



Welcome to Reef Check Malaysia's second newsletter of the year!

Hi everyone, welcome to Reef Check Malaysia's second newsletter of 2019! We've had an exciting start to 2019 and all our colleagues are out in the field, busy doing what they do best! We're excited to share with you about what has been happening and some of our plans for 2019. Keep reading to find out more!

Weekly Beach Clean Up and Trash Audit in Pantai Kelanang, Selangor

RCM is coordinating a weekly beach clean-up and trash audit over a period of one year (2019). Our aim is to collect consistent data every week on the type of trash found and if possible, where the trash originates from, as well as changes in the amount of trash. If we have such data every week for one year, we will be able to prepare reliable statistics, which will help empower us to lobby for a change in our recycling and waste management habits.



Some of the volunteers during the beach clean-up

We need 5 volunteers every Saturday, so if you are interested, you can now register here: <https://www.sedunia.me/groups/reefcheckmalaysia/missions>

Global Giving Campaign

We have raised \$3,057 through our March Accelerator Global Giving campaign. We appreciate all the support, however we missed out on reaching our target of \$5,000 that would permanently place us on their platform. We will launch another campaign in June and we hope to achieve our target then.

In the meantime, our campaign on Global Giving has been selected to be on the 2019 Climate Fund Campaign' that starts from 15th to 29th April 2019. That means our project 'Save 500 hectares of Coral Reefs in Malaysia!' is still accepting donations, and we stand a chance to win one of six year-long slots in Global Giving's inaugural Climate Fund, as well as compete for \$50,000 on Earth Day!

There is no better time to donate than THIS COMING WEEK! If you would like to keep updated on our next fundraiser, please email us at wecare@reefcheck.org.my.

EcoDiver Training and Surveys 2019

We recently certified 3 new EcoDivers in Sabah and 6 in West Malaysia as we kicked off 2019! We've also completed our Sembilan and Pangkor Island surveys. More surveys will be conducted throughout this year, and we hope to see positive results on the condition of our reefs.



Our 3 new EcoDivers in Sabah: Doreen Dominic, Ng Wei Siang and Chong Jin Han (Photo credits: Chong Jin Han)

We've got more EcoDiver trainings planned for this year, so if you are interested to become an EcoDiver, please feel free to contact us at ecodiver@reefcheck.org.my. For more information on the EcoDiver training programme, please visit our website at www.reefcheck.org.my.

Tioman Island Programme – Cintai Tioman

Early this year, we conducted Eco-friendly Snorkel Guide courses in Kg. Genting, Kg. Salang and Kg. Air Batang. A total of 50 participants who attended this course. Participants are taught various skills such as first aid response, safety skills and how to conduct short briefings for their customers which include environmentally-friendly practices.

We encourage anyone visiting the island to look out for these guides to have a wonderful snorkeling experience that does not harm the environment. You can find out more about these guides and contact them via the "Cintai Tioman" Facebook page.

Our recycling efforts on the island are also progressing positively. We now have a new recycling hut in Kg. Juara, sponsored by Yayasan Sime Darby. This little hut was built by Little Planet with the help of students from SK Juara, Reef Check Malaysia and the villagers. Plastic bottles and tin cans for this village will be collected here and then sent out to Mersing to be recycled. Meanwhile on the other side of the island, the villagers have also been supportive of the recycling efforts. They now separate their plastic bottles, tin cans and glass from other household waste. This is a huge progress which also helps with the problem of trash disposal on the island.

Do follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/CintaiTioman> for regular updates on our programmes and activities on the island.

Updates from Sabah and Mantanani

In March, our colleagues in East Malaysia met with the Kota Belud District Officer, Tn. Abdul Gari Itam to share and update him on our current programmes in Mantanani Island, such as the Mantanani Plastic Recycling Programme, Community Development programme and annual Reef Check surveys.

On Mantanani Island, we now have a new machine called the Shruder MKII which is housed at our newly established recycling centre in Kg Padang, which is also home to our baler machine. The shruder machine, sponsored by the Coca Cola Foundation, will be helpful in our plastic recycling activities, as it turns the plastic collected for recycling into new products, such as coasters and key rings. The machine is now fully operational, after our colleagues on the island were trained by a team from Plastic Collective.

We've also had a series of community programmes and stakeholder meetings to discuss the marine management plan for Mantanani Island. This includes meeting with Sabah Parks, Sabah Tourism Board, Sabah Tourism Association, District Office, and island based stakeholders.



Meeting with Kota Belud District Officer



Shruder MKII Machine training with Plastic Collective.

You can follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/cintaimantanani/> for updates on this community programme.

Johor Islands: extending the work on dugong and seagrass conservation

For the past three years, we have been working with several partners on a dugong and seagrass conservation programme.

In February, our colleague, Yun, attended the Dugong and Seagrass Project Closing Workshop in Bali. The workshop addressed successes, lessons learnt, project sharing and next phase actions between all partners from 8 participating countries (UAE, Malaysia, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Sri Lanka & Madagascar).



The first STIMC meeting in Mersing



Yun (third from left) at the workshop in Bali

Although this project has officially ended, our work continues as we are now in the early phase of 3-year extension to the programme, funded by CIMB Bank, which is designed to operationalise the co-management system for Sibut-Tinggi Marine Park.

We had our first Sibut-Tinggi Island Management Committee (STIMC) meeting of 2019 in Mersing in January. This was conducted to discuss management actions in which all stakeholders can collaborate and participate together. Mooring buoy installation & maintenance, beach clean-ups and capacity building trainings are some of the plans for 2019 which were discussed in the meeting. Three more quarterly meetings will follow to keep progress in-check, and to allow for continuous monitoring as this co-management system develops. The first project – EcoFriendly Snorkel Guide Training – will be conducted in early April.

And finally...

RCM was recently confirmed as one of the coordinators for the annual International Coastal Clean-up Day. Started over 30 years by The Ocean Conservancy, a US-based conservation organization, the annual event attracts thousands of volunteers worldwide, who clean hundreds of km of coastline every year. Last year, our first Malaysia-wide clean-up effort attracted over 5,000 volunteers in 80 locations around Malaysia.



Photos from previous ICC events in Malaysia

The annual clean-up forms an important educational and awareness component of our growing campaign against marine debris, which has seen us engage with a group of industry stakeholders to identify ways in which we can prevent plastics escaping into the environment. One of the problems we have identified is lack of segregation of recyclables at household level and we are hoping to launch a trial scheme in a KL neighbourhood soon.

So join the event FB page – Malaysians Against Marine Debris – to keep in touch, and save the date:

2019 International Coastal Clean-up Day: September 21st