2021 - 2025

IMPACT REPORT



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Reef Check
MALAYSIA



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

The past five years have been a defining period for Reef Check Malaysia (RCM). As marine ecosystems faced growing pressures from climate change, pollution and unsustainable human activities, our team has grown by 50% as we remain committed to protecting coral reefs and other critical marine ecosystems, while empowering coastal communities to become stewards of their natural resources.

Between 2021 and 2025, we:

- Engaged over 250 volunteers to assist with Reef Check surveys at 300 sites around Malaysia,
- Worked with over 200 people from seven coastal communities to implement coral reef conservation activities,
- Restored 5 hectares of degraded areas of our coral reefs, and
- Diverted over 100 tonnes of waste from island environments, including through ghost net removals, beach cleanups, improved village waste management and recycling systems.

These achievements were made possible through the dedication of our staff, partners and supporters.

Over the past five years, we have also navigated a range of challenges, from the COVID-19 pandemic and the proposed construction of a new airport at Tioman Island to the 4th global mass coral bleaching event. At the same time, we have continued to grow and adapt, expanding our Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs), strengthening community-led conservation, and broadening our focus on policy advocacy.

The work is far from over. Climate change, biodiversity loss and growing pressures on coastal ecosystems demand greater collaboration and innovation.

Our 2026–2030 strategy builds on the lessons of the past five years, with a renewed focus on resilient marine ecosystems, empowered communities and stronger partnerships to create lasting impact.

This report documents our programmes and the outcomes and impacts of our work over the last five years. It tells stories from the people on the ground who do the hard work without which RCM would be nothing. By looking back, we have been able to reflect on the work done and the people who helped make it happen. We are grateful for all the support we have received and look forward to the next five years.



Julian Hyde
Chief Executive Officer

Driving Impact Together

My journey at RCM has evolved significantly over the years, from leading fundraising efforts and marine debris projects as Programme Development Manager to stepping into the role of COO in 2023. My focus has expanded to supporting the organisation as a whole. While fundraising is still a large part of my current job, my role today also centres on organisational development, strategy, communications, company administration, and building strong relationships with partners, donors, and external stakeholders. I hope to bring a practical and people-focused perspective to helping RCM grow by strengthening internal systems, improving collaboration across teams, and helping the organisation mature while staying true to its mission and culture. It has been incredibly rewarding to support RCM's growth not just through projects in the field, but by helping build the foundation that allows the organisation and its people to thrive long-term.



Theresa Ng
Chief Operating Officer



Alvin Chelliah
Chief Programmes Officer

In the past 5 years, our programmes have expanded from Tioman, KK, Mantanani and Mersing to Redang, and Semporna. We now have field offices in all these locations and full time staff working on managing local threats in these areas. Our Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs) have expanded from Tioman to Mersing, Redang, Mabul, Selakan. Larapan, Kelapuan, Mantanani, and Kunak meaning more local islanders are actively involved in day to day conservation efforts to protect their marine ecosystems. My transition from Senior Programme Manager to CPO has been interesting; I have to look at the wider picture now and not just about Tioman. It is also very encouraging to see the young new colleagues come up and lead initiatives on the ground. It makes me think we still do have a fighting chance.

Joining Reef Check Malaysia in February 2025 as the Chief Public Policy and Advocacy Officer has provided me with profound fulfilling opportunities to advance RCM's 2021–2025 strategic conservation milestones. By elevating our advocacy from the coastline to the capital, we have succeeded in bridging the gap between our grassroots Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs) and crucial decision-makers—including Members of Parliament and government agencies. The ongoing expansion of our CMCGs stands as definitive proof that our community-led conservation model works on the ground. Over this period, we have successfully expanded our advocacy narrative beyond ecological preservation alone, positioning coral reef conservation as a non-negotiable anchor for local food security and community livelihoods. Moving forward into the next phase of our impact, our policy priority remains firmly set on institutionalising these efforts. We are actively campaigning to secure a formal, permanent platform that ensures the voices of local coastal communities are systematically integrated into national environmental policy and legislative decision-making.



Jasmin Mohd Saad
Chief Public Policy and Advocacy Officer

Looking Back: Our 2021–2025 Strategy

Our 2021-2025 strategy had three 3 overarching goals:

- Goal 1: Local stakeholders are empowered to participate in management of marine resources
- Goal 2: Resilience-based principles are incorporated into marine resource management
- Goal 3: The marine management policy, legal and funding framework is strengthened

In working towards our first goal, we focused on raising awareness of the importance of conserving our marine resources among all stakeholders. We also actively advocated for marine conservation with local government agencies and successfully secured support from relevant authorities for the use of our Reef Check survey data.

At the same time, we placed strong emphasis on ensuring local stakeholders could actively participate in marine management. To achieve this, we established multiple Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs), providing training to empower coastal communities to play a leading role in protecting and managing their marine resources.

For our second goal, we focused on promoting resilience-based principles in marine resource management. We identified a gap in existing marine resource management approaches and worked to address it by providing various training programmes for management agencies.

Our efforts centred on increasing stakeholders' understanding of social and economic resilience and advocating for these principles to be incorporated into Marine Protected Area (MPA) management planning.

Lastly, we worked to build consensus among key stakeholders on the need for a new policy and legal framework for marine resource management. As part of this effort, we formally expanded our work into policy advocacy.

Advancing stronger marine resource management requires sustained collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders. Recognising this, we also prioritised securing long-term funding through blended finance models to support and sustain these efforts. While this work began during the 2021–2025 strategy period, it will continue to be a key focus beyond 2025.

OUR IMPACT METRIC BY METRIC 2021 - 2025



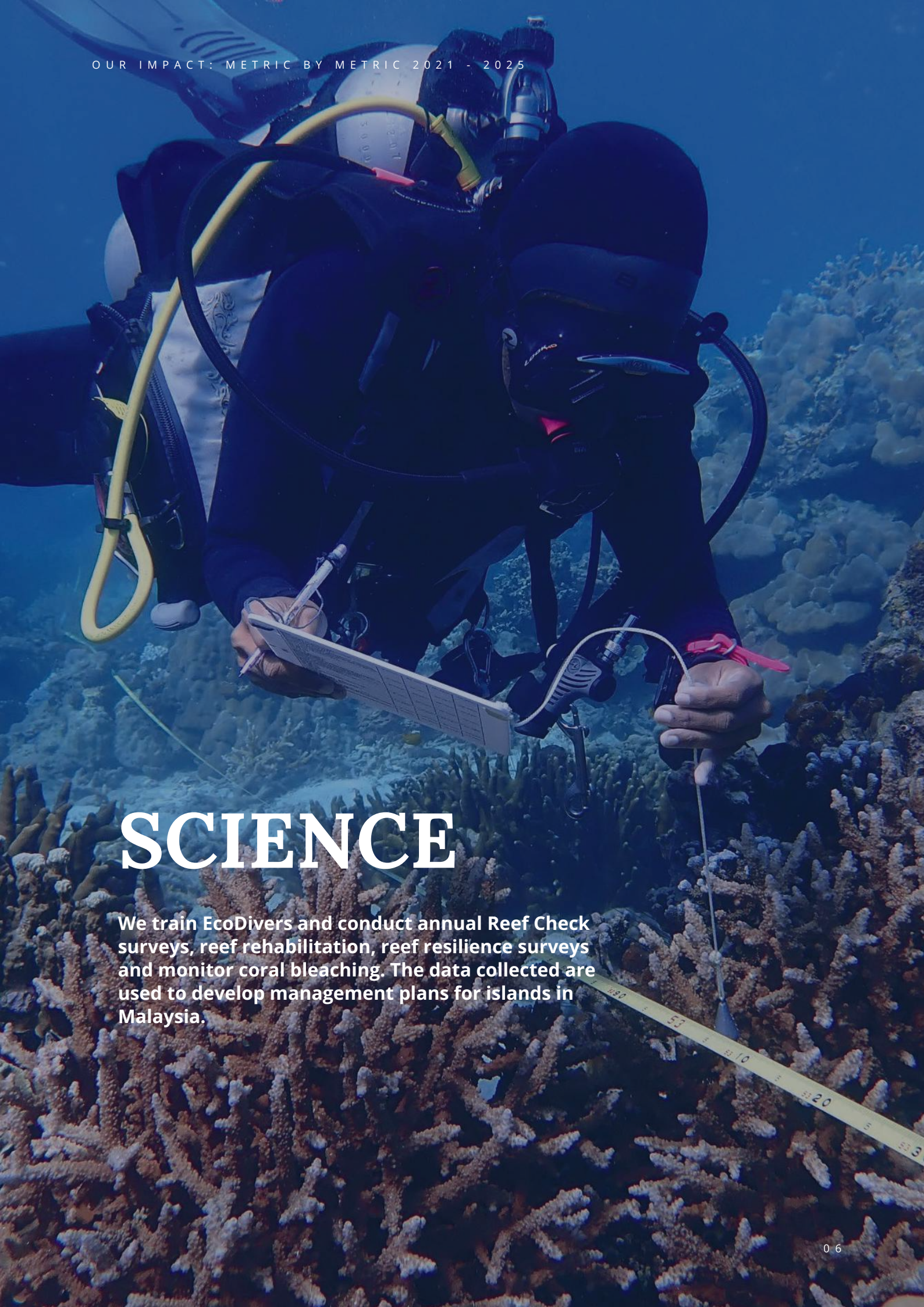
OUR IMPACT: METRIC BY METRIC
2021 - 2025

This section presents Reef Check Malaysia's conservation impact using IRIS+ metrics, an internationally recognised impact measurement standard used by over 3,000 organisations worldwide. By aligning our reporting with these recognised metrics, RCM provides funders and donors with a clear and credible view of not only what we do - from reef monitoring and rehabilitation to marine debris removal, education, training and community engagement - but how these efforts contribute to healthier marine ecosystems, stronger local stewardship and more accountable conservation outcomes in Malaysia.

Every number in this report traces to a verified source, a standardised methodology and a 19-year longitudinal dataset submitted annually to the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network.

**NOTE: We have divided each IRIS+ impact in this report into three sections that reflect our three core pillars of work.*

Year	LCC %	Sites	Change	Context
2021	44.26%	206	+2.94pp	COVID lockdowns. Reef recovery without tourism pressure.
2022	47.83%	323	+3.57pp	Huge reduction in tourist visitors during COVID. Highest LCC in the 5-year window.
2023	45.87%	326	–1.96pp	Tourism returns. Pressure resumes. Decline begins.
2024	44.65%	315	–1.22pp	4th Global Bleaching Event. ~90% of surveyed sites affected.
2025	39.94%	297	–4.71pp	Worst single-year decline on record. Reduction in LCC is indicative of impacts arising from a variety of human activities combined with the largescale coral bleaching event in 2024.



SCIENCE

We train EcoDivers and conduct annual Reef Check surveys, reef rehabilitation, reef resilience surveys and monitor coral bleaching. The data collected are used to develop management plans for islands in Malaysia.

Reef Restoration: Rebuilding Coral Habitats

IRIS INDICATOR

PI2252: Area of Marine Habitat Restored

5 hectares

marine habitat restored

across more than 30 reef rehabilitation sites

2021 - 2025

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

PI2252 measures the area of marine habitat where restoration activities have been implemented. For reporting, this metric provides a clear and tangible conservation footprint: it shows the physical extent of reef habitat that received active restoration support through RCM's reef rehabilitation work.

WHY IT MATTERS

Restoration is not a one-time act. Reef rehabilitation structures installed in previous years are continuously monitored and maintained, allowing restoration efforts to build on past investments rather than starting over each year. As surviving coral fragments grow into reproductive colonies, they contribute to natural reef recovery and provide essential nursery habitat for commercially important fish species that coastal communities depend on for food and livelihoods. In this way, every area restored represents more than reef recovery – it is an investment in the long-term resilience and food security of island communities.

Biodiversity Assessment: The Scientific Foundation

IRIS INDICATOR

PI2901: Marine Biodiversity Assessment

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

PI2901 reflects the use of marine biodiversity assessment to understand reef condition and ecological change. For reporting, it demonstrates that RCM's conservation work is evidence-based and grounded in recurring field data rather than one-off activity reporting.

