

Reef Check training

Reef Check (www.Reefcheck.org) is a global survey that was launched in International Year of the Reef 1997 and helps to provide an assessment of the health of the world's coral reefs. The methods used in Reef Check are standardised and straightforward and provide a way of carrying out rapid surveys that can be repeated in future years. Reef Check surveys have already been carried out at 4 sites within TSMP by the SIP team and MCS volunteers (1998, 1999, 2000, 2004). The aim of the training programme begun under the Darwin Project is to ensure that local teams can continue with the surveys. A 2-day introductory training course was carried out in November, comprising classroom sessions, practices on the beach and a trial survey using snorkelling and diving.



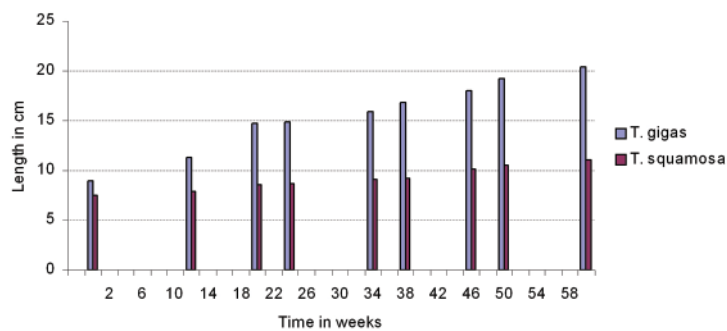
Giant clam sea ranching trials

As an interim activity, while the land-based hatchery for marine invertebrates is being developed, small-scale ocean ranching trials are being carried out using seed animals obtained from the University of Marine Science, Philippines.

This is a valuable exercise because it is providing the local community with the necessary skills needed to carry out sea-ranching, and is also providing useful scientific data on growth rates and survival.

A full report is currently being prepared, but the chart gives an indication of progress. Clam growth has been particularly high in *Tridacna gigas*. Specimens have, on average, doubled in size in one year, from an average of 9cm to 20cm.

Survival of clams at all sites combined is 48% for *Tridacna gigas* and 40% for *Tridacna squamosa*. The highest survival (91%) is for *T. gigas* at Selakan. The loss of all the clams from the Bodgaya lagoon was due to theft - providing an illustration of the enforcement difficulties likely to be encountered.



This project has been grant-aided by the Darwin Initiative through funding from the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and is managed by the Marine Conservation Society.

Thanks to the following groups and organisations that are providing additional support: Lighthouse Foundation, Mon Aqua Tech Ltd., National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Tropical Marine Centre, Malaysian Airlines.

Contact details

Project Leader: Elizabeth Wood ewood@f2s.com
 Sabah Co-ordinator: Muhamad Saini b. Suliansa mdsaini@yahoo.com
 Sabah Project Officer: Helen Brunt [snake1519@yahoo.com](mailto:sake1519@yahoo.com)
 Marine Conservation Society, Unit 3 Wolf Business Park, Alton Road, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 5BU. www.mcsuk.org Email: info@mcsuk.org
 Sabah Parks, PO Box 163, 91307 Semporna, Sabah. Local officer: Irwanshah bin Mustapa. Email Ishahm80@yahoo.com or Sabah Parks, PO Box 10626 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. www.sabahparks.org.my Email sparkshq@tm.net.my



TAMAN MARIN TUN SAKARAN
DARWIN INITIATIVE



MARINE CONSERVATION
SOCIETY

SIDP News

Issue 2 January 2006

Community action for sustainable use and conservation of coral reefs

Consultations continue

The SIDP consultation, awareness and feedback programme has continued with the Second Workshop in Semporna (September 27th- 29th), and the Second Boatshow travelling the islands in the Park over 4 days in October.



The workshop was attended by SIDP and Sabah Parks staff, local government agencies and about 30 local community participants. Emphasis was placed on reviewing and debating the draft management proposals for the Tun Sakaran Marine Park, and documenting objections, concerns and points of agreement.



