



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL SEAKEEPERS SOCIETY ASIA AWARD

~International Marine Conservation Organization Honours Sea Communities

March 9, 2022, Bali, Indonesia -

Every year The International SeaKeepers Society, Asia recognizes the marine conservation community for their extraordinary efforts and commitment towards marine conservation.

In 2020, The International SeaKeepers Society Asia Achievement Award was conferred to Sea Communities, located in Bali, Indonesia in acknowledgment for their exemplary work as a social enterprise and direct role in conservation management.

Even though the award event scheduled that year was not held due to the pandemic, the award itself has since found its way to Bali for presentation to Cipto Aji Gunawan, Co-Founder of Sea Communities. Rose Huizenga, Director, Gili Shark Conservation travelled to Bali to present the award on behalf of The International SeaKeepers Society, Asia.

Sea Communities works with the village of Les which is located in North Bali. Based on the concept of volunteer and educational tourism, Sea Communities has developed programmes which provide the funding and human resources needed to rebuild the reefs of Les and improve the livelihoods of the villagers. The programmes include Reef Rehabilitation, English Lessons, Sea Salt Farming and Plastic Waste Management community outreach programmes.

Since 2012, the Sea Communities programmes have created ways for the villagers to turn heritage skills in fishing and farming into new livelihoods in tourism and improved the villagers' language skills for them to host the influx of education-volunteer tourism to Les village. Through income-producing opportunities from Sea Communities programmes in marine, salt farming and plastic recycling activities, Sea Communities demonstrates to the local villagers and visiting tourists alike that conservation does not need hand-outs and can be self-supporting .

In doing so , the significance of the work that Sea Communities does in the community is not limited to protecting the environment but in a deeper and more humane way in helping and empowering the people.

During the pandemic, Sea Communities developed a novel online programme linking villagers with university students abroad. Students engaged in social and marine biology studies including assessment of impact of the pandemic to the villagers ; documentation of local legends; coral micro fragging; and second-generation coral transplanting.

After a hiatus during Bali's closure during the Covid pandemic, Sea Communities is welcoming its university and school groups back starting 2022 and 2023. The immediate focus of Sea Communities is to rebuild a more resilient volunteer/educational tourism market through longer term partnerships with schools and universities on one hand and community organizations and local institutions on the other hand.



In addition, Sea Communities hopes to bring the village's plastic recycling efforts to the next level, turning plastic waste into the construction of Balinese-style *bengongs* (outdoor pavilions).

For more information, contact:

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life@seacommunities.com visit [Sea Communities](http://SeaCommunities.com)



Photo 1 Caption:

Sea Communities - The International SeaKeepers Society Asia Achievement Award 2020.

Material: Teak wood



Photo 2 Caption:

Ms. Rose Huizenga, Director, Gili Shark Conservation and Mr. Cipto Aji Gunawan, Co-Founder of Sea Communities.



Photo 3 Caption:

(L-R) Mr. Garri Bernal, Managing Partner, Sea Communities, Mr. Cipto Aji Gunawan



Photo 4 Caption:

Back at Les Village.

(L-R) Ms. Luh Andari Lestari, Mr. Made Merta, Mr. Garri Bernal, Komang Wi

More About The International SeaKeepers Asia Achievement Award

The International SeaKeepers Society Asia Achievement Award is awarded yearly since 2016. The award seeks to recognise an Organisation/ Corporation/Government agency in Asia, that demonstrates a responsibility towards the health of Asia's marine environment because of who they are and what they do to take a lead role.

Whereby fulfilling accountability, by integrating social and marine environmental concerns in their primary operations either directly as part of their core business or as part of their corporate social responsibility programme. This could come in the form of Research and/or Education and/or Protection and/or Restoration.

Award Recipients

- 2020 - Sea Communities
- 2019 - Gili Shark Conservation Project
- 2018 – YTL Hotels
- 2017 – Nature Society Singapore, Marine Conservation Group
- 2016 – Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)

More About Sea Communities

The mission statement of Sea Communities is this simple ethos: that by loving the oceans and the environment, seaside communities can have better, sustainable livelihoods than by destroying Mother Earth. We believe in education through action, bringing volunteers using their hands to rebuild the reef. We believe in empowering the villagers to make a better living in harmony with their land and seas.

Today, Sea Communities is a social enterprise for the villagers of Les to rebuild the reefs of Les and improve the livelihoods of the villagers through its marine, English teaching, plastic recycling, salt farming and other community outreach programs. The success of Les model has been studied by NGOs. Other villages and indigenous groups in Indonesia send their representatives to Les to see how they can emulate this model. Sea Communities hopes to roll out this model to other seaside communities in Indonesia.

For more information : life@seacommunities.com visit www.seacommunities.com



More About The International SeaKeepers Society

The International SeaKeepers Society was founded in 1998 by a small group of yacht owners who were alarmed by the deterioration of our natural environment. The organization's initial focus was on the development and use of instrumentation on yachts to monitor marine conditions throughout the world's oceans. Today, The International SeaKeepers Society continues to work with yachts as a vital part of its programming.

The International SeaKeepers Society strives to increase current knowledge about the oceans, promote and facilitate scientific discovery and raise awareness about critical ocean issues. SeaKeepers works directly with the yachting community as an essential component and contributor to ocean research and conservation efforts. The organization runs several yacht-involved programs to accomplish this mission.

The International SeaKeepers Society began expansion into Asia in 2016 with the SeaKeepers Asia chapter. Building upon established international programming, the focus in Asia is creating awareness of the current situation of our oceans in Asia in order to build a sense of appreciation and commitment to protect, conserve and restore when possible.

Motto: Research. Educate. Protect and Restore.

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