

Seacology

Saving the World, One Island at a Time

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Seacology Visits “Four Villages” Project - El Nido, Palawan, The Philippines



Above: Seacology Executive Director Duane Silverstein and Philippines Field Representative Ferdie Marcelo address the crowd assembled to welcome Seacology expedition guests and celebrate the project at the four-village community of Mabini, New Ibajay, Sibaltan and Villa Paz. Below right: The vast mangrove forest protected as part of the project, with the marine protected area in the distance. (Photo credits: Ferdie Marcelo.)

In January 2011, a Seacology expedition traveled to the islands of the Philippines for a dive trip and to visit Seacology-funded projects on the island of Palawan. Local NGO the El Nido Foundation has worked with the four-village community of Mabini, New Ibajay, Sibaltan and Villa Paz to set aside 1,317 acres of coral reef and 2,580 acres of mangrove forest as protected areas for a period of 25 years. In return for this commitment, Seacology provided funds for guardhouses, patrol boats, marker buoys, and signs for the new reserve, as well as new equipment for their cashew processing industry, a sustainable alternative to fishing in the protected area.

Seacology expedition members visited the site to celebrate the project with the communities, and were greeted warmly with dance and music performances, refreshments and speeches by local officials. The group also was able to see first-hand the conservation areas and equipment funded by Seacology. Participants were even invited to try out the cashew-processing equipment. The roasted cashews are now being sold at El Nido's prime resorts, easing financial pressures in the communities. Patrols of the protected areas are ongoing, and the guard houses will be constructed within the coming year.

Visit Seacology's website to view a short video that was made during the group's visit to the "Four Villages" mangrove and coral reef restoration project: <http://www.seacology.org/news/display.cfm?id=4284>.

See more photos from this trip to the remarkable islands of the Philippines on page 3.

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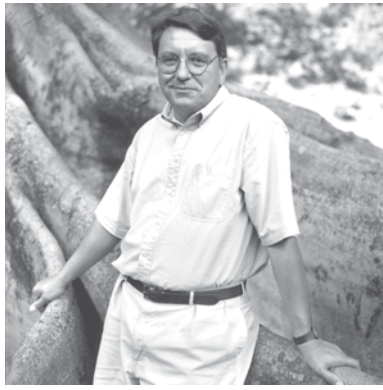
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We are relieved that all Seacology Japan board members have been spared from the recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan. We are especially grateful that our 2007 Seacology Prize winner, Mr. Kokichi Kariya in Fukushima, also survived.

Two years ago, I walked with Mr. Kariya through the Tademi forest in Fukushima. Flowers, ferns, and moss sprouted from the hillside. Large beech trees, with diameters in excess of two meters, shaded a small stream flowing across solid rock. I removed my socks and shoes, not only to feel the cool water and bare stone on my feet, but also to acknowledge that I trod upon sacred ground. The larger beech trees are 300-400 years old. After World War II, these trees started to disappear to logging, but Mr. Kariya valiantly struggled to protect a remnant. Because of his efforts, this forest remains.

Seacology Japan has generously funded island conservation projects throughout the world. Our Japanese colleagues also quickly rallied to raise funds for tsunami relief in Samoa. It should be no surprise that Seacology Japan's first response to the tsunami was to immediately identify ways that they can make a difference in their own homeland.

I am pleased to announce that Seacology has now established the Japanese tsunami fund. This is a channel in which overseas friends of Japan can demonstrate their compassion for the country while accomplishing both humanitarian and conservation improvements. Unlike most foreign aid agencies, our colleagues in Seacology Japan are already on the ground, fluent in the language and culture, and all serve without remuneration. They have an outstanding track record of executing conservation projects both within and outside of Japan. Every single dollar donated to Seacology's Japanese tsunami fund will be delivered to the designated project without any overhead or administrative costs.

As the efforts of the first responders conclude, Seacology Japan will find ways that precision injection of funds can best benefit Japanese villages and their precious island habitats.

Reflecting on the ephemerality of life, the Japanese poet Issa (1763-1828) wrote, *Tsuyu no yowa, tsuyu no nagara, sari nagara* (Nighttime dew, slowly disappears, drop by drop). Japan has suffered a great tragedy, and like the nighttime dew, many lives have disappeared. Yet like the mighty beech trees of Tademi, heroes such as Mr. Kariya and our Seacology Japan colleagues survive to ensure that the precious habitats of Japan are conserved. Thank you for your gifts which help Seacology save the world, one island at a time.

