

THAILAND CCRC APPEAL - ADDITIONAL INFO

Location and Ecological Importance Of Phra Thong Island

Phra Thong Island is located in the Andaman Sea, 150 km north of Phuket and covers an area of 114 km² in Kuraburi District, Phang Nga Province of Thailand. The island is accessed by a one hour boat journey from Kuraburi Pier on the mainland. Koh Phra Thong (KPT) is one of Thailand's least developed islands with only three small villages.

The island is quite flat compared to the neighboring islands. The interior of the island consists of predominantly savannah ecosystem. Human disturbance is limited, with most evidence relating to previous extraction of tin that became quite popular in the region until 1986 when the world tin market collapsed.

There are six distinct and threatened ecosystems: mangrove forests, beach forests, swamp forests, savannah, sea grass beds, and coral reefs. Additionally, Koh Phra Thong (KPT) is a biodiversity hotspot, harboring threatened species including, the Hawksbill and Leatherback Turtle, dugongs, Sunda Pangolin, Sambar Deer, Wild Boar, the Lesser Adjutant and Oriental Pied Hornbill. According to the IUCN the island hosts 217 wild species that include eleven mammals, 45 reptiles, 37 birds, eight amphibians and 24 freshwater fish species.

MAP'S Involvement With Lion Village

Mangrove Action Project has been working in concert with Naucrates to build long-term environmental equilibrium while helping the villages move towards sustainability. In the aftermath of the tsunami, MAP assisted Naucrates with several community-based conservation resource management projects that included: mangrove restoration, community surveys related to fishing gear impacts on sea turtles and short-term environmental education (EE) programs. Through support from the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo in 2007-08, MAP led an EE project that focused on the children of Lion Village. The project afforded MAP an excellent opportunity in preparing curriculum for the village and laying the foundation in which to base future projects.

Furthermore, in 2007 Naucrates and MAP were granted two unused tsunami-relief houses in Lion Village by the Lion Foundation. These homes were converted into the Coastal Conservation Resource Centre (CCRCs) and staff /volunteer centre. The facilities have provided a location to base the conservation and outreach work out of while signifying a long-term presence in the region. The efforts need to be sustained and expanded in order to reach out to other sectors of the community.



Thai Longtail Fishing Boat Using Sustainable Practices from Nearby Village.

Livelihood Needs of Community

Lion Village, or Ban Lion, is a collection of people from different villages on the island: including Moklen (sea gypsies), Thai, Chinese and more recently Burmese people who have now also settled in the village. The economy is mostly based off of fishing, with some income derived from construction and small-scale cashew plantations.

The family incomes of those in Lion Village often depend on the daily fluctuation of market prices and costs of petrol. The fishing livelihoods also include a middleman who provides gear, petrol and money to fish as an advance. This advance is given with the understanding that the fishermen must sell their catches back to the loan agent at his set price. This system often keeps the fishermen in debt for their span of their lives.

Due to the recent creation of the tsunami-relief village, the small Ban Lion Community is not historically united. Villagers come from different communities and have different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, they have remained fractured into several groups. The Lions Foundation has provided new houses, but it is one of the few communities that didn't receive any community or livelihood development programs to rebuild the economy of the impacted villages. Thus, there is an immense need for alternate sustainable livelihood options.