

Making a Splash!



Footballers from Terengganu's *Skuad Penyu* kicked in their support for WWF's World Sea Turtle Day 2012 celebrations. © WWF-Malaysia

Whale Encounter



© WWF-Malaysia

Nobody would have expected a visit by an animal as elusive as the whale, and Donny Musana—an Honorary Wildlife Warden (HWW) and resident of Maliangin Island within the proposed Tun Mustapha Park, Sabah—certainly didn't.

But in the afternoon of 17 May, a black whale was spotted swimming in the shallow waters in front of his house measuring approximately 3-4 meters long. Donny observed some minor scratches on its head and reported the encounter to WWF-Malaysia's Kudat-Banggi Priority Conservation Area (PCA) team. Donny captured a 4-minute video footage of the marine mammal which enabled positive identification.

The marine mammal turned out to be a Short-Finned Pilot Whale which had probably strayed from its migratory path. Rarely seen alone, this species is usually found in groups of 10 to 30. Donny and the WWF Team hope that the whale, which swam off in the night, managed to rejoin its migratory group to continue on their journey.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE LIVE REEF FISH TRADE: FISH TRADE: Visiting Philippine's perspective



Roundtable discussion held between Sabah delegates (represented by Department of Fisheries Sabah, Sabah Parks, WWF-Malaysia and Sabah LRFT traders) and Palawan stakeholders (represented by government agencies, academics, WWF-Philippines and Palawan LRFT traders). © WWF-Malaysia/ Cecilia Chu

The cross site visit is the first step towards a transparent and accountable trans-boundary trade of live reef fish between both countries, particularly between Palawan and Kudat which are located in the Sulu Sea. Although similar in feature, our counterpart is surprisingly different from our culture. For example, in Palawan they only market live coral trout and sell the other reef fish such as tiger grouper and *Humphead wrasse* to local fish markets and priced as dead fish, while it is highly sought after by our local Sabah traders because of their high price. Also in the Philippine, all resources including live reef fish needs to be transported to Manila first before they can be exported out, which not only increases the exporting cost but the mortality rate of the fish as well.

In Kudat, the dwindling reef fish populations in the wild due mainly for the use of destructive fishing method stimulate the illegal buying of these valuable fish species at the seas-boundary. Thus, the market for live reef fish was created between Palawan and Kudat out of short distance and convenience. After knowing the need of the people involved in the industry and learning the historical trade between Palawan and Kudat, policy measures were recommended during the roundtable discussion held during the visit which helps in documenting the cross-border trade and addressed the problem of Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) trade of species between the two areas. The measures will encourage collaborative management and sustainability of the Live Reef Fish Trade between the two markets.

WWF-Malaysia's marine work in the Kudat-Banggi PCA and with the Live Reef Fish Trade, is partially funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The USAID administers the U.S. foreign assistance program providing economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 80 countries worldwide.

Best Hatchery Practice (BHP) Training



Abdul Halim Mohd Noor of the Terengganu Turtle Information Centre demonstrating the proper handling of turtle eggs to participants.

© WWF-Malaysia/ Sharifah Ruqaiyah

WWF-Malaysia and the Department of Fisheries (DoF) Terengganu carried out the Best Hatchery Management Practice (BHP) workshop in Kerteh and Setiu, Terengganu on 5 and 7 April respectively.

Held annually since 2009, the trainers were from the Fisheries Research Institute and the Terengganu Turtle Information Centre. A total of 70 participants in Kerteh and Setiu underwent a programme that included a review of the BHP standard operating procedure where important statistics were shared on the number of nests and hatching success, briefing on the ongoing Egg Buyback Programme (EBB) by WWF-Malaysia and the sharing of hatching data, as well as methods of filling in forms such as the EBB forms for licensed egg collectors. Demonstrations on egg handling and the general management of a hatchery were also conducted.

It was heartening to note the increased awareness displayed by the participants on the importance of protecting turtle eggs.

Promoting Anti-Fish Bombing Message at the 19th Regatta Lepa



Puppet show entitled "Hentikan Bom Ikan" by School of Hope, Mabul to highlight the destruction caused by fish bombs to coral reefs and marine animals. © WWF-Malaysia/ Mazidi Ghani

The 19th *Regatta Lepa* has been celebrated annually since 1994 to commemorate the Bajau tradition of building these splendid boats. In conjunction with the annual festivity, WWF-Malaysia's Semporna Priority Conservation Area (PCA) Project joined in the celebrations to raise public awareness and educate the public about the dangers of fish bombing to our marine environment.

