

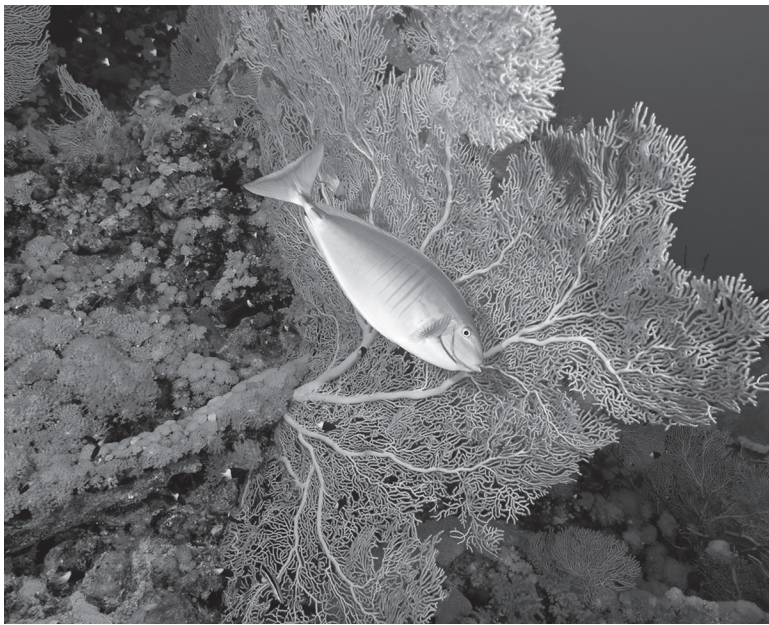
Seacology

Saving the World, One Island at a Time

Volume 11, Number 1

Spring Edition April 2009

Seacology Expedition Members Install Red Sea Mooring Buoys



Above: Marine life thrives in the Red Sea. Right: Seacology Board Member Doug Herst drills into the sea floor to install a mooring buoy (photo credits: Jeff Yonover).

In November 2008, a Seacology expedition visited a new project area, the Red Sea. Because of its proximity to Europe, the Red Sea attracts more dive boats than any other region of the world. However, if not managed well, too many anchoring dive boats could lead to the destruction of this beautiful dive destination. Every time a boat drops an anchor on a coral reef, a large section of the reef is damaged. Multiply this by the large number of boats in the Red Sea every day and the potential for significant damage is great. However, by tying up to mooring buoys, boats do not have to drop anchor, thereby preventing this damage.

To help preserve the beautiful marine environment of the Red Sea, the Hurgada Environmental Protection and Conservation Association (HEPCA), a local NGO, has installed the world's largest mooring buoy system, with over 1,000 moorings protecting reefs and wrecks. Seacology has provided funding to HEPCA to install 25 buoys around five

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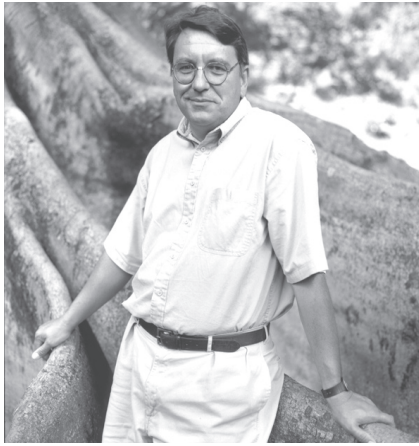
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From its inception, Seacology has been focused on our mission of protecting island habitats and cultures by keeping our staff and administrative expenses very small, and by not engaging in expensive fundraising activities. We were convinced that a small organization could accomplish great things if we avoided bureaucratic red tape and partnered with indigenous people to protect islands. That vision has succeeded in a spectacular fashion: Seacology currently has projects on 103 islands in 45 countries which have protected nearly two million acres of rainforests and coral reefs. Our projects are very cost-effective and usually involve funding a school, medical clinic or water supply in a remote village; in return the villagers covenant to protect their natural resources. Our highly-efficient use of resources has again led Charity Navigator to award Seacology its highest four star rating.

