MEM Summer Placement with C3 in Madagascar.

Louise Jones

For my summer placement I worked with Community Centred Conservation (C3) in Madagascar and completed a project investigating the scale of turtle capture around northern Madagascar using Traditional Ecological Knowledge. C3 aims to develop conservation efforts worldwide by building the capacity of local individuals and institutions through grassroots research and training initiatives. I was involved in data cleaning, analysis and the writing up of results and helped out with their public education initiatives. This improved my data analysis skills and gave me first hand experience of how conservation by small organisations is carried out in developing countries and some of the issues they face. For example I saw how artisanal fisheries work and the difficulties the local fishermen have in conserving the environment on which their livelihood depends and catching enough to feed themselves and their families. The whole experience gave me a deeper understanding of how poverty and marine resource use are interlinked and how appropriate conservation management must address this relationship. At weekends I was able to go and enjoy the incredible wildlife by visiting national parks and snorkelling on the nearby reefs. I made firm friends with the other interns and there was a real community atmosphere amongst the other volunteers. I had an amazing time and would recommend participating on the C3 intern scheme.