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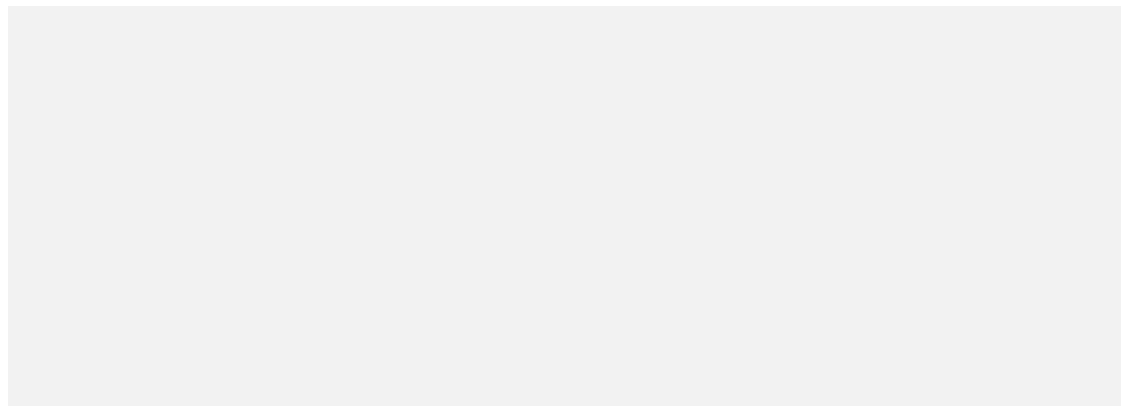


Newsletter of the Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project - a global effort to conserve dugongs and their seagrass habitats.  
Issue #1 of 2017

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### **Can you spot the dugong in this drone footage?**

Our partners in Malaysia are flying drones to survey dugong and seagrass. In this newsletter we highlight their work in a [feature story focusing on their lessons learned](#). Think drone surveys are easy? [See if you can spot the dugong in this drone footage?](#)





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### **Lessons learned. Drone surveys. Lawas, Malaysia.**

Our partners at the Sarawak Forestry Corporation in Lawas, Malaysia are flying drones to regularly survey dugong populations and map seagrass meadows. After many hours of flying they reflect on what they learned about flying drones in search of dugong and seagrass. [Read their lessons learned on our website.](#)

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*James Anak Bali (left) and Toloy Keripin Munsang fly drone surveys in search of dugong and seagrass. Read their story on our website.*

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## News from the Project

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### **Community conservation in Johor, Malaysia.**

A young conservationist moves to a small community island, the location for a new dugong sanctuary in Malaysia, to learn more about the community's understanding of dugongs and seagrass, the marine park, and the hardships and joys of island life. [Read more here.](#)



*The village of Pulau Sibu in Johor, Malaysia is located within a newly established dugong sanctuary.*

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### **Madagascar festival celebrates dugong and seagrass.**

Our project partners in Madagascar, COSAP Sahamalaza, organized a dugong festival in October 2016. Dancing, traditional boxing, costumes. [Read more and see photos of the celebration](#) which included all our project partners from Madagascar.

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*A community celebrates dugong and seagrass in western Madagascar. We strongly endorse the act of celebrating the presence of dugong and seagrass!*

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### **Indonesian fishermen releases dugong, thanks to the efforts of our partners. Release captured on video.**

A male dugong was released into the waters of Sulawesi, Indonesia after being held captive by a local fisherman who caught it in a gillnet. [Watch the dugong release on our YouTube channel.](#)

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## Environmental and socioeconomic reports from Puttlam Lagoon in northwest Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lanka Turtle Conservation Project, our project partner in Sri Lanka, recently completed extensive examinations of the socioeconomic and environmental conditions that affect biodiversity in the Puttlam Lagoon. [Read more here.](#)



*A Sri Lankan fisherman inspects his blue crab harvest in the Puttlam bay.*

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**ORCA confirms presence of seagrass species not previously known to exist in Sri Lanka.**