What we didn't realize when we started Seacology was that our careful stewardship of donated funds would help us not only survive, but continue to forward our conservation mission during an economic downturn. Unlike many larger not-for-profit organizations, Seacology has not had to lay off any staff, or to stop moving our mission forward. Coupled with our lean and trim administration, our Trustees and Fellows have generously supported administrative costs so that donated funds can have a maximum impact in conserving island habitats.

The bottom line is that your donation to Seacology, whether it be \$1 or \$100,000, will directly impact conservation. I know of no other organization that better translates donated funds into mission outcome. As Dr. John McCosker of the California Academy of Sciences said, "Dollar for dollar, pound for pound, Seacology gets more output than any conservation group that I've seen." Thank you for your generous support of Seacology's mission. Thank you for helping us save the world, one island at a time.

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Paul Alan Cox, Chairman

Project Update: Kanif, Dalipebinaw, Yap, Micronesia



In July 2005, with assistance provided by local NGO YapCAP, Seacology funded the reconstruction of Kanif's sea wall in exchange for the protection of 5.5 acres of mangrove forest in perpetuity. The seawall was completed in November 2007, and dirt was filled in behind the wall in 2008. The area will be planted soon. Meanwhile, the conservation area remains in full protection. Above: Kanif volunteers work on the reconstruction of the sea wall (photo credit: Simon Ellis).



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Seacology Group Visits Red Sea *(continued from page 1)*

islands in the 494,100-acre marine reserve adjacent to the Wadi El Gemal (Valley of the Camels) National Park off the Egyptian coast of the Red Sea. Coral reefs in the area are among the most diverse (240 species) in the Egyptian Red Sea and are home to a great diversity of fish and marine invertebrates (about 1,000 species).

A group of Seacology board members and donors chartered the Royal Evolution, a liveaboard dive boat in the Red Sea. The group was joined by Amr Ali, the executive director of HEPCA, who gave a presentation regarding the NGO's work to expand the world's largest network of mooring buoys. Several members of the Seacology group then put on dive gear to actually participate in the installation of the last buoy around Wadi El Gemal Island. The group descended to 40 feet, where the HEPCA team waited with a pneumatic drill. After quick instructions, Seacology board members Larry Barels and Doug Herst, Seacology Fellow Jeff Yonover and Executive Director Duane Silverstein took turns drilling the mooring attachment deep into the surface of the sea bed. Despite feeling shaken from the drill's vibration, the divers ascended with a feeling of accomplishment.

HEPCA continues to work closely with dive operators in the region to educate them regarding the mooring buoy system and other coral-friendly procedures. The organization also works with Egyptian governmental authorities to ensure laws governing offshore islands and coral reefs are enforced. HEPCA assists in development management and monitoring strategies, and continually lobbies for legislation to protect marine and terrestrial biodiversity. Seacology is proud to support HEPCA in its ongoing efforts to protect the spectacular environment of the Red Sea!



Above left: Coral reef and marine life thrive in the Red Sea. Above right: A curious Humphead wrasse. For more about this endangered species, see "Species-ology" on page 6 of this newsletter (photo credits: Jeff Yonover). Right: HEPCA Executive Director Amr Ali and Seacology Executive Director Duane Silverstein in Wadi El Gemal National Park (photo credit: Mark Evans).



Seacology Receives Third Consecutive Four Star Rating from Charity Navigator

A recent letter to Seacology from Charity Navigator, the nation's leading independent rater of financial efficiency of nonprofits, said the following: 'Based on the most recent financial information available, we have calculated a new rating for your organization. We are proud to announce Seacology has earned our third consecutive 4-star rating for its ability to efficiently manage and grow its finances. Only 11% of the charities we rate have received at least 3 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Seacology consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America. This "exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Seacology from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust.'

Seacology Board of Directors Approves New Island Projects

The following projects were approved by Seacology's Board of Directors at their January 17, 2009 meeting:

COOK ISLANDS, Manihiki Atoll - Purchase of two UV water purification units and pump system including spare parts in exchange for the creation of a 72-acre marine reserve for a duration of 30 years.