Paul Alan Cox, Ph.D.
Chairman

Seacology Project Update: Mudung Abun, Belaga District, Sarawak, Malaysia



Left: Guests arrive at the December 2010 dedication ceremony for a Seacology-funded micro-hydro power system in the community of Mudung Abun, Malaysia. This system, funded in part by Seacology in support of the protection of 1,236 acres of watershed for a period of 30 years, is now providing 20 kilowatts of renewable energy a day for the community, and has eliminated the use of polluting fossil fuels. (Photo credit: IPIMAS.)



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Seacology Project Update - Antanandava Village, Madagascar

In July 2010, Seacology's board of directors approved a project to construct two primary school classrooms, including furnishings and a restroom block, in the community of Antanandava, in northeast Madagascar. This community is to the south of the Markirovana-Tsihomoanaomy forest complex, which consists of 20 square miles of low-elevation, fragmented humid forest. It has been identified as a national priority area for plant conservation by the Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG). Numerous locally endemic and threatened plant species are found here, as well scores of reptile and amphibian and bird species, as well as six species of lemur. The forest is threatened by bushmeat hunting, selective rosewood logging and, in particular, slash-and-burn agriculture, locally known as *tavy*. Since 2008, the MBG has been working with the people of Antanandava to reduce these threats and conserve this area. In collaboration with the MBG, Seacology funded this school improvement project in recognition of the community's commitment to stop all new *tavy* within 988 acres of forest.

The actual construction of the school building was an enormous effort on the part of a volunteer group comprised of parents of the community's schoolchildren.

Materials for construction were transported from the nearest major town to the River Bemarivo, where they were carried by boat to the river bank closest to the village. From there, parents carried materials to the construction site. The 2,200 concrete breeze blocks for construction of the school walls were made by hand at the construction site. As of April 2011, MBG's Dr. Chris Birkenshaw reported to Seacology Madagascar Field Representative Erik Patel that, "The school is essentially complete except for a second coat of paint. We expect that all will be completed in one week and then MBG with the committee of parents will make an inspection of the work to confirm that the specifications of the contract were followed."

This project was generously funded by Seacology Board Member Peter Read.

Below left: The original school buildings. Below right: The new Seacology-funded Antanandava School, close to completion. (Photo credits: Dr. Chris Birkenshaw, MBG.)



More Photos from Seacology's Trip to the Philippines!



Left: Seacology Executive Director Duane Silverstein and expedition participant Kenny Murdock try out some dance moves with local children, as part of the celebration of the Seacology-funded "Four Villages" mangrove and coral conservation project. Above: Local kids check out their visitors. (Photo credits: Ferdie Marcelo.)

Species-ology! Spotlight on: The Albatross

By Seacology Development Director Susan Racanelli

Few literary references to humankind's unprompted abuse of nature figure as dramatically as the untimely death of the albatross in Coleridge's 18th century poem, the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. This particular poem relies on the spiritual allegory of a beautiful and mysterious bird that comes to visit, and perhaps help, a ship and crew lost in the Antarctic. The Mariner promptly dispatches the great flying creature with his crossbow. Bad luck and even worse weather soon take the entire crew; all, of course, but the Mariner who lives to tell the tale.

Because of Coleridge's intriguing poem, the albatross has become a famous bird of lore. A large seabird weighing up to 25 lbs., the albatross spends the bulk of its life gliding over the open ocean and is capable of round trips of thousands of kilometers over several days. With their massive wings – up to 11 feet across – they swoop low over ocean swells, dipping down when the sea falls and rising with the waves. Their wings are capable of “locking” into an extended position, thereby reducing strain over long flights. Simply by angling their wings and their flight path, albatrosses can use the variation in air speed and direction near the waves to soar over the oceans. This phenomenon, called dynamic soaring, is incredibly efficient and requires less energy than sitting on a nest.

These great birds can live to be 80-85 years old and they mate for life. Once they leave the nest they might not visit land again for five to 10 years when they return to their birth island. Most albatrosses have a white head, neck and body, a wedge-shaped tail, and a large hook-tipped beak. Plumage varies throughout its life, from dark brown in the first year to almost fully white in old age. Albatrosses lay only one egg per year and often take a year off between parenting; a contributing factor to the species' decline. The albatross feeds on fish, squid, krill, crabs and other crustaceans by either diving, swooping onto the water's surface or scavenging the kill from another animal or bird. They nest in large colonies on islands, atolls or in open forest, where there can be thousands of other albatross individuals.