Reef Check Malaysia conducted its annual marine biodiversity assessment across an average of 293 sites each year from 2021 to 2025, using the globally standardised Reef Check survey protocol. The assessment recorded a national Live Coral Cover average of 44.51% over those 5 years.

Meanwhile, indicator fish and invertebrate populations remain low, likely due to historical over-harvesting and naturally low numbers. Signs of disturbance and pollution have also increased across many reef areas. These local pressures highlight the need for stronger management of development and tourism to protect Malaysia's coral reefs.

WHY IT MATTERS

This assessment, conducted annually since 2007, provides the ecological data layer that underpins all of Reef Check Malaysia's IRIS+ metrics and is submitted to the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) as part of Malaysia's contribution to global reef health tracking. The resulting data also provides a consistent national evidence base on reef condition, including live coral cover and indicator species, and supports science-based marine conservation decision-making.

Monitoring Network: Eyes on Every Reef

IRIS INDICATOR

OI7876: Marine Area Directly Controlled: Total

206 to 326

reef sites actively monitored

across Malaysia's three ecoregions Peninsular West Coast, Peninsular East Coast and Sabah*

2021 - 2025

**in partnership with relevant marine-management authorities and local stakeholders.*



WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

OI7876 indicates the scale of marine area under an organisation's direct influence, management, stewardship, or *control**.

The breakdown of number of sites is as follows:

2021	**206 sites**
2022	**323 sites**
2023	**326 sites**
2024	**315 sites**
2025	**297 sites**

WHY IT MATTERS

This monitoring network represents one of Southeast Asia's most comprehensive reef health datasets, with continuous annual surveys since 2007 (18 years). Every site is assessed using the globally standardised Reef Check Point Intercept Transect (PIT) methodology, producing data directly comparable to reef monitoring programmes in over 95 countries.

This metric demonstrates the geographic reach of Reef Check Malaysia's conservation work and the breadth of reef areas supported through monitoring, stewardship, and management collaboration.

**Methodology note: "Directly controlled" should be interpreted as active monitoring and management support under relevant partnerships, not ownership or legal designation by RCM.*

Coral Health: The National Barometer

IRIS INDICATOR

LCC %: Live Coral Cover Index (Custom Indicator)

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

The LCC% custom indicator measures the percentage of reef surface covered by live coral. For reporting, it provides a simple and credible ecological context indicator that helps explain whether reefs are improving, stable, or under stress over time.



Malaysia's national Live Coral Cover percentage data over the years are as follows:

2021	**44.26%**
2022	**47.83%**
2023	**45.87%**
2024	**44.65%**
2025	**39.94%**

WHY IT MATTERS

The LCC% custom indicator measures the percentage of reef surface covered by live coral. For reporting, it provides a simple and credible ecological context indicator that helps explain whether reefs are improving, stable or under stress over time.

In 2025, average Live Coral Cover (LCC) across RCM's monitored reef sites stood at 39.94%, a decline of 4.71 percentage points from 44.65% in 2024 and the largest single-year drop in RCM's 19-year monitoring record. The decline was driven primarily by the fourth Global Coral Bleaching Event in 2024, which affected reefs across Malaysia and globally.

However, the national figure does not tell the whole story. Positive signs of coral recovery were observed at selected sites, particularly in areas where community-based management through CMCGs has been actively implemented. Meanwhile, during the COVID-19 period, reduced tourism and human activity coincided with LCC increasing from 44.26% in 2021 to 47.83% in 2022. As tourism resumed, LCC began to decline again. While this pattern cannot be attributed to a single factor, it demonstrates the potential for reefs to recover when local pressures are reduced. It reinforces the importance of RCM's community-based approach: reducing local pressures can help strengthen reef resilience in the face of global climate threats.

RCM has monitored LCC continuously since 2007, producing one of the longest continuous reef health datasets in Southeast Asia. This data is declared as a custom IRIS+ indicator because no standard catalog metric captures the specific longitudinal methodology of the Reef Check programme.



MARINE MANAGEMENT

We train island communities to become marine conservation leaders. By empowering local communities to take an active role in managing and conserving their island's natural resources, we help build a strong foundation for long-term conservation success.

Environmental Pressures: Understanding the Threats

IRIS INDICATOR
PI1899: Marine Environmental Pressures

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

PI1899 describes the environmental pressures affecting marine ecosystems. For reporting, this metric explains why conservation work is needed and shows which threats donor-supported activities are helping RCM monitor, respond to, and communicate.

Environmental pressure data was collected across an average of 293 sites each year from 2021 to 2025 (200-310 sites per year). Key pressures recorded during the surveys included trash, ghost nets, bleaching, and anchor damage.

WHY IT MATTERS

This evidence base helps identify priority threats to reef health and informs targeted management responses, community action, and advocacy. The sharp increase in bleaching prevalence reflects the 4th Global Bleaching Event in 2024, driven by record ocean temperatures. This pressure is external to RCM's influence, but the local pressures (trash, ghost nets, anchor damage) are the targets of our Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs) intervention. Reducing these local pressures gives bleached reefs the best chance of recovery.

Ghost Net Removal: Protecting Coral Structures

IRIS INDICATOR
CM-03a: Ghost Nets Removed (Custom Indicator)

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

Custom CM-03a tracks the removal of ghost nets and abandoned fishing gear, one of the most damaging local pressures on coral reefs. When left in the marine environment, these nets can physically break and smother coral structures while continuing to entangle and harm marine life. As a direct and visible measure of hazard removal, this indicator demonstrates RCM's contribution to reducing local pressures on reef ecosystems.

30,500kg

of abandoned, lost or discarded fishing nets retrieved

Malaysia's reef systems

2021 - 2025

WHY IT MATTERS

Between 2021 and 2025, RCM removed 30,500 kg of ghost nets and abandoned fishing gear, directly reducing the risk of physical damage and wildlife entanglement across affected reef areas.

Trained CMCG members and volunteer dive instructors from local dive centres carry out dedicated ghost-net removal dives, turning local skills into practical conservation action, through community-based management. Every kilogram removed reduces a persistent threat and helps protect safer, more resilient reef ecosystems.

Crown-of-Thorns (COTs) Control: Managing Predator Pressure

IRIS INDICATOR

CM-03b: Crown-of-Thorns Starfish Removed (Custom Indicator)

18,000

COTs removed

2021 - 2025

12,951 of COTs removed in 2025, by far the largest annual effort in RCM's history

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

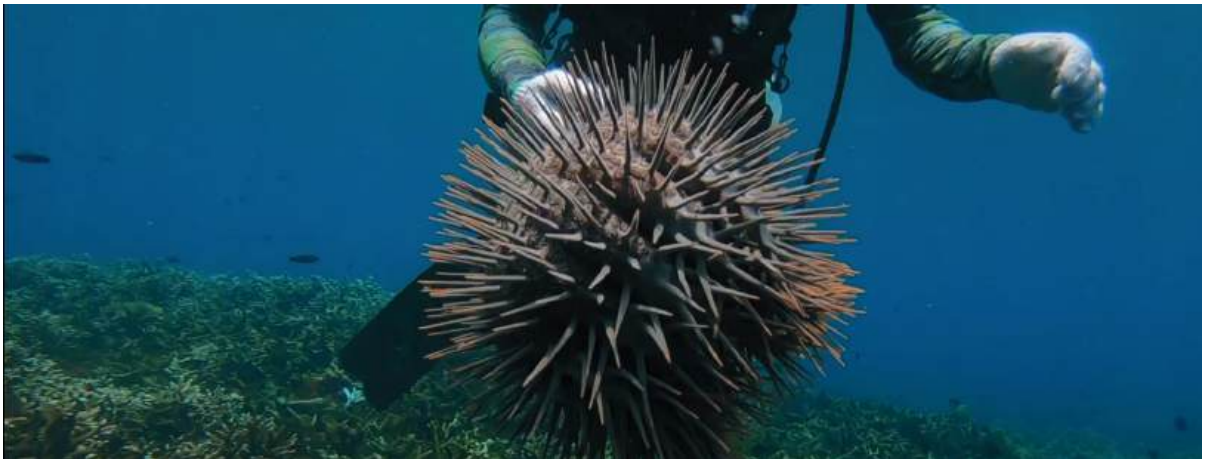
Custom CM-03b captures targeted action to reduce Crown-of-Thorns Starfish outbreaks, which can place local pressure on coral reefs. For reporting, it shows support for practical, field-based reef protection interventions that respond to site-specific ecological threats

WHY IT MATTERS

Crown-of-Thorns starfish (*Acanthaster planci)* outbreaks can devastate coral reefs, consuming live coral at rates that exceed natural recovery. CMCG predator control is a critical intervention during and after bleaching events, when weakened coral is especially vulnerable. This programme directly targets the herbivore-predator imbalance identified as one of three local resilience factors in RCM's Theory of Change.



Ghost nets removal (above) and Crown-of-Thorns starfish removal (below)



Marine Waste Management: Total Environmental Cleanup

IRIS INDICATOR

CM-04: Marine Waste Removed — Total (Custom Indicator)

600,000 kg

of marine and coastal waste removed

>112,000 kg successfully recycled from waste management and coastal stewardship activities.

2021 - 2025

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

RCM-CM-04 tracks the total amount of marine waste removed through RCM's clean-up (including the annual International Coastal Cleanup activity), waste management and coastal stewardship activities.

This custom indicator captures all waste types, including plastic, general rubbish, construction debris and other marine litter, providing a broader picture of pollution reduction. The indicator complements PI3664, which specifically measures plastic waste, and is reported alongside it where plastic-specific data is available, providing a more complete view of RCM's contribution to reducing marine pollution.

WHY IT MATTERS

RCM's waste management efforts and community cleanups go beyond removing rubbish from beaches and the sea. On islands with limited or no municipal waste services, RCM provides communities with the tools, training and infrastructure needed for organised collection, recovery and responsible waste management. These efforts reduce waste entering coastal waters, support healthier marine ecosystems and strengthen communities' capacity to manage waste sustainably over the long term.

Marine Waste: Cleaning Our Seas

IRIS INDICATOR

PI3664: Volume of Plastic Removed

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

PI3664 reports the volume of plastic removed from the environment. For reporting purposes, this is a highly visible pollution-reduction metric that connects support for coastal cleanups to cleaner coastlines and seas, while reducing the potential for plastic waste to persist in and impact marine ecosystems.

The continued shift towards waste management and prevention infrastructure is strategically important, as preventing waste from entering the environment is generally more cost-effective and scalable than removing it after pollution has occurred.

WHY IT MATTERS

RCM-coordinated coastal and marine cleanups removed 1,654.8 kg of plastic waste in 2025, while our annual International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) efforts removed almost 990,000 pieces of plastic items between 2022 and 2025*. Across the four-year period, the five most commonly collected plastic items were plastic beverage bottles, cigarette butts**, plastic/foam pieces, plastic grocery bags and food wrappers.

Note:

* ICC data is reported for four years (2022–2025). In 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, RCM conducted the "#ICCfromHome" instead of its usual coastal cleanup activities.

** Cigarette butts are recorded as a separate category but consists primarily of plastic. Globally, they are by far considered the largest single type of litter by count.



ADVOCACY

We raise awareness of the importance of marine ecosystems and the valuable ecosystem services they provide.

Training: Growing Malaysia's Conservation Workforce

IRIS INDICATOR
PI2998: Individuals Trained: Total

2,100
individuals completed certified conservation training through RCM programmes

2021 - 2025

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

PI2998 captures the number of individuals who received structured training. For reporting, it demonstrates how their support helps build local skills, technical capacity, and long-term community ability to participate in marine conservation and stewardship.

WHY IT MATTERS

RCM has invested in building the skills and capacity of local communities and marine stakeholders through structured training programmes in reef monitoring, rehabilitation, sustainable livelihoods and marine tourism.

These include EcoDiver certification (675 individuals), Reef Check Trainer certification (11 individuals), CMCG skills training (155 individuals), alternative livelihood training for local communities, and Green Fins operator training.

