

Wasini Island curbs mangrove destruction

The best way to see the mangroves of Wasini is to take the new boardwalk. Winding through the trees, just a few feet above the marshy ground, you'll catch glimpses of what locals call a "coral garden"—twisting limestone formations carved from years of erosion. It's a beautiful area on Wasini, an island just a half-mile off the coast of the Kenyan mainland, but until a few years ago it was under threat—along with the rest of Wasini's mangroves.

"People used to make charcoal from the forest, cutting down trees to sell as firewood," explains Bey Hemed Juma, Assistant Chief of Wasini Island. "They weren't mindful of mangrove destruction."

In 2008, we helped launch an effort on Wasini to protect 1,200 acres of mangroves in exchange for improving Wasini's crumbling infrastructure for storing rainwater. "The Subchief gave an order," recalls Ahmed Mohamed Abubakar, Chairman of Wasini. "Nobody is to cut even a piece of mangrove without the authority of the senior administration of the government of Wasini Island."

The decree was just a start. Local leaders did public outreach to explain the new rules and educate islanders on the value of the mangroves – for instance, their role as a "nursery" for fish that are eventually caught by Wasini fisherman elsewhere around the island. "We also told people, Seacology is helping build water tanks for you, so you have to conserve!" recalls Feisal Mohamed Abdalla, Treasurer of Wasini's Beach Management Unit.

Having new and improved water tanks and cisterns is no small development for Wasini. Freshwater is so hard to come by that islanders regularly imported water from the mainland – which isn't cheap. "The island itself is limestone and very porous, so it doesn't hold groundwater at all," explains Karen Peterson, Seacology's Program Manager, who visited Wasini in May. "Many of the catchment and cistern systems on Wasini were originally built about a hundred years ago. With our help, Wasini was able to repair the cisterns and build new tanks."

A Seacology expedition in Kenya from July 25 - August 3 2014 to witness the Great Migration will also include a visit to Wasini Island. Look for a formal announcement for this trip in the coming weeks.



TOP: Omar Abdallah Juma, Secretary of Wasini's Beach Management Unit, smiles during a visit to a renovated rainwater cistern. RIGHT: Everyone uses the new boardwalk through Wasini's coral gardens — even goats! BOTTOM: Renovated water storage building. LEFT: Wasini's Asst. Chief Bey Hemed Juma speaks about mangrove conservation during a community meeting.

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Paul Alan Cox, Seacology Chairman

Dear friends,

This year Seacology achieved an important milestone: we now have projects in over 50 countries around the world. This is an extraordinary level of international conservation work for a small not-for-profit organization such as Seacology. Since 1991, we have launched over 200 conservation projects on 149 islands in 51 countries around the world.

Why is Seacology's approach successful across so many different languages, cultures, and political systems? Perhaps that question is best left to others to answer, but I personally think it has much to do with values that cannot be measured in monetary terms. Yes, we do build needed schools, medical clinics, and other community projects in return for villages setting aside forests and coral reefs as nature preserves. However, while our funds are important for projects, many wealthier organizations have not experienced a fraction of our success.

Seacology always approaches island villagers with deep respect for their culture, and our projects are always founded on trust and recognition of the dignity of indigenous people. They can see that we have no other agenda than to help them conserve their precious natural resources.

By keeping people in the conservation equation, Seacology not only acknowledges the essential dignity of indigenous people, but indeed serves as an advocate for their ability to choose their own trajectory. Because we listen to rather than instruct indigenous peoples, we are welcome on islands throughout the world. To my knowledge, Seacology has never once been turned away by an island village. Thank you for making this stunning success possible. Thank you for all you do to help us save the world one island village at a time.

Paul Alan Cox
Chairman



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PNG's Wanang community builds first sturdy schoolhouse



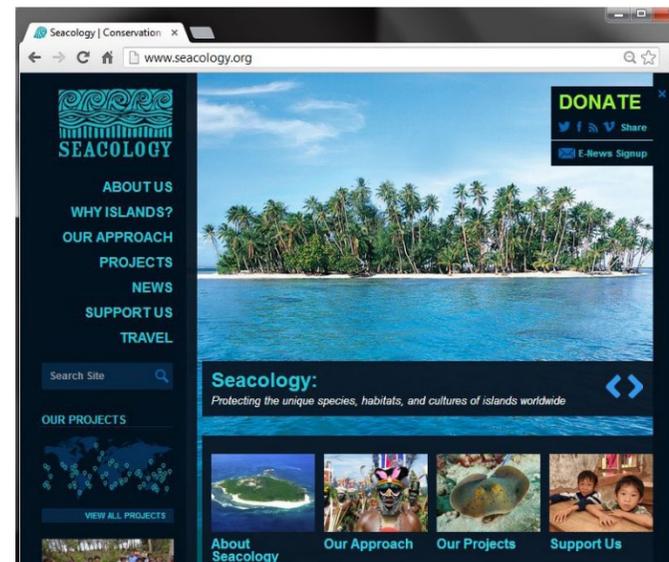
In January, the Wanang community in northeast Papua New Guinea opened the doors to its new schoolhouse, in a ceremony attended by area residents, educators, and scientists.

