



News from the Reef Check Global Network

Site Spotlight: Guatemala

Volume 6, Issue 1

Launch of Reef Check Guatemala

The end of 2005 saw the beginning of a new Reef Check program in Guatemala, a country located in central America with reefs on both Pacific and Caribbean coasts. In late November, biologist Guillermo "Mito" Paz, from Green Reef Institution of Belize, introduced personnel from local NGOs, government agencies, universities, as well as local fishermen and dive school staff to the Reef Check monitoring methodology. Staff from the Fundación Mario Dary Rivera (FUNDARY) coordinated the workshops, held at the Biological Research Station "Julio Obiols", located in the Punta de Manabique Wildlife Refuge. The participants were divided into 4 training workshops— three for 30 local



Group of participants show off their Reef Check field guides
Photo: Mito Paz

fishermen representing all Caribbean regions of Guatemala and the fourth for the representatives of the other sectors.

Guatemala is one of the participating countries in the ICRAN Meso-American Reef Project, funded by USAID/UNF; RC's role in the project is to encourage the involvement of local fishermen in coral reef conservation. It is hoped that these trainings will give an incentive to this important socio-economic sector to switch to tourism-related activities. Since many Guatemalan reefs are at a depth greater than 20ft, these fishermen will need to be scuba trained in order to survey their reefs.

Overall, the first training was promising; participants are enthusiastic to form the Guatemala Reef Check team and are ready to conduct more surveys. For more information on RC Guatemala, contact our coordinator: Lucia M. Gutierrez: imgutierrez@att.net.



Mito Paz, RC Belize coordinator, presents a happy graduate with his Reef Check certificate!

March 2006

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Check out our website

www.ReefCheck.org

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Reef Check News

Reef Check Travels to Hawai'i For the Kelly Slater Celebrity Surf Invitational

Involving celebrities with Reef Check draws attention to the Coral Reef Crisis. In February we joined a host of Hollywood stars and some of the best surfers in the world at the Kelly Slater Celebrity Surf Invitational in Kona, Hawai'i. A surf/lifestyle event filmed for an MTV special, the event focused on surfing, marine conservation, and fun in the sun for a host of celebrities including Incubus, Jack Osbourne, G.Love, Tony Hawk and Ashlee Simpson. In addition to interacting with the guests of the event to raise their awareness about our efforts, we established the Kelly Slater Reef Check Survey



Photo: Catherine Landa



Site to honor Kelly Slater for his continued support of our conservation efforts. Accompanied by a pod of singing humpback whales, Reef Check staff and volunteer Catherine Landa (RC Hawai'i) performed the first annual survey of this site. We wish to thank Kelly Slater, Quiksilver, Lenore Marusak (RC Board Member) and Terry Hardy for providing us with this wonderful opportunity. Be sure to check the MTV listings or www.kellyslaterinvitational.com for more info.

Kelly Slater awards Ashlee Simpson and Jack Osbourne as the top celebrity surfers in the competition
Photo: Erik Aeder

Plan Ahead: Celebrate Reef Check Month This July and December 2006!

The environment is celebrated in many ways, such as dedicating a day (Earth Day) or an entire year to a special environmental cause. To follow this idea, Reef Check is launching Reef Check Months to annually dedicate one month to celebrate the world's coral reefs in each hemisphere: July (Northern Hemisphere) and December (Southern Hemisphere).

While you are welcome to plan activities any time of the year, Reef Check Month is a way to focus attention on Reef Check and coral reef conservation. We are asking teams to consider special events to celebrate their Reef Check Month:

- Conduct a survey
- Monitor a new reef
- Train new divers in the Reef Check protocol
- Visit a local school or hold a public forum

- Contact local TV stations and media outlets to encourage the diffusion of coral reef related news and documentaries
- Organize outreach events to promote Reef Check and coral reef conservation

Reef Check encourages everyone to participate, even if you aren't a team member – hold a fundraiser, educate your peers about coral reefs, talk to your dive shops, or become a Reef Check member. Help us save coral reefs worldwide!

