Interviewer 1: What do you

testing

that we've covered...?

testing by kenny QC

[(9:10:56)]Interviewee: I don't know how specific you want me to be. [(9:11:01)]

Interviewer 1: Okay. Let's just briefly cover the mesh thing. The mesh is the thing that choked them so we'll set that up a little bit of it as well.

[(9:11:10)]Interviewee: Yeah, okay. [(9:11:11)]

Interviewer 1: Okay. What kind of pollutants are causing the problems?

[(9:11:19)]Interviewee: We see here a lot of fishnets, for example, that can be detrimental for turtles, specifically for small turtles that can get entangled when they go into the water. So, I think that's something important that we may have to focus on. Our survey will tell us a little bit more if we have that kind of material in the beaches that we have where most of the turtles are nesting and then if we have to dedicate some time to also retrieve that. [(9:11:53)]

Interviewer 1: Great, okay. So tell me who Abdul Aziz is.

[(9:12:02)]Interviewee: Okay. I don't know much. I don't want to say too much. [(9:12:09)]

Interviewer 1: No, no. Abdul Aziz is the person who oversees the management of the island.

[(9:12:13)]Interviewee:Yes. [(9:12:14)]

Interviewer 2: What is his role in EPA?

[(9:12:16)]Interviewee: He's the Director of Marine Sustainability. [(9:12:22)]

Interviewer 2: Okay, that's how he introduced himself.

[(9:12:25)]Interviewee: Okay. Abdul Aziz is the director of the Marine Sustainability Department of EPA. He is the person that oversees the management of the island. [(9:12:37)]

Interviewer 1: So, he is providing the team of people to clean the beaches and he comes to see how things are and help them focus on what needs to be done.

[(9:12:50)]Interviewee: Okay. [(9:12:51)]

Interviewer 2: Those team of people who were here yesterday, are they EPA? Are they full-time EPA people or are they brought in? Do you know?

[(9:12:59)]Interviewee:I recognize two of them, which I know are EPA. [(9:13:05)]

Interviewer 2: Yeah, so they managed that like Abdul Aziz provides EPA personnel?

[(9:13:08)] Interviewee: Yes, okay. [(9:13:09)]

Interviewer 2: So again, we'll just plug and blow them up that they're with EPA.

[(9:13:13)]Interviewee: Okay. So Abdul Aziz is providing a team of people from EPA to help us with the cleaning and their team is going to be crucial for what we need to do right now. And later on as well, we may have more than one effort for the cleaning of the beaches in preparation for the nesting season. [(9:13:34)]

Interviewer 1: And obviously, Abdul Aziz is aware of a lot of the issues so you're not educating him, but you're helping him to work out what needs to be prioritized, right?

[(9:13:44)]Interviewee: Yes, exactly. [(9:13:45)]

Interviewer 1: So if you could explain that to us in detail.

[(9:13:46)]Interviewee: Okay. We work in collaboration with Abdul Aziz. The two of us, of course, have to look into things that are relevant for the conservation of turtles in the island. And one of those things is for me to inform him what are the beaches that need to be prioritized for these cleaning efforts. We will have to look into this together. And hopefully, I can inform the team that he's bringing in, as well, where we need to focus on and what are the things we really need to remove from the beaches. [(9:14:21)]

Interviewer 1: You're coordinating with him so it's not just a one-off effort, is that right?

[(9:14:26)]Interviewee: Correct.[(9:14:28)]

Interviewer 1: So explain the process then, over the next few months.

[(9:14:30)]Interviewee: So now, we will have to work very closely with Abdul Aziz in terms of all of the activities that are related to the nesting season. This is the first effort- the preparation, it entails not only the surveys for the cleaning and the cleaning itself but also, how our teams are going to work together during the nesting season. The researchers and the logistics are needed to be coordinated for this to happen. So we will also need some of the support of his team to be able to go through the nesting season.[(9:15:10)]

Interviewer 1: Good. Could you also just in case mention that there would be other organizations as well. You don't have to be specific. We could mention EMEC. Let's do a version where we mention EMEC and a version that we don't mention EMEC, okay?

[(9:15:26)]Interviewee:Okay. [(9:15:27)]

Interviewer: So there are other organizations that will help from time to time as well so introduce them as well.

