

Sea Turtle CSI

Case Study



Condition Code Guide

Condition Code	Decomposition State	Description
1	Fresh dead	
2	Moderately decomposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Body slightly to very bloated - Body mostly intact, skin/scutes none/mild peeling, small cuts/scratches
3	Severely decomposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No longer bloated/carcass looks deflated - Flippers in OK to bad shape/missing - Large cuts, most internal organs missing - Moderate to significant skin peeling - Strong to moderate amount of skin/soft tissue remain
4	Dried carcass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most soft tissue gone, head and flippers missing - Remains not yet only bones, some soft tissue remains - Significant amount of exposed bones - Carapace/scutes still attached to bone to some degree
5	Skeleton, bones only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean bones, no attached tissue - Portion of carapace scutes may be intact, but not attached to ribs

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Day 0 Images



Day 0 Images



Day 0 Images



Day 0 Images



Day 0 Images



Day 0 Images



Case File B



Case File E



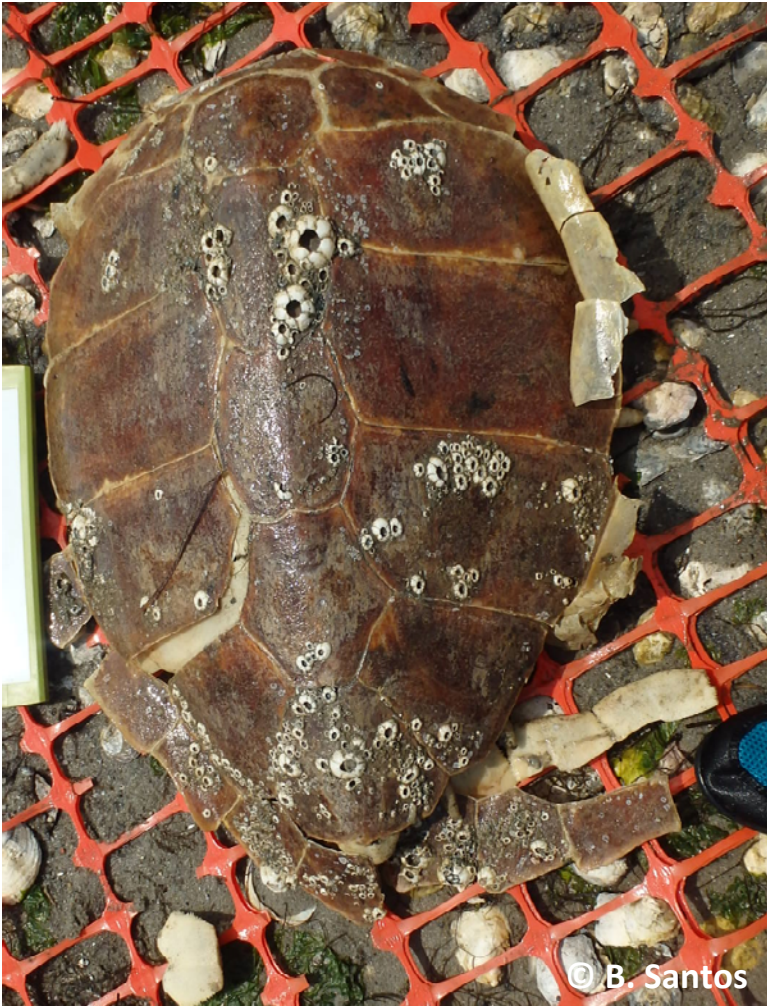
Case File A



Case File C



Case File D



Case File F



Police Report

Case No. 723

Case File. **B**

Reporting Officers: _____

Weather Conditions: sunny, low/mid wind, low/moderate wave action

Water temperature: 28°C

Field observations:

- Turtle carcass is floating at surface
- No organisms observed around turtle
- Mild odor

Detailed description of carcass:

CONDITION

CODE:

Police Report

Case No. 723

Case File. **E**

Reporting Officers: _____

Weather Conditions: cloudy, low wind, calm sea

Water temperature: 28°C

Field observations:

- Turtle carcass is not floating at surface
- 1 blue crab noted on turtle
- Moderate odor

Detailed description of carcass:

