

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2011

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Unveiled by Chef Chong
at the Captain's Table

Friends of Menjangan

...unite to fight a common enemy in a community based conservation programme to protect and steward Menjangan Island's coral reef safely towards a healthy future.

By Abigail Alling

Although Menjangan Island lies within Bali Barat National Park, its reef is threatened by cyanide fishing, dynamite fishing, overfishing, rising tourism (resulting in boats anchoring on the reef and divers jumping out onto shallow reefs), excessive trash/plastic, pollution and global warming.

Due to the fact that the island is sacred and loved by the local community, there is a wealth of interest to protect it and people are keen to become stewards of its temples and underwater gardens. Given this expressed interest and enthusiasm, Biosphere Foundation initiated a project called "Friends of Menjangan" with our local NGO partner, Yayasan Dwi Asih Sejahtera. The overall objective of "Friends of Menjangan" is to inspire and coordinate a community-based conservation programme involving everyone who cares about the island and its reef.

This project was embraced with joy at its inaugural event held on May 6 and 7 in Bali. Members of all stakeholders were present including fishermen,



The Biosphere Team

central government, local government, temple priests, students, local & international NGOs, resorts, dive operators, tour guides, tourists and the media. The event involved tree planting, diving, blessings, speeches, dancing, singing, trash clean-ups and viewing of Disney's new movie called Oceans. We were especially pleased to have a special fire dance performance sponsored by Yves de Leeneer at Deep Blue Subsea Consultancy & Engineering that included Raffles Marina dancer, Kels Chan.

The following week saw us organising a two-day field trip for 16 students to learn about forests and coral reefs as well as to witness first-hand the problems caused by destructive fishing, increased tourism, pollution/trash and limited resources for a growing world population. In the coming year we will continue this programme and seek new partnerships to create a community-based presence in NW Bali that furthers conservation and sustainable development. Please join us in this effort and follow our progress at www.friendsofmenjangan.blogspot.com and www.biosfirindonesia.org



Students at the field trip