INDIA, Kavarathi Island, Lakshadweep archipelago – Construction of an environmental education center in exchange for the establishment of a 500-acre marine protected area for a duration of 10 years.

INDIA, Minicoy Island, Lakshadweep archipelago – Construction of a natural and cultural heritage museum and two guard posts in exchange for the establishment of a 2,471-acre marine and mangrove protected area.

INDONESIA, Pulau Banyak Islands, North Sumatra - Soccer fields for Teluk Nibung Village and Ujung Sialit Village, community meeting hall for Pulau Balai Village, and storm gutters for Suka Makmur Village in exchange for a total of 1,924 acres of protected land and marine habits for a duration of 10 years.

PALAU, Ngaremlengui State, Babeldaob Island - Construction of a covered bridge, welcome center and three smaller foot bridges in support of protecting the 2,176-acre Ngarmeskang Nature Reserve in perpetuity.

SAMOA, Falealupo Village, Savaii – Construction of aluminum tower for the Falealupo Rainforest Canopy Walkway. *

SEYCHELLES – Signage and composting toilets for the Cousin Island Special Reserve.

SEYCHELLES, Mahe Island – Refurbishment of the Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles visitors center at Roche Caiman in support of a 7.5-acre reclaimed wetland. *

* Support for asterisked projects is provided fully or in part by the Nu Skin Enterprises Force for Good Foundation.



Above: Seacology is assisting the Palau Conservation Society (PCS) by funding the replacement of this old, slippery i-beam bridge in Palau's Ngaremlengui Nature Reserve with a covered bridge. Seacology is also funding three smaller foot bridges, as well as a welcome center for the reserve (photo credit: PCS).

Seacology's International Affiliates Program: Report from Seacology Japan



Seacology Executive Director Duane Silverstein and Development Director Susan Racanelli recently flew to Tokyo to visit board members and supporters of Seacology Japan. At a Seacology Japan board meeting, ideas were exchanged about potential Seacology Japan-funded projects. Duane and Susan then presented the Seacology Japan board with a copy of Seacology's eight minute intro video translated into Japanese. Following the board meeting, Duane and Susan made a presentation about Seacology's progress to 40 Seacology Japan Fellows. According to Duane, "We were thrilled to hear of the progress made by Seacology Japan, which is at the forefront of the nascent Japanese environmental movement. The enthusiasm of the board members and fellows of Seacology Japan is remarkable and is a major reason for their early success." Pictured above left to right (back row) Mitsuko Nose, Akemi Chiba, Michie Sekiguchi, Masakatsu Yasakawa; (front row) Akemi Yoshida, Duane Silverstein, Susan Racanelli and Takemi Sekiguchi.

Seacology Welcomes New Field Representatives in Two Regions

Seacology's success in identifying and monitoring island projects that both protect precious environments and benefit local communities lies with our wonderful field representatives. They act as our eyes and ears in their respective regions, and understand environmental and cultural issues on their home islands in a way that enables Seacology to operate so effectively. We are excited to introduce our newest field representatives in Mexico and Samoa.

Seacology is pleased to welcome a new field representative for the Samoan Islands, Toeolesulusulu Cedric Schuster. Toeolesulusulu is Cedric's matai (chiefly) title for his home village of Satapuala on the island of Upolu. Cedric holds a Bachelor's degree in Geography from the University of Victoria and a Master's degree in Sustainable International Development from Brandeis University.



Above: Cedric Schuster, Seacology's new field representative for the Samoan Islands (photo courtesy of Cedric Schuster).

For the past five years, Cedric has been one of three directors of the Pacific Environment Consultants Ltd, a group that specializes in environmental planning, natural resource management, and ecologically sustainable development. For seven years Cedric worked for the Samoan government's Division of Environment and Conservation, first as a National Parks Officer and later as Head of the Biodiversity Conservation Unit. He also serves as Pacific Coordinator of the Global Greengrants Fund.