Cumulatively, RCM has trained more than 2,100 individuals, strengthening the local skills base needed for locally led marine resource management. Each trained individual represents a lasting investment in conservation capacity, bringing knowledge and skills back into their communities and helping to build a stronger, more locally driven network of marine stewards.

Stakeholder Engagement: Conservation Designed With Communities

IRIS INDICATOR
CM-05: Stakeholders Consulted (Custom Indicator)

4,000
community stakeholders consulted across our 6 project sites

2021 - 2025

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

RCM-CM-05 captures the number of stakeholders consulted or engaged in shaping conservation priorities. For reporting, it demonstrates that RCM's work is participatory, locally informed, and responsive to community and stakeholder perspectives.

WHY IT MATTERS

The engagement effort is conducted through community sessions, feedback forums, focus group discussions, surveys, interviews and participatory planning activities related to marine resource management.

These consultations provided structured opportunities for island residents and other stakeholders to share their experiences, perspectives and priorities on the conservation programmes affecting their communities and livelihoods.

Feedback gathered through these engagements helped inform RCM's conservation priorities and programme planning, ensuring that conservation efforts are grounded in local knowledge and shaped by the needs of the communities they are intended to support.

Education and Awareness: Building Conservation Literacy

IRIS INDICATOR

PI2476: Communities Served (IRIS v5.3c)

13,000

students and community members reached through RCM's education and awareness programmes

2021 - 2025

WHAT THE INDICATOR MEASURES

PI2476 measures the number of people or communities reached by programmes or services. For reporting, it communicates the social reach of RCM's conservation work beyond technical training, including students, public participants, island residents, and other community stakeholders. It complements the individuals who received formal certified training (PI2998).

WHY IT MATTERS

These programmes included school-based marine education, public engagement events, environmental awareness campaigns and community workshops across multiple island and mainland locations. Building awareness is an important first step in helping people understand the value of marine ecosystems and the importance of protecting them. Over time, this understanding can inspire individuals to become more involved in conservation through initiatives such as EFSG training, Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs), waste management programmes and community cleanups. In this way, awareness serves as the foundation of RCM's community-based model, creating pathways for individuals to move from awareness to engagement and ultimately, active stewardship of their marine environment.

**NOTE:* Muhaimin's journey is one example: after attending RCM's Coral Reef Camp as a child, he was inspired to care for his home island of Redang. Years later, he joined the Redang Marine Conservation Group (RMCG) and has since become a full-time RCM staff member, where he now leads a group of young people in conservation activities. His journey illustrates how early exposure to marine education can plant the seeds for lifelong stewardship and, in some cases, grow into sustained leadership within the community.



Marine education school programme in Pengerang



Eco-Friendly Snorkelling Guide (EFSG) training in session

HIGHLIGHTS 2021 - 2025







2021

THE PANDEMIC YEARS

In 2021, the unprecedented worldwide lockdown continued. The COVID-19 pandemic kept everyone at home except essential workers. Businesses, schools, and communities were all forced to stop their activities and isolate themselves. Conservation work, while essential to the ecosystems that sustain us, was also required to adhere to the lockdown measures in the interest of public health.

Reef Check Malaysia is primarily a marine conservation organisation. We work to protect and conserve the ocean and our reefs. What, then, were we to do in the face of a total lockdown? With field work halted, we wondered what conservation looked like during a pandemic. But soon, we realised we had been asking the wrong question.

We shifted our focus to our communities. Overnight, tourism disappeared. Families who once depended on tourists suddenly had no income.

2021

I am so thankful for the food aid that has been donated to us to help with our difficulties. Many thanks also go to the Jawatankuasa Pembangunan dan Keselamatan Kampung (JPKK) and Reef Check Malaysia for handling the arrangements," Rommy Aziz, a local fisherman on Mantanani Island.

During COVID-19, we were fortunate enough to have our funders align with our renewed focus to help our communities. Across 11 islands, we coordinated food aid that reached 13,281 people.



Separately, the Mantanani community was supported in exploring alternative livelihood opportunities, including the production of virgin coconut oil, abalone farming, and the establishment of a *kebun komuniti* (community garden).

We are grateful for the opportunity to be able to serve the communities we work with. But when the programme ended, it left us reflecting on something much bigger.

The pandemic showed us that the people living on these islands are not separate from the ecosystems we protect—they are part of them. Looking back, spending our days helping the families instead of reefs during the pandemic made us realise, we had been protecting the same ecosystem all along.

The pandemic also raised another question. If tourism could disappear almost overnight, what would happen if the coral reefs these communities depend on were to collapse?

From that moment on, our understanding of conservation changed. Helping our communities also means helping our reefs.

Soon, the rules were eased from a total lockdown, with only cross-border travel remaining prohibited. For our teams who were already based on the islands, work resumed. But the lessons we learned and the relationships with the communities that were strengthened during that time are ones we continue to carry with us beyond the pandemic.

Shifting livelihoods away from relying solely on tourism can help reduce impacts on our coral reefs and help to diversify incomes for the local communities. This means there is a need to build capacity within local communities to develop alternative livelihoods so that they can become more resilient and diversify their economy. If such events were to occur again, the local communities would not be totally cut off from their income and would be able to persevere.



2022

COMMUNITY MARINE CONSERVATION GROUPS (CMCG)

Healthy marine ecosystems depend on the people who live alongside them. Communities are not just beneficiaries of conservation—they are essential partners in protecting and managing marine resources. Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs) serve as a practical mechanism for turning this approach into action.

Our first community-based conservation group was established on Tioman Island in 2015. Known as the Tioman Marine Conservation Group (TMCG), it was formed in response to strong interest from local island residents who wanted to play a more active role in protecting and managing their marine resources.

Building on the success of TMCG, in early 2020, the Department of Fisheries (DoF) launched the Reef Care Programme, which aimed to empower suitable local community groups by entrusting them with selected coral reef management responsibilities. Reef Check Malaysia and TMCG were appointed as Reef Care partners for Tioman. Recognising the value of this model, we worked with the DoF to establish additional community groups and to expand the programme to Redang in 2022.

2022

Building on the potential of this community-led approach to benefit other island communities, we extended the model to Sabah in 2022 by establishing community-based conservation groups. By the end of that year, these groups were active on four islands in southern Sabah: Larapan, Selakan, Mabul, and Kulapuan.

The Convention on Biological Diversity and the Sustainable Development Goals both emphasize the importance of community-based approaches in in the management and conservation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

As a signatory to these international commitments, Malaysia is encouraged to adopt a holistic approach to marine resource management that actively involves local communities.

This commitment is reflected in national frameworks such as the National Policy on Biological Diversity and the 12th Malaysia Plan (RMK-12). The growth of the CMCG model demonstrates how these national and international aspirations can be translated into meaningful action on the ground.

These early initiatives and subsequent expansion efforts laid the foundation for the Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs), a community-led conservation model that continues to support marine resource management and stewardship today.

Today, CMCGs empower island communities to become active stewards of the marine ecosystems they depend on, demonstrating how community leadership can strengthen marine conservation across Malaysia.



CMCGs respond to ghost nets sightings and reports



TMCG and RMCG together



2023

NO NEW TIOMAN AIRPORT CAMPAIGN

Five years after the proposal first surfaced, many believed the issue had been put to rest. Then, in 2023, the news we thought would not make its way back to Tioman arrived on its shores again. The community was rocked by the announcement of the construction of a new Tioman airport. The issue, which dated back to 2018, reared its head again when it came to light that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) had been made public and was open for public review and comments.

2023

The EIA came with a plethora of issues, the most prominent of which were:

- The EIA only considered the damage caused by the construction of the runway and support buildings when it should be viewed holistically and should consider the potential long-term island-wide loss due to the construction of resorts and infrastructure to cope with the increased number of tourists.
- The EIA claimed that local communities were consulted about the airport, but we found that the consultation process was deeply flawed, producing results that cannot be relied upon.
- There were significant errors in the EIA itself: the hydraulic survey data were out of date; marine ecosystem mitigation measures were questionable; and the marine survey contained grossly inaccurate lists of species (including some known to be native to the Caribbean and African waters).

For these reasons, we prepared a critical analysis of the proposal based on the EIA, which was completed with input from our partners and stakeholders. The full critical analysis can be found on our website.

We also looked to our community to amplify the mission. This fight affects everyone. While the ocean seems distant to city dwellers, an impacted ocean will be felt by them too. As per the guidelines, we called on the public to comment on the EIA through the relevant channels, resulting in a total of 1,412 people submitting comments. A public petition was created on Change.org by a fellow advocate, and 26,000 people signed the petition to oppose the construction of the new Tioman Airport.

Moreover, the Small Towns Malaysia team helped to produce awareness videos that showcased the voices of local islanders and the impacts of the construction, the Youths United For Earth (YUFE) created awareness videos on the issue, and various local and international media partners covered the story and brought attention to the situation. We were also fortunate to have the Reef Check Foundation headquarters and network stand in solidarity with us in this fight.

This collective voice demonstrated the breadth of public concern and the scientific shortcomings of the proposal. It ultimately resulted in the cancellation of the construction of the new airport, a decision we greatly celebrate, not for us, but for Tioman's biodiversity and community.

The victory demonstrated the power of science, community voices, and public participation in environmental decision-making. It showed that conservation is not the responsibility of any one organisation, but a shared effort involving communities, researchers, civil society, and government.

Most importantly, the people of Tioman showed that those who call an island home can also be its strongest advocates. We owe our ocean so much, and it is our job to protect it and be its voice when it matters.

2024

4TH MASS CORAL BLEACHING EVENT

It was felt before it was seen. Reports of high temperatures and warnings of heatstroke were released. People were sweating and keeping themselves in the shade whenever possible. But if it could be felt on land, what was the story underwater?

Evidently, in 2024, it was also felt underwater. Our team reported water temperatures that were on the high side for a prolonged period of time. Sightings of corals bleaching were becoming more and more frequent.

We've seen this before. In Malaysia, mass coral bleaching occurred in 1998, 2004, and 2010, and smaller-scale bleaching events occurred between 2012 and 2023. The 2010 coral bleaching event was considered the worst in Malaysia; however, 2024 set a new benchmark for recorded water temperatures and coral mortality.

Over 80% of the world's coral reefs were exposed to extreme heat stress. This resulted in widespread bleaching and the declaration of the fourth global coral reef bleaching event.



2024

In 2011, we developed the Bleaching Response Plan (BRP - later updated), which focuses on communications. When bleaching is happening, there is little we can do to stop it, but what we can do is support our reefs. Therefore, it is imperative that all stakeholders are aware of what is happening and that reef managers know what effective management responses they can implement.

When the fourth global coral bleaching event occurred in 2024, we activated the BRP. We knew what we had to do. Our teams conducted regular bleaching monitoring exercises and collected data.

Social media was used to spread awareness and information on coral bleaching, dive operators and reef managers were consulted and trained on how to manage coral bleaching, press releases and articles were published to further raise awareness, and government agencies were approached to support effective interventions. Everyone was mobilised to paint a clearer picture of the crisis.

The information collected during this period enabled us to assess the scale of the event and formed the basis of the 2024 Malaysia Coral Bleaching Impact Report, co-written with Coralku Solutions.



Our team conducted regular coral bleaching monitoring surveys

The experience also revealed opportunities to strengthen our preparedness. We refined our BRP and developed the Malaysia Bleaching Response Plan (MBRP), as well as island-based Bleaching Response Plans, as we recognised that different islands have unique needs.

The 2024 bleaching event also reinforced a broader reality: climate change does not affect coral reefs alone. Seagrass meadows and mangroves are also increasingly vulnerable to rising temperatures and changing ocean conditions.

As our understanding of these impacts grows, so too must our conservation efforts.

In the south of Johor, we have expanded our work to better understand and protect these interconnected marine ecosystems, recognising that healthy reefs, seagrass, and mangroves are all essential to resilient coastlines and thriving coastal communities.

2025

PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY

In the last year of our five-year plan, and after a few eventful years, we started to think, "Are we doing enough? What else is missing?"

We have been monitoring, taking active steps to manage threats, engaging with and working with the local community. We have the data, and we know the root causes of coral degradation, and we know the community marine conservation groups are participating in marine conservation work, but why do the problems persist?