Puppet shows followed by quizzes, coloring and mural paintings were some tools used to educate the public about the importance of protecting and conserving our marine environment.

In support of livelihood of the local community, WWF-Malaysia shared the booth with the community group, Wanita Pulau Omadal (WAPO) to promote their pandanus woven handicrafts. The team hoped to reach out to public to stop fish bombing for good.

Socialising with Pulau Tigabu Community



WWF-Malaysia's Kudat Priority Conservation Area (PCA) team organized a social event – *Majlis Ramah Mesra Bersama Komuniti Pulau Tigabu dengan Pihak Penguatkuasa*, on the 18 April 2012.

The event gathered the community of Tigabu Island, Malaysia Marine Enforcement Agency (MMEA), Marine Police, and Sabah Parks.

Newly appointed Honorary Wildlife Wardens from the island were introduced to their roles and duties. They will conduct collaborative patrolling activities with Sabah Parks and enforcement agencies around Tigabu Island, which is situated in the proposed Tun Mustapha Park.

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TRIPLE TREAT FOR WORLD SEA TURTLE DAY (WSTD) 2012 CELEBRATIONS



WSTD in Melaka © WWF-Malaysia/Liew Hui Jin

For the first time, WWF-Malaysia marked this year's WSTD Celebration simultaneously at all three of our national turtle project sites.

The plight of the endangered sea turtles took centre stage on 16 June. Here's what went down on that day across Melaka, Terengganu and Sabah.

Bringing Hawksbills to the Heart of Melaka

"Melaka has turtles? For real?!" is a common response when Melaka and turtles are mentioned in the same sentence. Home to the largest Hawksbills population in Peninsular Malaysia, the WSTD Celebration in the state was held at Dataran Pahlawan, Melaka Megamall with the slogan; 'Melaka Our Home, Hawksbills Our Heritage'. The event recognised not only Melaka's status as a UNESCO World Heritage City, but also brought attention to the Hawksbills as a natural heritage which is in need of protection. In addition, the event aimed to raise awareness amongst urban Malaccans on the state's Hawksbill turtles and to garner support for the protection of their nesting beaches.



WSTD in Melaka © WWF-Malaysia/Liew Hui Jin

Jointly organised with the State Government and Department of Fisheries Malaysia in collaboration with the State Department of Education, Ministry of Tourism, Melaka Office, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Alor Gajah Campus and other state government agencies, the one day event was officiated by guest of Honor, Y.B. Datuk Perumal a/l Raju, Rural and Agricultural Development State Committee Chairman who also led the pledge to protect Hawksbills.



WSTD in Terengganu © WWF-Malaysia

An array of activities followed suit including Hawksbills-themed performances by Eco-schools, a Flashmob and Freeze by 40 energetic UiTM students, Turtle Race, face-painting, exhibitions and Eco-bags painting.

It is hoped that with this event, more urban Malaccans were made aware that the the critically endangered Hawksbills which can be found literally, in their own backyards will become their pride to safeguard and conserve.



WSTD in Terengganu © WWF-Malaysia

A Kick of Hope for Terengganu's Turtles

No one would have guessed the connection between Football, Freezing, and Dancing with the biggest market selling turtle eggs in Peninsular Malaysia, Pasar Payang, in Kuala Terengganu. But on 16 June 2012, the dots were connected for one sole objective – the campaign themed 'Telur Penyu: Beli Jangan, Makan Pun Tidak!' (Turtle Eggs: Buy Not, Eat Not). Jointly organised with

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), targeted members of the public who sell and consume turtle eggs.

The event commenced with a Bicycle Convoy from UMT’s Cycling Club and whole day activities at Bazaar Warisan including exhibitions, face painting, pledge signing, children performances and a talk by renowned motivational speaker, Dr. Harlina Halizah Siraj.

The highlight of the event was the ‘Freeze to End Turtle Egg Trade’ held at Pasar Payang and participated by some 60 volunteers, including a special appearance by the state’s football players, aptly called ‘Skuad Penyu’. To encourage the public to have the right appetite towards turtle conservation, together they froze for 10 minutes wearing information panels in front of turtle egg stalls.

Volunteers from UiTM Dungun and UMT then burst into groovy moves with a turtle-inspired Flashmob in front of Pasar Payang. Later, the footballers joined the pledge signing to not buy nor eat turtle eggs.