Proposed zoning plan under discussion in one of the workshop groups

Zoning Plan. The overall concept is now accepted but many of the workshop participants had mixed feelings about some of the Sanctuary (No take) Zone boundaries and suggested the rules should be relaxed for 'legitimate land owners'.

Marine resource use regulations. There was general agreement about the lists of prohibited and acceptable fishing gears and the principles of sustainable use. Most of the workshop participants felt strongly that resource use should be restricted to members of the 'legitimate local community', but the question of who exactly can be considered as such has not yet been clarified. Complex issues still remain in relation to land claims and traditional rights.

Seaweed farming was strongly supported, and the majority view was that it should be small scale, semi-intensive and run by the local community. The proposed *Guidelines for Best Practice* were endorsed and it was suggested that seaweed farming should be integrated with mariculture of invertebrates.

Special protection measures for species and habitats at risk. There was good support for the proposed lists although requests were made for limited use of some species for broodstock and for personal traditional medicine.

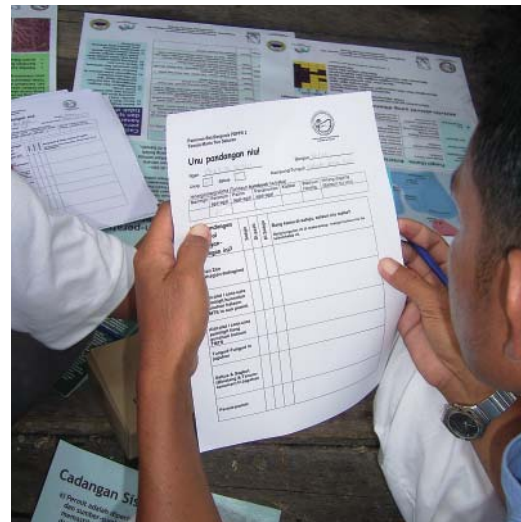
Permits and enforcement. There was general approval of the proposed permit scheme and the idea of using members of the local community as honorary rangers.

Community feedback

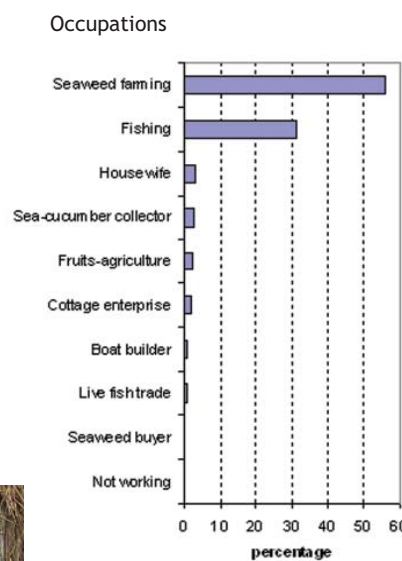
The main aim of the second Boatshow was to maintain contact with the island communities, explain the proposed management strategies and regulations and invite feedback. All seven inhabited islands were visited, together with 8 separate groups of stilt houses on the Sebangkat-Selakan reef top.



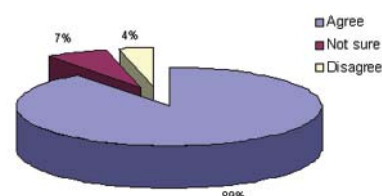
Four posters were produced to act as visual aids. These covered the proposed zoning scheme, permit scheme, resource use regulations and measures to protect species and habitats at risk.



Feedback questionnaires were produced in Malay, Suluk and Bajau in order to ensure that each ethnic group had access to a form in their own language.