And then we realised that, to effectively use the data we have, we can no longer beat the same drum. We have to evolve. This shift in thinking led us to open the door to policy advocacy.

Stepping into this, we quickly set our goal: we want to advocate for community participatory frameworks. The system works, and we have proof. We realised that top-down management has its limitations. What we need is a system where local communities are not just bystanders, but active participants and recognised managers of their own resources.

This year, we welcomed our **Chief Public Policy and Advocacy Officer.**

2025

Together with our CEO, we researched who our 222 Members of Parliament (MPs) are, narrowed it down to those who would be best to meet, and then introduced ourselves. The reactions were mixed; some knew us, some had heard of us but didn't know what we do, but one thing was certain: they were all open to conversations.

After much research and many conversations, we were introduced to the Parliamentary Special Select Committee on Environment, Science and Plantation and had the opportunity to meet with the MPs who were part of the Committee, and even the Chair himself. This Committee provides oversight for four key Malaysian ministries to ensure their policies and budgets align with national interests.

Without missing a beat, we presented our case to the Committee at the invitation of the Chair, Datuk Ahmad Amzad Mohamed.



Presenting at the the Parliamentary Special Select Committee on Environment, Science and Plantation (photo by Parlimen Malaysia) (above) and a group photo from the 'Bengkel Pengurusan Sumber Semulajadi Negeri Johor' (below)



A week later, we watched as the Chair raised critical questions during a parliamentary session about the link between food security and ecosystem health, encouraging government agencies to collaborate more closely with civil society, including RCM. For the first time, the issues we had long observed in the field were being discussed at the highest levels of government.

This opened our eyes even more. Now, we know that the way we frame conservation matters and that it can open doors to high-level discourse.

Through this journey, we gained a deeper understanding of the structural realities shaping governance in Malaysia. One of the most significant dynamics we encountered is the natural complexity that arises between federal-level policy design and state-level implementation.

We often see that well-intentioned policies face implementation challenges on the ground, simply because responsibilities are distributed across multiple agencies — each with its own mandate and priorities.

Coastal management, in particular, is a multi-dimensional issue that requires close collaboration among various ministries and state agencies. From what we have observed, much of this coordination currently happens through temporary, issue-specific working groups, rather than through an ongoing, formal platform for regular dialogue and joint planning. This presents a meaningful opportunity to strengthen long-term coordination going forward.

Our journey into advocacy has shown us that progress does not always come from creating new policies; often, it comes from finding the right place within existing systems where change can happen.

Moving forward, we will continue advocating for approaches that recognise the important role of local communities in conservation. We know that meaningful change takes time, but we remain committed to creating stronger pathways for collaboration and ensuring that conservation decisions are informed by those who are closest to the ecosystems we seek to protect.



The CMCGs receive continuous training to improve their skills in conservation and management





OPERATIONS HIGHLIGHTS





GROWING OUR TEAM & LOCAL PRESENCE

RCM began as a small NGO in 2007, with just a handful of staff led by our then General Manager, Julian Hyde. Since then, we've steadily grown both our team and our presence on the ground. Between 2021 and 2025, our team grew from 19 to 25 staff, while our field presence expanded from four locations - Tioman, Kota Kinabalu, Mantanani, and Mersing - to seven locations across Malaysia, including Redang, Semporna, and South of Johor.

As our work has grown, so has our understanding of what it takes to protect our oceans. In 2024, we broadened our mission from protecting coral reefs to conserving Malaysia's wider marine ecosystems (mangroves and seagrass), reflecting the interconnected nature of the marine environment and the communities that depend on it.

But our growth isn't only about having more staff in more places. It's also about empowering the communities we work with. Over the years, we've helped establish seven Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs), made up of local people who care deeply about protecting their own marine environment. Through training and ongoing support, members develop the skills and confidence to lead conservation efforts, manage marine resources and carry out day-to-day conservation activities in their communities.

Today, these groups are helping to create lasting, locally led stewardship of Malaysia's marine ecosystems showing that conservation is most effective when the people who call these places home are at the heart of the solution.







STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATIONS

Protecting Malaysia's marine ecosystems isn't just about the work we do in the field—it's also about helping more people understand why it matters. Since 2021, we've invested in strengthening how we communicate our work, equipping our team with new skills in strategic communications, storytelling, and website and social media analytics to help us connect with a wider audience.

We've also improved the way people can learn about our work. Our revamped website now features an interactive map showcasing Reef Check survey results from across Malaysia, alongside a marine education module with resources on key marine conservation topics. Through our social media channels, we continue to share stories from the field, celebrate conservation successes and encourage more people to play a part in protecting our marine environment.

Over the years, we've also found new ways to bring the voices of marine conservation to a wider audience. Baki Zainal joined us as an ambassador in 2018, and in 2023, Sharifah Sofia joined him. Together, they help us reach new audiences, share the importance of protecting our marine ecosystems and inspire more people to take action.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

Working closely with government agencies has always been an important part of how we protect Malaysia's marine ecosystems. In our early years, we partnered with the former Department of Marine Parks Malaysia to support coral reef monitoring and marine conservation efforts. When the management of Marine Parks was transferred to the Department of Fisheries Malaysia (DOF), we continued building on that strong relationship.

Over time, our partnership with DOF grew beyond supporting Reef Check surveys. Together, we've worked on scientific research and monitoring, community education, capacity building and marine conservation initiatives across the country.

In December 2022, this long-standing collaboration was formalised through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), strengthening our shared commitment to protecting Malaysia's marine environment.

We also collaborate with Sabah Parks (since 2009) in various efforts such as Reef Check surveys, coral reef rehabilitation as well as capacity building and training for local islanders and stakeholders.

As our work has grown, so too have our partnerships. Today, we work alongside many federal and state government agencies, as well as other stakeholders on a wide range of conservation and advocacy initiatives. An ongoing project with several state governments includes efforts to support integrated management of the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia's seascape.

By bringing together government agencies, local communities and other partners, the project aims to strengthen marine and coastal conservation, promote sustainable fisheries and improve the livelihoods and food security of coastal communities by 2035.

INVESTING IN OUR SYSTEMS

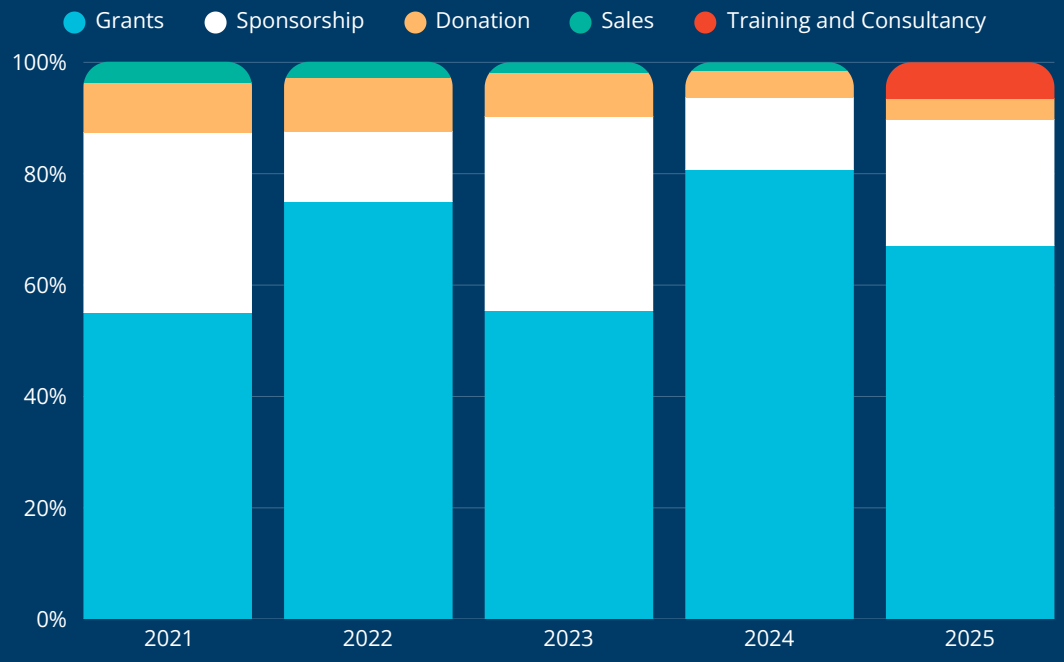
As our team grew and our work expanded across Malaysia, we needed better ways to stay connected and support one another. We adopted the Microsoft 365 suite as our central platform for communication, making it easier for colleagues across different locations to share information, coordinate projects and stay in touch.

At the same time, we strengthened our cybersecurity by installing antivirus software on all staff laptops, helping to protect our systems and the information that supports our conservation work. While these improvements happen behind the scenes, they play an important role in helping our team work more efficiently, stay connected and continue delivering conservation impact across Malaysia.



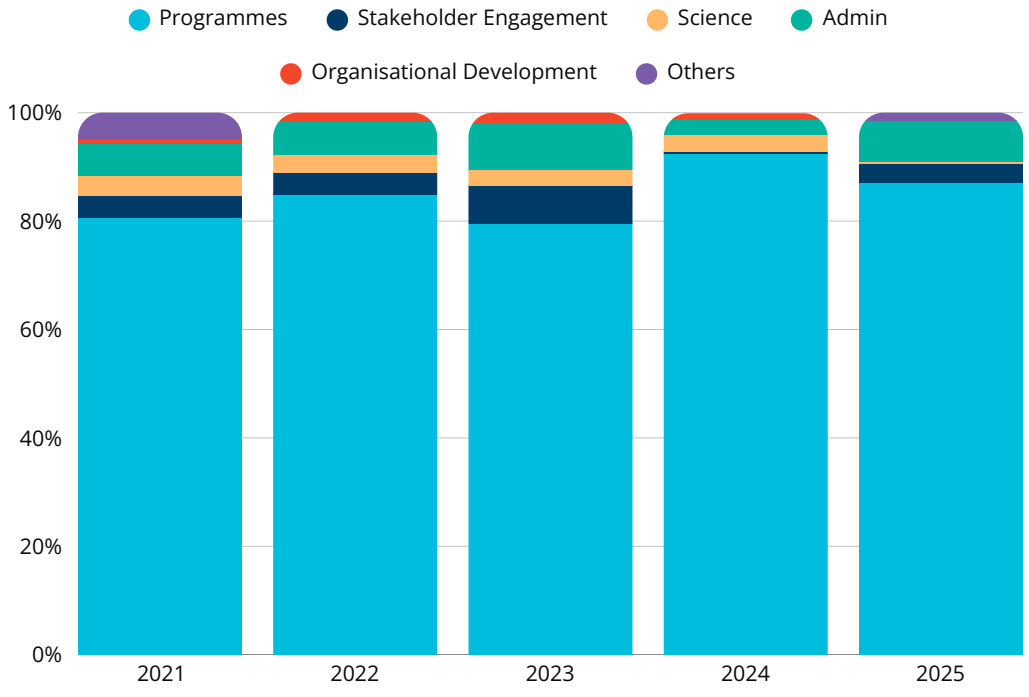
Income

Over the years, RCM's sources of income have become more diverse. While grants, sponsorships and donations remain important, newer income streams such as sales, consultancy and training are helping us build towards greater financial sustainability.



Programme Allocation

Since 2021, the majority of our expenditure (more than 80%) went directly towards conservation programmes. The remaining resources supported science, stakeholder engagement, organisational development, administration and other essential functions that enable our work across Malaysia.





FROM ISLANDERS TO CONSERVATION LEADERS

Coastal and island communities have depended on the sea for generations. Yet as marine ecosystems face mounting pressure from pollution and climate change, they have too often been left out of decisions about the waters they rely on.

Reef Check Malaysia's community-based conservation programmes empower local youth with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to protect marine resources, strengthen ecosystem resilience, and become active ocean stewards in their communities.

Muhaimin from Pulau Redang, Danise from Mersing, and Izral from Pulau Tioman began as curious participants. Today, they are leading marine conservation efforts in their own communities, reclaiming stewardship of the waters they grew up with.