Photo: Lumba Lumba Dive Centre



Join Us In Beverly Hills For Reef Rescue 2006 June 11th, 3-7pm

Reef Check's annual fundraiser will take place at a scenic Beverly Hills estate and will honor Jean-Michel Cousteau for his lifetime achievements in marine conservation. We will also be honoring "Mermaids of the Reef," the singer/actress Barbi Benton and award-winning songwriter Carol Connors. The three honorees are pictured here diving in Fiji. Come rub shoulders with Hollywood stars and musical legends, enjoy delicious food and drink, and bid on fabulous silent and live auction items. All proceeds will go to benefit Reef Check's worldwide programs. For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit: <http://www.reefcheck.org/events/reefrescue2006.asp>

www.davidfleetham.com



achievements in marine conservation. We will also be honoring "Mermaids of the Reef," the singer/actress Barbi Benton and award-winning songwriter Carol Connors. The three honorees are pictured here diving in Fiji. Come

Dr. Clive Wilkinson Speaks To RC Supporters

Dr. Clive Wilkinson, Coordinator of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network met with Reef Check supporters and community members in February to discuss the health of reef ecosystems worldwide and the impact of the recent tsunami. Before a packed crowd at The Crossroads School in Santa Monica, California, Dr. Wilkinson started the first leg of his cross-country tour promoting the release of GCRMN's report "Status of Coral Reefs in Tsunami Affected Countries." Results of post-event surveys, compiled in partnership with regional Reef Check teams, showed the majority of reefs in the Indian Ocean region escaped serious damage with major exceptions being reported in Indonesia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. Tempering the results with optimism, Dr. Wilkinson reported that with effective management, the majority of damaged reefs can all recover in the next 5-10 years. The major threat to all reefs, as he pointed out, remains human activities. Visit: www.gcrmn.org. To download a copy of the GCRMN report visit: www.aims.gov.au/pages/research/coral-bleaching/scr-tac2005/index.html

New Underwater Hawai'i Field Guides On Sale!

Reef Check Hawai'i field guides have arrived and are ready to purchase! Following the success of our Atlantic/Caribbean and Indo-Pacific guides, we have put together a brand new guide featuring Hawai'i indicator fish and invertebrates. Each 8-page underwater guide features full-color photos of all Reef Check Hawai'i indicator species, substrate categories and survey techniques and is made with professionally-bound, waterproof plastic for durability. Visit our website to place your order today: <http://www.reefcheck.org/methods/fieldguides.asp>



Photo: Dee Wescott

Reef Check Releases Aceh Report

Our last issue covered the multinational expedition to Aceh Province in Indonesia to monitor the effect of the December 2004 earthquake and tsunami on coral reefs. The final report was published in January and can be downloaded off our website.

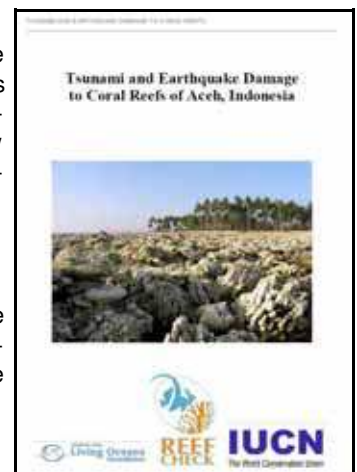
The results of the underwater surveys indicated that relatively minor physical damage to coral reefs was caused by the tsunami as compared with the well-documented devastation experienced on land. Tsunami damage recorded included overturned corals and swathes of broken corals where large tree branches and tree trunks had been washed across the reef as the waves receded.

No tsunami damage was observed at more than

half of the reefs surveyed and there were still large areas of intact, living coral reef nearby. These areas may act as an important source of larvae for recolonization of the damaged reefs. However, a low density of coral recruits was observed, which indicates that recovery is proceeding slowly.

The earthquake damage to coral reefs was more severe than that caused by the tsunami.

On land, the earthquakes and tsunami caused slope failures and removed vegetation facilitating increased erosion, sediment transport, and discharge during rainy periods. A low abundance and small



Cont...

mean size of the ten primary food fish families in Aceh was recorded suggesting that these stocks are overfished. 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 methods may represent a greater threat to Aceh's reef ecosystems than the immediate impacts of the earthquakes and tsu-

nami.

The earthquakes and tsunami have left the Acehenese more dependent than ever on their marine resources for survival. 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.