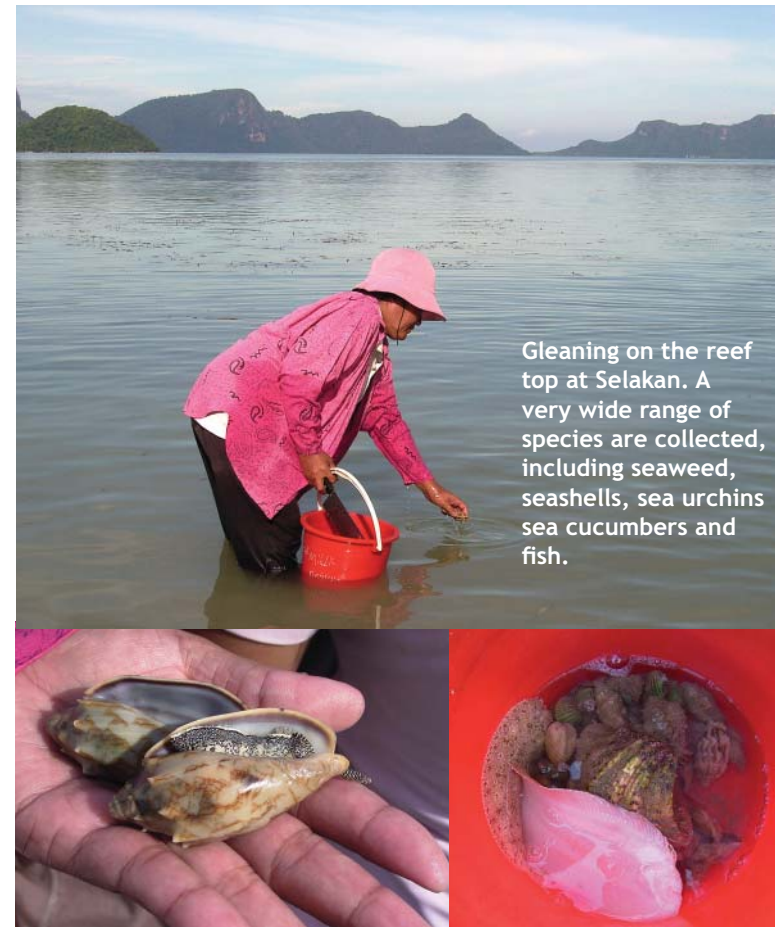
A total of 243 people (about 25% of the adult population) filled in the 'Have Your Say' questionnaire. As shown in the chart, most were seaweed farmers or fishermen. Following the explanations by the SIDP team, respondents were asked whether they agreed, were unsure, or disagreed with key proposals relating to management of the Park.



Response to proposed regulations on fishing gears/methods allowed in TSMP with a permit

They were also invited to list specific concerns. Support for most of the proposals was high (between 82% - 93% agreement), but there were concerns about potential loss of traditional, productive fishing grounds and certain traditional methods of fishing or types of fishing gear. Some people were also worried that fishing restrictions on a number of particularly valuable species would have a negative effect on their livelihoods.

The discussions, recommendations and concerns expressed at the Workshop and Boatshow have all been taken into account during the final draft regulations, which are currently being finalised.



Gleaning on the reef top at Selakan. A very wide range of species are collected, including seaweed, seashells, sea urchins sea cucumbers and fish.

Reef top gleaning in TSMP

During the workshops, the issue of traditional rights was hotly debated, including the right to collect or glean edible natural resources in areas close to villages. The community at Pulau Selakan requested exemption from Park regulations that might prohibit gleaning for food, and an agreement was reached to carry out a survey of resources collected by gleaning and to monitor the impact (if any) of this activity. The first survey took place on November 24th 2005.

A preliminary list of species targeted for gleaning was produced by the SIDP team, and lively discussions about the occurrence, use and status of these and other species took place on the island. A total of 27 participants then contributed to the feedback exercise, which entailed answering a range of questions about gleaning and the options for management.

Over 80% of those interviewed said that the resources collected were for home consumption, rather than for sale. Their income came through other jobs, with 56% working as seaweed farmers and 30% as fishermen. Although gleaning for this community is a part-time activity, it is still considered to be important, as the participants made clear in their responses to the feedback questionnaire. Over 70% disagreed with the idea of any form of controls on harvesting or the need to have a permit for this activity. Data from this survey are currently being analysed and a plan for sustainable use being devised which can also be applied to other areas within the General Use Zone of TSMP.



Marine life guides were used to help match local names with scientific names and confirm species identity.



A 'What am I?' quiz using stickers of marine animals was devised for children and proved to be a popular activity.

