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## **Reef Check Teams in Action**

## **CURACAO**

RC Curacao is led by Paul Hoetjes, senior scientist of the Netherlands Antilles Coral Reef Initiative (NACRI) and the Ministry of Health and Social Development in the Department of Environment and Nature (MINA). In 1999, after the devastating effects of Hurricane Lenny, Plantage PortoMari ([www.portomari.com](http://www.portomari.com)) began monitoring the progress of their reefs post-impact to help evaluate the reefs recovery to aid and track recovery. Over the past four years, three permanent transect lines have been established. In 2002 RC Curacao conducted four surveys and two monitoring periods are planned in January and July 2003. Special thanks to Renneke, Randy, Peter, Ardy and Marjo. For more information about Team Curacao's activities, contact Marjo at [mvdbulck@hotmail.com](mailto:mvdbulck@hotmail.com) or Paul at [paul@mina.vomil.an](mailto:paul@mina.vomil.an).

## **MOZAMBIQUE**

In October 2002, the Scientific Exploration Society out of the UK led a group of 10 volunteers kayakers on RC surveys in the Quirimbas Archipelago, Northern Mozambique. One goal of the month long expedition was to undertake as many RC surveys as possible on their 200km journey. Starting off in Pemba, a coastal town in Mozambique, the team island hopped all the way up to Cabo Delgado, located just south of the Rovuma River and the Mozambique -Tanzania border. The team managed to conduct RC surveys on neighboring islands, completing surveys at 10 sites. Incredibly strong tidal currents and poor visibility in this remote area made for difficult surveying conditions but the team met the challenge and felt a fantastic sense of achievement. Contact Tooni at [tooni@breathe.com](mailto:tooni@breathe.com) for more information.



A total of 10 sites were surveyed on the SES Expedition. This brings the total number of surveys in Mozambique in 2002 to an all-time high. Photo courtesy of Tooni Mahto.

## **RÉUNION AND EUROPA**

In 2002, using Quiksilver's Indies Trader as a research platform, the Crossing and RC were given the opportunity to surf and survey reefs off Europa, a French marine reserve west of Madagascar. Since then, Dr. Jean Pascal Quod of ARVAM (Agence pour la Recherche et la Valorisation Marines), [www.arvam.com](http://www.arvam.com), has established three RC stations which they will begin monitoring in 2003. This accomplishment would not have been possible without the aid of the Quiksilver Crossing, which continues to give RC the opportunity to survey reefs in remote locations. For more information about the 2003 activities in Réunion, contact contact Jean at [jpquod.arvam@wanadoo.fr](mailto:jpquod.arvam@wanadoo.fr).

## **Spotlight on Reef Check Site- Reef Check Headquarters**

To start off 2003, we thought that it would be a great to introduce all of us here at RC Headquarters in Los Angeles!

**Gregor Hodgson**, founder of RC, is a coral reef ecologist with an interest in Integrated Coastal Management (ICM). He began diving in 1970 in the Florida Keys, and in 1974 spent one year diving on reefs around the world. Greg received his bachelors degree in biology in 1979 from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he learned to surf, and from 1980-1982 volunteered with the US Peace Corps in the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Cebu City, Philippines, where he studied coral reef ecology and coral taxonomy with Francisco Nemenzo.



**Greg Hodgson**  
Executive Director

Greg earned a Ph.D in zoology in 1989 from the University of Hawaii where he completed the first “ridges to reefs” ecological-economics study on the effects of logging on coral reef-related tourism and fisheries in El Nido, Palawan, Philippines. Subsequently, Greg worked in Hong Kong where he served as the Environmental Sciences Manager for Binnie Black & Veatch, carrying out environmental impact assessments and baseline ecological surveys of coastal and marine areas. He designed and led Integrated Coastal Management projects in China and Vietnam and also taught at two Hong Kong universities. Greg is now a visiting professor at the UCLA's Institute of the Environment (IoE) and Associate Director of the IoE's Coastal Center.



**Lena Maun**  
Program Manager

**Lena Maun** has a BA in Biology from Wesleyan University and a MS in Environmental Health Science from UCLA but found her passion for the water many years before. She grew up on St. Thomas, USVI, mostly underwater with a mask and snorkel. Moving to the East End of Long Island NY, Lena traded the warm Caribbean for much colder waters, but continued to spend as much time as possible sailing, diving and at the beach. In college, Lena attended the School for Field Studies Marine Resource Management program on South Caicos, BWI where she studied coral reef ecology, socioeconomics and monitoring. Lena has worked with the National Park Service's turtle nesting program on Buck Island, taught marine science through Cornell University, and worked on environmental health projects for the Physicians for Social Responsibility and the EPA.