*Halophila stipulacea* (Forssk.), a new record added to the Sri Lankan floral list, is found north of Mannar Island. [Read more here.](#)



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### **Ecotourism off the ground and into the sea in Timor-Leste.**

Blue Ventures' ecotourism model launched successfully with the first expedition of volunteers to Atauro Island, in Timor-Leste. Four expeditions so far. More in the works.. Tourism helps convince local communities to conserve marine ecosystems. [Read more about Blue Venture's efforts in TL.](#)

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## **Executive Project Steering Committee met in KL in November 2016.**

The 2nd Executive Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project was held in November 2016 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. [To view the presentations navigate to our website.](#)

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## **'Like' our new social media posts and short videos? Thanks go to Azhar. Our new intern.**

We have a student intern in the Abu Dhabi office. Azhar Mubarak Abdulla is a senior at Zayed University majoring in Integrated Strategic Communications. We look forward to seeing her talent applied to our project for the next few months. See some of her work on our [You Tube Channel](#).

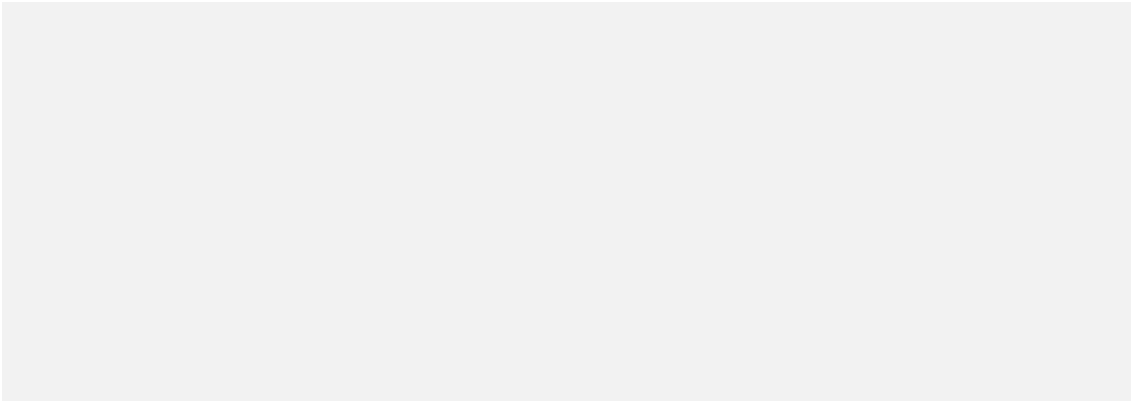
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## **Also in the News**

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## **Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project makes waves on UNEP and GEF websites.**

Articles highlight our project on key websites. Read short excerpts from several of our partners including those in Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Vanuatu and Mozambique. Thank you, [GEF](#) and [UNEP](#)!







