



Second Update Report Apr.30, 2009

*Community natural resource conservation and management project
Lion Village, Phra Thong Island,
Phang Nga, Thailand*



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**Report for Lions Foundation Thailand on the Environmental Management,
Homestay and Conservation Activities at Lion Village,
Koh Phra Thong, Phang Nga**

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The Lion Foundation supported two year project at Koh Pha Thong officially commenced with the receipt of the first installment of project funds in January, 2009.

BACKGROUND:

The local people of Lion Village come from different villages that were affected by the tsunami and are now working towards becoming a cohesive community. Our project is contributing to that process, helping establish several groups and stimulating community spirit and unity while building conservation awareness and implementing activities. Naucrates have been operating on the island for 10 years and MAP started to assist Naucrates since the tsunami and both are known by local people as conservation organizations.

ACTIVITIES:

Environmental Practices for a Green Village

As the idea of a green village was introduced to the villagers in October 2008, MAP and Naucrates continued the work by promoting the villagers to plant more indigenous trees. More soil was bought and 200 seedlings of Kheelek (*Cassia siamea Lam.*), Tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*, Linn.), Hoo Kwang (*Terminalia catappa L.*) Hoo Chang (*Barringtonia procera* (Miers) Knuth) were donated by the Laem Son National Park nursery. Most of these soil and seedlings were distributed on April 8, 2009. These seedlings were meant to be planted in the villagers' front yards. A "Clean & Green Competition" was announced to encourage the locals to participate the environmental practices.

Additionally, the rest of seedlings were kept for planting in this rainy season in the school front area, which was leveled on April 10, 2009. The planting area in front of the school was designed to improve the landscape of Ban Lion. The land was regraded into a shallow dish shape to facilitate capturing rainfall in the pure sand soils in order to grow trees.

Moreover, the recyclates kept in the house opposite to the CCRC have been removed to the mainland by a local collector on March 12, 2009. A new recycle storage location was still under discussion. Furthermore, numbers of cooler buckets were bought and given out to the local students, so that they could help reducing plastic cup use when they bought drinks from local shops.

Issues:

- The community's water pump broke very often, so there was no water for plants sometimes in dry season.
- There was no discussion on a central waste disposal site, therefore piles of fresh/burnt rubbish were still found in many areas of Ban Lion.

Homestay and Community-based Eco-tourism

In the light of a running homestay service provided to Naucrates conservation project volunteers during January – March, six local families have expressed their interest in joining the programme as an addition to the original five hosts. The conservation homestay project was considered as a first step to a year round homestay and CBT programme on Koh Phra Thong (KPT). To give these eleven hosts an insight into a CBT project, a homestay study trip to Ban Talay Nok (BTN), Ranong Province, was arranged from April 19 – 20, 2009 with the assistance of Andaman Discoveries (AD) in organizing and advising.

Ban Talay Nok community-based eco-tourism started in 2004 focusing on hosting volunteers from a local environmental volunteering project in the neighborhood (WARF). Since then, the programme was developed for individual travelers, families and small groups of tourists. BTN villagers provide homestay not only to volunteers but also to both Thai and international tourists whom visit them all year round.

As a result, the study trip has offered attendees from Ban Lion opportunities to observe the BTN CBT management team and crafting groups, to discuss and exchange views as well as problems with each other, and to reflect and improve their own management on KPT. After the field study, an informal meeting was arranged at Ban Lion on April 26, 2009 to discuss the formation of Ban Lion Homestay and CBT committee. More meetings will be arranged to further the details of this programme.

Besides the homestay part, Ban Lion's CBT capacity was strengthened by a Thai traditional massage training, where 6 villagers participated. The training was conducted by a professional masseuse, Ms. Thattika Woonsakul, from March 13 – 15, 2009. Later in March 2009, three trainees had started giving massage services to a number of Naucrates volunteers.

Moreover, two more sources of livelihood – coconut shell crafting and nypa palm weaving – were proposed to the CBT project. Consequently, the possibilities of both were investigated through a visit to two villages of coconut shell crafting and Krajoed, weaving in Pattalung Province on April 22, 2009 by MAP team and a community facilitator of Ban Lion CBT project. The visit revealed the information as follow:

Coconut Shell Crafting involves approximately 10 steps, 4 of which require an electric motor to run. Apart from that, a craftsman stated the crafting needed a 3 month period training, which would be done in Pattalung. An estimated cost of crafting tool (motor, electric fan, etc.) is at 3000 Baht.

Krajoed Weaving is a product made by one whole village that works as an assembly line. Every village member takes part in it, but not all needs to be skilled since not all the processes involve weaving. The fresh water grass material of Krajoed for weaving is comparable to nypa palm and pandan commonly found on Phra Thong Island.

Issues:

- Coconut shell crafting depends on running electricity which is unsuitable for the condition of Koh Phra Thong, where power is available from 6 – 10 PM.
- Also, the training process takes three months and it is not convenient for Lion villagers to stay in Pattalung for such long period of time.

