

Tanjung Ringgit Community Planning Diary

Day 1: Thursday 6 January 2011

After an overnight sail from Gili Meno we arrived at Tanjung Ringgit and anchored in a bay on the calm north side of the peninsula. The Matahariku, a newly built wooden sailing ship, is the base for the team providing excellent facilities for eating, sleeping and team working. After a morning briefing the team spent some time enjoying swimming and relaxing in the clear, coral waters of the bay before embarking on an exploration of the region.

First the team walked around the peninsula, site of the proposed tourist development, and considered the different features of the various bays and the contrast between the wilder, rocky north side and the calmer, more verdent south side which has views across many islands to the distant Rinjani volcano towering 3000m over Lombok.

The team then took to local fishing boats to explore the wider south facing bay visiting its beautiful natural features including a multitude of islands, a sand bar linking various islands, lobster fisheries, and finishing up at a traditional working fishing village. The community there welcomed the team and village leaders will be participating at the Community Planning event on Saturday.

On return to the ship the team then reviewed the day and discussed their first impressions and aspirations for the project. Key aims will be to create a sustainable tourism development that truly enhances the biodiversity of the peninsula whilst bringing economic gain and community benefits to the local people.

Meanwhile, on the dark horizon a continuous line of tiny lights twinkled from hundreds of fishing boats as village fisherman began their nights work.

Day 2: Friday 7 January

Today was a day of fact finding and briefing with various team members setting off on fishing boats and utility vehicles to visit various organisations and facilities including hospitals, schools, tourism and forestry.

Jugen Korber an organic butcher and meat producer from southern Germany was first to set off at 3am to witness the slaughtering and butchery of two buffalo.

The planning group which included architects Joachim Eble, Varis Bokalders and surveyor Martin Bucht and me visited the East Lombok municipal offices in Selong and met with Mr Syamsuhaidi, the Chief Planner, and various departmental colleagues to learn more about needs and future plans and policies for the area, in particular infrastructure projects. Our study area is lacking basic infrastructure including mains water and electricity but there is the potential for the eco-tourism development to be the catalyst for bringing this infrastructure to the area, thereby benefitting the local community greatly.

As it was Friday, the Muslim holy day, Mr Syamsuhaidi and his colleagues left for prayers at the mosque. Our group was taken for lunch at a nearby fish restaurant. We sat on the floor in a raised lesehan (an open sided timber and bamboo structure with thatched roof) surrounding by carp ponds and we were brought a range of delicious fish dishes.

The meeting continued in the afternoon and Mr Syamsuhaidi expressed his support for our work and the expectation that it will help bring much need investment and economic development into the area.

We returned to our study area by fishing boat and called into the fishing village we had visited the previous day where other team members were having a meeting with village chiefs. The chiefs

expressed their gratitude that they were being visited by such an eminent team and their hopes that eco-tourism will bring prosperity to the area. At present many young men are forced to go to work in Malaysia and the village lacks a water supply and any sanitation. The villagers are keen to learn English and develop ways of ensuring that the jobs that will be generated are filled predominantly by local people.

We returned to the Matariku as the tropical darkness closed in around us and the nightly string of local fishing boats formed once again in the distance.

Over dinner the team discussed their days discoveries and the general impression was that the community of East Lombok is cohesive, enterprising and self dependent but is held back from furthering their potential through a lack of resources.



From the left: Eco-architect Joachim Eble (Germany), Architect Varis Bokalders (Sweden), Local champion Ecka, Charles Campion and Surveyor Martin Bucht

Day 3: Saturday 8 January

Today was the big day - the Community Planning Day. It started at 7.30 with a team briefing at breakfast before we were taken ashore to Beach 2 where a banner for the event hung between two trees. Two open sided tents had been set up on the grassy flat land behind the beach and we started to set up the chairs and equipment for the event. I then briefed the local Indonesian team from Alasanti Design who were to facilitate the first workshop.

At 11 o'clock members of the community were invited into the tent - local fisherman, farmers, young people, teachers, elders and representatives from local agencies. Suddenly the tent was full with expectation.

Local champion Ecka began with his introduction about the purpose and importance of the day - to begin the process of the planning the future of the area to include eco tourism. Everyone was then led in prayer by the local Imam before the first workshop commenced.

Gede, the lead facilitator, explained the workshop process and post-its and pens were handed out. Participants were first asked to write down good things and bad things about their lives and the area and finally their hopes and expectations for the future. People worked individually and in small groups as many in the community are unable to read and write. Soon numerous post-it notes began to come forward and Gede started to read them out, often encouraging discussion on the points raised. The post-its were then handed to colleagues who stuck them in categories on white boards. The workshop was effectively run and by the end hundreds of post-it notes covered the boards all containing important information from the community.

