

International Floating Marine Park

UPDATE

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One of the dreams of Chimp-n-Sea is to help set up an *'International Floating Marine Park'* that will inspire and empower communities, through a combination of science, music and storytelling, to create their own marine protected areas and develop meaningful mythologies and actions that will help sustain life in the sea for future generations.



In December 2009, two of CnS's board members, Sara Lourie and David Browne, spent time in Indonesia furthering the development of the International Floating Marine Park (IFMP) idea.

We worked with Yayasan Jari (Taufik Hizbul Haq, Hani Nusantari and Juanita Mandagi) whose mission is to share their love and knowledge of marine and coastal environments, and to help foster environmental understanding so as to empower local communities to make informed decisions about sustainable use and development in their area.

Lombok is one of Indonesia's 17,500+ islands, situated in the middle of the archipelago, on one side of the famous zoogeographical boundary known as Wallace's Line. On the edge of the Coral Triangle it harbors a remarkable diversity of marine creatures. It is also a major gateway between the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. However, like many other regions of Southeast Asia it is under increasing pressure from a burgeoning human population, tourism development, mangrove-cutting and unsustainable fishing practices.



The initial project location is planned for the *Five Gilis* region in the northeast part of Lombok. The islands are part of a designated tourist development zone. A conservation area (KKLD – Kawasan Konservasi Laut Daerah) has been declared around the islands of Gili Sulat, Gili Lawang, however no on-going monitoring, management, or educational plan is currently in place. The protected area status of Pulau Petagan is unclear. Tourist development elsewhere in Lombok, as in Bali, has been rampant often with severely negative environmental consequences.



The dominant vegetation on the islands is mangrove forest, with seventeen different species represented. Coral reefs and seagrass beds are in mostly good condition, except where they have been destroyed by dynamite fishing or mined for building materials (about 50% area). Mangrove replanting has occurred, especially on Pulau Petagan, and there have been a couple of coral reef rehabilitation projects: one with an artificial reef, and one involving transplantation. One of the local villagers has continued to plant mangroves – his motto ‘satu orang, satu pohon’¹

Two other islands in the group are very small. Gili Bidara is windswept, but sufficiently raised to enable cultivation (e.g. soy beans, corn). On the south end of the island is a group of huts that are used on a rotating basis by fishers/farmers from the mainland who come out for a few months at a time. Gili Kondo is used as a stopover for liveaboard dive boats operated by Perama Tours. The government has built two roofed picnic areas, and Perama has built a small house with seating area, bar and sleeping area, a volley-ball court as well as an outhouse, shower and bougainvillea-lined paths. There is also a pearl culturing platform.



The Indonesian Ministry of Tourism is launching a program to boost tourism with *Visit Lombok Sumbawa 2012*. The Lombok government wants to make the island a centre for ecotourism, and turn Mataram into an ‘eco-city’, however it’s questionable as to what that concept actually means given the plans to invest \$26 billion from Dubai in a massive tourist development in southern Lombok and goals of > 1 million visitors climbing Mt Rinjani. The three Gili’s in the northwest of Lombok and Senggigi Beach are already overdeveloped, and the environment somewhat

degraded. There are also plenty of lessons to be learned from Bali, but whether these will be heeded when investment money in the equation is hard to know.

This is where community-based preparedness comes in, including an understanding of the role of intact environments in supporting humans as well as other organisms. Education is key – formal, informal, as well as encouraging mythologies that enable people to relate to their environment in a sustainable way. Perhaps there is also a role here for vEcotourism (www.chimp-n-

¹ ‘one man, one tree’

sea.org/projects/vecotourism). During the trip we undertook several test vEcotours and found cell phone reception to be excellent, so from a technological point of view this seems promising.

Yayasan Jari and the Next Steps

We are excited to be working with Yayasan Jari on this project. Yayasan Jari was officially incorporated in 1997 although its founder members had been working together since 1992. Founders, Hani Nusantari and Boen Taufik Hizbul Haq have recently (2008) returned from two years in Hamilton, New Zealand where Hani completed a Masters degree in Environmental Education, with a thesis on the understanding of the marine environment by elementary school children in Lombok. Hani also has a BSc degree in Marine Sciences from the University in Ambon and was the Indonesian coordinator for the International Coastal Cleanup.



Boen studied law at university in Mataram (capital of West Nusa Tenggara Province), has a good understanding of the way government operates and has good connections to many decision-makers. He is also a CMAS trained and registered dive teacher and has taught many diving courses, both recreational and technical, as well as coral survey and monitoring techniques, to a huge number of people including government officials, LIPI (Indonesian Institute of Sciences researchers), university students, other conservation professionals and the general public.



Juanita (Nita) Mandagi another founding member of Yayasan Jari is currently working free-lance in Jakarta, writing articles about marine conservation and pollution. She hopes to return to Lombok in the next year. She was very enthusiastic about ideas for a vEcotour of Jakarta Bay and continued collaboration with Yayasan Jari.

Some of Yayasan Jari's plans include:

- building an environmental education centre, and developing educational activities
- developing a formal curriculum to fit into the 'local content' (mulok-muatan lokal) section of the national school curriculum (elementary age)
- designing field tours and informal educational activities, including using origami and amigurumi as tools for storytelling
- encouraging further research and monitoring of corals, seagrass and mangroves
- developing community-based ecotourism and vEcotourism
- outfitting a local fishing boat as a floating environmental education centre (IFMP) to visit communities in east Lombok and west Sumbawa.



Hani and Boen own approximately 1 ha of land situated in Sugian on the mainland of Lombok opposite Gili Sulat and Gili Lawang. This is the site of the potential future environmental education centre and base for the IFMP.

During the December visit other links were developed: with TERANGI (Indonesian Coral Reef Foundation) in Jakarta, WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society) and CI (Conservation International) in Bali. We hope to capitalize on their experience as we develop our projects.

In recent months, Hani and Boen have been working to ensure a stable legal basis for the land in Sugian. They have also received funding from the Rufford Foundation in the UK to support their work and have begun to develop and implement informal educational activities. Hani has been invited to present some of her ideas about using origami as an educational tool in marine conservation at a conference in Fiji.



We look forward to continuing our collaboration with Yayasan Jari and sharing the unfolding of this story with you in the months and years to come.



If you are interested in becoming more involved, would like to make a donation or are looking for further information, please contact: info@chimp-n-sea.org or see www.chimp-n-sea.org