

16 February 2023

Shri Narendra Modi

Hon. Prime Minister of India
Prime Minister's Office
New Delhi-110001, India

Subject: Request for support to conserve the rare nesting site of Olive Ridley Sea Turtles in the state of Karnataka and visit by your authority to grace the occasion of release of hatchlings

Respected Sir,

I am Mr. Sandeep Hegde, a software engineer based in Bengaluru and one of the trustees of Honavar Foundation from the state of Karnataka. I am an enthusiast to protect the rare nesting sites of Olive Ridley Sea Turtles in the coastal areas of Karnataka state to conserve such rare natural treasure for the future generations. I am writing this request letter to seek kind support from your authority for my activities, which could profoundly impact in conserving the population of rare marine creature for future generations.

I highly appreciate "Man vs Wild" episode of your authority with Mr. Bear Grylls and your great interest in bringing back the extinct Cheetahs from Namibia to India. I do have great hope that your authority will go through the following aspects mentioned in this request letter and generously support my little efforts in conserving the rare nesting sites of the Olive Ridley Turtles in the state of Karnataka. I wish to bring to the kind attention of your authority that the Olive Ridley (vulnerable species as per IUCN Red List) turtles have major nesting hub in the state of Odisha and are rarely seen in other coastal parts.

Most importantly, several Olive Ridley Sea Turtles make nest and lay thousands of eggs each year in the state of Karnataka, at the shoreline named Kasarkod Tonka near Honavar Taluk of Uttara Kannada District. Such nesting is rare in Karnataka coast, and certainly warrants utmost care in handling their eggs till hatching. As per the information I gathered through the reliable sources, in this season which started from December 2022, nearly 20 nests with more than 2000 eggs were spotted in this specific beach at the Honavar Forest Division. I recently visited the area and herewith enclosing few photographs of the hatchlings of Olive Ridley Turtles. Also, the above-mentioned Tonka shoreline area is highly sensitive as it also comprises of the estuary of Sharavathi River, one of the ancient rivers in the country. I also would like to emphasise here that the adjoining shoreline of Tonka area is one of the 8 prestigious Blue Flag Beaches in the country.

Since many years, the Karnataka Forest Department is trying to protect the eggs of Olive Ridley in the Honavar Forest division of coastal Uttara Kannada District, which in my opinion needs to be further strengthened in the interest of conserving the rare treasure of the nation. In such efforts, the kind support and interest from your authority could certainly do great positive difference.

Sir, I hereby earnestly request your authority to support my little efforts in conserving the rare nesting sites of the Olive Ridleys in the state of Karnataka. It would be uncommonly kind of you, if your authority graces the occasion of Olive Ridley Turtle hatchling release at the Kasarkod Tonka shoreline, Honavar Forest Division in this season which lasts till the month of April.

Sir, as a common man and young enthusiast, it is my humble request before your authority to kindly take necessary action to ensure protecting the nesting sites of the rare Olive Ridley turtles in the Honavar Forest Division in the state of Karnataka. Your kind support in this genuine cause and visit by your authority to the rare nesting sites of Olive Ridley Sea Turtles at the Kasarkod Tonka shoreline area to release hatchlings could certainly become one of the rare events in the country. Just like the Cheetah release, my fellow citizens would love to see your photos & videos releasing baby turtles into the sea.

I do hope my request will be considered positively by your authority at the earliest. I would be extending all my co-operation to the state and central authorities in this regard.

I will eagerly look forward to the positive response for my request from your authority at the earliest.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sandeep Hegde
Trustee, Honavar Foundation

Enclosures: as above

