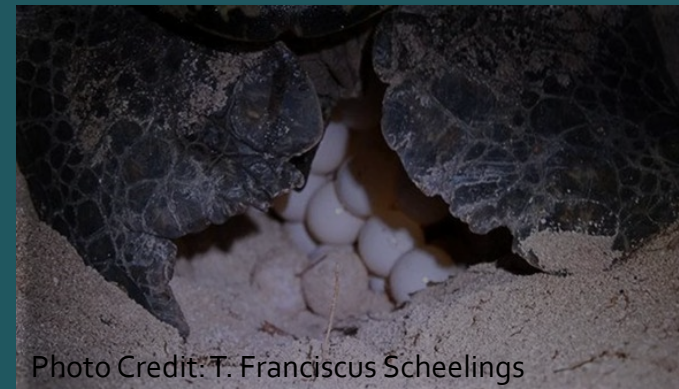# Green Sea Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) Proposed Terrestrial Critical Habitat
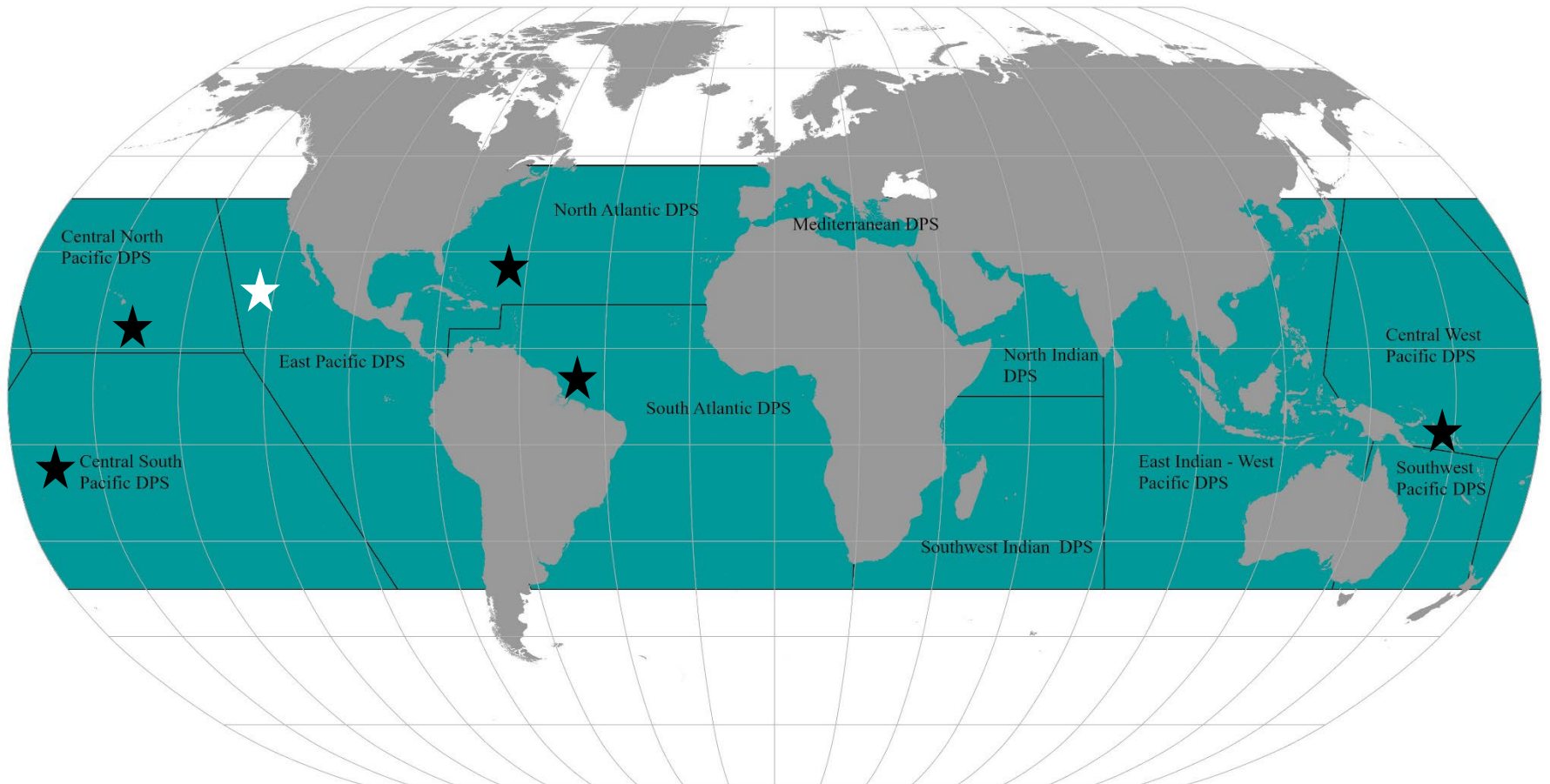
North Atlantic and South Atlantic distinct population segments

