



Bangkok Post Learning: *Test Yourself*

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Saving the sea

by Gary Boyle



Photo courtesy of Elaine Ross

Read the following story by Pattarawadee Saengmanee from the *Bangkok Post*. Then, answer the questions that follow.

After falling in love with the Andaman Sea, British diver/videographer Saffron Kiddy left her job as a TV producer and moved to Koh Lanta in 2004. It was great to live with nature and enjoy a slow life. But one day, she woke up to find her second home was turning into a sea of trash.

WASTE WORLD

"I think everywhere in the world has a waste problem. Here, we find many flip flops, chairs, tin cans, lighters, plastic straws, plastic bottles or even a bathtub on a beach. Sometimes, we find the corals wrapped with huge fishing nets that make them suffocate," said Kiddy, who operates the dive centre Scubafish.

Thailand is the world's sixth-biggest generator of sea debris, mostly single-use plastic bags and Styrofoam food containers. Of these, 90% come from tourists on the beach and waterside communities, according to research conducted by the Thailand Development Research Institute.

For Koh Lanta, the distance is an obstacle to transport a mountain of debris to the mainland of Krabi province. Meanwhile the official authority can't provide a waste management system for the remote area. If no further action is taken to manage the waste on the island, there could be a reoccurrence of the time many years ago when pictures went viral that showed a beach on Koh Lanta covered in garbage.

And at this point, there's nothing better than the local communities learning to solve the problem by themselves.

CLEAN TEAM

Pimalai Resort and Spa teamed up with B.Grimm Group to introduce the Rak Lanta (Love Lanta) project, with an aim to educate villagers and students about the marine ecosystem and how to sort all the trash for the recycling process. Focusing on sustainable living, the property turns all discarded food into compost for its organic vegetable farm, serves drinking water in glass and aluminium bottles and uses a zero water discharge technology.

To foster the understanding of environmental issues, some 15 schools on Koh Lanta set up a waste bank, where students can deposit paper and plastic bottles and sell them. Students also transform used milk cartons into trendy bags and other handcrafted merchandise.

Some 30 hotels and resorts have arranged a weekly programme of beach cleaning activities in different areas. And to refresh itself for the high season, the Mu Koh Lanta National Park continues its collaboration with communities in the second of the recent Cleaning Day activities.

"We set up the first Cleaning Day last year and collected more than five tonnes of waste from the sea and beaches. This year, we came back as part of the Krabi Goes Green campaign to encourage people to say no to single-use plastic. Plastic waste has killed a lot of marine creatures and damaged their life cycles," said Kankasame Meesuk, head of the Mu Koh Lanta National Park.

"Plastic straws have become the waste we find most in Thailand. There are also plenty of cotton buds, plastic spoons and toothbrushes. Some days, we can collect 2kg of lighters."

GOOD NEWS

"In 15 years living on Koh Lanta, I think the coral bleach and number of people coming for diving and snorkelling has increased. At least, it's good that the national parks have closed for five months and allowed the environment to rejuvenate," Kiddy said.

"I started diving around the Phi Phi islands, where every day I was greeted by several species of sharks like leopard, reef, and bamboo. Right now, Maya Bay is closed, so there are no people, boats, diving and snorkelling and the sharks seem to notice this. It becomes a safe nursery area and for at least seven or eight months we've seen an increase in the number of sharks."

Section 1: Read through the story and answer the following questions.

1. What was Kiddy's job in the UK?
2. Where does she work now?
3. What percentage of trash doesn't come from tourists and waterside communities?
4. The main purpose of Love Lanta is to educate locals. True or false?
5. What have local students set up?
6. How much waste was collected in the first Cleaning Day?
7. What does Cleaning Day find most on the beaches?
8. The closure of Maya Bay reduced the number of sharks around there. True or false?

Section 2: Write the adjective form of the following words.

9. nature10. waste11. mountain12. community..... 13. water

Section 3: Read the following passage. Then, fill in the blanks with the correct words from the choices given.

"In ...14... years, the local residents realised the impact of the ecological crisis and paid more ...15... to sustainable tourism. They don't catch clownfish and ruin coral ...16... . The amount of rubbish has ...17..., especially plastic and fishing tools. I love the sea and Koh Lanta is the best spot for diving in Thailand, home to the ...18... biological systems. I don't want to see our home become a ...19... resort."

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|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 14. a. recent | b. recently | c. last |
| 15. a. money | b. attention | c. time |
| 16. a. before | b. anymore | c. then |
| 17. a. decreasing | b. decrease | c. decreased |
| 18. a. diversity | b. diverse | c. diversion |
| 19. a. slum | b. eco | c. five-star |

Section 4: Find words that match the following definitions.

20. to die because there is no air to breathe.....
21. a very light soft plastic that is usually white
22. far away from places where other people live
23. all the plants and living creatures in a particular area
24. to restore something to a more healthy state

For the answers, find the story online at www.bangkokpost.com/learning. If you have any questions or feedback, please contact the Editor at garyb@bangkokpost.co.th