Cedric's areas of expertise include biodiversity conservation, ecological surveying, and strategic planning. We are thrilled to have him join the Seacology team to launch and monitor projects in the Samoan Islands.

After earning a degree in Marine Biology from the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California Sur, México, Jose Angel Sanchez-Pacheco began doing research on sea birds, coastal lagoons, islands, fisheries and the abundance and distribution of gray whales as a member of the team that assembled the proposal for the creation of "El Vizcaíno" in Baja California Sur, one of the first and the largest Biosphere Reserves of Mexico. Since then his achievements include co-founding and directing Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas, the highly effective and award-winning Mexican sister organization of the international NGO Island Conservation. During his tenure as director, Jose initiated and oversaw projects to protect and restore more than 25 Mexican islands by forming NPAs/MPAs on and around them, resulting in the legal protection of the natural resources and wildlife species that live there. Jose is also co-founder and director of Instituto SummerTree A.C., the Mexican branch of SummerTree institute of California. There, he created programs to develop sustainable economic opportunities in remote communities of Baja California peninsula, and develop environmental education programs and conservation activities around whale watching and ecotours to the coastal lagoons, islands and desert. Currently, Jose is co-owner of Cedros Outdoor Adventures, a company that promotes ecotours, sportfishing and whale watching with the goal of promoting environmentally-friendly economic opportunities in remote communities on the Baja California peninsula and islands.



Above: Jose Angel Sanchez-Pacheco in Baja California's central desert (photo courtesy of Jose Angel Sanchez-Pacheco).

Welcome to the Seacology team, Cedric and Jose!

Project Update: Mitiaro, The Cook Islands

Mitiaro is one of the southern islands of the Cook Islands group, with a population of 318 located on the island's western coast in four closely grouped villages. In January 2008, Seacology funded the renovation of eight community water tanks, as well as purchased household waste bins, and constructed handrails and paths to two water caves for communities. In exchange, the communities agreed to establish a 2,965-acre forest protected area for a duration of 10 years. The forest is home to two endangered and endemic palm species, the Ā'i sandalwood and Mitiaro fan palm. Most of the island is about four feet above sea level, and the seepage of salt water into the water table has rendered ground water brackish and unfit for human consumption. The communities' eight 10,000-gallon water tanks had become leaky and were not adequate for the needs of the four villages.

By November of 2008, six of the eight tanks had been renovated, the steps and handrails had been installed, and 65 wheelie bins for household waste had arrived in the villages. Seacology Cook Islands Field Representative Allan Tuara visited the site in November 2008 and attended a dedication ceremony. Due to water shortages on the island, the renovation of the last two tanks has been postponed until after the six refurbished tanks are full to ensure a continuous supply of water.



Above: Mitiaro villagers gather to celebrate the Seacology-funded renovation of their water tanks, as well as paths and steps to caves where non-potable water is gathered. Seacology also provided 65 waste bins for the villages (photo credit: Allan Tuara).

Species-ology! Spotlight on: The Humphead Wrasse

By Seacology Development Director Susan Racanelli.

Seacology scientific advisor, Dr. Sylvia Earle, recently received one of the three prestigious TED Prizes given in 2009. TED stands for Technology, Entertainment, and Design, and its mission brings together the world's most fascinating thinkers and doers, challenged to solve global problems. Sylvia recently gave her compelling talk in Long Beach, California; it was a brilliantly informed and rational plea to restore and preserve the health of the world's oceans by linking together marine protected areas globally. Seacology is grateful for her counsel as we approach the challenges facing the marine environment with our worldwide island conservation.

As an homage to an increasing awareness of the fragility of the world's seas, we are showcasing the spectacular reef fish, the **humphead wrasse**. This species is found on rocky reef cliffs and channel passes throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans as well as the Red Sea. The humphead is classified as *Endangered* on the IUCN Red List and is especially rare in any areas juxtaposed to human populations because of the demand for food and the live fish trade. As a result, this beautiful reef denizen is disappearing throughout most of its natural environment, though its habitat covers a vast area of the world's oceans where coral reefs exist. Without intervention, planning and restoration, this fish could virtually disappear in the next ten years.