Coleridge could not have known that two hundred years hence, of the 21 species of albatrosses recognized by the IUCN, 19 are threatened with extinction. Still, he might have had a hunch the way things were going, because even in 1798, when the poem was written, the albatross was relentlessly hunted for an array of reasons: feathered hats, down, tobacco pouches (made from their feet), food and sport. Today, however, the disturbing reduction in albatross populations is no longer from deliberate pursuit. They are needlessly slaughtered by long-line fishing vessels: the birds, attracted to bait, get hooked, dragged under and drowned. Long-lines kill more than 100,000 albatrosses every year. Other serious threats are plastic flotsam ingestion and feral species which prey on the nesting babies. However, since the beginning of this century, scientists and conservationists have been working with governments to find solutions to the threats albatrosses face.

Right: Laysan albatross on Midway Atoll. Seacology is helping this species by assisting the Kure Atoll Conservancy in its efforts to improve habitat by removing invasive plants and reintroducing native vegetation on Hawaii's remote Kure Atoll (photo credit: Forest and Kim Starr).



One important step towards protecting albatrosses is the 13-country treaty, *Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels*, which came into force in 2004. Ratified by Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, New Zealand, Spain, South Africa, France, Peru, Uruguay and the United Kingdom, the treaty requires these countries to take specific initiatives to reduce by-catch and pollution, and to remove introduced species from nesting islands.

In addition, encouraging news about these great birds recently surfaced: scientists made a surprising discovery when a tagged female, named Wisdom, became the proud mother of a baby albatross. Scientists estimate Wisdom has already raised at least 30 chicks in her lifetime. Equally astounding is the distance she has likely traveled over the years. Adult albatrosses average 50,000 miles per year, which would mean Wisdom has flown two to three million miles over the 60 years since she was first banded. To give this statistic its due, Wisdom's flight history is the equivalent of four to six trips *from Earth to the moon and back again*. This represents extraordinary resilience for the albatross species, which bodes well for the future of this ancient mythical bird.

Seacology Welcomes New Field Representative for the Bahamas

Seacology is pleased to welcome another Field Representative to our team! Seacology's Field Representatives act as our “eyes and ears,” helping to identify and monitor our island conservation projects around the globe. We are expanding our programs throughout the Caribbean; Lindsey McCoy is our first Field Representative for the island nation of The Bahamas.

A life-long visitor to The Bahamas, Lindsey moved there full-time in 2004 with her Bahamian husband, Matthew. Soon after, she began work as Executive Director of Friends of the Environment, a small environmental nonprofit based in Abaco, in the northern Bahamas. During her time there, FRIENDS renovated an old church into an Education Center, started a school-based education program and worked to create two new National Parks. She left FRIENDS a few years later when her son was born. In her more than ten years working in the nonprofit sector, Lindsey has also worked for a Community Foundation and as a nonprofit consultant. She holds a Master's in Nonprofit Management from Indiana University's School of Public & Environmental Affairs. She and her husband also have an environmental documentary company, Loggerhead Productions.

Welcome to the Seacology team, Lindsey!



Seacology Project Update: Mandalamekar Village, Java, Indonesia

Mandalamekar Village, located in the highlands of West Java, is home to 3,200 people. The village has created its own protected area of four sections of forest totaling 267 acres. In 2008, the village took it upon itself to reclaim 74 acres of community land and replanted it with about 12,000 native tree seedlings. Since that time, the community has expanded tree-planting activities to cover another 72 acres of degraded forest with about 15,000 seedlings. The village intends to protect this forest in perpetuity. In May 2009, Seacology funded construction of a multi-purpose community building in support of the village's conservation efforts.

The community building is now complete, and is being used regularly for meetings, school activities and as an indoor badminton court. Seacology Program Manager Karen Peterson and Indonesia Field Representative Arnaz Mehta visited the project in October 2010 and were greeted by a large crowd inside the community center. The community's commitment to conservation spans generations, and local schoolchildren expressed great pride in the beauty of Mandalamekar's forests. Local community group Mitra Alam Muggaran is actively patrolling and enforcing the conservation area.



Left: The newly-completed Mandalamekar community building. (Photo credit: Irman Meilandi.) Above: Seacology Program Manager Karen Peterson, Indonesia Field Representative Arnaz Mehta and members of volunteer forest patrol group Mitra Alam Muggaran under one of Mandalamekar's three waterfalls. (Photo credit: Irman Meilandi.) Right: A member of Mitra Alam Muggaran plants a tree within the protected area. (Photo credit: Arnaz Mehta.)