**Kelly McGee**, originally from Toronto, Canada, graduated with a B.S. in Biology and Environmental Science from Trent University. Even though she was 'land-locked' for her first 20 years she has always had a strong affinity for the water and in Grade Two declared that she wanted to be a marine biologist. Kelly studied coral reef ecology at the Discovery Bay Marine Lab, Jamaica where she did her thesis on *Diadema* as an indicator of reef health. While at the Marine Lab, Kelly also examined the role of sustainable fisheries in the Caribbean and the effectiveness of community-based enforcement of marine parks. Kelly's passion for marine mammals led her to British Columbia to study Northern resident Orca as well as to New Brunswick to research Humpback Whales and Orca in the north Atlantic. Kelly has also worked as an environmental advocate for the Sierra Club of Canada, the David Suzuki Foundation and the Toronto Environmental Alliance where she educated the Ontario public on the hazardous effects of coal-fired power generators.



**Kelly McGee**  
Outreach Coordinator



**Craig Shuman**  
RC Scientist

Born and raised in Southern California, **Craig Shuman** graduated from Venice High School (Los Angeles) before attending the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB). Discovering a love for the ocean and the environment, Craig majored in Environmental Science and became an avid SCUBA diver for both research and pleasure. During his undergraduate studies, Craig became involved with a project studying the population dynamics of coral reef fish in Moorea, French Polynesia where he continued to work on his Masters Thesis. Craig is currently finishing his doctorate at UCLA in Environmental Science and Engineering where he began working with RC. For his doctoral research, Craig joined Quiksilver's "Crossing" expedition aboard the Indies Trader in summer 2001 to study the ecological impacts of the marine aquarium trade. Craig continued his research in the Philippines in early 2002 has been working extensively on the development of the Marine Aquarium Trade Coral Reef Monitoring Protocol (MAQTRAC). He will help lead RC and MAQTRAC training workshops following ITMEMS in March.

**Jenny Mihaly** is currently a fourth year marine biology major at UCLA. This past fall, Jenny spent the quarter studying with other UCLA students at the Bodega Marine Laboratory in Bodega Bay, California. While she was there she conducted experiments on sea anemones and flatfish. It was an incredible experience for her. Jenny enjoys the opportunity to promote awareness about coral reefs, as well as the chance to increase her own knowledge about them through Reef Check. Jenny currently manages the RC database and is member of RC's research team. She is looking forward to increasing her role within the organization, in addition to learning to dive this summer in Hawaii.



**Jenny Mihaly**  
Data Manager

## Trainings, Workshops, and Meetings

### **ITMEMS-2, PHILIPPINES**

March 24 to 27, 2003, the 2nd International Tropical Marine Ecosystem- Management Symposium (ITMEMS-2) will be held in Manila. This will be a great meeting where scientists and managers exchange the latest on coral reef conservation. Calling all Coordinators and future Coordinators: There will be a Reef Check meeting on Tuesday night March 25<sup>th</sup> 5:30 – 7:00 pm. Come meet your fellow coordinators. For more information on ITMEMS, visit the website at [www.icriforum.org/router.cfm?show=http://www.icriforum.org/itmems/itmems2.html&Item=1](http://www.icriforum.org/router.cfm?show=http://www.icriforum.org/itmems/itmems2.html&Item=1). See below for post-ITMEMS Workshops.

Three post-ITMEMS workshops are offered:

### **RC/GCRMN Workshop on Coral Reef Monitoring**

**March 28-30, 2003**

Cebu and Bohol, Philippines

This will be a standard training package but with some great dive sites to survey! For more info click on the heading.

### **Marine Aquarium Trade Coral Reef Monitoring Protocol Workshop**

**March 31-April 2, 2003**

Cebu and Bohol, Philippines

This is one of the first training sessions for MAQTRAC open to the public following two years of design and testing. For experienced biologists who want to sharpen their taxonomy. Led by Dr. Domingo Ochavillo – RC fisheries scientist.

**Socioeconomic Training Workshop****March 31-April 1, 2003**

Cebu and Bohol, Philippines

The inaugural training for SOCMON – the rapid assessment form of the GCRMN socioeconomic manual written by Leah Bunce et al. Training led by Dr. Susan Siar of SEAFDEC.

More information at [www.reefcheck.org/workshops/cebu/cebu\\_march03.htm](http://www.reefcheck.org/workshops/cebu/cebu_march03.htm)

**MYANMAR (BURMA) TRIP**

Participate in the first 2003 RC Expedition!! Join Reef Check and Europe Conservation Switzerland in an expedition to the exotic reefs off Myanmar (Burma). Participants will be conducting surveys of the Mergui archipelago reefs in the Andaman Sea for 12 days, departing February 15 from Ranong, Thailand . More information visit

[www.reefcheck.org/expeditions/georg\\_burma.htm](http://www.reefcheck.org/expeditions/georg_burma.htm).