There's good reason to celebrate. The new structure is the first sturdy schoolhouse in the Wanang area. Previously, Wanang relied on schools made from bush materials like bamboo and palm fronds, which deteriorate quickly. (In 2010, a flood swept through Wanang and completely destroyed two such schools.)

As part of the deal for this school, Wanang is doubling its forest reserve for a total of 5,400 acres. For 25 years, no one may use the forest for logging, hunting or harvesting crops.

In typical Papua New Guinea fashion, the opening ceremony gave way to a *sing-sing*, a traditional celebration where people sing and dance while wearing colorful garb to show off their village's unique style. The party, we're told, lasted through the night.

ABOVE: Wanang kids gather in front of their new school. BELOW: Seacology's field representative in Papua New Guinea Sam Moko speaks at the school's opening ceremony.



****NEW & IMPROVED****

www.Seacology.org

In June we **launched a new website** making it easier to use and prettier to look at. Visit <http://www.seacology.org> and click around! You can...

- Browse our 200+ projects in our new interactive map
- See bigger and better photos from our projects
- Keep up-to-date with everything happening with Seacology with our news and updates feed



PROJECT UPDATES

With dozens of active projects around the world, things are happening all the time. Here are just a few highlights of the past several months.

1



MADAGASCAR

Builders in northwest Madagascar completed a new two-classroom schoolhouse in Amboloboza, bringing the first sturdy school structure to the municipality. Made with cement and topped with a corrugated roof, the structure marks a major improvement over existing schools in the area, which were undersized, leaking, and falling apart.

Amboloboza is just a few miles from Radama Islands National Park, a recently-established forest reserve home to several rare animal species including the endangered blue-eyed black lemur. Sea-ecology provided funds for the new school in exchange for the villagers' support in protecting the new park from habitat disturbance like slash-and-burn farming, logging, and hunting.

2



ORACABESSA BAY, JAMAICA

Fish stocks and coral cover increased substantially over the past year in Jamaica's Oracabessa Bay, according to a report by a Jamaican environmental agency. The encouraging results suggest that conservation efforts to rejuvenate the bay's biodiversity are working. Oracabessa is home to our field office project where we helped convert an old shipping container into a central headquarters for sanctuary wardens to help them patrol the 150-acre reserve.

Left undisturbed, the average fish size in Oracabessa bay grew by 15%, and overall fish biomass nearly tripled. Coral cover increased by 47% while algae cover decreased by a quarter. These data are all consistent with improving marine ecosystems. This is good news not just for Oracabessa Bay, but for the surrounding waters. The bay serves as a nursery for many aquatic species that eventually move elsewhere, generating a positive "spillover effect."

While the report cautions that the bay is "still far from being considered healthy," the results are very promising. "If these trends continue," the study concludes, "then Oracabessa Bay may, in the near future, become resilient to the effects of climate change while at the same time promoting sustainable livelihoods of local fishers."

3

CAT BA ISLAND, VIETNAM

After years of planning, the two Cat Ba langurs isolated on a small island off the coast of Vietnam were successfully relocated to nearby Cat Ba island to join a bigger population group. (There are only about 60 or so Cat Ba langurs left, so each one is critical.) It's not easy to catch and relocate two endangered langurs – these two in particular spent much of their time high on cliffsides – and we were happy to provide some funding to the Cat Ba Langur Conservation Project to help with logistics.

4



VANUA LEVU, FIJI

Tree planting began in Vanua Levu's Qumusea District to replace trees lost to brush fires, and even the kids helped out. The kids are the focus of the project after all: in exchange for replanting trees, and preserving a 4,000-acre forest area, we agreed to provide funds to build a new kindergarten classroom, which was completed last year.

The ultimate goal is to plant 50,000 new trees over the next 20 years. Among the varieties being planted are indigenous species like sandalwood trees – in fact, Vanua Levu was known as Sandalwood Island before the trees were largely decimated.