Join Seacology on a Diving Expedition to Chuuk

AMicronesian Archipelago, Chuuk lies in tropical waters north of Papua New Guinea. Chuuk is famous for its large lagoon, filled with a kaleidoscope of corals, fish and other marine life. As a Japanese base during World War II, and the site of Operation Hailstone, one of war's most important naval battles, Chuuk Lagoon is a trove of shipwrecks, creating the world's most astounding collections of "shipreefs." At least 20 different underwater wrecks can be found in the lagoon, many of which now harbor corals and other marine life. The lagoon's barrier reefs feature many cascading wall dives, and the region is known for ideal diving conditions: calm waters and warm temperatures.

Join Seacology aboard a world-class liveaboard, the *Odyssey*, on an eight-day expedition from October 30-November 6, 2011. The trip will include a site visit to one of Seacology's environmental conservation projects in Chuuk, in the community of Onongoch on Fefen Island, where Seacology has funded renovations to the village's community center in exchange for the protection of 15 acres of pristine upland forest. The Fefen rainforest is rich with biodiversity and has been a sacred area for local communities for generations. The forest contains many endemic and endangered plants, birds and other animals.

The cost of this extraordinary dive trip includes the eight-day, seven-night cruise aboard the *Odyssey*, all meals, activities on board, scuba diving, Nitrox, village

visit, private ensuite facilities, and \$100 per person donation to Seacology's Carbon Offset Fund. Rates are \$6,750 single occupancy (per person) and \$4,500 double occupancy (per person). For further information, please contact the Seacology office via email (islands@seacology.org) or by calling 510-559-3505.



Left: The glorious waters of Chuuk Lagoon. (Photo credit: trukodyssey.com.)

Seacology Board of Directors Approves New Island Projects

The following projects were approved by Seacology's Board of Directors at their January 31, 2011 meeting:

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA – Visitor's center, boardwalk and waterway rehabilitation in exchange for the creation of an 87-acre no-take freshwater wetland Terminalia forest in perpetuity, Yela Valley, Tafunsak Municipality, Kosrae.

INDONESIA – Community health clinic in support of a 939-acre existing no-take forest reserve and the creation of a new 74-acre no-take forest reserve for a minimum duration of 10 years, Sano Nggoang Village, Flores Island. *

MEXICO – Demarcation (traffic separation) buoy to protect whale sharks, Isla Mujeres area, Yucatan Peninsula.

PHILIPPINES – Construction of a Multi-Purpose Building in support of the extension of a 15 hectare (37-acre) Marine Protected Area for an additional 20 years, Barangay Canipo, Municipality of Magsaysay, Northeastern Palawan.

SRI LANKA – Construction of a coastal resource conservation and livelihood development center in exchange for the conservation of 2,965 acres of coastal swamp and mangrove for a minimum duration of 10 years, Uraniya Lagoon, Ampare District, Eastern Province. *

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



Above: Uraniya Lagoon in Sri Lanka's Ampare District, where Seacology is funding the construction of a coastal resource conservation and livelihood development center in exchange for the conservation of 2,965 acres of coastal swamp and mangrove. The project is being coordinated by the Small Fishers Federation of Lanka (photo credit: Vineeta Hoon).

SEACOLOGY FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Seacology Fellows program was created to honor those individuals who wish to make an ongoing commitment of \$2,000 or more per year. Along with our board members, contributions from Fellows fund the ongoing operations of Seacology. Admission to the Fellows Program includes the following special benefits:

- **Advance notice of all Seacology trips.** Seacology plans several expeditions per year to visit project sites in locations such as Indonesia, Micronesia, Fiji, Samoa, Madagascar, Tanzania and many more remote islands worldwide. These adventure trips are much sought after and offer an insider's view of Seacology's successful island projects.
- **Complimentary invitation to the annual Seacology Prize ceremony.** Each year, Seacology honors an outstanding indigenous island conservationist. Past recipients include Mr. Kokichi Kariya for his efforts to save one of the few remaining ancient forests on Honshu Island, Japan; Ms. Meity Mongdong for her relentless work to save the mangrove forests and coral reefs of her native Bunaken National Marine Park in Sulawesi, Indonesia; and Mr. Rabary Desiré for his tireless efforts to further forest and endemic wildlife conservation in increasingly depleted areas of northeastern Madagascar.
- **Acknowledgement (with your permission) on Seacology's website and our newsletter and annual report.**
- **Complimentary copy of Seacology's signature DVD.**
- **Complimentary Seacology tote bag and lapel pin.**
- **Special reports and articles throughout the year covering Seacology's island projects.**

For more information on the Seacology Fellows program, please email Seacology (islands@seacology.org) or call our office at 510-559-3505.

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957,852 acres of coral reef and other marine habitat	36 scholarship programs, vital medical services and supplies, and other crucial support for island communities.

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.