
July 2026 — Project Update

Nicaragua Sea Turtle Project

Field Partner: the community of Salinas Grandes led by Gabriela Paredes, Lucia Balladares, Antonia Duarte, and Yaoska Torres

Background: Biome's grass-roots sea turtle project at Playa Salinas Grandes—located 26 km from the city of León, Nicaragua—highlights the power of local action. The project's Environmental Education Program strengthens environmental education and builds local support for sea turtle conservation in the community of Salinas Grandes. This is complemented by the community-run sea turtle hatchery, which aids the reproductive success of four threatened sea turtle species by protecting their eggs and their beach nesting habitat.

During the first half of 2026, the project's nursery activities were severely affected by unusual climatic conditions occurring in the Nicaraguan Pacific region. In June, strong tides caused an extraordinary rise in sea level that flooded the area where the hatchery is located. Three sea turtle nests were swept away by the sea. The remaining two nests were moved to a better location ~20 metres further inland; however, they failed to hatch. The project team consider that exposure to saltwater combined with the handling of eggs during the emergency relocation likely compromised the viability of the embryos.

Bad years do happen in the natural world.

On a **positive note**, project staff recently (in July) discovered and have protected a new leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) nest containing 84 eggs. This is very encouraging, because the leatherback sea turtle is classified globally as Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List and designated as Endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act and Canada's Species at Risk Act.

The project's staff continue to notice an increase in environmental awareness and positive change in the behavior of children who participate in the education program. In the first half of 2026, the program hosted seven seminars and supervised outdoor activities for local community children. Program activities usually take place on the weekend (Saturdays) from the beginning of March to mid December.

Biome is proud to support this grass-roots initiative and the ongoing work of project staff, as they inspire the next generation of young conservationists at Playa Salinas Grandes!

with my best wishes,
Carlos R. García

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SEE PHOTOS NEXT PAGE...



Kids during an 'Environmental Education Program' activity



Sea turtle hatchery



Releasing sea turtle hatchlings at Playa Salinas Grandes, Nicaragua