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research education conservation



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Reef Check Foundation

annual report 2005



Saving Reefs Worldwide

Reef Check Foundation

Founded in 1997, Reef Check is a non-profit organization dedicated to marine conservation, especially tropical coral reefs and California’s rocky reef ecosystems.

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highlights of 2005

2005 was a great year for Reef Check but a challenging one for coral reefs. We successfully completed our transition from a university-based program at UCLA to an independent non-profit organization. Our mission also expanded from a narrow focus on community-based volunteer monitoring of coral reefs to one focused more broadly on marine conservation. We began work on a number of major new projects.

The year literally started with a “bang” as coral reefs in the Indian Ocean were still shaking from aftershocks from the December 26th earthquake and tsunami. This natural disaster damaged reefs and took human lives in countries as far away as Africa. Reef Check responded rapidly by teaming up with Quiksilver and SurfAid to survey the immediate impacts. Dramatic photos taken by RC Scientist Dr. Craig Shuman showed unprecedented damage with entire islands such as Simeulue tilted and reefs lifted out of the water and killed. A detailed survey effort was launched in October to study the status of the affected reefs in Aceh in collaboration with Living Oceans Foundation and IUCN. This study showed that sedimentation is one of the lingering after-effects of land-clearing by the tsunami, but the reefs were otherwise not too badly damaged. The study concluded that overfishing, a controllable problem, was the worst impact facing Aceh’s reefs, and recommended establishing a long-term monitoring program in the area to support integrated coastal management and the setting up of marine protected areas. A section of the report was included in the Global Coral Reef Management Network’s Status Report released in February 2006. Our report is available from our website.



A major guiding philosophy of Reef Check is to involve the private sector and to use business incentives to promote conservation. During 2005, with a grant from the US Agency for International Development and United Nations Foundation, Reef Check moved closer to realizing the dream of full implementation of our EcoAction Tourism program. This program aims to provide a menu of exciting coral reef educational



materials and training which tourists can purchase while on holiday. The sales of training and materials are expected to help fund local programs, as well as to provide an incentive to harness the private sector to spread the word about the value of coral reefs and problems facing them. A multi-level education program was designed and materials were created and are being test-marketed in Hawai’i, Dominican Republic, Philippines and Indonesia. As part of this program, we also began to market Reef Check EcoExpeditions to allow recreational divers to join with RC scientists to survey coral reefs in different parts of the world.

When I returned to California in 2000, I was shocked to discover the poor state of marine conservation and to learn that the problems of overfishing in the Golden State are no different from those found in developing countries. Clearly, California needed a Reef Check program as much as tropical coral reef countries. Another milestone was achieved in 2005 when we began to design our first temperate ecosystem program to monitor the marine life living on the rocky reefs of California. Funded by a grant from Resources Legacy Fund, we are initially implementing Reef Check in Central California, and will eventually expand to the entire state. This year, the public can participate in a standardized rocky reef monitoring program and ultimately will be able to view the status of the ecosystem on the web. Most importantly, the new RC California program will also link ocean enthusiasts in California with those in tropical coral reef nations and provide opportunities to learn from each other through expeditions, joint surveys and training.

Reef Check acts at both the grassroots level and at the highest levels of international policy making. In 2005, Reef Check was the co-sponsor of a major resolution at the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) meeting to warn governments and the private sector about the dangers of inappropriate use of engineered structures to rehabilitate coral reefs. While artificial reefs made of concrete or other materials may be useful for certain specific applications, we have been increasingly

concerned about the proliferation of artificial reef projects in places where coral reefs would naturally recover if properly cared for. The resolution was adopted by ICRI and can be found at ICRIForum and on our website: www.icriforum.org/secretariat/pdf/ICRI_resolution_Restoration.pdf