To read the full report, go to:
http://www.reefcheck.org/PDFs/reefcheck_aceh_jan2006_web.pdf

Reef Check Champions: Jason Auclair and Mike Segda

Reef Check has experienced a lot of growth and some great successes over the past 10 years thanks to the committed volunteers who conduct Reef Check surveys on a regular basis. It's all about local people making a difference, and the people helping out with the new California program are no different – meet Jason Auclair and Mike Segda. They aren't big businessmen and they sure aren't scientists with doctorates in marine biology. Instead, they are two of California's hardest working scuba instructors who believe that monitoring the local rocky reefs is important enough to give up a lot of



Jason Auclair

free time and effort to support the fledgling RC California program. Since the launch of the program last year, whenever help was needed, Jason and Mike have been there. Whether working as dive masters on in-water video shoots or helping out in the office with the development of Reef Check's training programs, these two divers have been an important asset in the program's fast start.

They've also gotten their employers involved. Jason's bosses at Sherwood Scuba and Cramer-Decker Industries, a world-leader in scuba diving, encouraged Jason to support the program. As a result, all Reef Check HQ scientists are safe and well equipped in the temperamental waters of California's central coast. Rocky Stickel, Mike's boss and owner of Scuba Haus in Santa Monica, has let Mike turn this venerable California dive shop into "dive central" for Reef Check staffers, filling tanks and making sure that everyone who walks in the door



Mike Segda

learns about Reef Check. It is sometimes hard to find a spirit of local stewardship in a city of over 3 million people, but thanks to the hard work and commitment of Mike and Jason, the Reef Check spirit is alive and growing here in California.

Visit: www.cramerdecker.com or www.scubahaus.com

California Corner

By RC California Director Dr. Craig Shuman

As most of you know, the end of 2005 and start of 2006 brought a lot of swell activity to California's coast. While the waves were great for surfing, the diving conditions were less than ideal. Fortunately, we had plenty to do here in the office busily preparing for the upcoming trainings while we waited for diving conditions to improve. We have just completed our comprehensive training curriculum and course materials that will not only teach you how to accurately complete Reef Check California surveys, but will provide you with an introduction to the physical and biological processes that drive California's extraordinary underwater environment. Participants who complete the training course will be eligible to submit data to our California database and will be issued a Reef Check California specialty certification card.

Due to the overwhelming response to our initial trainings, we will be scheduling additional trainings to be held in the fall and will begin work on our Training of Trainers program to increase the number of accredited instructors. While we do not yet have the capacity to train all the interested divers in California, we are starting a new campaign that all divers can participate in.

This spring will mark the start of our "1,000 Diver" campaign. With the slogan that "one thousand divers can make a difference" this membership campaign aims to unite California's divers under the common objectives of science and sound management of our shared coastal resources. Although divers tend to fall into different categories (hunters, photographers, recreational, etc.) we all must unite to protect our rocky reefs that we so passionately enjoy.

The health of California's Reefs isn't what it used to be...

1,000 divers can make a difference.

California's reefs look a lot different today than they did 30 years ago. Abalone are almost gone and big fish have become scarce. Our kelp forests resemble ghost towns compared to days past.

We call on all California divers, the living witnesses to what's happening beneath the waves, to unite and protect our reefs. Join Reef Check's "1,000 Diver" campaign and be counted as we protect California's marine resources. There is still time to make a difference.

Join Reef Check today and become part of California's first state-wide community-based monitoring network. A tax deductible gift of \$50* or more entitles you to all the benefits of a Reef Check Member, including;

- Commemorative "Recon California" T-Shirt
- Reef Check's quarterly newsletter, The Transect Line
- Reef Check pin and sticker
- Invitations to trainings, special events and other RC activities

Visit www.ReefCheck.org/california to sign-up today!

* All proceeds from this campaign will be used to monitor and maintain California's reefs
 Photo by Howard Hall Productions

Reef Check Teams in Action

RC Malaysia Formally Meets at the International Media and Environment Summit in Kuching, Sarawak

By Stuart Green

Using the International Media and Environment Summit as a backdrop, RC coordinator Stuart Green, representing RC Philippines and Indonesia and also acting as chair of the marine session, met with Reef Check Malaysia stakeholders for a strategic planning workshop to discuss the future of the country's program.

Participants in the two-day meeting included RC Malaysia Coordinator Badrul Huzaimi Tajuddin, Saras Suresh Kumar and Serina Effendy of Malaysia Nature Society (MNS), MNS Board members Tony & Rebecca Sebastian, as well as Sew Yeen, owner of Tioman Dive Center.