At lunch the afternoon working groups were planned to be facilitated by Indonesian speaking team members together with experts from the Swedish led team. These included looking at physical issues, mapping the stories and myth of the place and considering issues of community development and integration with the tourism development on Tanjung Ringgit.

After lunch the community were briefed about the different working groups and participants then sat down with the facilitators to begin working. The groups worked in the tents and under trees for over 90 minutes and then gathered again in the tent for the final reports back. Each report back was given by a community member and were fluently delivered using the bullet point summaries produced by their group. The final report back from the mapping group was given by Ecka and he finished by telling the legend of Tanjung Ringgit and the Spirit of the Flower - the name for the ancient forest there.

Following the close, people said their goodbye and heartfelt thank yous and the team returned the boat. Over dinner a happy but tired team worked to discuss community consensus points that had emerged from the day.



Charles Campion at the banner advertising Community Planning Day



Ecka introduces the purpose and aims of the community planning day



Hands-on planning group

Workshop summary

The following is a summary of key issues to emerge at the morning workshop held at the Tanjung Ringgit Community Planning Day. There were approximately 75 participants.

Community Assets

The natural environment (both above and below sea), abundant access to fish, the good nature of local people, as well as a high level of student motivation for learning were cited as key community assets.

Community Challenges

Challenges faced in the area included lack of environmental management, littering, coastal erosion, lack of access to education, poverty, cyanide and bomb fishing, low economic returns from fisheries, as well as, lack of access to clean water and sanitation facilities, electricity, and roads.

Community Aspirations

By far the most widely voiced aspiration was improvement to the fisheries and the economic development of the area through the development of the eco-tourism industry. Community aspirations for benefits resulting from the eco-tourism development included better environmental management, ensuring that development plans did not negatively affect current livelihood activities, public outreach / education about tourism development plans, better educational facilities and access to those facilities, access to clean water, better roads, and more localized medical assistance. The community want to see good integration with the eco-tourism development, with a participative process through the development of the project ensuring community involvement with training, jobs and business opportunities fully accessible to local people.

Key Themes

The following key themes have emerged through the process and include an analysis of the workshop and discussion groups at the Community Planning Day.

A unique opportunity

The eco-tourism development of Tanjung Ringgit and the wider Pemongkong peninsula is a unique opportunity to deliver a project integrated on all levels, linking the fishermen, farmers and eco guests and providing tangible and sustainable benefits for the local community and environment. It can act as a model project for Indonesia.

"Eco tourism can be good for the community if carried out with respect for community needs and local culture."

The community want to see more prosperity coming to the Pemongkong peninsula and are thoughtful about the future development possibilities and have engaged fully in the process. They have experienced disappointment with initiatives in the past but have shown trust that high quality and sensitively planned eco-tourism development will bring positive benefits and play a major part in shaping the future of the area.

Respecting and enhancing the environment

The community love and respect the Pemongkong peninsula, both above and below the water - it's a place of myths and traditions associated with the very special environment, which provides for their livelihood. However, there has been much degradation including the bombing of the coral, the cutting down of the forest and increasing problems of littering and waste management. The spiritual and natural environment must be protected, respected and enhanced in a sustainable and economically advantageous way if the project is to be seen as successful by the local people.

"Sustainable development must respect nature and traditions."

Support and strengthen the existing economy

The local community have strong values, self-reliance and enterprise, but lack the resources to flourish. Young people in particular have high aspirations but poverty currently forces many to leave education early. Many young men are forced to leave their community and move to Malaysia in search of work. By far the most widely voiced aspiration was for investment in the fisheries but people also see the development of the eco-tourism industry as bringing many potential opportunities and benefits which they would like to be taken up by the local community rather than incomers.

Lack of infrastructure

The area suffers from a lack of infrastructure including good roads, water, electricity and sanitation, which impacts on all aspects of life, including health, education and economic prosperity. It is anticipated that the eco-tourism development of Tanjung Ringgit and other initiatives will act as a catalyst to improve services and infrastructure in the area resulting in improved economic opportunities and raised living standards for the local community.

Health

The local health care system lacks resources and is inadequate for the needs and geographical spread of the local population. Improved transportation, clean water and better sanitation are required to improve health outcomes. The eco-tourism programme is an opportunity to bring in expertise to develop and introduce new, sustainable systems and technologies to benefit the community at an early stage and into the longer term.