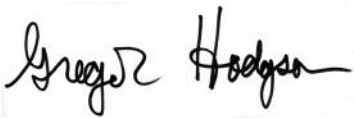
A major problem facing coral reefs in a number of countries is an unregulated trade in marine ornamentals. The Reef Check Fisheries Program moved ahead quickly in 2005 with the start of the Marine Aquarium Market Transformation Initiative (MAMTI), a \$6.6 million Global Environmental Facility project funded through the World Bank’s International Finance Corporation. Working with two partners, the Marine Aquarium Council (MAC) of Honolulu and Conservation and Community Investment Forum of San Francisco, RC is using the marine aquarium trade to leverage conservation gains in two key high biodiversity countries, the Philippines and Indonesia. RC has designed a high-end monitoring protocol called MAQTRAC to carry out baseline surveys and to track the status of fish and shellfish stocks used in the marine aquarium trade. We use MAC certification as an incentive for local fishermen’s groups to set up Marine Protected Areas in Indonesia and the Philippines. We also establish a Fisheries Management Plan and a rehabilitation plan for each reef area chosen for the project. Innovative work has also been carried out with a French company Ecocean, to test the capture and grow out of young fish (post-larvae), so that mortality can be decreased and the fish released to the reefs as a method of “kick-starting” fish stock enhancement. In addition, Reef Check is strengthening existing marine protected areas in the two countries and creating new ones such as in the Polillo Islands. We welcome supporters to visit our Reef Check offices in Bali, Manila and Cebu to learn more.

On the outreach front, Reef Check and long-term sponsor Quiksilver worked together to communicate a marine conservation message to thousands of surf enthusiasts during the Crossing visit to the US West Coast. This extremely successful program was a culmination of the 5-year old partnership that enabled RC scientists to survey remote reefs throughout the world while based on the Indies Trader vessel. In May, Body Glove invited RC to partner again in the “Kona Classic” in an underwater photography and reef education program in Hawai’i. Hundreds of kids learned about coral reef conservation thanks to gift items provided by Body Glove. On the celebrity front, RC Board Member Lenore Marusak facilitated Reef Check being featured in one episode of MTV’s Trippin’ show with Cameron Diaz, Jessica Alba and RC Dominican

Republic Director Dr. Ruben Torres. This show was broadcast around the world and seen by an estimated 30 million young viewers.

Unfortunately, the year ended with yet another challenge for coral reefs – this time a major bleaching event in the Caribbean. RC teamed up with US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to put teams in the water to survey the damage. Despite bleaching of up to 90% of corals at many reefs from Jamaica to Venezuela, initial results indicate that damage was not as bad as feared, and mortality was lower than expected. A joint report will be issued this year.

In 2006, Reef Check is concentrating on completing the educational materials needed for the multi-level EcoAction Program, training as many dive masters and scuba instructors as possible, adding new Marine Protected Areas with better coral reef management in the Philippines and Indonesia as well as continuing to support our global coral reef monitoring efforts and the new California program. With your support, we will continue to achieve major gains on conservation’s front lines.



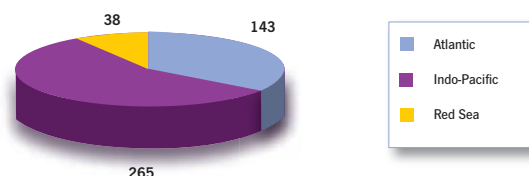
Gregor Hodgson, PhD
Executive Director



Global Status of Coral Reefs

In 2005, **446** Reef Check surveys were conducted at **348** sites in **42** countries and territories around the world. This brings our total to **4237** surveys at **2299** sites in **82** countries and territories worldwide.

2005 Reef Check Surveys by Region



Location of Reef Check surveys in 2005



“The results of Reef Check surveys are an important contribution to the scientific assessment of the world’s coral reefs and the search for solutions to the crisis threatening them.”

Dr. Terry Done
Australian Institute of Marine Science



Tsunami and Earthquake Damage to Coral Reefs of Aceh, Indonesia

The December 26, 2004 earthquake and tsunami precipitated one of the greatest humanitarian crises in history with an estimated 232,000 lives lost and 1.2 million people displaced. It was also feared that the earthquake and ensuing giant tsunami waves, reaching as high as 20 meters in some areas, had severely damaged coral reefs. These fears were confirmed by a rapid Reef Check, Quiksilver and Surf Aid expedition in February 2005 that documented large areas of reef raised out of the water at Simeulue Island, resulting in widespread coral mortality. Recognizing the importance of this situation to food supply, Reef Check asked the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) to partner in a survey of Aceh’s coral reefs.

A multinational team of seven scientists and three support crew carried out the Aceh expedition in October. The expedition covered the area affected by the earthquakes and



Shattered Heliopora on Pulau Wei. The earthquake shattered a 7 km-long stand of blue coral (*Heliopora coerulea*) on Pulau Weh. (Photo by A. Hagan)

tsunami – over 660 kilometers of Aceh. Surveys were carried out using manta tows and the globally-standard Reef Check protocol.