The meeting was very positive, with key outputs including a discussion on the formalizing of RC Malaysia under the Malaysian Society of Marine Sciences (MSMS)- more specifically under the Coral Reef Ecosystem Support Team (CREST) in partnership with the Marine Special Interest Group of the Malaysian Nature Society. The plan is to work towards a number of goals including: a series of trainings with the possibility of

networking with the Philippines and Indonesia programs, a regional meeting celebrating a decade of Reef Check in the world, and the development of the



Stuart Green (right) enjoying the fruits of the sea through a traditional Malaysian Steamboat with his peers.

RC EcoAction certification system for trained divers. Tioman Dive Center will become an approved RC training center.

The future looks bright for RC Malaysia, which will further its activities in the coming year to include working with the Marine Parks Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment, the Fisheries Department under the Ministry

of Agriculture, various academic institutions, NGOs, media and other groups.

For more information on how to get involved with Reef Check Malaysia - please contact:

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Plans for RC Kuwait Moving Forward

In 2005, RC Egypt coordinator Dr. Mohammed M.A. Kotb led a workshop for volunteer and sport divers of Kuwait that gave an extensive overview of Reef Check and also encouraged local diving organizations to get involved. This year, the effort continues- Dr. Kotb is working on plans for Kuwaiti divers to travel to Egypt to be officially trained in the Reef Check protocol. The divers would then have the necessary tools to start a program back in Kuwait. He hopes that RC Kuwait will come together sometime this year!

Dr. Kotb is also busy preparing a field trip with German students from the Marine Ecology Institute of Essen University. For the past few years he has joined them in an annual field course held in Ras Mohamed Marine Park, Egypt. It is expected that this year's course will involve a greater number of students, as well as provide an excellent opportunity for a new group of divers to gain Reef Check experience. For more information contact Dr. Kotb at kotb13@ismailia.ie-eg.com

INCO Sets Priorities For Reefs of the Persian Gulf

In 2003, Reef Check coordinator Abdulvahab Maghsoudloo's research center, the Iranian National Center for Oceanography (INCO), was officially selected as the

regional node for the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, of which Reef Check is the official community monitoring program. Since then, seven countries in the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman have been selected to make up the GCRMN National Network: the

United Arab Emirates, Sultanate of Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. This year, the network chose three new reef sites to monitor: Kish Island (Iran), Jubail (Saudi Arabia) and Dimaniyat (Oman).

INCO recently set its top priorities for 2006 and 2007, including regional training workshops and research projects. They are planning on training professionals in reef monitoring techniques, including Reef Check, as well as using and analyzing the collected data. They will also hold workshops on artificial reefs and remote sensing applications for coral reef monitoring. Research projects will include Satellite Mapping of Coral Habitats, Developing Keys for Identification of Coral Species, and Monitoring the Status of Coral Reefs in the RSA.

For more information on the region's coral reefs and what INCO is doing, visit their website at <http://www.inco.ac.ir/coralreefs/home.htm>



Participants of a workshop on coral reef monitoring in Iran.
Photo: Abdulvahab Maghsoudloo

The Amadis Project Completes Its Pacific Leg

By Lily Kozmian-Ledward



RC site Vaioue, Aitutaki, Cook Islands
Photo: Lily Kozmian-Ledward

The Amadis Project completed their work in the South Pacific on September 15th, 2005. Thirty-seven Reef Check surveys were conducted over the two months of the 'Pacific Leg' of the project.

The yacht 'Amadis', skippered by Lily Kozmian-Ledward, provides a means to access remote islands and reefs. The 'Pacific Leg' of the project departed from Panama in May 2005 with five people onboard headed by Science coordinator Gwenael Hemery.

The project was supported by grants from the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers and the

Project Aware Foundation. In addition to collecting data for Reef Check, The Amadis Project gathered information for the UNEP-W CMC Global Coral Reef Database using digital photography to document all sightings of coral disease.

The team arrived in Fakarava, one of the largest atolls in the Tuamotu archipelago, to start the Reef Check training and surveys in July. The Fakarava district of seven atolls has been proposed as a UNESCO Man and Biosphere reserve and the Amadis' work will help get the support of the inhabitants by providing information on the importance of their local coral reefs. During their stay, 12 surveys were conducted at eight sites within the lagoon, near the reef passes, and on the outer reef. A successful school workshop, which included using quadrats to conduct basic sampling in the lagoon, was given in Rotoava. The reefs there seem healthy and not under important human pressure. Indeed, the high abundance of top-predators, such as sharks, in the area is a positive sign. Five RC surveys were also carried out at Toava, a smaller atoll to the North of Fakarava.