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 4

Public Hearing, August 29, 2023

Photo Credit: Blair Witherington

Photo Credit: Mary Wonzy

Photo Credit: T. Franciscus Scheelings

Green Sea Turtle Range and Distinct Population Segments (DPSs) Worldwide

Endangered Species Act Critical Habitat

What is critical habitat?

Critical habitat is habitat that contains features or areas essential for the conservation and recovery of species listed under the Endangered Species Act. It is a regulatory requirement affecting federal actions; it is not a park, preserve, or a closed area.

Who is affected by critical habitat?

Critical habitat designations directly affect federal agencies. They must ensure that any action they permit, fund, or carry out is not likely to destroy or adversely modify critical habitat.

Why do we designate critical habitat?

Critical habitat is habitat needed to support recovery of listed species. When a species is listed under the Endangered Species Act, we must designate critical habitat for that species.

How do we designate critical habitat?

We are required to designate critical habitat based on the best available science and after considering economic, national security, and other relevant impacts, as well as public input.

Where is critical habitat?

Critical habitat may be designated anywhere in the United States and its territories.

NOAA FISHERIES

Please see our website for more information on critical habitat:
https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/endangered-species-conservation/critical-habitat

Features Essential to the Conservation of Atlantic green turtle DPSs in the terrestrial environment
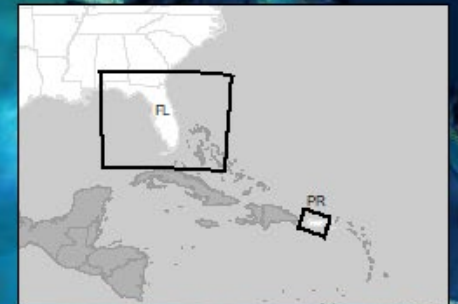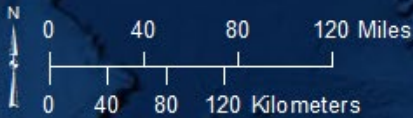
Photo Credit: PascoPacifico

- Dry sandy beaches
- Unimpeded ocean access
- Above mean high water
- Suitable sand conditions
- Sufficient darkness *(nesters/hatchlings)*
- Natural coastal processes or artificially created habitat that mimics natural conditions

North Atlantic DPS

23 Units Florida

10 Units Puerto Rico

33 Units TOTAL

NW

NE

Florida

CE

W

SE

Keys

Dry Tortugas

Marquesas

Puerto Rico

0   20   40 Miles

0   20   40 Kilometers

N

0   40   80   120 Miles

0   40   80   120 Kilometers

FL

PR

North Atlantic DPS- Puerto Rico

10 Units

Mona Island

Puerto Rico

Vieques

0 5 10 20 Miles

0 5 10 20 Kilometers

South Atlantic DPS

8 Units

Submit comments by October 17, 2023

Regulations.gov

- FWS-R4-ES-2022-0164
- NOAA-NMFS-2023-0087

Public hearings or via mail (see websites for more information):

https://www.fws.gov/species/green-sea-turtle-chelonia-mydas
https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/critical-habitat-green-sea-turtles

Photo Credit: NPS