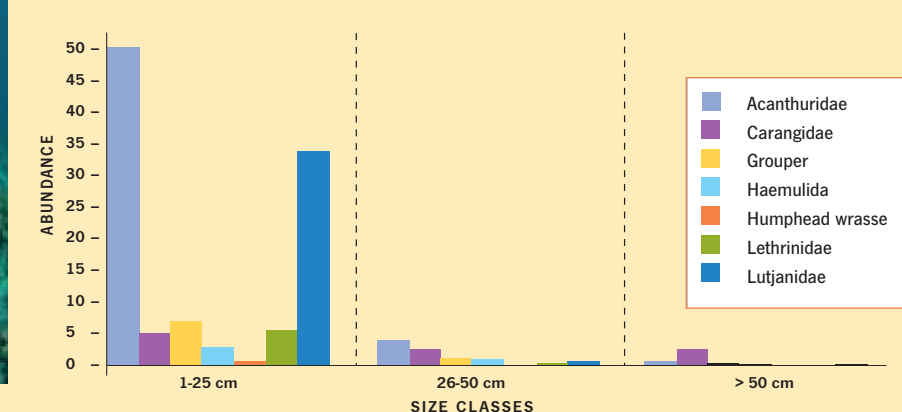
Overturned table coral, Pulau Rondo (photo: A. Hagan). Unlike the overturned corals of mainland Aceh, some of those at Pulau Rondo were alive ten months after the tsunami.

Despite significant destruction on land, relatively little damage was observed underwater. Damage included large areas of uplifted reefs, shattered beds of coral and overturned coral heads. No tsunami damage was observed at more than half of the reefs surveyed. Even in areas where severe tsunami damage was recorded, there were still large areas of intact, living coral reef present nearby. These areas may act as an important source of larvae for recolonization of the damaged reefs. However, of the 5,280 quadrats surveyed for recruits, only 18 recruits were recorded, and 15 of these were in the Banyak Island group. This low density of coral recruits indicates that recovery is proceeding very slowly.

The earthquake damage to coral reefs was more severe than that caused by the tsunami. Damage included uplifted reefs, shattered beds of coral, and overturned coral colonies. Several islands such as Simeulue were tilted, with one end rising as much as 2 m while the other end descended a similar amount. This caused tens of hectares of living coral reef to be raised above the high tide level and killed.

On land, the earthquakes and tsunami caused slope failures and removed vegetation facilitating increased erosion, sediment transport, and discharge during rainy periods. In addition to inhibiting coral settlement, sedimentation can directly injure and kill adult corals. A low abundance and small mean size of the ten primary food fish families in Aceh was recorded suggesting that stocks of these fish are overfished. Evidence of destructive fishing practices was common. Overfishing can lead to an imbalanced ecosystem in which the lack of herbivorous fish allows fleshy algae to overgrow corals and dominate the coral reef.

The findings from this study suggest that sedimentation (exacerbated by the tsunami), overfishing, and the use of destructive fishing



Food fish. Mean abundance per 100 m² of three different size classes of ten common food fish taxa. Few fish greater than 25 cm in length and none longer than 50 cm were recorded (n=10 surveys). * indicates mean number of Acanthurids in the 1-25 cm size class was greater than 50 (mean = 117).

methods may represent a greater threat to Aceh’s reef ecosystems than the immediate impacts of the earthquakes and tsunami.

The earthquakes and tsunami have left the Acehenese more dependent than ever on their marine resources for survival. Coral reefs can recover relatively quickly following a reduction in

fishing pressure. There is now an opportunity to invest in a long-term strategy to rehabilitate the marine resources of Aceh through education, coastal management, regular monitoring and the establishment and maintenance of marine protected areas.

Reef Check and NOAA Team Up to Track Caribbean Bleaching Event

Last year was the hottest ever in recorded history and corals of the Eastern Caribbean felt the effects. Seawater temperatures were raised up to 3°C above normal for 15 weeks, causing a massive coral “bleaching” event on reefs from Jamaica to Venezuela and potentially killing a significant percentage of the region’s corals. Reef Check has teamed up with the US National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to track the impacts. Reef Check teams from ten countries (Belize, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Netherlands Antilles, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, and Venezuela) set out to monitor the effects of bleaching on their local reefs.

“Bleaching” occurs when corals are stressed by environmental conditions such as unusually high sea temperatures, low salinity, or exposure to toxic chemicals. The syndrome is characterized by the white appearance of the corals caused by a loss of microscopic algae called zooxanthellae that live within coral tissues, providing them with a food supply, as well as their distinctive coloring. If the symbiotic algae do not return to the corals within a few weeks, the corals often die.