CONDITION

CODE:

Police Report

Case No. 723

Case File. **A**

Reporting Officers: _____

Weather Conditions: partly cloudy, low wind, low wave action

Water temperature: 29°C

Field observations:

- Turtle carcass is not floating at surface
- 3 blue crabs and 2 goby noted on turtle
- Strong odor

Detailed description of carcass:

CONDITION

CODE:

Police Report

Case No. 723

Case File. **C**

Reporting Officers: _____

Weather Conditions: partly cloudy, moderate wave action, med wind

Water temperature: 29°C

Field observations:

- Turtle carcass is not floating at surface
- 1 blue crab noted on turtle
- Mild odor

Detailed description of carcass:

CONDITION

CODE:

Police Report

Case No. 723

Case File. **D**

Reporting Officers: _____

Weather Conditions: sunny, mid/low wind, mid/low wave action

Water temperature: 30°C

Field observations:

- Turtle carcass is not floating at surface
- No organisms observed around animal
- No odor

Detailed description of carcass:

CONDITION

CODE:

Police Report

Case No. 723

Case File. **F**

Reporting Officers: _____

Weather Conditions: sunny, mid/low wind, mid/low wave action

Water temperature: 30°C

Field observations:

- Turtle carcass is not floating at surface
- No organisms observed around animal
- No odor

Detailed description of carcass:

CONDITION

CODE:

Carcass Evaluation

Compare the pictures from your case file to the original photos (Day 0).
Try to use sea turtle anatomy language in your description.

Below are some things to look for:

- Body parts to check:**
- Head
 - Neck
 - Flippers
 - Carapace
 - Plastron

- Things to look for:**
- Cuts
 - Bloating
 - Missing body parts
 - Condition of skin/scutes

Basic sea turtle anatomy:

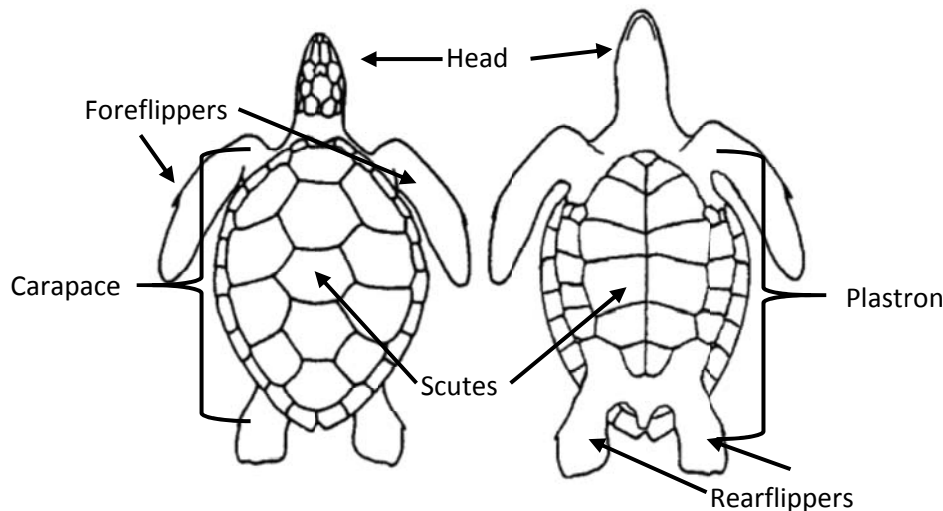


Image: Modified from NOAA source

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 - Condition of skin/scutes

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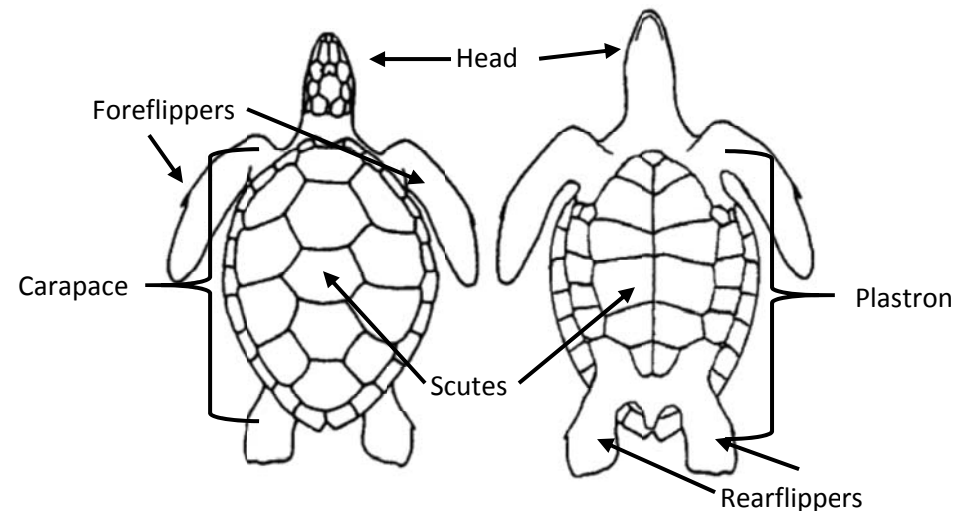


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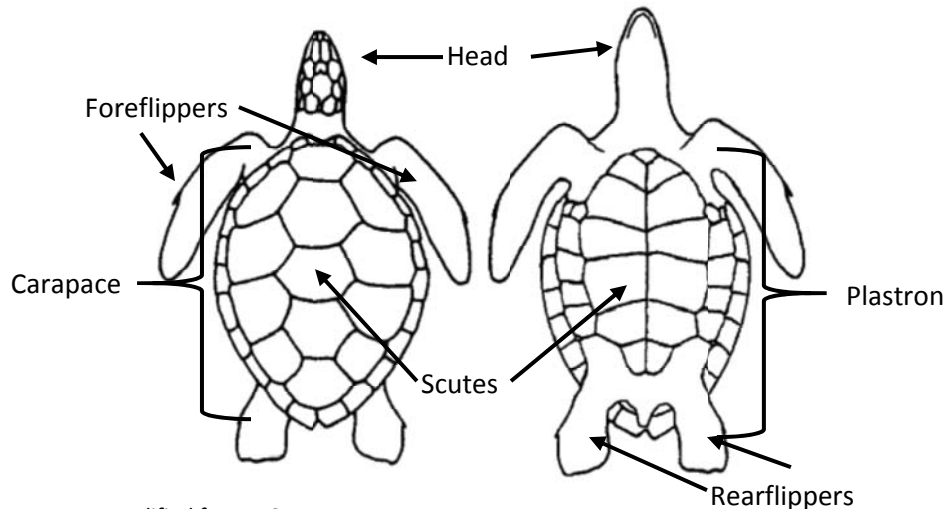


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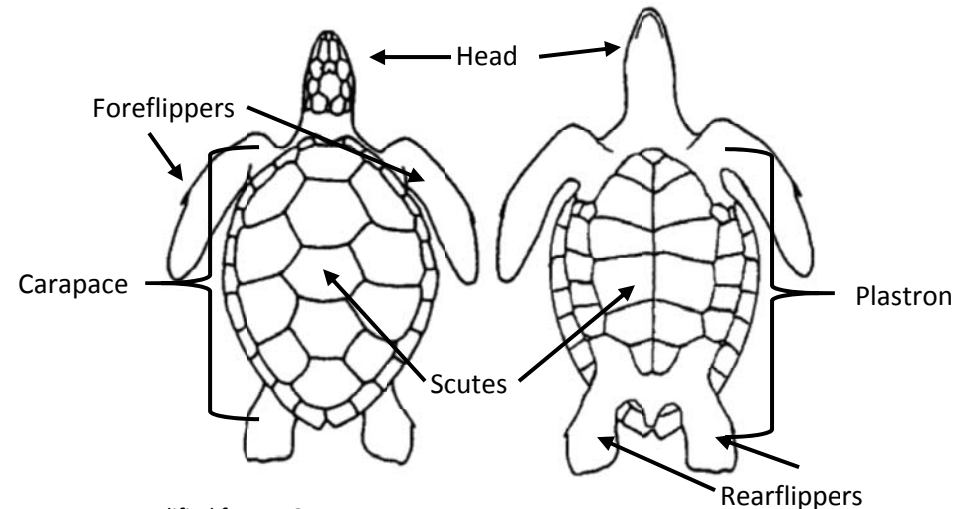


