RATE PREDATION ON THE NESTING OF CARETTA CARETTA BECAUSE OF OCYPODE CURSOR IN CALHETA DE PAU BEACH, BOA VISTA ISLAND (CAPE VERDE REP.)

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Abstract

Located in the Cape Verde Archipelago is one of the most important nesting population of Caretta caretta, Boa Vista Island being the principal nesting area. This population has been subject of research since 1998. During the 2004 nesting season, loggerhead nests in the beach of Calheta de Pau we monitored and an incubation period for the eggs of 57 days (n=193) was observed. The hatching success calculated was 47.2 % (n=30). The crab ghost (Ocypode cursor) is the principal predator of eggs and hatchlings on the beaches of Boa Vista. In this study, the rate of predation was also calculated at Calheta de Pau, and so the impact of this predator versus other factors that affect viability of the nest during the incubation (e.g. the tide).