A special website set up by NOAA allows users to track the ocean surface temperature as it begins to increase above normal for a particular time of

year. This helps scientists to predict where bleaching is likely to be taking place.

In 1997-8, the previous record hot year, up to 90% of corals were killed on Indian Ocean reefs in locations such as the Maldives. As global warming continues to heat up the earth, large scale bleaching events are increasing in frequency. With an expected 0.6°C to 2.4°C rise in temperature during this century, bleaching events may also become more destructive to coral reefs.



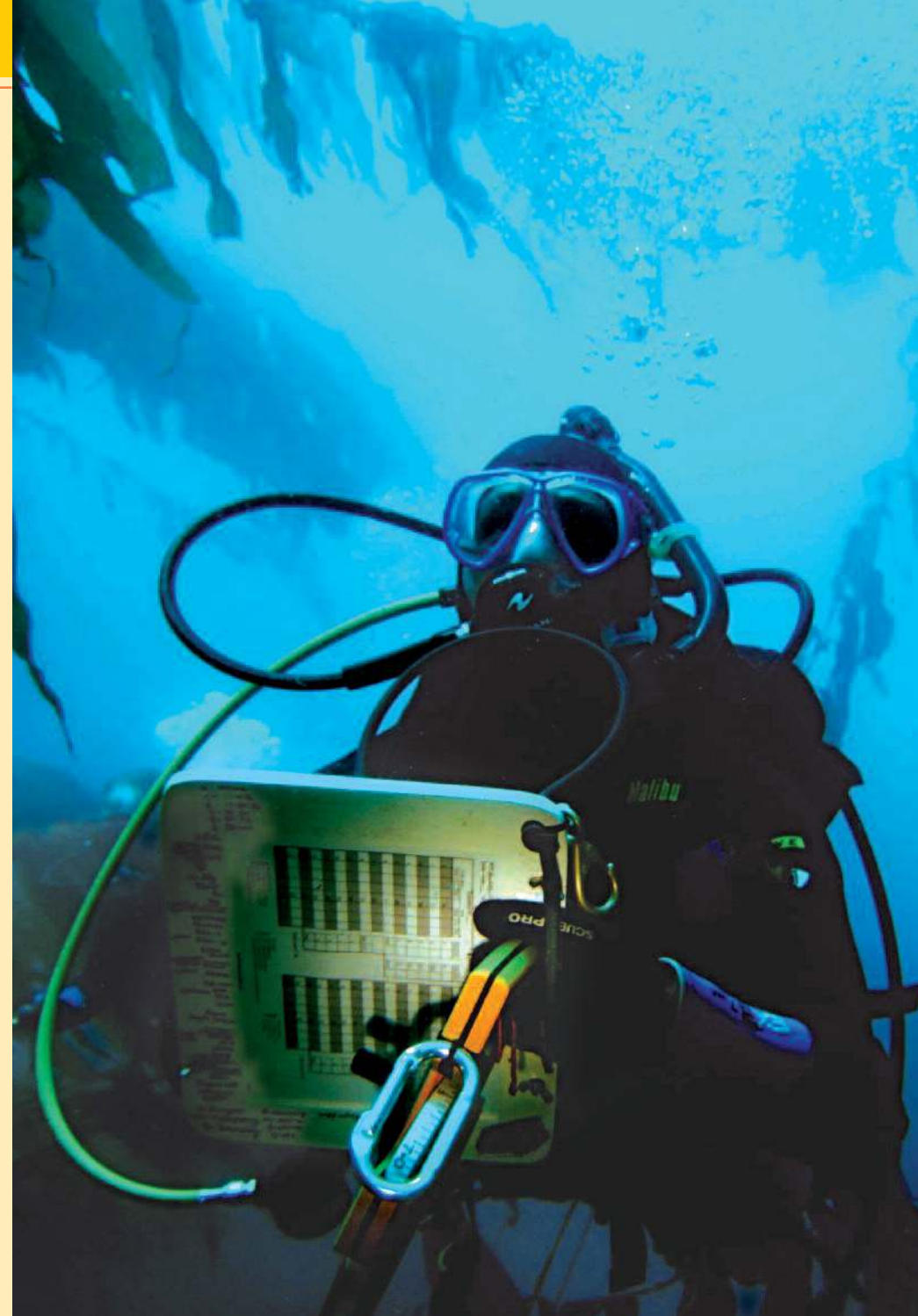
Reef Check California is underway

The Joint Oceans Commission, a merger of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission, recently released a report grading progress toward implementing the recommendations outlined in their 2004 reports. Unfortunately, the issue areas of “research, science, and education” received very poor grades. Research was found to be lacking due to the absence of an integrated monitoring program capable of providing decision makers with needed information. The absence of an ocean and coastal stewardship ethic indicated that education and outreach activities were failing to enhance the public’s view of ocean resources, thereby hampering support for reform and funding. Reef Check’s new California Program was specifically designed to address these exact issues by establishing a coordinated monitoring program and developing an educated constituency supportive of conservation and science-based management.

Our first task during the development of the program was to create a scientifically robust monitoring protocol. The goal was to develop a simple and relatively rapid survey method that would help assess the health of California’s coastal rocky reefs. We performed a thorough review of existing monitoring programs and assembled a panel of academic, government, and dive industry experts to guide the development of the draft protocol. The draft monitoring protocol was then put through extensive field testing to ensure our research objectives were achieved while keeping the protocol accessible to trained volunteers. Our last step was to develop comprehensive teaching and testing curricula to train experienced recreational divers to accurately perform the monitoring.

We anticipate a very busy year in 2006. The demand for places in our initial five training workshops was so overwhelming that additional trainings were added. Between training periods, we plan to get in the water as much as possible to collect data.

The final plan for the new network of marine reserves on California’s central coast is expected to be approved this year by the Fish and Game Commission, with implementation not far behind. Consequently, we have a very narrow



window to collect the critically important “before” data needed to evaluate the success or failure of the new network. We will also continue to develop partnerships with groups already out on the water, such as the Monterey and Long Beach Aquarium and research diving programs at UCSB, UCSC, UC Berkeley, UCLA and Carmel High School.