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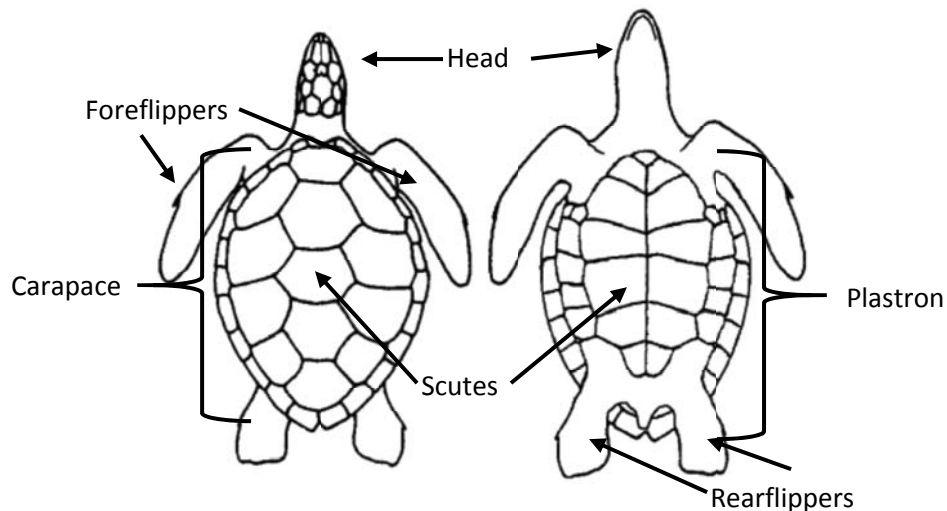


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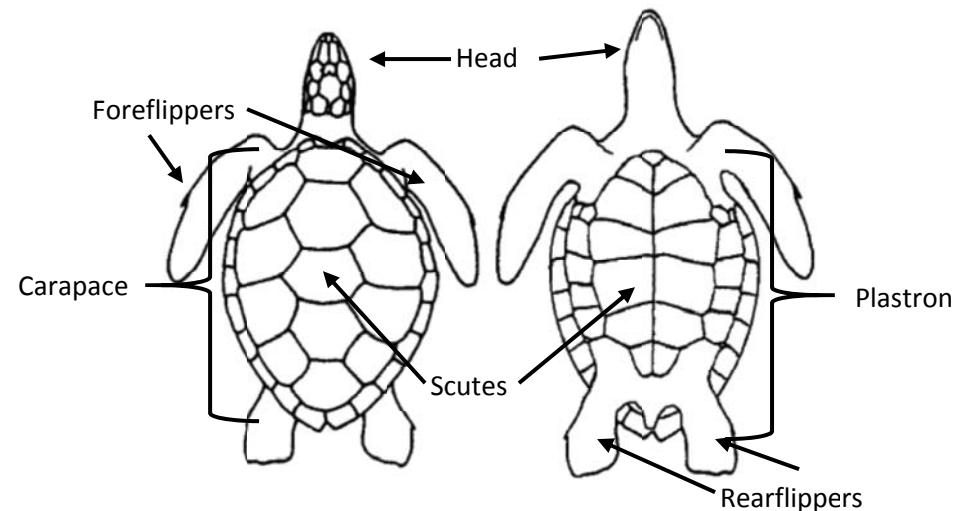


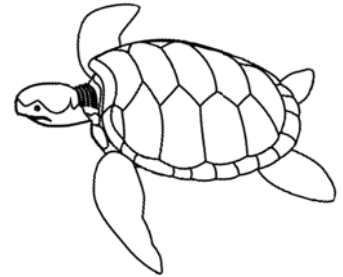
Image: Modified from NOAA source

Sea Turtle CSI

Stranded sea turtles are any marine turtles that wash up on beaches either death, injured or sick. The majority of turtles are deceased, and a sea turtle stranding response team is called in to investigate when they are found. One piece of information that the team records is a condition code (1-5) based on how far decomposed the animal looks. It is important to try and determine how long ago death occurred based on its condition code in order to help determine where and why the animal died. Below is the condition code key:



Condition Code	Carcass State
0	Alive
1	Fresh dead
2	Moderately decomposed
3	Severely decomposed
4	Dried carcass
5	Skeleton, bones only



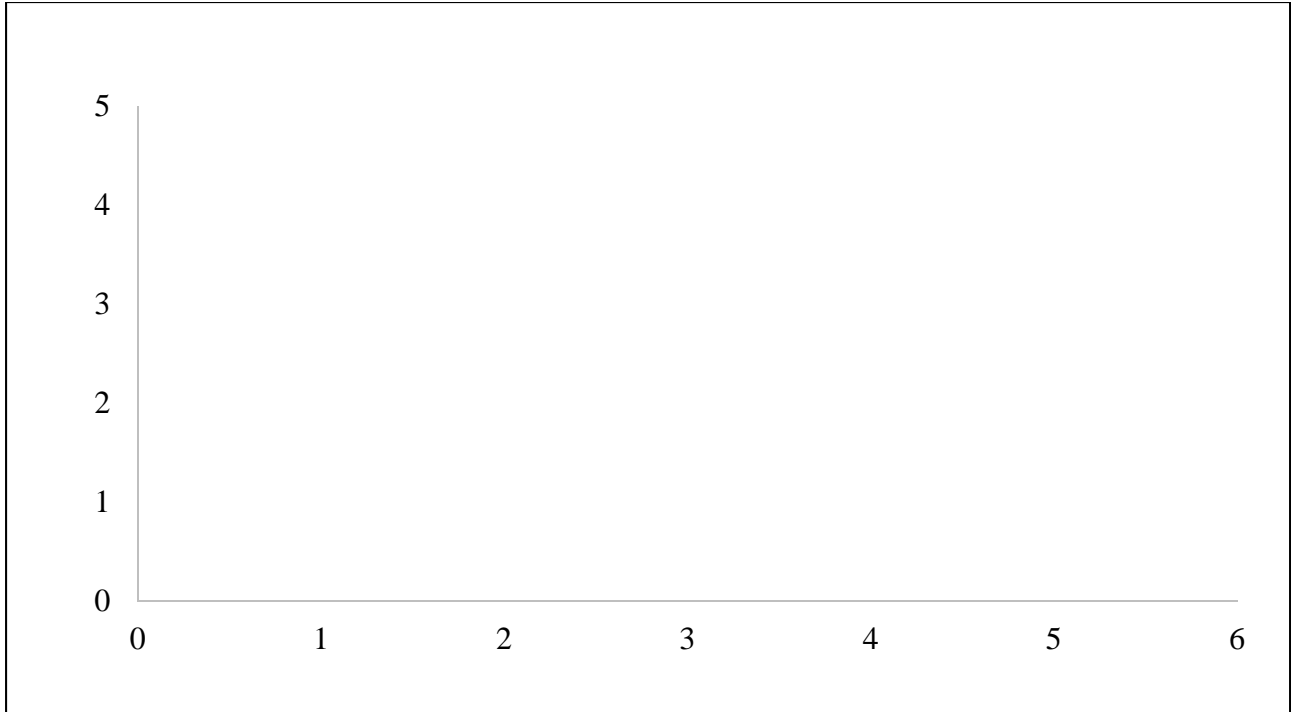
Fill in the data table below based on the results from the class activity:

Case File	Condition Code	Day
	1	0
A		
B		
C		
D		
E		
F		

Graphing Assignment

Name _____

Date _____



1) **Plot** the data on the blank chart above. Give your chart a **title** and **axis labels**.

A) What is the independent variable?

B) What is the dependent variable?

2) Use the graph to answer each question:

A) How long did it take the turtle to decay to **code 3**?

How long did it take the turtle to decay from **code 2** to **code 4**?

B) What condition code stage did the turtle spend the **most** time in?

How many **days** was the turtle in this stage?

3) Name **three** threats that sea turtles face:

1.

2.