Muhaimin, home beneath the waves

Muhaimin grew up on Pulau Redang, where the sea has been a constant in his life since childhood. Muhaimin's father brought him to the sea when he was just three months old, and the water has been part of his life ever since.

On weekends and school holidays, he'd tag along with his neighbour, a snorkelling operator, out into the water.

"I loved seeing the corals at Pulau Paku," he says. "That's what made me fall in love with the sea."

During monsoon season, when the rain kept most people from working, the community drew closer together. "Some went fishing, but we kids would swim at the Alor, small rivers inside the jungle of Pulau Redang," he recalls.

For Muhaimin, Pulau Redang was never a holiday destination. It was simply home.



Muhaimin conducting a Reef Check survey

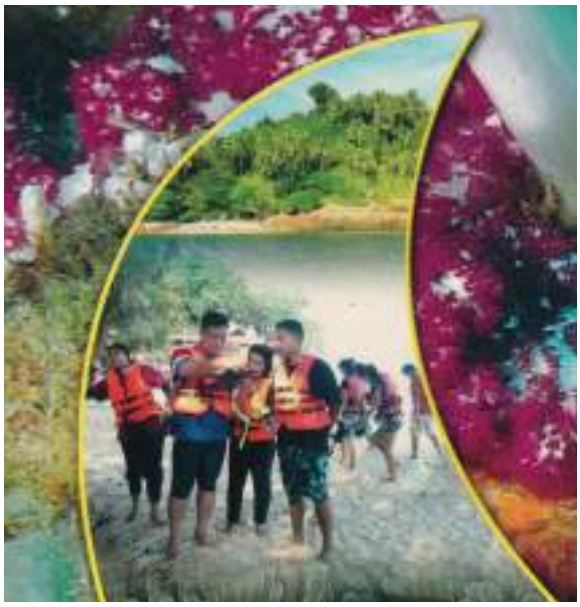
At ten, Muhaimin talked his way into his first Coral Reef Camp, run by Reef Check Malaysia and technically meant for older kids.

"They gave a talk on how plastic affects coral reefs," he remembers. "The next day, they took us snorkelling at the marine park, and I saw firsthand how much damage plastic can do." That was when the seed of his conservation mindset was planted.

Thirteen years after that first camp, at 23, Muhaimin joined Reef Check Malaysia as an Assistant Programme Manager, helping Cintai Redang's Programme Manager, Asma, recruit fellow islanders into the Redang Marine Conservation Group (RMCG).

"As a participant, you only think about what you gain," he reflects. "Now that I'm on the other side of it, I think about how to help participants understand and gain from it too."

For Muhaimin, local leadership isn't optional; it's essential. "Islanders have a deeper connection to the islands they call home," he believes.



Muhaimin (far right) found himself on the cover of a report from 2011

Danise, finding his new depth

Danise grew up in a small town near Mersing. His journey began with a simple question from his father, "*Minat diving tak* (interested in diving)?"

That conversation led him to Cintai Mersing's Instagram page, and from there, to a study trip to Pulau Mawar to learn about mangrove ecosystems, before he'd even earned his diving license through the Mersing Marine Conservation Group (MMCG).

His first real taste of marine conservation work was installing sea moorings alongside Reef Check Malaysia and local boatmen in Mersing and its surrounding islands. The hardest task, he says, was clearing large ghost nets, physically demanding work.

"Learning to dive was easy for me since I already knew how to swim," Danise laughs. "But at first, I was using my hands to move around underwater."



Danise removing ghost nets that threatens the reefs

He started out knowing little about corals or fish species. A Reef Check survey trip to Pulau Aur and Pemanggil changed that.

"They taught me proper buoyancy and finning technique, how not to move with my hands." He later earned his EcoDiver certification in Pulau Tioman, learning to distinguish the species that count in a survey from those that don't. Along the way, his enthusiasm for the reef, marine life, and conservation work only grew.

Two years later, when Cintai Mersing needed to expand its team, Danise was offered a full-time position. "There are still many people who don't know much about the sea," he says. "Most just think there are fish and rocks down there. They call the corals *batu* (rocks)."

That gap is exactly what drives him now. He invites fellow Mersing locals to join beach cleanups, hoping to spark the same curiosity that once pulled him in. Today, his favourite part of the job is simple. Diving and running exhibitions that give others the same "Wait, corals are alive?" moment he once had.



Danise explaining RCM's work at our awareness booth

Izral, seeing the reef from down below

Izral's introduction to Reef Check Malaysia began much like Muhaimin's, joining a Coral Reef Camp in primary school, though on a different island.

Snorkelling, fish identification, and stories about the reef stuck with him from then on. Later, beach cleanups opened his eyes to the work happening behind the scenes, including reef surveys, ghostnet removal, and coral rehabilitation. After finishing college, he joined the Tioman Marine Conservation Group (TMCG) to learn how to dive.

As an *anak pulau*, a child of the island, Izral had always lived near the water, but only ever seen it from above. Learning to dive changed that.

"It felt like I was stepping into another world," he says. Only then did he truly see the reefs he'd grown up beside, and understand what visitors travelled across the world to chase.

Later, work commitments kept him away from TMCG for a while. Alvin Chelliah, Reef Check Malaysia's Chief Programmes Officer, continued encouraging him to get involved. When an opening at RCM finally came up, he applied, with Alvin's nudge behind him.

Today, coral rehabilitation is the most rewarding part of his job. "You plant a coral fragment, and months later you come back to see it alive and growing," he says. "That's the real satisfaction, seeing the impact of your work."

Special thanks to our volunteer, Jaling Sim, for helping to write this story.

Building the next generation of local ocean defenders

Muhaimin, Danise, and Izral found their way to marine conservation through curiosity, and each has since become a steward of the place they call home.

Reef Check Malaysia's programmes do more than raise awareness. We aim to spark curiosity and interest among local youth to get involved in marine conservation and to protect the places they call home. Muhaimin, Danise, and Izral started out as curious participants and are now the ones leading the work.

Systemic barriers have long left coastal communities underserved and underrepresented in decisions about the environments they depend on most. Reef Check Malaysia is working to address power imbalances, empowering local communities to care for and protect their own homes and, in the process, become ocean defenders themselves.



Izral diving to remove COTs



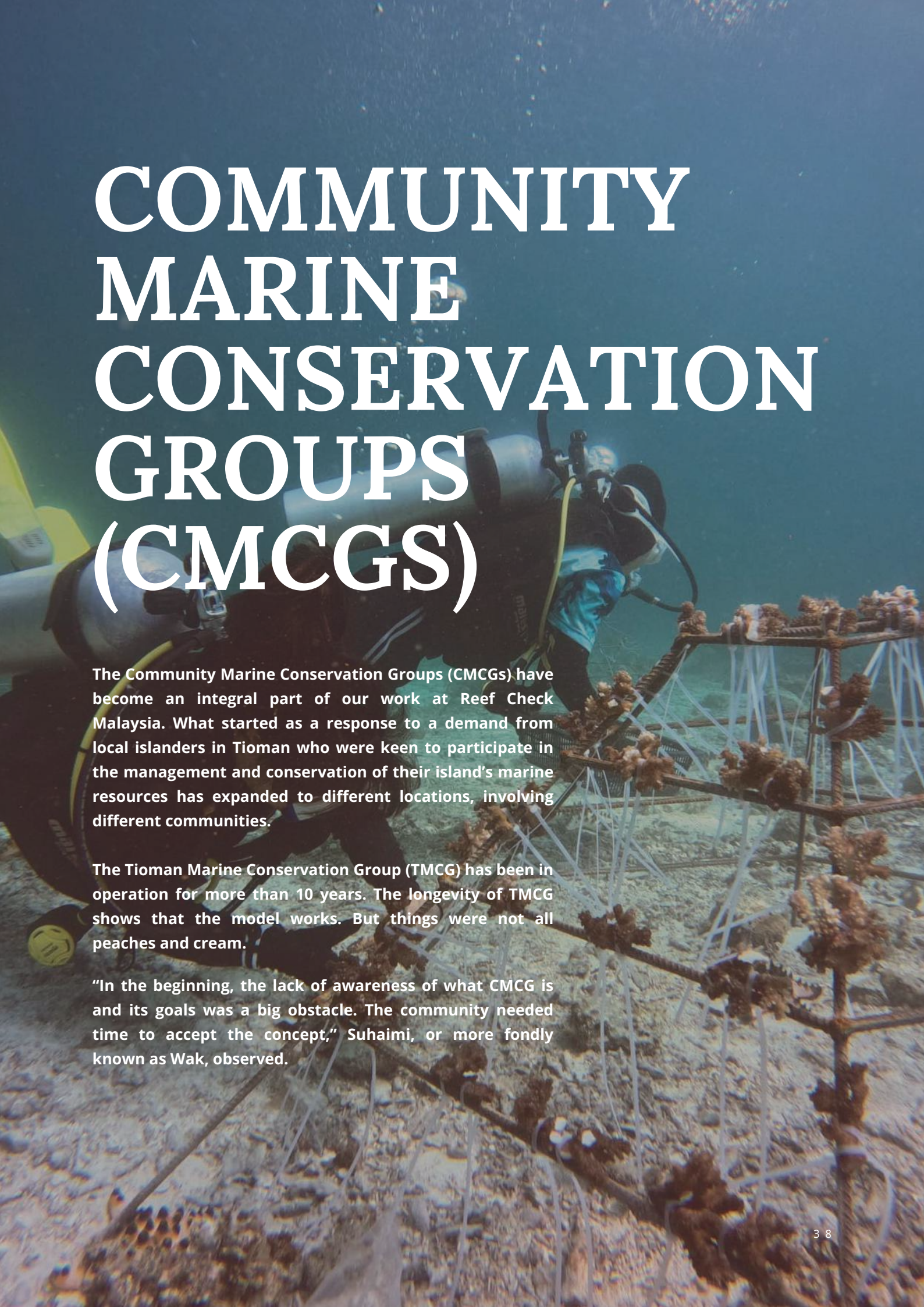
Muhaimin



Danise



Izral



COMMUNITY MARINE CONSERVATION GROUPS (CMCGS)

The Community Marine Conservation Groups (CMCGs) have become an integral part of our work at Reef Check Malaysia. What started as a response to a demand from local islanders in Tioman who were keen to participate in the management and conservation of their island's marine resources has expanded to different locations, involving different communities.

The Tioman Marine Conservation Group (TMCG) has been in operation for more than 10 years. The longevity of TMCG shows that the model works. But things were not all peaches and cream.

"In the beginning, the lack of awareness of what CMCG is and its goals was a big obstacle. The community needed time to accept the concept," Suhaimi, or more fondly known as Wak, observed.







“Walaupun tidak ramai, tapi kami ada”

Wak is one of the first members of TMCG and has actively participated in TMCG work over the years.

“Honestly, I was influenced by friends. I am also interested in marine life and scuba diving activities,” says Wak when asked what motivated him to join TMCG.

TMCG has grown to a network of over 80 members and has been one of the first responders to marine issues in Tioman.

“I’m proud to see how TMCG has grown from a small group of islanders to a registered entity that’s actively doing marine conservation work and raising awareness among the public. It’s even more encouraging to see how there are more volunteers and local community members participating in protecting our ocean now,” says Hazim, another TMCG member.

The success of TMCG has led to the formation of CMCGs in other locations. The TMCG model became the blueprint for the CMCG programme and expanded to Redang, and four locations in Semporna, Sabah, i.e. Kulapuan, Larapan, Selakan and Mabul, in 2022, then in Mersing in 2024. Since then, these CMCGs have flourished and are leading programmes instead of merely participating.

Photo from the top: Wak, TMCG member, during Kod Blue 2025; An RMCG member doing Reef Check survey; LMCG team during a COTs removal operation.

"I used to be shy speaking in front of people," says Aina, leader of the Larapan Marine Conservation Group (LMCG). "But after closely joining CMCG's activities, meeting people, voicing opinions and doing presentations, my confidence grew."

Similarly, Yen, leader of the Kulapuan Marine Conservation Group (KMCG), also commented that he feels more confident, his communication skills have improved, and he has learned how to work in a team better.