The humphead wrasse, also known as the Napoleon wrasse, is not your average reef fish. It is the largest living member of the wrasse family – a family which numbers in the hundreds – with most wrasse species being much smaller. This character boasts a long life (up to 30 years), is slow growing, reaches up to eight feet in length and has a hefty girth (over 400 pounds in mature males). These wrasses are brilliantly colored: males are mostly electric greenish blue and can even display some purple; females and juveniles display more red. The wrasse family produces hermaphrodites, and it is believed that all female humpheads become males once they reach a maturity of 15 years.

Humpheads feed on a variety of reef creatures such as small fishes, crabs and mollusks. In addition, they are one of the few predators that feast on a handful of toxic creatures – sea urchins, sea hares, box fishes and the voracious crown-of-thorns starfish – which make these wrasses invaluable to the health of the reef in keeping invasive species in check. While juveniles prefer small coral or sea grass habitats, adults hang out in pairs or small groups not large enough to be called schools.

Increasingly, the burgeoning appetite for live reef fish across Southeast Asia and especially mainland China is decimating these fish populations in the Coral Triangle. Part of this triangle, home to the richest marine biodiversity in the world, stands protected on paper. But as we all know, the health of so many nature preserves around the world is only as good as its policing and proper protection. This big fish is in big demand; a meal of humphead wrasse can sell



Above: A Humphead wrasse in Egypt's Red Sea (photo credit: Jeff Yonover).

for over \$250 a plate in Asian restaurants. In addition, the mature wrasse's Mick Jagger-esque lips, considered to have aphrodisiac qualities, are a target for the Eastern medicine market.

Yet juveniles are equally sought after for their delicate taste and as aquarium specimens; in the live fish trade alone, millions are taken each year. Because of the primitive methods of capturing the young fish with dynamite or cyanide fishing, generally only one of ten fish survive the collecting process. A particular threat to this fish is their breeding pattern. The large wrasses congregate in spawning areas where they gather in significant numbers. Once these locales are discovered, aggressive fishing can wipe out literally generations of the humphead with one dynamite blast or cyanide drop.

Seacology remains acutely aware of the challenges facing the living sea that covers 70 percent of the planet and the consequences faced when the natural balance is shattered from human interaction and planetary changes. Indeed, Seacology assists islanders with sustainable solutions for living within their small terrestrial domains and the greater seas around them. In line with Sylvia's vision, Seacology has so far helped preserve nearly two million acres of marine environment surrounding the world's islands.

As of 2009, the First World has reached the tipping point of environmental awareness, and oceans are the focus everywhere. The message is clearly to protect, preserve and sustain our watery habitats now before it's too late. With the help of individuals like Dr. Sylvia Earle and organizations like Seacology, there is hope the oceans will someday soon obtain the protection they need.



Offset Your Carbon Footprint With Seacology!

As you know, global warming is a serious threat to the earth's environment. If you'd like to do something tangible about this environmental challenge, you can offset your own car's emissions. Seacology offers a program where, for \$40.00, you will receive a special sticker (pictured left) for your automobile.

One hundred percent of your donation will go to Seacology's Carbon Offset Fund, which supports island projects dedicated specifically to renewable energy or reforestation, offsetting greenhouse gases caused by fossil fuels. In particular, carbon emissions present an acute threat to coral reefs which can only survive in limited temperature ranges and are damaged by additional infusions of fresh water created by melting ice caps. Instructions for acquiring one of Seacology's carbon offset stickers can be found at www.seacologycarbonoffset.org.

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Seacology is the world's premier nonprofit environmental organization with the sole and unique purpose of preserving the environments and cultures of islands throughout the globe. From Fiji in the South Pacific to Madagascar off the coast of Africa, from islands in the Arctic Circle to tropical islands of Southeast Asia, from Bali to Micronesia and from Polynesia to Iceland, Seacology launches projects to help preserve island environments and cultures.