Education and training

There are high levels of illiteracy and currently a lack of skills for local people to be able to take advantage of the opportunities that the eco-tourism industry will bring with the risk that jobs and business may go to people from outside the area. The local community would like the opportunity to be trained in English, tourism, environmental management and other skills to be able to take full advantage of the opportunities that will arise.

Restoring the forest - the spirit of the flower reborn

The forest, known locally as 'the Spirit of the Flower', is key to the ecology of the area, in particular the natural storage and distribution of the peninsula's water. Restoring the indigenous, tropical dry forest is key to creating a sustainable eco-system, with opportunities for forest agriculture and harvesting. It will be important, with government support, to prevent the unsustainable burning and cutting down of the forest.

"A healthy forest will bring back the water."

Integration between tourism and local community

The community have heard negative things about western tourism and are concerned about the potential creation of a 'gated' eco-tourism development that excludes local people from accessing Tanjung Ringgit peninsular. Eco-tourists must be informed about the traditions and cultural expectations of their hosts and strategies of integration should be developed with the local community.

The Tanjung Ringgit eco-tourism masterplan

The proposals for Tanjung Ringgit eco-resort must be designed to respect the traditional legends and energies of the place. Buildings and landscape must be carefully integrated to help create an enhanced and sustainable whole. Planting will help to restore degraded environments and buildings will use appropriate, sustainable materials and technologies and sit well within the landscape. The layout of the peninsula will foster integration of the eco-tourists with the local community and provides areas of more activity and areas of tranquillity. The construction and environmental management of the resort will bring training and jobs for local people and deliver an enhanced, high quality, sustainable environment.

Continuing community participation

It is important that the eco-tourism development is seen as a partnership with the local community and the East Lombok authorities. It should be conducted in a collaborative and participatory manner involving

all sections of the community. This will ensure that people have meaningful opportunities to input their local knowledge and ideas, are involved in organising programmes of community development, are kept up to date with the emerging plans and can comment on proposals. Only in this way will the outcomes be 'the right fit' for the community and ensure that the local people will benefit from opportunities that arise in their area.

'The community must be involved every step of the way!'

Day 4: Sunday 9 January

The working day started a little later following the extreme heat and hard work of Saturday.

Following breakfast a group of us took a short boat journey to beach 1 of Tanjung Ringgit (TR) which we had previously not seen in order to assess its potentials as part of the eco resort. The beach is the smallest of the four on the TR and is surrounded by steep wooded slopes which run down to meet the white, coral sand. At the back of the beach lies the remnants of a bunker built by the Japanese during their occupation of the Lombok in the second world war.

Once back on board the Matahariku, the team sat down together to plan our day. The first task was to assess and write up the workshop and group sessions. The team then prepared for the visit of the Swedish Ambassador HE Mrs Ewa Polano.

Some of our team, including Anders Granat Vice Governor of Gotland (Gotland is twinned with Lombok) set off to Selong to a formal reception for the Ambassador at the Mayor's residence.

Meanwhile the Matahariku was tidied and mopped as the team worked. At around 6pm, as darkness was descending, the Ambassador's launch came into view. Her Excellency (HE) and Indonesian officials were welcomed aboard the Matahariku and introduced to the team. I then gave a brief slide presentation of the previous day's event.

Before dinner HE was presented with some freshly caught lobster. After dinner HE spoke of how impressed she was by the team's work and how she would do what she could to support the project. HE then led the singing of Swedish songs and also Happy Birthday to John Higson in the various languages of the team members.

On beach 2 the Indonesian party had arranged music and dancing in one the tents that had been used the previous day. We all went ashore and danced with the Indonesian hosts returning to the Matahariku just before midnight.

Days 5-7

The team met over breakfast to discuss drawing out conclusions and developing way forward strategies and programmes. After some discussion we decided it would be best to set up three discussion groups; the first looking at the masterplanning and design of the Tanjung Ringgit Eco Resort; the second group looking at the future development of the village communities and their integration with the tourism development of the area and; the third looking at the overall development planning (including infrastructure) and programming (including planning submissions and funding) for the project.

The teams worked over the next two days, with various members going of on site visits and meetings through this period.

HE the ambassador participated in the morning and left the team around midday of day 5 after what was agreed by all to have been a very successful and fruitful visit.

On the evening of the 6th day the team set off on the journey back to Gili Meno arriving 24 hours later following a rough passage.

Everyone then started dispersing but with the shared experience of a highly successful few days fresh in their minds and the promise of the next stage of this groundbreaking project to come.

Charles Campion
John Thompson & Partners
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