"To me, CMCG is not just a community or work group. It is like a family; a fight. A place where the community's voices are heard, a place where we learn and change for the better," says Yen.



CMCGs respond to Crown-of-Thorns starfish (COTs) outbreaks



KMCG with the ghost nets they've removed from the ocean

CMCG members are given training in SCUBA diving and marine conservation. They are also trained to be EcoDivers, where they learn how to conduct Reef Check surveys. The *'Modul Latihan Pemulihan Marin'* (Marine Rehabilitation Training Module) was developed as a resource for CMCG training.

"Before joining CMCG, my understanding of marine conservation was limited," says Izzharuddin, a member of the Kunak Darvel Marine Conservation Group (KDMCG).

"I knew that we have to protect the ocean, but I did not understand how human activities could impact our reefs and marine life. After becoming a CMCG member, I now understand its importance and realize that every person has a responsibility to care for the marine environment."

We believe strongly in the CMCG model because the community has a deeper understanding of the needs of their homes. The sustainability of conservation work hinges on the local community caring, wanting to, and doing the work itself.

"Local communities are the ones who are close to the ocean. We see what is happening and we are also the ones who rely on the ocean for our livelihoods," shared Aina.

"I cannot forget seeing the reefs myself when I'm out diving doing CMCG work. There are places that are beautiful, but there are also places that are damaged and full of trash. At that moment, I realize, if we don't take care of the ocean, who will? I knew then that the work we do, even if it seems small, creates an impact."

On top of that, it will not be outsiders telling the islanders what's wrong. It will be their peers. It's someone they know, a friend or a family member, who are doing the surveys, gathering data, interpreting it and passing on the message.

"When we return to the sites where we've done coral rehabilitation work and see the reefs recover with our own eyes, I feel so proud," reflects Hazim.

We know the CMCG model works. The next step is to see formal recognition of the role of these CMCGs in managing the islands' resources.

The members of the Selakan Marine Conservation Group (SMCG) are recognized as Honorary Park Rangers by Sabah Parks. This grants them legal authority to assist state agencies in patrolling, protecting the community-managed zones, and preventing illegal activities in their waters.

The team conducts regular sea patrols, actively deterring illegal fishermen and fish bombers from entering the protected zone. Through this recognition, it proves that formal collaboration can happen.

Both national policies (National Policy on Biological Diversity, RMK 13) and international agreements (Global Biodiversity Framework, SDGs) emphasise the role of IPLCs (Indigenous People & Local Communities) in resource management, but there is yet to be any mechanism that makes it a reality.

In this vein, we are working on promoting the Protected Area Management Body (PAMB) concept, a body that represents all stakeholders in decision-making on resource management. We are also advocating for the establishment of the Thematic Working Group (TWG) on coastal and marine resource conservation as part of the implementation mechanism of the National Policy on Biological Diversity.

The CMCG model also shows that local communities want a seat at the marine management table and that they are willing to and can do the work needed.

"I hope CMCGs will continue to grow, inspiring and engaging more members of the community, especially young people, to take part in marine conservation." said Muhammad Fitri from Redang Marine Conservation Group (RMCG).

"*Walaupun tidak ramai, tapi kami ada*," says Wak, which means, 'even though we are small in numbers, we are here' in reference to a group of communities working on protecting their home.



A CMCG member trying to free a turtle from ghost net.



MANTANANI HOMESTAYS

“Most of us used to be housewives,” says Mainah. “I started my homestay to earn more income and, at the same time, to introduce the beauty and uniqueness of Mantanani Island to the world.”

For Mainah and many other women in Mantanani, tourism became more than just an opportunity to earn an income. It became a way for the community to build new skills, share their home with visitors and create a stronger future for the island.

Mantanani Island is an isolated island off the west coast of Sabah, off the town of Kota Belud. The island has a population of about 1,000 people and has pristine white sandy beaches and crystal-clear waters.

Fishing has traditionally been the main source of income and protein for villagers. The community depended on the ocean. However, Mantanani was also once identified as a hotspot for fish bombing.

As is the case with all our programmes, we understand that conservation work has to go hand-in-hand with understanding the needs of the local community. Conservation needs to include solutions that can support their future. It should be about creating opportunities that allow them to protect the ocean while continuing to support their families.

One of the alternative livelihoods we introduced and trained the local community in was improving their homestay operations.

Ten homestay operators established the Homestays Mantanani group to rebrand their marketing and improve their services. It is through this group that our work was channelled, as we helped them navigate the homestay business world.

"I feel so grateful," says Himah, one of the homestay operators. "The trainings provided by RCM helped us to elevate our homestay operations. It used to be us just providing a place to sleep and some food. But now, we can accept tourists at any time, and we have an array of activities and products we can offer to enrich their stay."



Visitors staying at Mantanani homestays get to experience cultural activities

With support from RCM, the homestay operators learned new skills that helped them strengthen their businesses and helped in their day-to-day lives. Some of the trainings we have provided include Mandarin language classes, first aid classes, basic digital marketing classes, cake-making classes, and more.

"These trainings have helped us to expand our business, shared Epah from Epah Homestay.

"I still apply the learnings I gained from a financial management training RCM organized," shared Himah. "I separate my money and set up emergency funds for future needs."



Homestays Mantanani ladies attending homestays management training



Himah (far left) presenting with her group during the package development training



Homestays Mantanani ladies visited the community farm during their study trip

"Our homestays really thrived after the trainings," Mainah reflected. "We learned how to use social media to promote our business with guidance from RCM. We also got to go on a learning trip to other successful homestays."

The trip referred to was a learning trip by the Mantanani Homestays group to Kudat and Kota Belud. During this trip, they were able to see how other communities run their homestays and what they could bring back and apply to their own businesses.

"We got to learn how other homestays work and what our own homestays lack," commented Himah.

It has been more than 10 years since the Mantanani Homestays group underwent training with RCM. In 2025, it was their turn to showcase their learnings and experience when they received a visit from the Mersing community.

The Mersing community got to experience how the Mantanani community runs their ecotourism business, introduces their local products, and more.

"I think the Mantanani community is very independent," shares Alya from Mersing.

One of the trainings the Mantanani community went through under RCM's programmes was how to make local products. Through this programme, the community came up with a variety of locally made products such as virgin coconut oil, handmade soap and lip balm, magnets from upcycled plastic bottle caps, and even pouches made from plastic wrappers.

"During the four-day visit, I learned a lot from the Mantanani community." shares Norazila from Pemanggil Island. "My favourite takeaway is how to make lip balm because I've never seen it before."



Mersing community learning from the Mantanani community

“I’ve learned how to make handicrafts and about the island’s attractions, such as the coral island,” says Nur Aziahwati from Tinggi Island. “After the visit, I want to make my own handicrafts so tourists can buy them and indirectly promote our business.”

The visit highlights how far the Mantanani community has come: from learning how to grow their own business to now being able to impart knowledge to a different community.

What started as a search for alternative livelihoods has grown into a community-led effort where local people are not only protecting their environment, but also sharing their knowledge and experience with others.



Mersing community learned how to make their own products from the Mantanani community during their study trip

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Every morning, the daily paid assistants (DPAs) collect bags of trash from house to house across the *kampung*. The waste is weighed, recorded and sorted. This system has now become second nature but did not exist a decade ago in Mantanani.

"The condition of Mantanani used to be worse." says Rasimah, who is one of the DPAs. "The villagers used to dump their trash on the beach. Food waste, dangerous items like glass, zinc or other materials – it didn't matter."

Before starting any conservation work, we make engaging with the community our top priority. We need to understand the problems they face and their needs. On the islands, we find that more often than not, the community has no system to rely on for proper waste management.

Without a proper waste management system, the community had to rely on methods available to them such as burying it, open dumping, or throwing it directly into the ocean. This creates a negative perception of the communities as they are deemed the problem by outsiders. However, the communities are only working with what they have.

"We never intended to be known as a 'waste management' organisation," says Julian, CEO of Reef Check Malaysia. "But the connection between marine debris and the health of our reefs is undeniable."

Marine debris remains one of the biggest threats to our coral reefs. It is made up of waste properly discarded that ends up in landfills; waste improperly discarded that then ends up in the ocean; abandoned fishing nets, more commonly known as ghost nets; and other debris floating in our ocean.

Marine debris pollutes our waterways and also causes damage to our reefs as it can become entangled and break corals. Not forgetting how harmful it is to our marine life, which can get tangled in it or end up ingesting it.

In Mantanani, we have run our longest waste management programme. While fish bombing was the reason we decided to work with the Mantanani community, eventually, waste management became the issue we continued to support them with.

When we first started the programme, the community was consulted on how they would like to manage their waste. It was the community that responded with segregating organic and non-organic waste and sending out the trash monthly to landfills on the mainland to save costs.

This finding led to the establishment of the daily waste collection programme in Mantanani, where selected locals collect both organic and non-organic waste from household to household.

A collection centre was built where the DPAs sort and record waste by type and quantity. Non-recyclable waste is packaged and stored onsite, while recyclable waste is transported to the Mantanani Plastic Recycling Centre.[1]

"Living on an island, you'll still see plastic bottles now and then. But you don't see piles of trash washing up on the beach anymore," says Rasimah.



A DPA doing her daily collection duties

The recycling centre gives the community a place to process certain recyclable materials locally. Equipped with a plastic shredder, a baler machine and powered by a solar energy system, the centre allows recyclable plastics to be shredded for upcycling products, while remaining plastics are compacted before being sent to the mainland for recycling.

A scoring system was introduced to encourage households to continue improving their waste management practices, with top scorers awarded with achievement certificates.

1 The MPRC was destroyed due to coastal erosion in 2025. The collection centre was then rebuilt in a different area.

Biannual community engagement sessions are also done to raise awareness, share knowledge, and act as a platform for them to voice concerns, provide feedback, and seek clarification on related issues. Through beach cleanups and educational programmes with children on the island, the community has become more aware of the impact waste has on their marine environment.

Over time, waste management has become more than a programme. It is part of the community's daily routine and responsibility.

Our long involvement with waste management in Mantanani has allowed us to publish a study entitled "Community-based municipal solid waste management system on Pulau Mantanani: Strategies, challenges and possible solutions," which can be found on our website.



Selakan villager weighing trash sent to the waste collection centre



Mersing community members sorting recyclables at the bins provided

The success of the waste management programme in Mantanani showed that communities, when given the right support and systems, can take ownership of managing their environment. However, these community-led efforts were possible because a system was created around them.

This approach became the blueprint for similar programmes in Larapan, Selakan, Mersing and most recently, Kampung Sri Aman, Sabah. Again, we find that the community is open and willing to put in the work to ensure their homes and environment are clean but need support in the form of a properly designed system.

However, our experience in Mantanani taught us valuable lessons. We applied those lessons to improve the system in these locations, where community members now bring their segregated waste to the waste collection centre themselves. This simple shift has fostered a greater sense of ownership of the waste management process.

"We used to see a lot of trash, especially plastic, along the streets," says Mohd Kamani from Mersing. "There were also lots of glass bottles because there was nowhere to process them. Now, with the *Rumah Sampah*, we can process both plastic and glass waste, and it's made a big difference."

"At first, it was hard to be consistent about segregating our waste," says Nur Amirah from Selakan. "But over time, it became part of our routine."

In Tioman, our efforts focus on recycling. Two *Rumah Hijau* (recycling centres) have been established, in Kampung Tekek and Kampung Juara, where recyclables such as aluminium cans and glass bottles are processed by the local community.

However, community efforts alone cannot address the waste challenges faced by islands. Waste generation is also closely linked to tourism activities. Tourism also plays an important part in the waste problem on islands. We are not against tourism; in fact, we are advocates for sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism benefits the local community while having very little impact on the environment.

While mass tourism means increased income for locals who are involved in the tourism industry, it also leads to a huge amount of waste being generated with no system in place to process it.

In Semporna, local operators are beginning to take greater responsibility for managing their waste through the PUSPABUMI Eco-Pledge Programme.

