

Romanos beach, SW Peloponnese, Greece: increase of loggerhead sea  
turtle nests following a ten-year project (2009-2018)

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The 2.7 km Romanos beach, in southwestern Peloponnese, was first monitored by ARCHELON in the years 1989 and 1998-2000 to assess nesting of loggerhead sea turtles. A large percentage of nests were predated by foxes but due to difficulties in logistics no mitigation measures were taken and the project was eventually interrupted. Nest monitoring in Romanos was re-instigated in 2009 and continues until today. We present herein the results of this ten-year (2009-2018) work. All tracks of emerged turtles were examined whether they resulted in nests. Nests were marked, fenced and monitored until appearance of hatchlings. After a week from hatchlings' departure, nests were excavated to determine clutch size as well as hatching and emergence success. Incubation duration was defined as the elapsed time from egg-laying until appearance of hatchlings. The annual number of nests over the ten-year period shows intense fluctuations (4 to 41) with an average of 18 nests. Clutch size averages 97.3 eggs (N=178 clutches), and hatching and emergence success 83.6% and 76.6% respectively (N=166 clutches). Incubation duration averages 52.9 days (N=170 clutches). The annual number of nests shows an increasing trend over the 10-year period. Part of Romanos beach is included in the EU Natura 2000 network. A large hotel was built behind the beach but construction works did not affect the dunes. The hotel follows protective guidelines, provided by ARCHELON, to manage beach furniture and bright lights. We thank TEMES S.A., the development company of the hotel, for following ARCHELON suggestions and their continuous support.

**Keywords:** marine turtles, *Caretta caretta*, nesting areas