United Nations  
Environment Programme

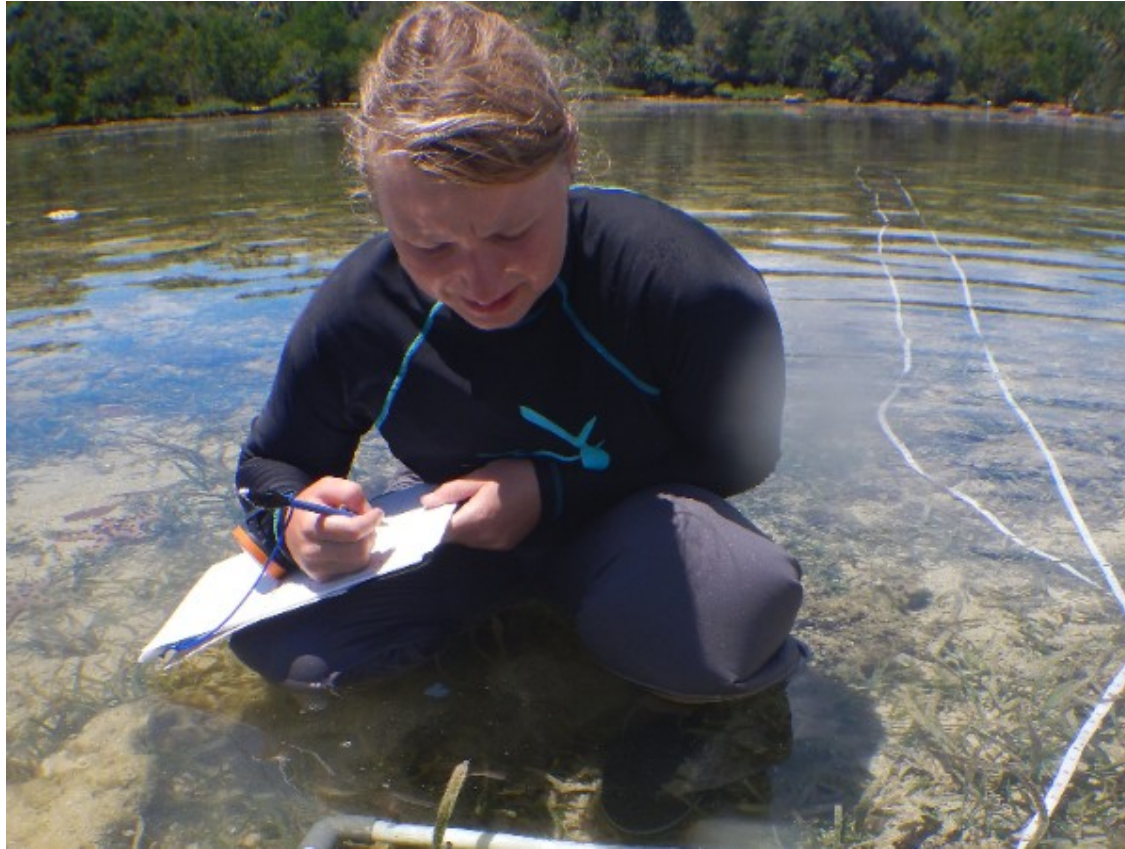


### Dugong conservation project makes waves

*The project was recently highlighted on the Global Environment Facility and UN Environment websites.*

## Real people, real research: We interviewed a young scientist searching for dugongs and seagrass in Indonesia.

In other dugong and seagrass projects from around the world, read here about how university intern Angélique Bonnet's passion for wildlife turned into a budding research career focused on dugongs and seagrasses in remote Indonesia. [Read more here.](#)



*Angélique Bonnet just completed here Masters thesis on dugong and seagrass in Sulawesi, Indonesia.*

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## Upcomming Events

### **Third Meeting of Signatories to the Dugong MOU (MOS3)**

Two important dugong and seagrass events are on our radar in March 2017. MOS3 and the Dugong and Seagrass Technical Workshop. Both are organised by the CMS Dugong MoU Secretariat and both are hosted in Abu Dhabi, UAE. [For more info, click here.](#)

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## From Around the Web

### Interesting dugong podcast.

5,000 year-old cave paintings of dugongs in Malaysia. Are dugongs intelligent? Do they have memories? The dugong is featured in a 7-minute episode of 'The Ark' [Listen. Download. Distribute.](#)

### Dugong humor that keeps us laughing...again and again.

We are strongly committed to laughter, [and so are these ladies.](#)



OH! DUGONG!!😂😂



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*A short, hilarious and totally irrelevant You Tube video that keeps us laughing.*



This Project is executed by The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, with financing from the GEF and implementation support by UNEP. The project execution is technically supported by the UNEP CMS Dugong MoU Secretariat.

**Contact:**

For project related/general enquiries, please contact: [myacout@mbzfund.org](mailto:myacout@mbzfund.org)

Please contribute to the Project by sending news updates, articles, photos and comment to: [kduthler@mbzfund.org](mailto:kduthler@mbzfund.org)

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