It was introduced to ensure all local operators who are members of PUSPABUMI manage their waste responsibly. Reports from the programme showed that in one month alone, 1,216.5 kg of waste was transported to the mainland.

It shows that waste management is not the sole responsibility of the local community and authorities. It is a shared responsibility, and tourism operators play an equally important role.

While our experience shows small-scale waste management programmes with communities work, these efforts alone cannot solve the wider waste challenges faced by island communities. There is a gap in the system that needs to be filled to ensure sustainable waste management systems are established and maintained on the islands.



Two members of the Larapan commnity weighing trash collected at the waste collection centre



HOW THE COMMUNITY ON PULAU SELAKAN IS REBUILDING ITS WATERS

Off the east coast of Sabah, within Tun Sakaran Marine Park, sits Pulau Selakan, a 32-hectare island of coral limestone, small stretches of sand beach, and patches of mangroves. The island is home to around 380 people. While the water is blessed with rich biodiversity, sustaining the island's residents for generations, the Selakan community is simultaneously exposed to climate vulnerabilities.

Building a reef and a community

It all started with a two-year Community-Based Coral Restoration and Conservation project in Tun Sakaran Marine Park (TSMP) in 2023. The goal is to prepare local communities in the TSMP area to become self-reliant in managing future coral reef conservation and rehabilitation work.

15 local youths from Pulau Selakan were selected and trained in restoration work, including diving, MARRS reef star restoration techniques, seagrass mapping, Reef Check survey method, coral bleaching monitoring, reef resilience survey and ocean mapping. The active involvement of these youth led to the establishment of a new community marine conservation team, the Selakan Marine Conservation Group (SMCG).

Building a reef, it turns out, takes a village. Adults and children of Pulau Selakan spent two days coating the metal frames with rust converter, resin, and sand, while the trainees went out to finalise site selection and source so-called "corals of opportunity". These rescued coral fragments were tied to the frames with cable ties, then carried out and lowered into the restoration site.

"The construction of a large-scale coral restoration site requires high commitment and close cooperation from the entire community," said SMCG manager Mulsedi bin Abdul Hadi. The activity not only strengthens relationships within the community, he added, but it also instils a shared sense of responsibility in preserving their marine treasures.

Reef Stars don't take care of themselves. For two years, SMCG was committed to a maintenance schedule—brushing algae off the frames, identifying and replacing dead fragments, retying loose corals, and logging survival counts by hand.



SMCG member installing the reef star in 2023

The hard work paid off. Across two implementation phases, SMCG lowered 510 Reef Stars and installed 7,175 coral fragments at the restoration site.

By December 2024, they recorded a 79.13% coral survival rate, with hard coral cover rising from 15% in 2023 to 27% in 2025. Fish were returning too: surveys recorded 78 species across 17 families within the restoration area, compared to 40 species across 11 families just outside it. The rebuilt reef was starting to support more life than the bare rubble around it.

"Seeing the return of marine life and the increase in fish density around the reefs we built with our own hands gave us a deep sense of pride, gratitude, and satisfaction," Mulsedi says. "It proved our efforts had a positive impact on the marine ecosystem, and it motivated us to keep working."



Photo (right): The corals planted were thriving in 2025

A setback, but a reason to keep going

Then, in the blink of an eye, at least ten Reef Stars, along with two years of coral growth, were destroyed, likely by a single fish bombing incident carried out at dawn or dusk, one or two days before the damage was discovered.

"It is sad to see more than two years of hard work restoring, caring for, and planting these reefs get destroyed," says Mulsedi.

The loss stings, but the work continues. The community's response to the damage is to keep going. The pride and love for the waters where they live become their driving force. Their earlier success has become both inspiration and proof that recovery is possible, and enough to send them back to the sea, ready to rebuild with even greater determination.



Ten reef stars were destroyed in a second in early 2026

Patrolling their own waters

Fish bombing has plagued Pulau Selakan for many years, largely carried out by illegal fishers. To tackle the issue, SMCG members have taken on the role of guardians of Selakan's waters.

It began as a volunteer effort to monitor illegal fishing and quickly grew into a structured, skills-based patrol effort. Ten SMCG members were first trained in sea patrolling methodology, covering risk and mitigation planning, the use of handheld GPS devices, drone operations, reporting, scheduling, and simulation exercises on how to engage and communicate with fishermen when illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity was spotted.

Select members went on to complete a three-day Honorary Park Ranger training, after which they were formally appointed by Sabah Parks, granting them the authority to enforce the Parks Enactment 1984 in the waters they patrol.

The work itself isn't easy. Patrollers navigate barriers to communicating conservation principles to illegal fishermen, unpredictable weather, and shallow waters that can strand boats at low tide. What makes the patrol effective, patroller Rasyid bin Abdul Jal said, is that it's run by people who already know the waters and the community.

"We are more familiar with the ins and outs of the village and the surrounding waters. We also know the fishermen who are from our own village, as well as the fishermen from outside who enter our waters."

Close ties with the community make it easier to communicate boundaries around protected zones and to act quickly on suspicious activity without waiting for outside enforcement to arrive.

Becoming an Honorary Park Ranger as appointed by Sabah Parks changed how Rasyid sees his own role. "This appointment gives me greater responsibility and a clear source of authority," he explains, noting that outside fishermen are now more receptive to guidance from the patrol team.



Rasyid (on the right) conducting sea patrol and advising fishermen of sustainable practices

"The waters around the island already have more fish than before," Rasyid says, proof that patrolling and conservation efforts are paying off.

Residents, too, have grown more engaged, actively reporting suspicious activity to the team themselves. They no longer have to travel far to catch fish, as the waters around the island are teeming with life again.

Closing the loop on waste

Beyond coral restoration and sea patrolling, the community is also addressing its waste management challenges. With no formal waste management system on the island, residents once had little choice but to burn their rubbish, while organic waste was often dumped directly into the sea, adding to the nutrient pollution in the marine ecosystem.

In early 2025, SMCG, with support from Reef Check Malaysia, implemented the Community-Based Waste Management Project, the island's first structured waste segregation and disposal system. It introduced a purpose-built waste storage facility, household segregation bins, communal bins, and regular collection routines managed by a trained local coordinator, putting residents in charge of the system themselves.

More importantly, it inspired lasting behaviour change. "At first, it was quite difficult for us to separate food waste and the different types of rubbish," project participant Nur Amirah Sakilah Abdullah recalls.



Nur Amirah, also an SMCG member, participated in a beach cleanup

"But over time, we got used to the daily waste collection system and now separate our waste according to the different categories."

The project also established the first Plastic Recycling Learning Lab in the Semporna islands. Serving as both a plastic upcycling facility and an educational centre, it's equipped with machines, including a plastic shredder and an extruder, to convert recyclable plastics into new products, such as keychains.

Training in plastic upcycling and social business development has given SMCG members the skills to develop these products, though income generation from the lab is still in its early stages, with the community now preparing for its next phase.

A long-term partnership with *Majlis Daerah Semporna* (MDS) now ensures proper waste disposal on the mainland, anchoring the system within district-level waste management infrastructure.

Looking ahead

Today, cleaner beaches and thriving reefs are becoming another source of pride for the community.

"We live by the sea. When our beaches are clean, our coral reefs are protected too," Nur Amirah said. "When tourists come to snorkel and tell us *Selakan cantik* (Selakan is beautiful), it makes us proud."



Ahmad Zairul (in red), underwent first aid training, a requirement of the EFSG training

At least nine members of SMCG have also trained as Eco-Friendly Snorkelling Guides, opening a new source of income by leading tourists through the waters they've worked so hard to restore.

"I have learned a lot in terms of interacting and dealing with different types of people. Now I am more confident than before I was trained, and I am really enjoying this career and the opportunity to keep introducing my island to people out there," said Ahmad Zairul, a certified eco-friendly snorkelling guide.

"From thriving coral restoration to sea patrols to waste management, the people of Pulau Selakan are proving that conservation is strongest when it's led by the community itself. The Selakan conservation model places local people at the forefront.

Reef Check Malaysia's role, working alongside Sabah Parks, and various partners, has been to provide the training, technical guidance, and sustained support to turn that potential into lasting impacts and a sense of stewardship over the waters they call home.



Selected SMCG were formally appointed by Sabah Parks as Honorary Park Rangers

Special thanks to our volunteer, Jaling Sim, for helping to write this story.



KEY LESSONS IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

“We should know you as much as you know us.”

That was the sentence that struck Adzmin, our Senior Programme Manager, the most in his many years working with the community. Based in Semporna, Adzmin is no stranger to community engagement and is often out in the field communicating with the local community.

“It makes me anxious and scared,” says Adzmin, referring to when the locals he engages with are curious about him on a personal level. “I tried to build a wall.”

However, upon hearing those words from a local he was speaking to, Adzmin realised that it is only a fair trade.

“When we work with the community, we learn so much about their personal lives. We know about their needs and worries and really dig into their lives.”

Since then, Adzmin has been more open in his approach. He realized that part of engaging the community is allowing them to get to know you, too.

In his many years engaging with communities, Adzmin concluded that community engagement boils down to five principles: building trust before projects, ensuring community ownership, incorporating local context, maintaining clear and continuous communication, and linking conservation to livelihoods.

"There is no singular formula to effectively engage with communities, as each community has its own unique characteristics, motivations, needs, priorities, and circumstances," says Adzmin.

"However, understanding the basic components of community engagement can help design a tailored approach based on their needs or attributes."

Build trust first, not projects

The first step to engaging with the community is to build relationships and trust. Trust is the foundation of all community work.

During our recent community engagement work in Sepanggar, the community was at first reluctant to communicate with us," says Calvin, our Assistant Programme Manager based in Kota Kinabalu.

The community commented that there were many organizations that came to run a project but did not ask what the community needed and did not continue the engagement when the project ended."

Spending time listening to the community is crucial before introducing the project that we hope to implement. One of the key things that we have learned is to build relationships with local leaders and respected individuals in the community, as this helps bridge the gap between us and the community.

Community ownership is key

Ensuring community ownership is also important, as we are of the view that projects succeed when communities feel they are theirs. It is important to include the community when planning the programme and not just during implementation.

In every community, there are usually already a few notable individuals who are deemed to be local champions. Identifying these individuals or groups is key, and supporting them would be beneficial in this endeavour.

> "Shift the mindset from, 'we are doing it for them', to 'we are doing this together.'"
>
> - Adzmin

Local context matters

Working with different communities also means that we have to understand that every island is different. That is why local context matters.

"When we speak to local communities using a language that feels foreign, they're bound to view us as outsiders," says Adzmin. "Disconnection begins subtly: in our word choice, our accent, and in examples that do not reflect lived realities. Language, in this sense, becomes a marker of belonging."

It is important that we respect local knowledge and practices and not be seen as imposing our ideas of what is best for the locals.

> "We assume that because we understand the technical complexities, we are better positioned to decide what should be done. In doing so, we risk overlooking a fundamental truth: local communities understand their realities far better than we ever can."
>
> - Adzmin

Ensure clear and consistent communication

Communication should also not be a one-off engagement but should be done consistently. It includes providing updates on implemented projects to keep the community informed and maintain their commitment. Disconnection can lead to demotivation or loss of commitment from the community.

Ensuring inclusivity goes without saying. The communication has to be simple and delivered in the local language to ensure the message is heard and fully understood. Engaging with the entire community ensures that diverse perspectives and needs are considered.



Link conservations to livelihoods

And ultimately, years of engaging with communities have made us understand that we must link conservation to livelihoods. Telling the community that conservation is important is not enough. It is important that they understand the tangible benefits of doing the hard work of conserving their environment.

The community's needs and priorities have to be met. Telling fishermen to just stop fishing will not work, as that's how they earn an income. Sustainability should be the culmination of protecting the environment while ensuring a steady income for the community and fostering a sense of ownership in carrying out conservation work.

"We have to explain and show the community the benefits of conservation to their livelihoods," says Adzmin. "For example, practising eco-tourism would mean that coral reefs will be protected. This will lead to tourists coming back to see the beautiful reefs, and fish stocks will be protected because their habitat is protected."