In addition to trainings and research on the central coast, we will work to expand the program into Northern and Southern California. We hope to achieve this through new grants and our “1,000 Diver” membership campaign.

I hope to see you all in the water soon.



Craig Shuman

Dr. Craig Shuman

eco•expeditions

Reef Check’s EcoExpeditions offer divers the chance to visit some of world’s foremost diving destinations and the opportunity to help keep those areas destinations. All EcoExpedition participants become RC certified team members and conduct surveys as part of their holiday experience.

In 2005 RC EcoExpeditions went to a number of exciting destinations. Reef Check partnered with the Shedd Aquarium of Chicago for the third year to run an expedition to the Bahamas for middle school children. RC EcoExpeditions also ventured to Myanmar (Burma) and far-away reaches of the Phillipines – Puerto Galera, Batangas and Apo Reef, Mindoro. Moreover, RC partners with other conservation organizations that conduct RC surveys all over the world as part of their expeditions. These include: Coral Cay, Frontier, Earthwatch and Blue Ventures.

In 2006, Reef Check will team up with local divers and snorkelers for even more EcoExpeditions. Traveling to unique destinations, including Egypt, the Cayman Islands, and the Philippines, Reef Check scientists will guide travelers as they learn about coral reef ecology and local culture.

Reef Check and The Quiksilver Crossing

2005 marked yet one more year of one of the greatest expeditions in the history of surfing, “The Quiksilver Crossing.” The mission of the venture is to explore the world’s oceans for world-class waves, demonstrate empathy for local culture and customs, and give something back to the environment. Reef Check was chosen as the best organization to carry out environmental work as the “on board scientist” for the Indies Trader vessel. Reef Check scientists conducted surveys and trained teams in the remote locations visited, and when in port worked to educate the public about the world’s coral reef crisis and marine conservation solutions. In total, 15 Reef Check scientists

have spent six years and traveled over 90 thousand nautical miles with the Quiksilver Crossing studying the health of remote reef ecosystems at 70 sites in three oceans.

During the Summer of 2005, the Crossing toured the West Coast of North America to promote the spirit and mission of the expedition. The boat made several stops in California including San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Morro Bay, Monterey, and San Francisco.

The Amadis Project

While the Quiksilver Crossing was based on a motor vessel, another exciting expedition is based on a sailboat. The Amadis Project is an around-the-world sailing odyssey with the mission of training communities about the value of coral reefs, their ecology, and how to scientifically monitor them and to help further public stewardship and understanding of the threats facing coral reefs around the world. The Amadis Project is working closely with Reef Check and regional partners to conduct surveys of coral reef health and human impact, coordinate and train new Reef Check teams, and to assist several partner projects by providing a research vessel and team of five divers. In 2005 The Amadis Project sailed through the Caribbean and the South Pacific.