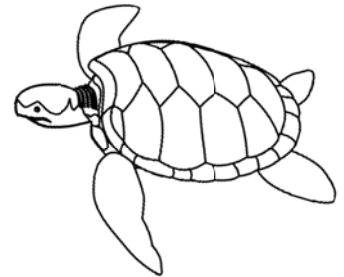
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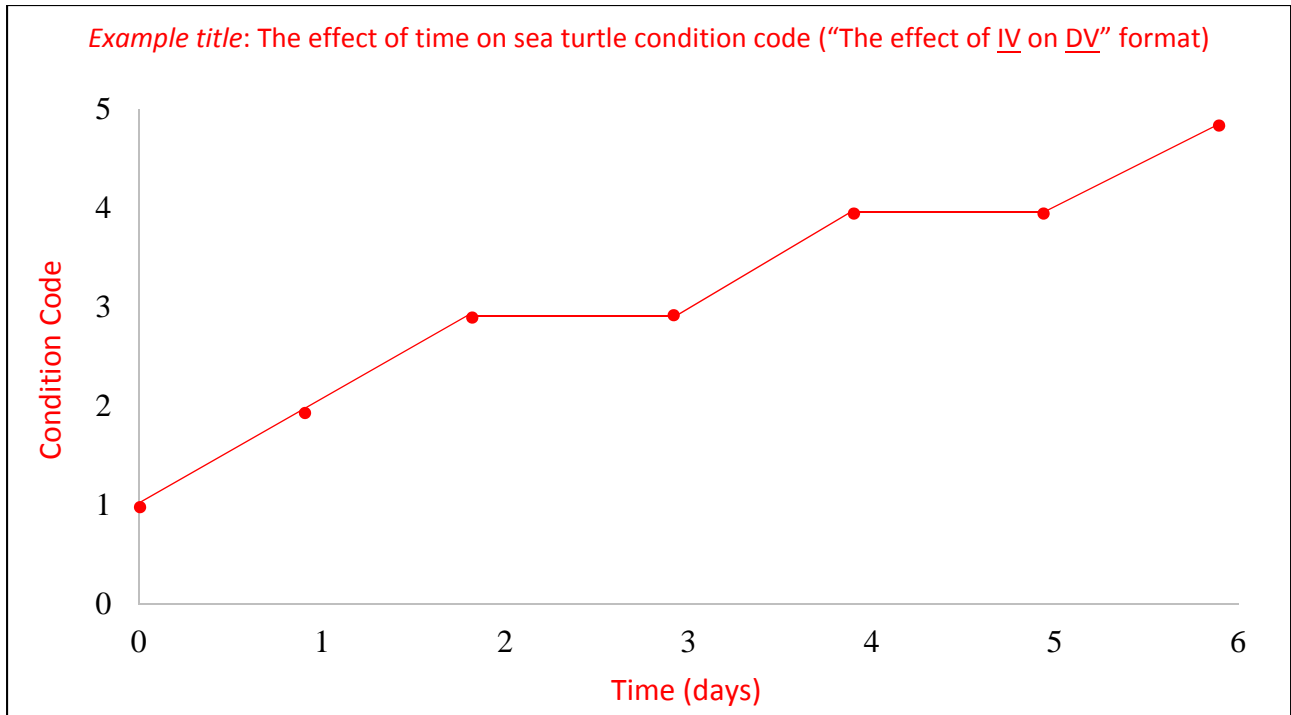
Fill in the data table below based on the results from the class activity:

Case File	Condition Code	Day
	1	0
A	3	3
B	2	1
C	4	4
D	4	5
E	3	2
F	5	6

Graphing Assignment

Name _____

Date _____



1) **Plot** the data on the blank chart above. Give your chart a **title** and **axis labels**.

A) What is the independent variable? **Time (days)**

B) What is the dependent variable? **Condition code**

2) Use the graph to answer each question:

A) How long did it take the turtle to decay to **code 3**? **2 days**

How long did it take the turtle to decay from **code 2** to **code 4**? **3 days**

B) What condition code stage did the turtle spend the **most** time in? **Codes 3 and 4**

How many **days** was the turtle in this stage? **2 days**

3) Name **three** threats that sea turtles face:

1. **Fisheries interactions/entanglement in gear (nets, hooks, etc.)**

2. **Pollution**

3. **Boat strike**

Other possible answers: climate change, habitat loss, erosion, poaching, predation, etc.