sea turtles: lesson 3 of 3

Helping turtles

What harms pawikan, and what we can do



Green turtle. Photo: MCP

What harms turtles?



Taking eggs

Eggs are collected from nests to eat or sell.



Nets and hooks

Turtles get caught by accident and drown.



Plastic

A floating bag can look like a jellyfish.



Bright beach lights

Lights lead hatchlings the wrong way.



Building on beaches

Walls and buildings take away nesting sand.



Selling shells

Hawksbill shell was once used for combs and jewellery.



The law protects pawikan

In the Philippines, all five kinds of sea turtle are protected by law, the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

Catching turtles, collecting their eggs, or buying and selling turtles or turtle products is against the law.



Apo Island. Photo: MCP



Turtle Islands

1 to 2 million

turtle eggs are laid each year on the Turtle Islands in Tawi-Tawi

1996

the Philippines and Malaysia agreed to protect these islands together

It is the most important green turtle nesting place in the Philippines, and one of the biggest in Southeast Asia.

How we know: CMS IOSEA national report



From egg takers to protectors

In some villages, families that once collected pawikan eggs to sell now guard the nests, watch over hatchlings and help them reach the sea.

When a community sees that living turtles are worth more, everyone can win.



Children at an MCP environmental club. Photo: MCP



If you meet a turtle on the beach

1. Stay back and keep quiet. Give her lots of space.
2. No torches, phone lights or flash photos.
3. Never touch a nesting turtle, her eggs or the hatchlings.
4. Let hatchlings crawl to the sea by themselves. Don't carry them.
5. Tell an adult, who can report it to the barangay or the DENR.



Design a turtle-friendly beach

1. Draw a beach on your planner sheet: sand, sea, trees and houses.
2. Add at least five things that make it safe for turtles.
3. Think about lights, rubbish, fishing, dogs and where people walk.
4. Share your beach with a partner. Did they think of something you missed?



My turtle promise

One thing I will do on the beach:

One thing I will do at home:

One person I will tell about pawikan:

Well done! You have finished the sea turtle lessons.



Photos and sources

Photos: turtle, Apo Island and environmental club by MCP. All illustrations drawn for this lesson by Marine Conservation Philippines.

Sources:

- Republic Act 9147 (2001), Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.
- CMS IOSEA (2011). Philippines national report.
- Daily Tribune (2026). From poachers to protectors.
- Philippine Information Agency (2024). DENR marks Pawikan Day.

Full links are in the teacher reading. Free to use and share for education. Made by Marine Conservation Philippines. More free lessons: marineconservationphilippines.org/resources/teachers-resources/