Turtle eggs are still openly sold in the markets in Terengganu, but only Leatherback eggs have been declared illegal for trade and consumption. The campaign hoped to serve as a platform to educate and instill awareness amongst the public that each turtle egg that ends in the markets and in their stomachs contribute towards further decline of turtles.

Sea Turtle Camp in Semporna

Joining the World Turtle Day celebrations in Sabah, WWF-Malaysia and Pom-Pom Island Resort co-organised a two-day and one night camp at Pom-Pom Island, Semporna for 20 students and teachers from School of Hope, Humana and Persatuan Kebajikan Pendidikan Kanak-Kanak Miskin (PKPKM).

With the theme ‘Celebrating World Sea Turtle Day: Sea Turtle Camp’, presentations on Turtle YeYe and games on the beach based on the turtle life cycle by Gavin Jolis, WWF-Malaysia’s Semporna PCA team’s Species Officer were carried out. Highlights included learning to collect scientific data by measuring paper-made turtle carapaces, and convincing poachers (played by the camp’s facilitators) not to collect turtle eggs at the beach.

The following day, participants had a session to express what they had learnt on the first day. School of Hope showcased their dancing talent entitled ‘Dance of the Turtle with Debris’, followed by a recitation of their turtle pledges, ‘We promised not to buy and eat turtle eggs!’.

Although they did not have the chance to see any turtles grazing while snorkelling or turtle nesting during the night beach patrolling, all participants enjoyed the fun experience at the camp and were determined to spread turtle conservation messages to their family and friends. Quoting Ratna Hassan, 14 of Humana, ‘Together We Protect Sea Turtles!’.

WWF-Malaysia would like to sincerely thank partners from government agencies, local schools, universities, private entities as well as the volunteers who made this year’s WSTD Celebration a success.



WSTD in Semporna © WWF-Malaysia/Gavin Jolis



WSTD in Semporna © WWF-Malaysia/Gavin Jolis

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SMK Rahmat	Football Association of Terengganu	Humana Lil-Babs	Borneo Speedy Dive Sdn. Bhd.
SMK Tinggi Melaka	Casligas Sdn Bhd	Humana Nam Hing Estate	Island Shop
SMK Selandar	Kuala Terengganu City Council	Persatuan Kebajikan Pendidikan Kanak-Kanak Miskin Semporna	
Tabika KEMAS Padang Kemunting	Scouts Association of Terengganu	School of Hope, Mabul	
Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)	Taska Cahaya Warisan		

Launch of MFFAM to Guide Members towards Sustainable Practices



Dr. Sundari Ramakrishna, WWF-Malaysia Conservation Director hands a grant to Dato' Goh Cheng Liang, Chairman of the MFFAM (second from left) as seed money to carry out the association's activities witnessed by Director-General of DoF Malaysia, Dato' Ahamad Sabki Mahmood (second from right) and Nik Ab. Wahab bin Mat Diah, DoF Aquaculture Development Division Director (far left) © WWF-Malaysia/ Nadiah Rosli

Marine Fish Farmers Association of Malaysia (MFFAM) was first suggested 2 years ago and was launched in Putrajaya on 8 May 2012. The Coral Triangle Network Initiative, WWF-Malaysia and the Department of Fisheries expressed concerns on Live Fish Trade issues, particularly reef fishes and the negative impact to the marine environment from the unsustainable fish farming techniques .

The objectives of MFFAM are to advance knowledge on all aspects of sustainable aquaculture and related activities with particular reference to Malaysia and the neighbouring region in order to foster rational development and management of aquaculture and related activities for food, recreation and conservation.

The Association aims to meet these targets by organising and participating in meetings, seminars and forums as well as to produce, publish and disseminate latest information on sustainable aquaculture and related issues to its members and the public.

Director-General of Department of Fisheries Malaysia, Dato' Ahamad Sabki Mahmood who was present at the launch commended the effort and stated that the association's activities would be in line with the government's effort to protect dwindling supplies of fish.

Arvind Devadasan, Field Biologist, Malacca Turtle Conservation left our organisation mid May. We thank him for his contribution and wish him all the best in his endeavors.

We welcome Liew Hui Ling, Communications Officer for the Marine Programme who reported in January and Nurul Bariyah Babu who joined the Malacca Turtle Conservation team as Field Biologist end May.