Environmental Education and the Community Coastal Resource Center (CCRC)

To operate the CCRC at Ban Lion in a long run, an environmental education (EE) for children is inseparable to the project. So, a daily conservation lesson at Ban Lion School was organized for a length of three months from Jan – Mar 2009. Together with this, numbers of English lessons were included to enhance opportunities of the locals. The lessons were planned and taught to 7 local students with helps from three experienced volunteers. The lesson topics are listed below:

Environmental Education: population effect, Koh Phra Thong ecosystems (sea, coral, mangrove and wetland), water, food, tourism, climate change, waste management and Naucrates.

English: direction, buying & selling, emotion, adjectives, body parts, family, phonetics, verb and present continuous tense.

Classes were made interactive, and lots of teaching methods were employed. A mangrove study area was observed weekly by students from February until the end of their semester in March. Throughout the semester, pupils had been eager to learn and had shown more understanding of every topic.

Moreover, the Community Coastal Resource Centre had welcomed many visitors both locals and tourists. A room in Ban Tao (Turtle House) was converted to an EE museum, whereas a reading room in Ban Pa Gong Gang (Mangrove House) has served itself to the locals. These two rooms were left opened for anybody who wished to learn more about environment. Plus, walking between Ban Tao and Ban Pa Gong Gang was easier because workers had finished the joint walkway. In the mean time, the other two new houses were prepared by connecting water supply and adjusting the land behind the houses.

Issue:

- Some rainwater came in the CCRC through walls and the back part. This could make damages to the exhibit area, the reading room, as well as the office.
- The two new houses were not provided with electricity yet, so it is not convenient to expand the display area in CCRC and for staffs to move in there.

Natural resource conservation and management

As mentioned in the environmental education part, the mangrove study area in Lion Village was weekly observed by the students and data has been collected. For the mangrove restoration area in the tidal creek behind the Golden Buddha Resort, Naucrates volunteers had cleaned up the area by removing debris brought by tsunami.

Regarding the waste management in Ban Lion, compost bins are now ready and the composting will be demonstrated to the locals in May – June.

In the meantime, the effort of kitchen gardening went well. The school kitchen garden bore its fruits and the students managed to sell these products to villagers. The income from these products was spent on improving the garden. Also, the project helped the school by providing more vegetable seeds, soil and gardening tools. Additionally, many households had started their kitchen gardens and became more self-reliant for their food source.

Issue:

- Many villagers' kitchen garden could not bear produce that well due to the nutrient poor dry sandy soil condition. More soil, compost, mulch and fertilizers should be provided to support the practice of kitchen gardening.

Other Work and Activities

Apart from the focal work described above, another activity involved dog neutering which was arranged to improve the condition and value of the community with the support of Naucrates. This activity was not only important for the communities health and safety but it also has important implications for the conservation of the island's wildlife, domestic livestock, and the cleanliness of the village.

In Ban Lion, there were numbers of stray and pet dogs which were not vaccinated and neutered. The possibilities of problems created by these dogs such as, increasing dog population, dog induced parasites, and rabies, were taken into the team's consideration, therefore a dog veterinary service day was arranged with the help of a vet team from Kuraburi Livestock Department on 2nd April, 2009. Fifteen (15) dogs were vaccinated, while ten (10) out of these were also spayed and castrated. To show their support and gratitude the dog owners from the village contributed some money to support meals for the vet team during the field camp.

PROGRESS AND ON-GOING ACTIVITIES

1. Appointing judges for the "Clean & Green Competition"
2. Fencing recyclates storage area
3. Forming a homestay and CBT committee
4. Discussing the handicraft possibilities
5. Lesson planning for environmental education and English class for the coming semester.
6. Demonstrating compost

Photos



Villagers helped unloading soil and seedlings.
(April 2009)



An area in front of school was prepared for
tree planting. (April 2009)



A family got ready for the “Clean & Green
Competition”. (February 2009)



Recyclates were removed to the mainland.
(March 2009)

Photos



Local ladies were trained to massage. (March 2009)



Homestay providers brainstormed for Ban Lion's CBT project during a BTN study trip. (April 2009)



An electric motor was used for coconut shell crafting. (April 2009)



A lamp made from coconut shell was for sale in Pattalung. (April 2009)

Photos



A family decorated Krajoed weaving bags.
(April 2009)



Krajoed weaving products were made by a local crafting group in Pattalung. (April 2009)



Students played games during EE hour.
(February 2009)



A Canadian volunteer teacher explained an English lesson to pupils. (March 2009)

Photos



An English volunteer teacher became a vendor during buying & selling lesson.



Another volunteer teacher acted as a seller in an English class.



A French volunteer helped pupils with their monkey coloring sheets.



Two students were proud of their bracelets made from unused ropes in an EE hour.

Photos



Students visited a mangrove study area weekly. (February 2009)



Students observed changes and collected data. (March 2009)



The walkway connecting two houses was finished. (February 2009)



A compost bin was ready for demonstration. (March 2009)

Photos



The vet team got the dog ready for castration. (April 2009)



The vet team worked hard on neutering the dogs. (April 2009)

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