[(9:15:33)]Interviewee: Okay, yeah. The Marine Turtle Conservation Monitoring and Research Program works in collaboration with other entities as well. So through the season, we are supported by EMEC, for example. Their team is brought as well to the island to help with the monitoring of the turtles and their protection. [(9:15:55)]

Interviewer 1: Okay. Let's do another version where you don't specifically mention EMEC. We'll just take in, "Various groups will come from time to time to clean beaches."

[(9:16:08)]Interviewee: Okay. So The Marine Turtle Conservation Monitoring and Research Program works together with other organizations that help us with their teams to go through the nesting season and help us with the monitoring day and night. This is valuable for us. [(9:16:26)]

Interviewer 1: Good. Okay. What would be the next step in the process? Once you set the beach cleaning up, when will we see you and the team back here?

[(9:16:45)]Interviewee: Okay, right. That's a good question, though, because we will be here as well for a second cleaning effort just right before the nesting season starts in February. We will be bringing more people to focus on the beaches that we need to clean. So what is happening now is just an assessment and the initial cleaning of plastics like bottles and all of the things that are very obvious to the eyes. But then, what we will do in February is just to focus on those materials that we've identified in the survey that needs to be removed from the beaches. So that is going to be a bit of more in-depth cleaning because we are going to be very close to the start of the nesting season. [(9:17:41)]

[(9:17:45)]Interviewee: Okay. Can I add something else? [(9:17:52)]

Interviewer 1: Yes.

[(9:17:54)]Interviewee: And the other side of things as well is, we will come to the island in February to organize a group training with the research team and also other people that will be involved at the beginning of the monitoring and through the nesting season. We are going to obviously run an initial training for everyone onsite so they get familiar with the area itself and recognize all of the beaches around. They get familiar with the terrain, but also, I can explain easily what are the techniques on how we do the monitoring so when the time comes they're fully ready to start. [(9:18:37)]

Interviewer 1: We'll probably deal with this more whenever the time comes, but maybe I'll just get you to address that in a way. Last year, you were doing most of the work, but what you're hoping to do now is to bring some of the members of the team into more leadership positions. Just explain more about what will happen when dividing them into teams.

[(9:19:08)]Interviewee: Okay. So last nesting season was an initial season to try and test the involvement of new people in the program and to establish a permanent research team for the monitoring of turtles. With the researchers from EPA, specifically women that are willing to get involved in this program. Last year was like a trial let's say. We did a good first-year foundation with the team. What I hope now for this nesting season is to see the team grow a little bit and take a step forward to the next level trying to be a bit more of a leader in the activities that need to be done on the field. I would like them to take that initiative, and also to play a little bit more of a leadership role now that they know how the work is and how things need to be done. So hopefully, we can see that happening this year. [(9:20:14)]

Interviewer 1: It's quite interesting that Halima and Marvah have already stepped up, not necessarily at the management level, but they're doing a lot of work themselves, unsupervised. It's quite good to see people moving up through the organization. That's something that motivates you, is that right?

 [(9:20:38)]Interviewee: Completely, yes. [(9:20:39)]

Interviewer 2: Is that an EPA initiative? Would it be correct if we're saying that one of the initiatives in EPA is that we have all of these international experts, but what the program is, is to empower them with all of our experience and information, so eventually, when we leave...

[(9:20:57)]Interviewee: Yes, definitely. [(9:20:58)]

Interviewer 2: I think that's important because I know that's what you've been saying to me. However, you want to say that, in terms of you passing on all of your experience and knowledge to young Emirati women. So maybe in two or three years, they're going to be the ones whose training the next generation, yeah?

[(9:21:14)]Interviewee: Exactly. [(9:21:15)]

Interviewer 2: How are you going to say that?

[(9:21:17)]Interviewee: All right. So one of the missions of the program is to establish a strong foundation for us to be able to train the next generation of researchers that are going to be looking at this. There is a lot of international expertise within EPA and I'm one of that persons as well. My role here, as I see it, is also to pass on my knowledge to the new generation of local researchers so they can empower themselves and to feel that they own this project and that they will look after it through the years to come. What I wanted to do is also integrate not only men on this project but also to open this opportunity for Emirati women to feel empowered, able, and capable as well to run this kind of initiative in their own country. [(9:22:23)]

Interviewer 2: Brilliant. That's great.

Interviewer 1: Do you want anything else you want to cover at the moment?

Interviewer 2: Do you want to mention anything about--

[END]