**WORLD WATER DAY**

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) would like to invite you to participate in World Water Day, Saturday March 22nd, 2003. More information visit

[www.reefcheck.org/newsletter6/waterday.doc](http://www.reefcheck.org/newsletter6/waterday.doc).

**RC TRAINING AND ACTIVITIES IN HAWAII**

On Feb 23rd the first scuba RC will take place where the team will be revisiting the Kewalo Pipe. Contact Matt Zimmerman at [reefcheck@islanddivershawaii.com](mailto:reefcheck@islanddivershawaii.com) for more information.

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**Reef Check Champion**

This month we are highlighting Andre Montenegro, as told by two students of RC Philippines. If you know a Reef Check Champion that you would like to be nominated, please email a brief description of their contribution as well as a photo (if possible) to Kelly at [rcheck2@ucla.edu](mailto:rcheck2@ucla.edu).

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**One Dive Only****by Christine Louise P. Emata & Jean Asuncion T. Utzurrum**

Few people today are environmentally concerned for their communities. Many Filipino lives seem too indulged in their fast-paced world of computers and cell phones, failing to notice the declining quality of the air they breathe or the water they drink, and the plight of both the Philippine forests and coral reefs. But in a quaint little city by the sea, one man seems to stand still amidst the blurred lifestyle of a growing city.

At first glance, one could mistake him for a fresh 22-year old college graduate. But this simple 31-year old is no ordinary Dumagueteño (a person from Dumaguete City, Negros). He is a third generation diver with a soft spot for the ocean and its conservation. Snoopy, as he is fondly called, started diving when he was only eight years old. At age 16, Snoopy was a certified diver who enjoyed diving at the local Silliman Beach. Despite earning a degree in Civil Engineering from Silliman University in 1996, Snoopy went on to become a dive instructor and opened a dive shop, White Tip Divers, in the city the following year.

When RC Philippines began in 1998, Snoopy was invited by RC Philippines coordinator Dr. Laurie Raymundo, [lauriejr@dgte.mozcom.com](mailto:lauriejr@dgte.mozcom.com), to take part in the activities. Snoopy eagerly agreed to help RC's environmental cause. Since that first experience, he has consistently volunteered for the RCs conducted by Dr. Raymundo. Snoopy not only lends his time and his own team of dive guides to RC, but also lends his tanks, gear and motorized boat, especially when the funds are low. In addition to his work with RC, Snoopy also organizes coastal and underwater cleanups for local communities through PADI.

Snoopy, together with his wife Percy, a rescue diver and co-manager of White Tip Divers, are striving to spread awareness about the plight of the Philippine coral reefs to both their local and foreign recreational divers. Snoopy believes that even just one or two people can still make a difference for conservation efforts. "We only have one chance to truly experience the beauty of things and that very moment is when we are living. Life for the enthusiastic diver is one spectacular dive. We shouldn't deprive future generations of their right to experience the magnificence of our reefs."

We are grateful to this committed dive instructor for his support and hard work in our annual surveys.



Andre Montenegro gives the 'OK' before setting off to do a Reef Check. photo courtesy of Laurie Raymundo.

## Methods Check

### 2003 TRAINING AND PROTOCOL UPDATES

The new 2003 Training and Protocol Update is now available from headquarters and will be distributed to all coordinators in early February. We have worked really hard to create more "user-friendly" versions of our RC training materials and hope you like the update. There are some great new changes this year, including the addition of one new Caribbean invertebrate indicator, a re-designed Site Description Sheet, and a change in one of the substrate categories from "Fleshy Seaweed" to "Nutrient Indicator Algae". Due to the number of changes, we ask all RC teams to carefully read over and review all training materials. We also ask that all teams change over to the new forms by March 1, 2003 when submitting data. If you have any questions on the changes or are not a coordinator and would like a copy, please email Headquarters at [rcdata@ucla.edu](mailto:rcdata@ucla.edu).

## Other Reef Check News

### RC FEATURED IN NEW IMAX® THEATER MOVIE *CORAL REEF ADVENTURE*

*Coral Reef Adventure* takes viewers on a journey to the South Pacific to explore some of the world's most beautiful reefs. Audiences are introduced to Reef Check as they watch Howard and Michele Hall be trained along with local Tahitians how to conduct RC as part of local management practices of Tahiti's reefs. More information visit

<http://www.reefcheck.org/imax/cra.htm>.

### UPDATE ON TEAM EGYPT



The last time we caught up with RC Egypt, they were partnering with RC Europe and Blue Heaven Holidays, <http://www.blueheavenholidays.com>, to make their way to Marsa Alam, Egypt (September 1-14, 2002). The expedition was a great success; some veteran RCer's were part of the 12 volunteers who came from Europe and Egypt to take part in the activities. The team conducted surveys on six reefs, including two new sites that had not been surveyed before. A special thanks to team leaders/scientists Constanze Conrad and Liz Cotterell. If you would like to participate in a trip like this, the next trip is scheduled for February 15th to Myanmar (Burma). For

more details visit [www.reefcheck.org/expeditions/georg\\_burma.htm](http://www.reefcheck.org/expeditions/georg_burma.htm).

