



The end of January I arrived in Nicaragua and the first days I spend in Granada to get used to the new climate, time and culture.

After four days I moved to Jinotepe where I was about to live with two other people. I am doing my internship for a British NGO that dedicates itself to the protection of dry rain forest and the turtles in Nicaragua. One of the “subprojects” is called “Tejiendo por la naturaleza” which is a very nice recycling project. A group of women from the protected area of Chacocente collects the plastic trash bags from the beach, cleans them, cuts them in treats and finally they crochet different models of fashion bags, belts etc of it.

Since the women are living in a very poor area where they have no access to electricity, streets and drinking water it is quite difficult for them to do the marketing and sales part on their own. My job is to promote the project and the products to find places where the bags can be sold and the other important issue in this project is to teach the women how to run this business on their own, without being depended on the NGO. The second task is a hard one and I feel already bad about it because I am not able to reach this goal in such a short time.

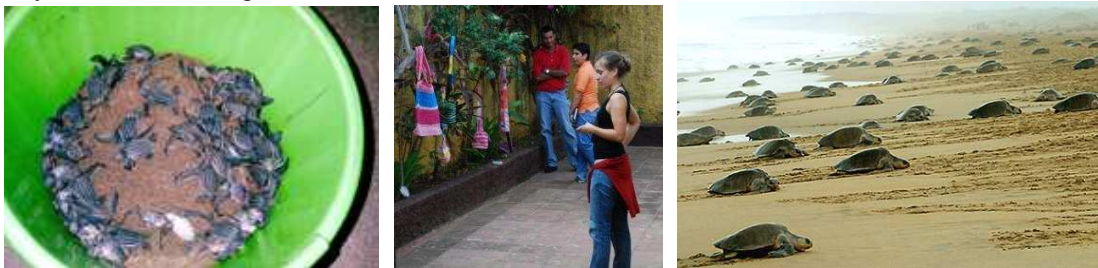


Every day is different, there is no daily or weekly routine in my internship, and therefore I will just describe what I did today.

On Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> is “día de la tierra” ( day of the earth) and the NGO has organized various days with a broad program including conferences about recycling projects, speeches, concerts etc etc. Since we will also sell the bags some of the women have to be present to get used to making contacts and promoting their work. Today we entered the protected area to visit the two communities where the women are living. Entering this

protected zone – without proper roads – means that I spend two hours on a motorbike to reach Astillero, one of the communities.

There we had a short meeting with the seven women of that community and then we headed for Aguas Calientes which again took us almost two hours. Here we met only two of six women because the other ones were busy somewhere else. Here the same, we spoke with the women about the exhibition they should attend and a new model we want them to make. After 30 minutes we were on our way back to Santa Teresa. Basically we spend 5 hours in an incredible heat on a bumpy road to speak a couple of minutes with the women – but it is fun and an adventure. Since this is a lot more tiring than eight hours in the office (which also frequently happens) I called it a day and spend the rest of the day with other things than work.



The other days are quite different, I have two offices where I am working, one is the main office in Managua and the other one is in Santa Teresa and it is up to me where I want to work. For the sale of the bags I spend a lot of days in Managua visiting shops, hotels and other businesses. When I am working in the office in Managua I spend a lot of time with one of my colleagues on creating a clearly laid out documentation of production, sales, contacts, forms etc - basically the documentation for the entire project.

I really like my internship and my tasks. It is very diverse and never boring, I think the project is a real opportunity for the women although there still needs a lot to be done to make them more independent and self-confident. My colleagues are always a lot of fun and give me a lot of freedom to try things out. So I am learning a lot here, not only for my studies but also for my personal development, whilst working in a sustainable development project.