The second area of the Amadis work was in the Southern Cook Islands during August and September. This area suffered five consecutive cyclones in early 2005 and is under increasing human pressure. The data collected there will be submitted to the Minis-

try of Marine Resources database. The Amadis Project carried out eighteen RC surveys on the leeward (western) side of Aitutaki and two surveys at the small uninhabited island of Manuae. Coral reef health was found to be generally in recovery. In Rarotonga, two coral reef conservation talks and a workshop were well received by local secondary and primary schools,



Gwenael Hemery introduces Reef Check to children in Fakarava (Tuamotu Is.)
Photo: Lily Kozmian-Ledward

respectively.

SV 'Amadis' is now based in New Zealand with the author on board until May 2006.

Please visit the Amadis Project website at www.theamadisproject.co.uk for more information on the Pacific Leg, as well its previous tour through the Caribbean.

RC Dominican Republic Helps Government Combat the Illegal Marine Aquarium Trade

Reef Check has been working for over five years with the Marine Aquarium Council (MAC), an international, not-for-profit organization based in Honolulu. MAC's mission is to conserve coral reefs and other marine ecosystems by creating standards and certification for those engaged in the collection and care of ornamental marine life from reef to aquarium. To do this, MAC brings marine aquarium organism collectors, exporters, importers and retailers together with aquarium keepers, public aquaria, conservation organizations and government agencies. Reef Check supports MAC certification as one way to provide financial incentives for coral reef conservation.

Unfortunately, there are still many countries where aquarium collecting is occurring that have not yet had the benefit of MAC certification. In these places illegal cyanide and other poison fishing techniques are used, and in others, unscrupulous collectors do not follow local laws.

In February, Reef Check Dominican Republic assisted the DR Customs Department and the Ministry of the Environment in

seizing an illegal shipment of marine organisms to be sold in the US for aquarium enthusiasts. A total of 200 anemones, almost 100 coral banded shrimp (pictured), over 2,500 hermit crabs, and numerous species were collected for exportation without the mandatory permit from the Ministry of the Environment (law 64-00).



Photo: Jeff Jeifords

Several Reef Check surveys conducted over the past two years indicated a diminished population of coral banded shrimp, sea anemones, flamingo tongues. This case highlights the need for a more detailed assessment of the impacts of marine aquarium collecting on DR reefs. Working with MAC, Reef Check has developed just such a protocol, called MAQTRAC to check on the status of marine life targeted for collection.

In the meantime, this joint effort of the Reef Check Dominican Republic and the DR government resulted in the illegal shipment being detected, inventoried and returned to the ocean. Says RC DR Director, Dr. Ruben Torres, "We are now focusing on how to help the government strengthen marine conservation efforts in our country." Please see the MAMTI story on Page 6 to learn more about other ways Reef Check has partnered with MAC.

Mark Your Calendars

Thailand Earthwatch Expeditions:

Bangkok, Phuket or Trat, Thailand
 Dates: March 2006 to November 2006
 Duration: 10 days
 Share of Cost: \$2595
 Snorkel and dive Thailand's amazing coral reefs, some of the most magnificent and diverse on earth. Like many of the world's reef systems, Thailand's reefs are facing the pressures of overfishing and destructive fishing practices, as well as threats posed by global warming and coral diseases. Dr. Georg Heiss and Kim Obermeyer, Reef Check coordinators, are joining forces with Earthwatch to do baseline assessments of Thailand's reefs and to set up a long-term monitoring program.

For more information about the Thailand EcoExpedition and how to sign up, visit: www.earthwatch.org/expeditions/heiss.html

Maldives RC EcoExpedition:

Live on board the "Hammerhead II"
 Date: May 2-10, 2006

For more information visit:
http://aquanaut-tauchreisen.de/uk/safaris/safaris_set.htm?hammerhead2/hammerhead_2.php%7Ettauchreisen
 or email tauchreisen@aquanaut.de.



The Hammerhead II

Aquanaut Tauchreisen will donate 10% of the earnings to Reef Check

Red Sea RC EcoExpedition:

Sharm el Sheikh: Reef Check Safari
 Date: May 11-18, 2006

Experience the Red Sea in the best way possible – a one-week liveaboard safari on Ghazala I. You will be accompanied by marine biologists, who will introduce you to the Reef Check survey protocol. At the end of each day, the Reef Check biologist will comment on the results of the dives and give a closer look into the complexity of coral reefs. The famous dive-sites in Ras Mohammed and Tiran are part of the itinerary.

