

Turtle tagged in Brazil reaches UK territory

June 11 2018



Credit: University of Exeter

A turtle tagged by University of Exeter scientists in Brazil has swum thousands of miles – and is now in the waters of a UK overseas territory.

The female leatherback turtle, nicknamed Fubica, is exploring the seas

off Tristan Da Cunha, a remote group of volcanic islands in the South Atlantic – highlighting how interconnected our global seas are on World Oceans Day (Friday 8 June).

Fubica was one of four [turtles](#) tagged on a Brazilian beach during the breeding season in November 2017, and is the only one whose tag is still transmitting, more than six months later.

The turtles were tagged as part of a study run by Exeter and Brazilian non-profit organisation TAMAR-ICMBio, with funding from Funbio (the Brazilian Fund for Biodiversity).

"Fubica has swum thousands of miles and has now found her way to the protected zone around Tristan Da Cunha," said Exeter Ph.D. student Liliana Poggio Colman, who is on a scholarship from the programme Science Without Borders (CNPq), funded by the Brazilian government.

"These turtles only nest every two or three years, so we don't expect her to return to land for many months to come.

"Some stay in the coastal waters of South America and others – like Fubica – cross entire oceans.



Credit: University of Exeter

"She will be spending her time foraging for jellyfish, which makes up most of these turtles' diet."

Poggio Colman, who tagged the turtles along with Exeter's Professor Brendan Godley, said: "Fubica was seen nesting four times late last year.

"During this period she moved along the entire coast of the state of Esp rito Santo, eastern Brazil, showing how important those areas are for leatherbacks.

"After leaving the beaches she spent a lot of time foraging off the Brazilian coast, where there is high marine productivity and intense fishing – meaning threats from nets and hooks.

"She then began to move eastwards, and is currently near Tristan Da Cunha (inside the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone around the islands)."

Provided by University of Exeter

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