“Reef Check has created a global coral reef monitoring program using a mixture of scientists and recreational divers that is providing coral reef managers in many countries with important and timely data.”

Professor Richard Kenchington
Chair of the Board of the International Coral Reef Action Network

The Challenges of Marine Conservation

The changes seen in many marine habitats in the past 30 years paint a clear picture of the rapid destruction of key habitats. In the 1970’s many reefs in countries such as Jamaica and the Philippines were comprised of 85% living corals and were abundant with fish. Today, a good portion of those reefs are covered by a thick mat of algae and the few remaining fish are small. On the same note, abalone, which was once common in local markets, is now a rare sight in Southern California.

At the risk of oversimplification, the problem we face is that the human population and consumption are both increasing whereas the area of reefs and fish populations are decreasing. Aquaculture is one solution. But the level of research and development funding invested in aquaculture of high-demand marine species has been frustratingly low. Therefore, no one knows how to culture the humphead wrasse – a food fish that can sell for up to \$200 per pound. Nor do we know how to raise most aquarium fish. Some, such as a large Blueface Angelfish, sell for hundreds of dollars per piece.

Reef Check addresses these issues through scientific research and educational outreach. On the scientific front, Reef Check is working with its many partners to try to bring the best science and technology together to find ways to rehabilitate fish stocks.

At the end of the day, however, the primary challenge facing marine conservation is neither technical nor scientific; the real challenge lies in generating public response to environmental issues. Reef Check strives to raise the level of public awareness on marine issues and to advocate and facilitate implementation of solutions. It turns out that most of the problems facing the marine environment have fairly simple technical solutions – reduce pollution and fishing. If, for example, 30% of nearshore areas became effective no-take fisheries management zones, many habitats now in critical condition

could be protected. The lack of public awareness and the corresponding lack of public pressure on governments have delayed implementation of these and many other simple solutions.

The Marine Tourism Alliance and the EcoAction Program

The Marine Tourism Alliance project is jointly funded by the United States Agency for International Development and the United Nations Foundation through the International Coral Reef Action Network. The project’s primary objective is to develop and implement the Reef Check EcoAction program – an exciting initiative that provides incentives for divers to learn about coral reefs and creates a business opportunity for hotels and dive shops to offer Reef Check certification to their clients.

Engaging Youth
Reef Check believes that empowering children with an appreciation of the marine environment is critical for long-term conservation. This year Reef Check will release a key part of the EcoAction program – an EcoAdventure coral reef book for kids. The book includes text, photos, and learning activities. Reef Check Board Member and Body Glove CEO, Russ Lesser, facilitated the layout and illustration of the book by Body Glove graphic artist Christine Braun.

Assisting Recreational Divers Make a Difference
The EcoAction program also has a component that allows recreational divers to become Reef Check certified team members. Proceeds generated from the materials and training are channeled back into local conservation initiatives. By selling this program to holiday travelers, our local teams can create their own revenue to support their conservation activities.

EcoAction Program offers two levels of training to the recreational diver: the Introduction to Reef Check and the Reef Check EcoMonitoring

Package. The Introduction to Reef Check is an entry level program similar to a “discover scuba” course; materials will be available in English, Spanish, Japanese, French and Italian. Students who complete the Reef Check EcoMonitoring Package become fluent in the Reef Check surveying protocol and receive certifications as Reef Check Certified Divers. Stay tuned in 2006 for further developments with this exciting program!

Reef Check Philippines and Indonesia partner in the Marine Aquarium Market Transformation Initiative (MAMTI)

Why would Reef Check, a conservation organization, work with the aquarium trade, which has been perceived as contributing to the damage of coral reefs through the use of cyanide, habitat destruction, and overcollection? The Marine Aquarium Transformation Initiative (MAMTI) is an opportunity to fast track coral reef conservation by using business incentives.

MAMTI is a five-year project funded by the Global Environment Facility through the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to transform the marine aquarium trade into a sustainable, environmentally friendly business that enhances biodiversity conservation of coral reefs. MAMTI brings together a strategic partnership of three international non-governmental organizations: the Marine Aquarium Council of Honolulu (MAC), the Conservation and Community Investment Forum of San Francisco (CCIF), and Reef Check. The Marine Aquarium Council has developed a certification program that was designed to eliminate destructive fishing and maximize the care and handling of marine ornamental species during transport and storage. Most importantly, the incentives provided by certification can be used to leverage the establishment of no-take marine protected areas in every location that is certified. Many previous attempts to establish marine protected areas have failed due to the lack of financial incentives. The project goal is to transform 17% of global aquarium trade and affect the entire value chain – from collection in the source countries to marketing in the consumer countries. The approach is integrated and uses market-based instruments to achieve conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and poverty alleviation.