Freunds Visit Kuala Lumpur



Jürgen Freund and wife, Stella (centre) with WWF-Malaysia's staff. © WWF-Malaysia

Acclaimed German photographer, Jürgen Freund and wife Stella Chiu-Freund were in Kuala Lumpur in March to share the dazzling shots taken for WWF from their 18-month photographic expedition (from 2009-2010) around the Coral Triangle region documenting the diversity of species, people, cultures and traditions found here.

The underwater photography slideshow and talk conducted at Scuba Symphony-Underwater Imaging Dive Centre also highlighted the problems and threats that plague the region and the work being done on the ground to help save this globally-significant marine treasure.

Freund, a mechanical engineer by training became a full-time international freelance nature photographer specializing in the marine environment in 1995. He has traveled all over the world, taking acclaimed pictures published in numerous international magazines. Based in Far North Queensland with his wife Stella, the couple shared their favorite story from their WWF Coral Triangle Expedition:

"We had an incredible but short encounter with the magnificent Leatherback in West Papua." Freund described the turtle's arrival on the beach as a rather surreal experience and added that the diverse people they've met were also highlights of the assignment.



Freunds' Top 3 Most Memorable Assignments so far:

1. "Of Course" the Coral Triangle Photographic Expedition - http://blogs.panda.org/coral_triangle/
2. A snake expedition for GEO Magazine - <http://jurgenfrend.photoshelter.com/gallery/Snake-Science-in-Queensland/G0000xA.bPoEyZ2k/>
3. Lake Eyre in South Australia for GEO Magazine - <http://jurgenfrend.photoshelter.com/gallery/Lake-Eyre-Basin-Central-Australia/G00009f3dqEHmvSA/>



Announcements

Guidelines for Sustainable Turtle Ecotourism



Participants deliberating on the draft guidelines which will encompass the Dos and Don'ts for both tour guides and tourists.

© WWF-Malaysia/Sharifah Ruqaiyah

To promote turtle conservation via ecotourism, WWF-Malaysia (WWF) and the Department of Fisheries (DOF) jointly organised a national workshop on Turtle Ecotourism Guidelines in Kuala Lumpur on 10 April 2012. The workshop aimed to socialise the draft guidelines amongst the invited stakeholders and to gather feedback and consensus in an effort to produce viable national guidelines for sustainable turtle ecotourism in Peninsular Malaysia. Nazuki Sulong, Research Officer of DOF gave an introductory presentation on the 'Management and Conservation Status of Turtles in Malaysia' followed by a presentation entitled 'Tourism: The Forefront of Economy and Turtle Conservation' by WWF's Peninsular Malaysia Sea's Programme Manager, Gangaram Pursumal. Case studies and lessons learnt in sustainable turtle ecotourism ventures were shared by WWF's Terengganu Turtle Conservation Team Leader, Rahayu Zulkilfi and Irwan Isnain, Research Officer from Sabah Parks citing examples from Ma'Daerah and Sabah Turtle Islands, respectively.

A total of 54 participants comprising government representatives from state and federal DOF offices, tourism agencies, state Economic Planning Unit, Marine Parks, PERHILITAN, Sarawak Forestry Corporation as well as tour and resort operators, tourist guides association, non-governmental agencies, academicians and coastal community representatives attended the workshop. They were divided into break-out groups to deliberate on the draft guidelines for both tour guides and tourists. The outcomes of these discussions were collated for further review.

A recommendation was made to determine status of the guidelines so that it has some form of weight for legal action as well as the need for an overall framework on turtle ecotourism. The outcomes of the workshop will be instrumental in designing ecotourism products that will not only benefit the local economy but more importantly the conservation of turtles in the country.

Steering Committee to promote Sustainability in Malaysian Fisheries



WWF-Malaysia has been strongly advocating for EAFM in national fisheries since 2008 and will provide input to the National Steering Committee and Technical Working Group. © WWF-Malaysia

On 8 May 2012, the National Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) Steering Committee was formed. The meeting was chaired by Director-General of DOFM, Dato' Ahamad Sabki Mahmood and attended by DOFM officers, representatives from relevant ministries and resource management agencies and WWF-Malaysia representatives. Following the meeting in Putrajaya, a Technical Working Group will be set up to develop the EAFM Plan of Action and Framework for Malaysia. Jointly coordinated by WWF-Malaysia, this Working Group which will be chaired by DOFM will work towards sustainability in fisheries with EAFM as a management model.

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