



2,023 kilograms of wastes collected at Koh Libong Sub-district beach cleanup

From 23 to 26 August 2021, 130 volunteers representing eight (8) communities joined the beach and ocean cleanup activity in Koh Libong Sub-district, Thailand in celebration of the Beach Cleanup month. This activity is part of the project, **“Enhancing circular economy model at local level and improving municipal plastic waste management practices and policies”** at Koh Libong is funded by the European Union (EU), and supported by Expertise France, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and GIZ.

Waste collection in each community were divided into two teams, one took care of waste on the beach and another one went out to the ocean to collect debris from canals and the sea. All collected garbage were sorted, weighted, recorded and reported by local DMCR office. Some of the recyclable materials, such as aluminum cans, plastic and glass bottles, ropes and nets were sold to local informal collectors in Koh Libong. Incomes from those recyclable materials will be given to the community’s fund. The total number of the garbage collection was **2,023 kg.**, most of them were plastic and rope. Marine debris were massively aggregated in Koh Mook during monsoon season.

“This beach and ocean cleanup activity is one of the tool kits, which will enhance the community’s engagement and collaboration. The number of collected marine debris is not critical as much as the community’s commitment and the awareness on the negative impacts of garbage to their sources of livelihood and Dugong’s natural habitat, which is the highlight of Koh Libong” **Mr. Haren Prakong, President of Trang Fisher Folk Association said.**

With IUCN leading, this activity was conducted in partnership with the Trang Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment, DMCR, Save Andaman Network Foundation and Trang Fisher Folk Association as well as by the Koh Libong Sub-district Administration Organization.

The objectives of this event are to raise awareness among local fishermen, community members, the network of Trang PONRE, and Trang Provincial Office on the impacts of marine debris and negative impacts on the environment in Trang, as well as encouraging engagement of local fishermen groups and people from all sectors in marine litter collection, both remote islands and coastal areas. Waste free island will save the dugong from all marine debris leaked to their habitats.

IUCN and partners also invited the local informal collectors to join this activity. This small sector played an important role and a potential mechanism to have proper segregation, and will facilitate transport of recyclable materials on the islands to the recycling plant on the mainland, following the closed loop of the circular economy model.

“The local informal collector’s security, welfare including their social existence and respect should be reconsidered for the equality in the community” said **Mr. Pakphum Withantirawat, Director of Save Andaman Network Foundation.**

One of the project outputs of the Rethinking Plastic project is having community waste management action plans for the eight (8) communities. Beach and ocean cleanup is prioritized in their action plans, as well as waste segregation at household level. Coordination with local

informal collectors for recyclable material collection and export is also encouraged. It will be more sustainable for communities when the agreements are further developed to the sub-district's policies.

Activity sites and collected garbage proportion

