

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
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NATIONAL
OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC
ADMINISTRATION

MEDIA ADVISORY – SAVE THE DATE

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Dec. 24, 2003

**GOVERNMENT RESEARCHERS, FISHERMEN FIND WAYS TO SAVE THREATENED AND
ENDANGERED SEA TURTLES**

*NOAA Launches International Education Initiative to Spread
Turtle-friendly Fishing Techniques Globally*

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) scientists and partners have developed cutting-edge longline fishing techniques that can reduce sea turtle deaths due to fishing by 92 percent. The new techniques help reduce encounters and the ensnarement of sea turtles and can increase post-release survival rates of threatened and endangered leatherback and loggerhead sea turtle populations around the world. These findings are results of a three-year study recently completed by NOAA and endorsed by the international environmental advocacy group, the World Wildlife Fund. NOAA is an agency of the Department of Commerce.

- WHAT:** Announcement on findings of 3-year research to save sea turtles; live demonstrations of the new fishing techniques and equipment.
- WHO:** Dr. William T. Hogarth, director, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
Dr. Rebecca Lent, dep. director, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
Nelson Beideman, president, Bluewater Fisherman's Association
Scott Burns, director, World Wildlife Fund, Marine Conservation Program
- WHERE:** National Press Club - Murrow Room
529 14th Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20045 (202) 662-7500
- WHEN:** 1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., Monday, Jan. 5, 2004

United States fisheries are responsible for about five percent of the overall sea turtle deaths internationally, and American fishermen are regulated to reduce such incidents. However, the fishing nations responsible for the remaining 95 percent of sea turtle deaths do not always impose similar restrictions, resulting in high rates of sea turtle deaths in all the world's oceans. NOAA, in partnership with the American pelagic longline fishing industry, has completed a high-seas experiment designed to help all fishing nations do their part in saving sea turtles.

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, please visit www.noaa.gov.

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B-roll of the experiment at-sea and high res. photos of international turtle workshops available.