The lessons we have learned over the years have shaped the way we engage with communities today. Community engagement is an important aspect of conservation and has to be treated with the utmost care and consideration.

Our experience has taught us that protecting our marine ecosystems does not only mean protecting the reefs and marine life; it also means listening to, learning from and working alongside the local communities that directly rely on them.

Picture left: Empowered women leaders in Larapan, presenting their work during Larapan Protocol Development at Larapan Island.

The Next Five Years (2026–2030)

Our experiences and the lessons we learned over the past five years have shaped our strategy for the 2026–2030 period. Building on this foundation, we will focus on three key objectives: building resilience, strengthening community stewardship, and strengthening Reef Check Malaysia as an organisation.

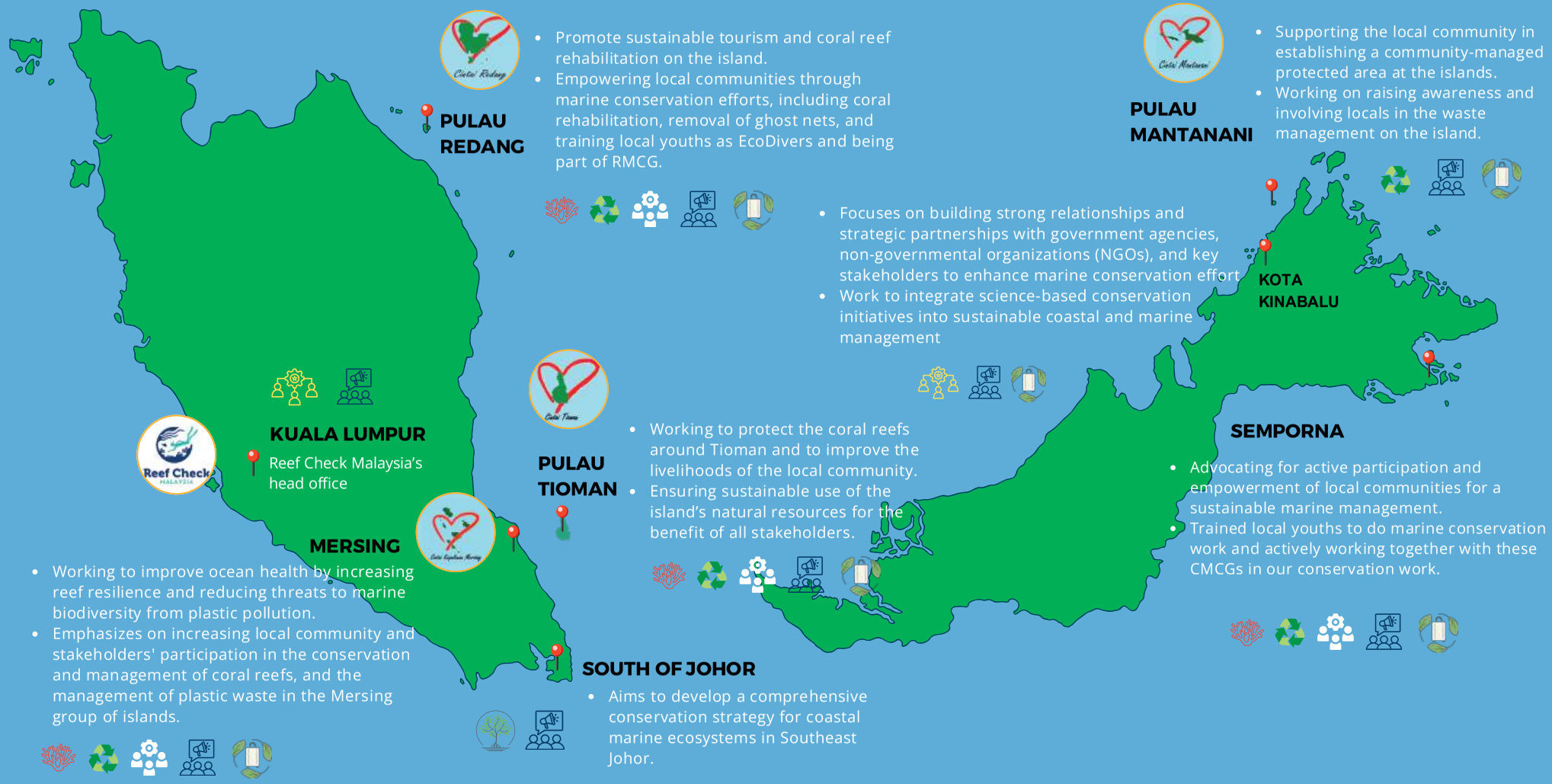
To build resilience, we will focus on enhancing ecological resilience while fostering a shared vision for resilient marine ecosystems. This will involve conducting ecosystem monitoring, reducing threats, and restoring degraded ecosystems, alongside advocacy and awareness initiatives that promote knowledge sharing, collaboration, and collective action among all stakeholders.

We will also continue strengthening community stewardship by improving socio-economic resilience, expanding and strengthening the Community Marine Conservation Group (CMCG) network, and building the capacity of community leaders while fostering stronger support from relevant government agencies. Over the past five years, we have learned that effective conservation must be linked to sustainable livelihoods. We have also seen that local communities are willing and ready to take a more active role in managing their marine resources when they are provided with the opportunities, support, and skills to do so.

Finally, as our organisation continues to grow, we recognise the importance of strengthening our internal systems and operations to support an expanding team and increasingly ambitious programmes, both nationally and regionally. We will continue to build strategic partnerships, deepen collaboration across sectors, and diversify sustainable funding to ensure the long-term success and resilience of our organisation and its mission.

“The next five years will be dedicated to building resilience, strengthening community stewardship, and enhancing our organisational capacity, laying a strong foundation for the long-term protection of our marine ecosystems.” - Julian Hyde, CEO





PULAU REDANG

- Promote sustainable tourism and coral reef rehabilitation on the island.
- Empowering local communities through marine conservation efforts, including coral rehabilitation, removal of ghost nets, and training local youths as EcoDivers and being part of RMCG.

PULAU MANTANANI

- Supporting the local community in establishing a community-managed protected area at the islands.
- Working on raising awareness and involving locals in the waste management on the island.

KOTA KINABALU

- Focuses on building strong relationships and strategic partnerships with government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and key stakeholders to enhance marine conservation effort
- Work to integrate science-based conservation initiatives into sustainable coastal and marine management

KUALA LUMPUR

Reef Check Malaysia's head office

PULAU TIOMAN

- Working to protect the coral reefs around Tioman and to improve the livelihoods of the local community.
- Ensuring sustainable use of the island's natural resources for the benefit of all stakeholders.

SEMPORNA

- Advocating for active participation and empowerment of local communities for a sustainable marine management.
- Trained local youths to do marine conservation work and actively working together with these CMCGs in our conservation work.

MERSING

- Working to improve ocean health by increasing reef resilience and reducing threats to marine biodiversity from plastic pollution.
- Emphasizes on increasing local community and stakeholders' participation in the conservation and management of coral reefs, and the management of plastic waste in the Mersing group of islands.

SOUTH OF JOHOR

- Aims to develop a comprehensive conservation strategy for coastal marine ecosystems in Southeast Johor.

Protecting and conserving coral reefs by doing coral rehabilitation, coral maintenance and monitoring and removing threats such as ghostnets, trash and coral predators.

Waste management and recycling programme with the local community.

Marine management with the local community.

Advocacy and awareness programmes.

Marine management with all stakeholders.

Mangrove and seagrass programmes.

Promoting and implementing sustainable tourism measures such as enforcing Green Fins and Green Hotels, installing mooring buoys etc.



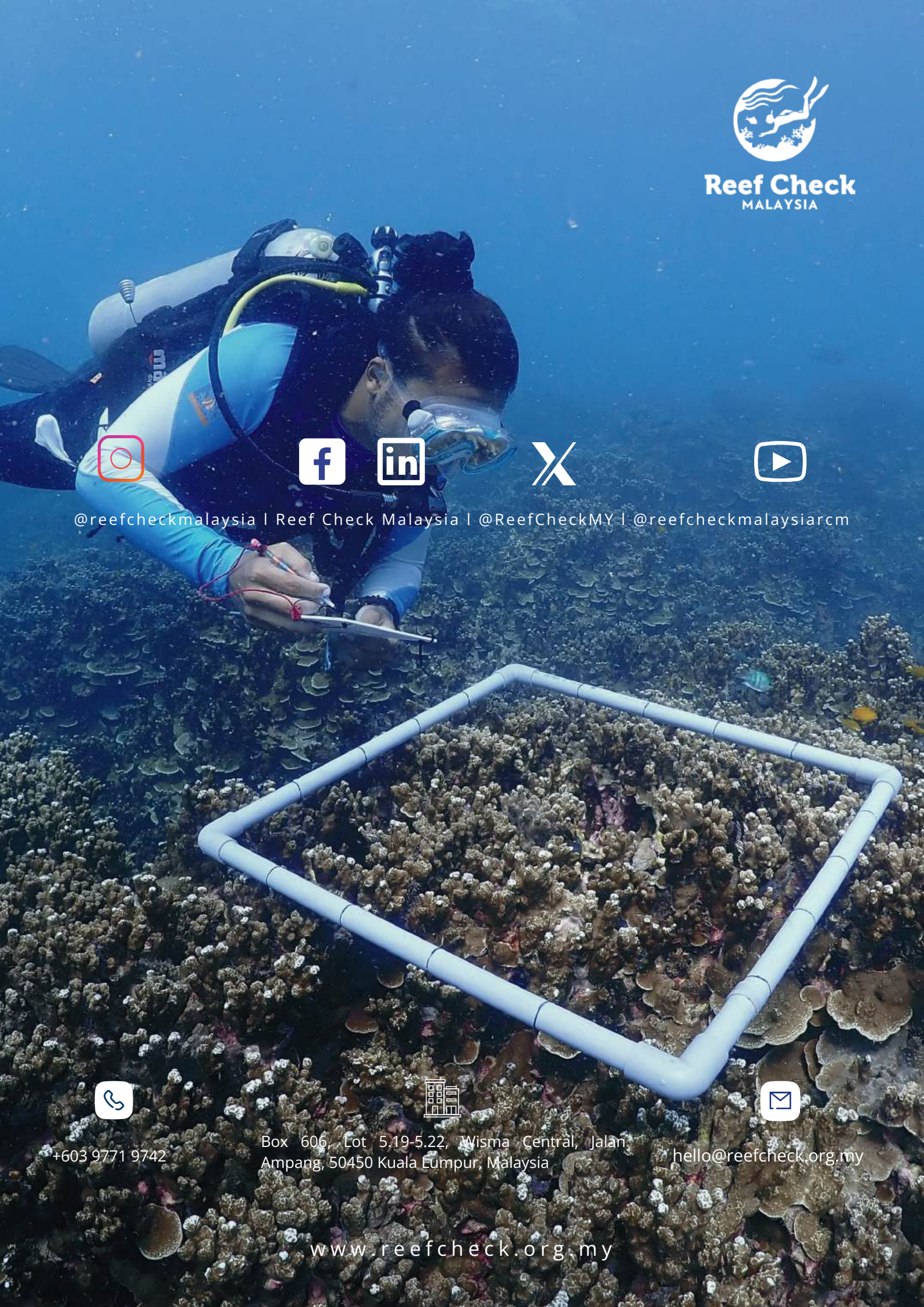
Appreciation

Reef Check Malaysia extends our heartfelt gratitude to our funders, donors, government agencies, national and international organizations, businesses, universities and research institutes, civil society organisations, media partners, ambassadors, volunteers and the local communities.

Your trust, partnership and unwavering support have been instrumental in advancing our mission and enabling our work over the past five years.

Every achievement is a reflection of what we can accomplish together. As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening these partnerships, embracing new opportunities for collaboration, and working collectively towards a future where our marine ecosystems and coastal communities continue to thrive. Thank you for being part of this journey and for believing in the impact we can create together.

This report provides a high-level overview of our impact from 2020–2025. To keep the focus on our collective achievements, individual funders and project partners are not listed here. Detailed acknowledgements and project-specific partnerships can be found in our annual reports.



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