### MAQTRAC UPDATES

Last time we checked in with Domingo Ochavillo, RC Fisheries Scientist stationed in the Philippines, he was busy collecting data. Six months later Domingo and his team have clocked hundreds of dives and collected so much data that as of the new year they are still inputting and analyzing ! The team will be spending the next few months running stock assessment models for both fish and invertebrates that can be used byMAC with the certification process.. 2003 is getting off to a great start, with trainings scheduled in March in Leyte and Samar to increase support for MAQTRAC and RC workshops that will be available to collectors in early April. There is also an additional training planned in Southern Mindanao focusing on coral reef resource monitoring.

### BIOLOGY SENIORS GET INVOLVED!

Last year, sixteen biology students from Silliman University were trained in RC as part of their Coral Reef Ecology course. Students were excited to take part in an applied monitoring project and felt a sense of purpose that the data they collected would be submitted to an international database. Arther Ong remarked, "The diving was fun, but it also good to be involved in something so meaningful and useful." Students were able to see first hand the difference in reef conditions between the well-managed Apo Island sanctuary and the reefs surveyed off of Bantayan. Jean Utzurum described the experience as "an eye opener"; saying, "You read about these things in textbooks, but it's different when you see it in real life."



Many of Silliman's Biology graduates go on to jobs with government environment offices or NGOs, where they are expected to conduct monitoring as a regular part of their responsibilities.

This training gave them something solid to take with them, something that will hopefully increase their capability and employability. Several students from this year have already offered to help with next year's class during their survey. The success of this first attempt has ensured that the "Reef Check Laboratory" will become a regular feature of the Coral Reef Ecology class.

#### **STATUS OF CORAL REEFS IN THE WORLD: 2002**

Since 1998, RC has been a major contributor to GCRMNs *Status of Coral Reefs in the World* reports. RC coordinators have supplied countless data and information to help support the findings of these reports. The 2002 report suggests that reef managers will play a key role in predicting gains in coral reef health within the coming two decades.

[www.aims.gov.au/pages/research/coral-bleaching/scr2002/scr-00.html](http://www.aims.gov.au/pages/research/coral-bleaching/scr2002/scr-00.html).

#### **RC FEATURED IN COASTAL LIVING MAGAZINE**

Susan Haynes reports on the threats coral reefs are facing and the importance of their health. She interviews RC Hawaii discusses with O'ahu coordinator Matt Zimmerman about the work RC is doing to monitor reefs in his area. For the full story visit

<http://www.coastalliving.com/coastal/travel/bestofthecoast/article/0.14587.-398136-1.00.html>.

#### **GET YOUR 2002 DATA IN!**

Jenny is working hard to enter all of the data that has been pouring into Headquarters over the past few months. Don't miss out! Make sure that your team's work is counted! Please send all of your 2002 data to Jenny at [rcdata@ucla.edu](mailto:rcdata@ucla.edu).

#### **WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOUR TEAM IS UP TO!!**

If you would like to submit a story or photographs for the next issue, please contact Kelly, [rcheck2@ucla.edu](mailto:rcheck2@ucla.edu). To be highlighted in the next edition of The Transect Line, all submissions must be received by March 21st, 2003.

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## **Coral Reefs in the News**

#### **GIANT SHARKS WIN UN PROTECTION**

Landmark victories to protect two species of giant sharks -- a U.N. convention frustrates the shark fin industry and encourages conservationists.

[www.reefcheck.org/newsletter6/press\\_release.htm](http://www.reefcheck.org/newsletter6/press_release.htm).

#### **CORAL REEF LAWS PAPER**

*Protecting coral reefs: The principle, national and international legal instruments* by Mary Davidson, was published by the Harvard Environmental Law Review.

[http://oshadavidson.com/coral\\_reef\\_laws.pdf](http://oshadavidson.com/coral_reef_laws.pdf)

#### **OTHER NEWSLETTERS**

GCRMN [www.reefcheck.org/newsletter6/gcrnews.pdf](http://www.reefcheck.org/newsletter6/gcrnews.pdf)

CEA [www.ceakumal.org/ceas\\_electronic\\_newsletter\\_edition\\_4\\_january\\_2003.html](http://www.ceakumal.org/ceas_electronic_newsletter_edition_4_january_2003.html)

MAC [www.reefcheck.org/newsletter6/mac\\_news.htm](http://www.reefcheck.org/newsletter6/mac_news.htm)

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