Reef Check’s role with MAMTI
As a conservation organization, Reef Check brings its wealth of scientific experience in the

Philippines and Indonesia to the project. Reef Check designed an underwater monitoring protocol called MAQTRAC specifically to track the impacts of ornamental collection on coral reefs. Reef Check is responsible for coral reef monitoring, fisheries stock assessment, rehabilitation and the establishment of marine protected areas. The Reef Check MAMTI team in the Philippines has a staff of fourteen highly-experienced and motivated scientists, with backgrounds in coral reef ecology, social science, and integrated coastal management. Reef Check Indonesia has six additional coral reef specialists.

A highly detailed process has been developed for choosing sites for the project. To be eligible, sites must already have an active marine aquarium collection business in operation; this assures that MAMTI is not promoting the expansion of the trade into new areas. One of the first steps is for Reef Check staff to observe fishermen in action and survey the habitats of interest to generate a baseline for the condition and status of commercial stocks.

Reef Check’s role in the MAMTI project extends to working with marine ornamental collectors and their communities to design and implement community and government co-managed “no-take” Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Reef Check Staff help delineate reef enhancement zones within designated collection areas to ensure that natural rehabilitation of fish and invertebrate stocks can occur in an appropriate location of sufficient size.

To supplement the marine sanctuary program, Reef Check is also testing a number of methods of fisheries rehabilitation. In particular, Reef Check is partnering with Ecocean, a French company, to test the use of special “light traps” designed to catch young fish returning to the reef following their planktonic larval phase. A test facility has been established in Tubigon, Bohol, Philippines and the initial results have been encouraging; dozens of species of reef fish have been captured and raised to juvenile stages for release back to the reef. The results of these experiments will provide invaluable insights into the "fast track" restocking of MPAs. Reef Check started out as an organization primarily concerned with community-level coral reef monitoring as a first step leading to marine conservation. In the MAMTI project, Reef Check scientists continue to play a critical scientific role in tracking reef health through MAQTRAC monitoring, but are also directly involved in coral reef conservation through the design and establishment of dozens of marine protected areas in the two most species-rich coral reef countries in the world.





Local Commitment to Conservation: A Vanuatu Success Story

Prior to 2001 artisanal fishing pressure was high around the islands of Nguna and Pele in Vanuatu and food resources were on the decline. A US Peace Corps project was established to facilitate a community-based management program to protect resources and develop additional livelihoods. These villages set up their own self-governing committees for the management of the area and established alternative livelihoods through tourism and the aquaculture of giant clam and trochus.

The Nguna-Pele MPA was established in 2001 to protect reef resources from over-harvesting and poor waste disposal practices, and as a means to attract tourists to the area. Each MPA has its own staff that is selected from the local communities. These staff members conduct monthly Reef Check surveys at 40 sites, monitor the clam and trochus populations, and report on their findings at monthly village meetings. The surveys indicate a 15% increase in the abundance of large food fish and a 38% increase in new coral recruits since the start of the reserves. These encouraging results coupled with the MPAs' success at attracting numerous international tourists have helped to build community support for the project. In addition, this enterprise was recently awarded second place in the "World Challenge", a competition run in association with Shell, which is aimed at



finding groups from around the world that have shown enterprise and innovation at the grassroots level.

The Nguna-Pele MPA success story is now being used as a national example of what communities can achieve. In 2004 the Vanuatu Department of Fisheries began to establish a national Reef Check program. With assistance from scientists and volunteers from Reef Check Australia and



Fiji, a series of training workshops were run for Peace Corps and Ni-Vanuatu volunteers from 15 locations throughout the nation. Further training workshops are planned during 2006 to expand the network of Reef Check teams and build capacity within local communities to ensure a sustainable future for their marine resources.

Reef Check Vanuatu and the Vanuatu Department of Fisheries work together to monitor coral reefs and to assist communities like Nguna-Pele, Pango and to use the data to manage their communities' marine resources and marine protected areas. For example, the Wan-Tok Environment Center, a local NGO based on Santo, is using Reef Check to collect baseline data at community conservation areas. Also, dive businesses like Hideaway Island Marine Sanctuary and Resort and Sailaway Cruises rely on Reef Check to monitor the health of coral reefs where they operate.

