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THE PRESENCE OF GREEN TURTLE (*CHELONIA MYDAS*) IN ALBANIA

Vilma Piroli^{1,2*}, Idriz Haxhiu¹

¹Albanian Herpetofauna Association, Vorë, Albania;

²Department of Biology, University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania;

*Corresponding Author Vilma Piroli, e-mail: vilmapiroli@gmail.com; idriz_haxhiu@yahoo.com;

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ABSTRACT

Information about the loggerhead turtle in Adriatic is highly present compared to the green turtle. The bycatch of the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) in Albania was monitored during the period 2011-2018. Results indicate the annual presence of juveniles and sub-adult turtles in Albania, with a greater encounter in Drini bay. The Drini bay, and possibly Vlora bay, might be nursery habitats for the turtles dispersed to the South Adriatic from the Eastern Mediterranean nesting sites. The presence of both juvenile and sub-adult greens suggests a possible role as oceanic and neritic areas for both of these bays, especially for Drini bay. Results indicate Drini bay Stavniks as the fishing gear with the highest green turtle bycatch, and their seasonal and geographical limited usage might impact the low number of encounters in other areas.

Key words: *Chelonia mydas*, Green turtle, Albania, Nursery habitat, Oceanic habitat, Neritic habitat.