Sinai Divers will donate 10% of the earnings to Reef Check.

For more information contact Sinai Divers:
 Tel: +20-(0)69-3600697
 Web: www.sinaidivers.com
 Email: info@sinaidivers.com

Celebrate Earth Day with Reef Check in California

Santa Monica Promenade: April 15th, all day

If you live in Southern California, you'll want to come to Santa Monica's famous 3rd Street Promenade for this major annual event: dozens of local and international environmental groups will have tables and displays along the pedestrian-friendly 3 block stretch.

Concert at Polliwog Park, Manhattan Beach: April 22, 11am-4pm

VOICE presents the 15th annual Earth Day event in Manhattan Beach. Dozens of environmental groups, including Reef Check, will have tables and displays at this family fun festival.

Kona Classic Underwater Photography Contest: May 13-21, 2006: Kona, Hawaii

Join Reef Check, Body Glove, Sport Diver and the PADI Diving Society, along with some of the world's most famous underwater photographers for the Kona Classic. Not only is the week-long Kona Classic a photography competition, it also celebrates the diving lifestyle and community along with environmental awareness. This renowned event gives underwater photographers and videographers opportunities to dive, shoot, and learn with image-makers such as Eric Cheng, David Fleetham, and Marty Snyderman. In addition to daily photo seminars and expert advice, Reef Check will be surveying local reefs and educating participants about the importance of healthy coral ecosystems. Great prizes will be given away for various categories, including the special Reef Check Best Indicator Species Shot. The winner will go home with a brand new Sherwood Axis buoyancy compensator, courtesy of Cramer Decker industries. Please come out and join us for this great event. Visit <http://www.sportdiver.com/article.jsp?D=41300> for more information.

Coral Reefs in the News

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

by Stuart Green, Naneng Setiasih (Chairwoman RC Indonesia) and Dr. Domingo Ochavillo (Executive Director, RC Philippines)

Why would Reef Check work with one of the world's destructive fisheries (the use of cyanide, associated with habitat destruction and unsustainable collection techniques)? The MAMTI (Marine Market Transformation Initiative) brings together three international non-governmental organizations, the Marine Aquarium Council (MAC), the Conservation and Community Investment Forum (CCIF), and Reef Check, as key project "partners". The project aims to transform the marine aquarium trade from an unmanaged industry, with the potential to damage coral reefs through illegal poison fishing and over-harvesting to a more conservation-friendly one. Fisher-



Municipal Planning & Development Coordinator Engineer Noel Mendaña of the Municipality of Tubigon, Bohol, Central Visayas Philippines restocking the Batasan Island MPA.
 Photo: G. Lecaillon, Ecocean

men are trained to collect and handle fish following particular guidelines, therefore providing a healthier and "green" certified product to retailers and customers. MAMTI is a five-year project with offices in Manila, Philippines, and Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia. It is funded by the Global Environment Facility and implemented by the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

Continued next page

Reef Check believes that by getting involved with the industry and its very diverse stakeholders (collectors, buyers, exporters, importers, local governments etc.) we can work with our partners to promote a more sustainable industry, and use the project as part of a management plan to establish and strengthen Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) across the region. MAMTI is working to achieve conservation, sustainable livelihoods, poverty alleviation, and significant reductions in the threats to biodiversity.

The Reef Check 'niche' in MAMTI

Reef Check brings its wealth of scientific experience in the Philippines and Indonesia to this initiative, and focuses on fisheries monitoring, rehabilitation and management. 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 also hired six additional specialized professionals to implement our work in Indonesia.

Reef Check contributes to two components of MAMTI. The first applies a scientific monitoring method, the Marine Aquarium Trade Coral Reef Monitoring Method (MAQTRAC), to undertake baseline and regular monitoring of MAC Certified collection areas, and analyze catch data. This ensures sustainable operations and continu-

ously refines the science and management of marine ornamental collection. The results of this work will provide information to collectors for improved resource management through their Collection Area Management Plans.