An excellent example of collaboration was an expedition organized by the Vanuatu Scuba Operators Association, and involving a team of researchers from Reef Check Australia and the Department of Fisheries to study the effects of aquarium trade collecting on local recreational dive sites. Data collected during this expedition is being used to develop a management plan for the aquarium trade industry.

Hong Kong: An Inspiration for Community-Based Monitoring

Reef Check Hong Kong is a successful example of what can happen when a government agency picks up Reef Check as a formal monitoring program and provides a small amount of funding and organizational assistance. There are now about thirty teams carrying out RC monitoring in Hong Kong every year. Every year, each group chooses to survey one reef. It is a major activity for local dive shops, academics and environmental NGOs to work together. The results are analyzed and posted on the local Reef Check Hong Kong website in both English and Chinese.

public awareness



“Growing up in Hawai’i, I learned about the value of coral reefs. Reef Check’s unique educational efforts are very inspiring and highlight the urgent need to reverse the global coral reef crisis.”

Kelly Hu, Actress and Reef Check Spokesperson



The Body Glove “Kona Classic”

Last May, two dozen amateur photographers spent a week practicing their craft with five professionals during the Body Glove Kona Classic 2005 on the Big Island of Hawai’i. For the second year, Reef Check invited the photographers to take aim at Reef Check indicator species in Hawai’i and to shoot participants carrying out surveys. A silent auction during the final award ceremony raised funds in support of RC. During "Kids Day," about 100 children, ages 6-17, were taught some basic do's and don'ts of coral reefs and then quizzed. Successful answers were rewarded with a snorkeling set, rash guard or other items donated by Body Glove.



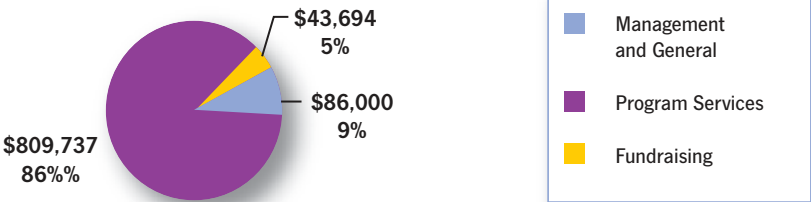
Cameron Diaz Trippin’ with Reef Check

In 2005 Reef Check Scientist Ruben Torres was featured in an episode of Trippin’, a new MTV travel/environment reality show starring Cameron Diaz and her friends. Filmed in Honduras, the edu-tainment show was aimed at providing an environmental message.

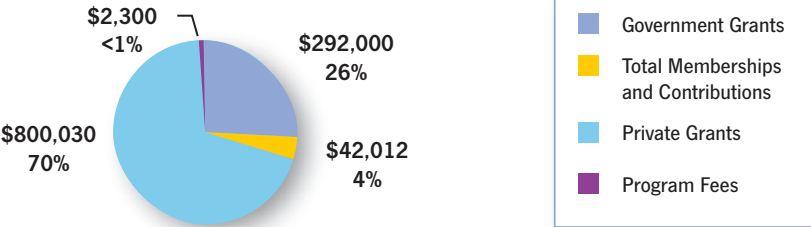
funding

In 2005 Reef Check continued to be recognized for its scientific expertise. Nearly 1.1 million dollars in grant funding was awarded to Reef Check. Major sources included the **United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP)** and the **World Bank**. Perhaps even more impressive is the total amount of in-kind donations received from our **volunteer teams all over the world**. Of the over \$165,000 received in in-kind contributions, Reef Check volunteer teams' efforts totaled over \$133,000 in value.

Expenses in 2005



Revenue in 2005



Increasing revenue through membership is a major target for Reef Check in 2006. With the launch of Reef Check California and our Eco-Action Program, we expect our membership base to grow.

Our program services accounted for 86% of our total expenditures. The heavy cost of launching two new programs in 2005 kept this number lower than we would have liked, but it does indeed demonstrate that the vast majority of your donation dollars are going directly to conserving reefs.

Reef Check in 2005

Total Revenue	\$ 1,136,342
Total Expenses	\$ 939,341
Revenue - Expenses	\$ 197,001
In-kind Contributions:	\$ 165,300

our thanks to

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