

P R E S S R E L E A S E

COMMUNITY IN LEMBONGAN, NUSA PENIDA, LAUNCHES COMMUNITY CENTER TO SUPPORT MARINE CONSERVATION

Nusa Penida, 21 February 2009 – Satya Posana Nusa, a local NGO from Nusa Lembongan, facilitated by The Nature Conservancy – Coral Triangle Center (TNC-CTC), launches a Community Center in Nusa Lembongan, a resort island located just 25 minutes off the coast of Sanur, Bali. The community center is designed to accommodate various activities, including community meetings, community discussions and consultations, and workshops for issues within the context of conserving Nusa Penida’s coastal and marine ecosystem. Nusa Penida itself is a three island sub-regency, consist of Nusa Penida, Nusa Lembongan, and Nusa Ceningan.

Program Manager for Coral Triangle Program, TNC-CTC, Mr. Abdul Halim, in his welcome speech during the community center launch emphasizes, “For TNC-CTC, the establishment of this Community Center is part of TNC’s effort in increasing local capacity, so communities in Nusa Penida can actively take initiatives and roles in the effort of protecting and conserving marine life around their own island called home.”. Abdul Halim further points out, “This collaborative and participative approach is the kind of way that we endorsed in TNC-CTC partnership with the Indonesian government to protect and conserve coral reefs and marine biota within the *Coral Triangle*, consist of Indonesia, Phillipines, Malaysia, Timor Leste, Papua New Guinea, and Solomon Islands.”.

Currently, TNC-CTC is working in Nusa Penida in partnership with local communities, Klungkung district government, and other partners to facilitate the establishment and management of Nusa Penida Marine Protected Area (MPA), which will consist of 10,00 hectares of sea and coastal areas. The MPA will have several zones, amongs all are the protected zone designated as coral reef preservation area and as SPAG/reproduction area for scientific and ecomically significant marine biota such as mola mola and manta ray. The MPA will also have a zone of utilization such as seaweed aquaculture, marine eco-tourism, and capture fisheries.

TNC-CTC project leader for Nusa Penida, Marthen Welly explains, “Our shared goal for the establishment of Nusa Penida MPA is to conserve marine biodiversity for food security and the sustainability of local community’s source of livelihoods. The end result of this MPA will be a harmony between conservation of marine and coral reef biodiversity with food security and sustainability of livelihood for longer term,”

Nusa Penida local leader who is actively participates in the effort of Nusa Penida marine conservation and also a member of Satya Posana Nusa, I Wayan Suarbawa points out, “this Community Center will also be a focal point for various activities conducted by local community, in improving knowledge and skill to conserve the marine biodiversity in Nusa Penida”. Further Suarbawa emphasized, “If it’s not us, the people of Nusa Penida, then who else to protect our marine biodiversity we call treasure,”

In geographical terms, Nusa Penida is a sub-regency consists of three islands, Nusa Penida, Nusa Lembongan, and Nusa Ceningan, and is located in the southern part of the Coral Triangle. The sub-regency has in total of 20,000 hectare of land mass, and populated by approximately 44,000 people living in 16 villages. The main source of livelihood for people of Nusa Penida is sea weed aquaculture and marine tourism.

Nusa Penida waters has 230 hectares of mangrove, 1,800 hectares of coral reefs, and is world famous for its Mola-Mola fish, Manta Ray (*manta birostris*), Green Turtle (*chelonian mydas*), Hawksbill Turtle (*eretmochelys imbricate*), Dugong (*dugong dugon*), Sperm Whale (*physeter catodon*), and several species of dolphins. According to recently conducted Rapid Ecological Assessment, Nusa Penida waters has at least 247 species of coral reefs and 562 species of reef fishes. The data shows that Nusa Penida water has a high degree of marine biodiversity as part of the Coral Triangle.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has proposed the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) for Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security that aimed to invite six countries in the coral triangle region to be a part of a multilateral partnership to conserve the amazing marine life in the region. At the APEC Summit in 2007, President Yudhoyono's effort gained momentum that included other 21 heads of state and government who supported the initiative. The six governments are currently finalizing a 10-year CTI Plan of Action that reflects common priorities to be endorsed during the Coral Triangle Initiative Summit at the World Ocean Conference in Manado, North Sulawesi in May 2009.

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Map of Nusa Penida :

