Sea turtles and longline: a veterinary perspective
Ecuador – Pacific January 2007

Hooks: J - J wire - C13 wire

101 turtles captured (black and olive ridley)
58 turtles examined
Spain– Mediterranean August 2007

Hooks: J - C12

70 turtles captured (C. caretta)
20 animals examined
Spain– Mediterranean August 2009

Hooks: J Mustad 7 - C16

23 turtles captured and examined (C. caretta)
Satellite transmitter placed on 10 animals
Hooks: J4 - C15

At least 15 turtles captured (*Chelonia mydas agassizii* and *Lepidochelys olivacea*)

7 turtles examined closely
8 treated by the fishermen
Observations

The worst lesions are caused by a long line, especially if the hook is still lodged.
Observations

In the mouth hooks are much easier to remove. However, there are some sensitive areas.
Observations

Study in Spain 2007-2008
- 10 juvenile loggerheads hooked in mouth with C12 hooks
- Observed for 1 year without intervention
- 7 hooks fell after 3-11 months / 3 had to be removed
- 1 hook caused osteomyelitis of mandible after 9 months

9 months after being hooked in the jaw.
Hook fell 3 months before this Xray.
Observations

4 months after being hooked

1 year after being hooked
Observations

In the esophagus hooks are more difficult to remove. However, if animals are well handled lesions are not always fatal.
Observations

Study 1 – Spain 2002-2004
- 11 juvenile loggerheads hooked in esophagus
- Observed for 2 years without intervention
- 5 out of 11 eliminated the hook
- Rest of hooks causing no lesions
Observations

**In the stomach** hooks tend to be fatal and kill quick. The perforate the wall causing celomitis, or perforation of heart/blood vessels/trachea
Observations

heart

stomach
Conclusions

- The line is the most dangerous part
- There are several sensitive points in the mouth of a turtle
- A hook lodged in the stomach is probably fatal
- The proper handling of the animal and the hook is essential to increase post-release survival
- To assess post-release mortality the attitudes of fishermen should be taken into account.