

Project Update: February 2014

In March 2013, the Philippine Government launched the Sustainable Coral Reef Ecosystem Management Programme as a national strategy to enhance the management of the Philippine's marine resources. By including Green Fins as a major component of this strategy the national government pledged their commitment and resources for ongoing project implementation. As an archipelago of over 7000 islands, governmental systems are very decentralised and the "trickle down" effect from national to local levels is often quite slow. Through RSG support, Reef-World has been able to invest time and resources to work at national, regional and local levels to assist in the flow of support for all the Green Fins local management teams they have been partnering with in the most popular diving destination of the Philippines.

Reef-World are very excited to announce that funds have now been secured from the SCREMP national budget in El Nido for Green Fins training, assessments and a mooring buoy programme. Baseline assessments of dive and snorkel centres in El Nido highlighted the lack of mooring buoys to be a major threat to the local marine ecosystems. Although it has been a frustrating process for the local team to access these funds, Reef-World and the national Philippine government is confident that now the system has been set up this process will be much more streamlined in the future. It is now Reef-World's vision to replicate this success for long term sustainability of local management teams in other popular diving destinations of the Philippines, and indeed other countries beyond this.

As part of this RSG, Reef-World had planned to work with WWF Malaysia to kick start Green Fins in Semporna. Unfortunately, plans have been put on hold because of ongoing political issues locally. However, this process has sparked positive communications between Reef-World and the national government of Malaysia who are keen to support Green Fins activities and find alternative ways to stimulate activities. Another national NGO has approached Reef-World requesting training and technical advice to conduct Green Fins activities in the popular diving destinations of Peninsular Malaysia. The result of this is a Green Fins Capacity Development Workshop tentatively scheduled for the 17 – 27th March 2014 in Pulau Tioman to be run by Reef-World in collaboration with national government to train a local management team.



Left: El Nido local management team have now secured national funds for Green Fins activities. Right: Green Fins Malaysia - Green Fins Pulau Tioman coming soon!