In the second component, Reef Check works with marine ornamental collectors and their communities to designate community and government co-managed "no-take" MPAs, and designates zones within collection areas to ensure rehabilitation of fish and invertebrate stocks. Reef Check is also establishing a fisheries rehabilitation program which will test various reef and fish rehabilitation techniques within collection areas. If successful, these will be adapted and/or replicated in other areas. A current initiative, in collaboration with subcontractor Ecocean explores the use of innovative fish post-larvae collection devices for grow out and restocking. The results of these experiments will provide invaluable insights into the "fast track" restocking of MPAs.

MAC trained ornamental fisher using the barrier method of catching fish in Marcilla, Coron, Calamianes, Philippines

Photo: Pepo Passigna, RC Philippines



For more information on our partners, please visit:

- www.marineaquariumcouncil.org
- www.cciforum.org
- www.ecocean.fr

Support Reef Check

Summer is quickly approaching... Be ready to face the sun with Reef Check clothing merchandise!

RC T-shirt M-L-XL: \$10*

Quantity _____ Size _____



Front



Back

Reef Check Hats: \$15*

Quantity _____



* Please include \$2.00 shipping & handling for each item, contact us for international orders

A tax deductible gift of \$25 or more entitles you to all the benefits of a Reef Check Membership:

- RC's quarterly newsletter, The Transect Line
- RC pin and sticker
- Invitations to trainings, special events and other RC activities.

Sign up for a \$50 membership & receive a free t-shirt or hat!

Name _____

Mail/Billing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____

E-mail _____ Phone No. _____

Credit Card No. Check Enclosed Exp. Date _____

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$Other _____

Signature X _____

By signing here, I agree to the above charges being made to my credit card.

Detach & Mail to: Reef Check | P.O. Box 1057 | Pacific Palisades, CA 90272-1057 | USA | Tel 310-230-2371 | Fax 310-230-2376

What You Can Do To Help Coral Reefs

Spring is here... as well as the international events celebrating the Environment. From Earth Day to World Ocean Day, environment friendly activists won't get bored! If YOU want to join us in our quest to save coral reefs worldwide, you couldn't ask for a better time!

April 22, 2006: Earth Day

Earth Day celebrates the Earth and its Environment, and encourages us to care for it in a sustainable way. If you want to have a coral reef theme for Earth Day, join RC in Southern California: April 15: Santa Monica Promenade; April 22: Manhattan Beach (see page 6)

RC also joins the Coral Reef Alliance for their "Dive In To Earth Day" Week as people around the world plan special events to celebrate our planet's aquatic ecosystems.

For more information, a list of events and to register your own event, visit <http://www.coralreefalliance.org/divein>

June 5, 2006: World Environment Day

Theme: Deserts and Desertification: Don't Desert Drylands!

World Environment Day can be celebrated in many ways, including street rallies, parades, green concerts, essay and poster competitions in schools, tree planting, recycling efforts, clean-up campaigns and much more. In many countries, this annual event is used to enhance political attention and action. Although this year's theme is the "Desert", let's not forget about our coral reefs! Find out more on WED on: www.unep.org/wed

June 8, 2006: World Ocean Day

Unofficial celebration of the Oceans!

Created in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro - although not yet officially designated by the United Nations - World Ocean Day is an opportunity each year to celebrate the oceans and our personal connection to the sea.

Visit the Ocean Project Website to find out what events are held in your area, and how you can help. You could also sign the petition to make June 8th the official international ocean celebration! www.theoceanproject.org

How YOU can celebrate our Coral Reefs (inspired by "77 Ways to Celebrate WED", UNEP):

Art:

-Artwork: donate your artwork for auction at one of RC's events or donate proceeds from an auction or sale; you can express your artistic talents while at the same time providing financial support to RC, and contributing to international coral reef conservation efforts.

-Film festivals/screening of films on coral reefs: Coral Reef Adventure, Finding Nemo, Ocean Wonderland 3D are just a few

-Performances: plays, songs, poetry

-Promotional materials related to coral reefs: T-shirts, stickers, bookmarks

-Puppet shows for children featuring environmental messages

-Write plays, poems, songs

Act:

-Organize a special event

-Clean up campaigns: you can organize a beach clean up, or a coral reef clean up

Education:

-Conference on coral reefs: knowing the occurrence of a problem is always the first step to achieve effective solutions: educate and find solutions for our reefs!

-Environmental education programs in schools

-Bin or volunteer for Reef Check!

You can help make a difference by making these events relevant and successful. Be a concerned citizen!

Photo: Gwenael Hemery



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