5

NUSA PENIDA, INDONESIA

The guard post on Pelilit Beach has been completed, offering extra protection for the green and hawksbill sea turtles who come here to nest. (Work was slow going because the post is located at a bottom of a steep hill and all the materials needed to be carried down by hand.) In addition to protecting the sea turtles' nesting area, villagers on this small island off the southeast coast of Bali agreed to create a 85-acre no-take forest reserve.

6

FAM BESAR ISLAND, INDONESIA

Equipment for solar-powered lighting arrived on Fam Island, and the plan is for local students to help install the system in their junior high school.

In addition to the lighting system, we're also funding a guard post to help locals patrol part of two newly-created no-take marine areas totaling 143,000 acres. Known for its exceptional marine biodiversity, these areas are often sites for illegal blast fishing, which is damaging to underlying coral reefs.

7

ABALONE CAYE, BELIZE

In January, workers in Belize completed the repairs to the Port Honduras Marine Reserve rangers station (which we helped build in 2000). "We were indeed scared of losing the ranger station as each time there was a storm or the winds blew too hard, we worried about the safety of the ranger team," the Toledo Institute for Development and Environment wrote in a report. "With the refurbishment of the station, we can sleep better knowing that our staff who has the gigantic task of enforcing fishing regulations, and conducting research in the Port Honduras Marine Reserve, is provided with safe and comfortable housing while on duty."

New Projects

In February, our Board of Directors approved nine new projects, already underway:

| Country | Location | Benefit to the community | Benefit to the environment |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|
| ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA | Mt. Obama National Park | Nature trail signage and informational brochures for Mt. Obama National Park. | Improved enforcement of national park |
| BAHAMAS | Eleuthera Island | Infrastructure for Ocean Hole Park | Cleaner and safer park |
| CHILE | Curaco de Velez, Quinchao Island | Construction of a visitor center for ecotourism | New 100-acre reserve protecting endangered migratory shorebirds |
| FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA | Metipw, Mesihou, and Dolopwail villages, Pohnpei | Community and education center | New no-take 752-acre marine protected area |
| INDONESIA | Saubeba, Warmandi, and Wau Villages, West Papua | Full scholarships for seven students | Support of 1,137 acres of critical Leatherback turtle nesting beach |
| KENYA | Kiwayu Island | Construction of a Beach Management Unit office, bandas (traditional huts) and a freshwater well | New 618-acre community marine sanctuary |
| PAPUA NEW GUINEA | Managalas Plateau, Oro Province | Conservation Resource Center | Support of the conservation of 889,579 acres of forest |
| PHILIPPINES | Barangay Palau, Luzon Island | Visitors center | Support for a 250 acre no-take zone inside an existing 741-acre Marine Protected Area |
| VANUATU | Umetch Community, Aneityum Island | Community hall with two guest rooms and solar panel | A 140-acre marine reserve and 127-acre terrestrial reserve |

Upcoming Travel: Join Seacology on one of our exciting trips in 2013. Find more information and travel brochures at Seacology.org/Travel

Mexico

August 17-22, 2013

Spend three days off Guadalupe Island on the *Solmar V* liveaboard vessel swimming in cages with great white sharks. Seacology helped set up a desalination system on Guadalupe Island that delivers fresh water to a small fishing community.



Great White Adventures

India & Myanmar

Oct 31 - Nov 12, 2013

Travel through Myanmar to experience its fascinating past and intriguing present. Journey into mangrove forests of India's Sundarbans region, where Seacology is helping to purchase and renovate a boat to use as an environmental education center



BalloonsOverBagan.com

On The Horizon

Eco-safari in Kenya
Summer 2014

Exploring French Polynesia
Summer 2014

More details on the way over the next few months, with first notice going to Seacology Board Members and Fellows.

Seacology Fellows

Our Fellows Program honors individuals who give \$2,000 or more annually. Our highest giving level is named for Chief Ulu Taufu'asisina, a Samoan chief and dedicated conservationist who won our first Seacology prize in 1992.

Chief Ulu Fellows (\$25,000 or more)

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Seacology helps protect island habitats and assists local communities by offering villages a unique deal: if they agree to create a forest or marine reserve, we'll provide funds for something the village needs, like a schoolhouse or health clinic.

Since 1991, Seacology has worked with over

200 villages on **149** islands in **51** countries

helping to protect **nearly 2 million acres**

of some of the world's most vulnerable ecosystems.