



Passing the Baton

Sinbilan: tmllyung?

What to Do in the Water?





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wazaqan pinfazaq iamin mafazaq a kalawan

What the Ocean Teaches Us

ya Thau a lalawa, sa “Zintun” numa “Wazaqan” mulhthkiz tataal zain “Wazaqan” dai. munsai sa Thau a mzai, Zintun miazai sa mita wa Thau a Wazaqan. isa thuini a kawash, ianan sa laturu Tao a ayuzi pasain sa kawi kmalawa shausuunin a ruza, musui Tai-waan a tumbuz makaruza, isa makashpashpat a furaz shaunanai Zintun, masa iamin Thau a ruza musuun makaruza isa Zintun. mutal ianan sa Nan-tua minihala inai a thau a qbit pasain sa shausuunin a ruza mu’ iutu wazaqan a marutaw 748 bii makaruza, numa miasuun makaruza ya tusha ianan pinruza wa minihala inai a thau a qbit, numa ya pasain antu tataal a ruza makaruza, numa mushnaw sa tanatuqash pinruza wa ti-hui numa kazakazash.

Thau manshirshir sa sazum ininthewa numa ianan tata wa kazakazash — ya Matansuun mashtay sa Thau pintuza pulalu sa tuza, maqa Zintun a tuza wa rusaw mathuaw muribush, numa tuza madaqri ya sakpin, antu pasapuk ya smapuk; ya uka sazum, numa ya mapanduu sa maqarman amungkaruz isai prug. numa sa Thau pintuza pulalu, afuilh tanatuqash pimbahiwian iamin Thau a azazak miazai mapuzi a tuza shduu ya madaqri numa marumiz dai.

thuini puhubuqiza wa qali, Zintun uka sazum, mathaw mashtay a thau masalpu, kanuniza munsai sa Thau sa maqitan a kalawan. maqa ya Lit-puun niwan tu kmlawa sa sui-kuu ya isisua, Zintun a sazum antu ya marutaw; numa thuini shqayqaiza sa sazum, isa Zintun manshirshir a prug itia sa patilhaz, numa puhubuqiza lhmir, naur uka sa ribush apuhubuqiza, numa Zintua tataal tu kahiwan. mathuaw maqitan dai, maqa thuini a ruza antu shduu makaruza, numa kilhnaqualh a thau antu munai, numa isa hudun a lhkaribush shduu mutantu sazum a shirshir miqilha sa sazum, shduu mani ya inai a prug pangqaiza.

Tai-waan sa hai-tau a katataunan, inai katataunan a Wazaqan mathawa maqitan ya riqazan, ani sia-po-kui numa kilhnaqualh a taun tu pakdup inai a maqitan a Wazaqan. mathuaw manasha wa thau kurubuzin sa izai a sazum, numa thuini a Wazaqan sa thau amara u’ araan tuali a aniamin. iamin sa inintusi Wazaqan a thau, tiakaiza shduu ya sunda wa ininthewa izai Wazaqan a prug?

In the Thao lexicon, Sun Moon Lake and the sea are both called “wazaqan”. For the Thao people, Sun Moon Lake is like the sea. This year, three Tao Kuroshio Warriors sailed a tatala on a trip around Taiwan. In August they brought their traditional fishing canoe to Sun Moon Lake and met two Thao canoes, marking the first time our traditional Austronesian boats were paddled at 748 meters above sea level. Through boats and shipbuilding traditions, the two peoples came together to experience the wisdom and culture of their ancestors.

The Thao people, who live near water, have a tradition of sacrificing white eels as an offering to their ancestors. The white eels of Sun Moon Lake are strong and resilient; they can escape predators with their slippery mucus and hide in soil when in danger or water levels are low. The Thao people pray to their ancestors to protect their children so they may be as strong and adaptive as the eels.

Earlier this spring, falling water levels at Sun Moon Lake caused public outcry, but this was good news for the Thao. According to them, water levels were not high before the Japanese built water conservation facilities in the area. As water levels dropped, soil at the lake’s shore was exposed to the sun, and plants began to grow. The Sun Moon Lake of our memories came back to life. More importantly, sightseeing boats were forced off the lake. Tourists stopped coming and wild animals quickly returned to drink. The land was given a chance to breathe.

Taiwan is an island country. We should keep our minds open and not let breakwaters and tourist hotels ruin ocean views. With manmade structures interfering with the flow of water, natural resources have become an accessory to economic development. We’re an ocean people, but when can we truly approach the ocean at all?

naur kazash a kalangkan
CEO of the Indigenous
Peoples Cultural Foundation



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Passing the Baton

What to Do in the Water?

We watch the ocean every day. We see the waves, the tides...and now oceanfront hotels that boast great views.

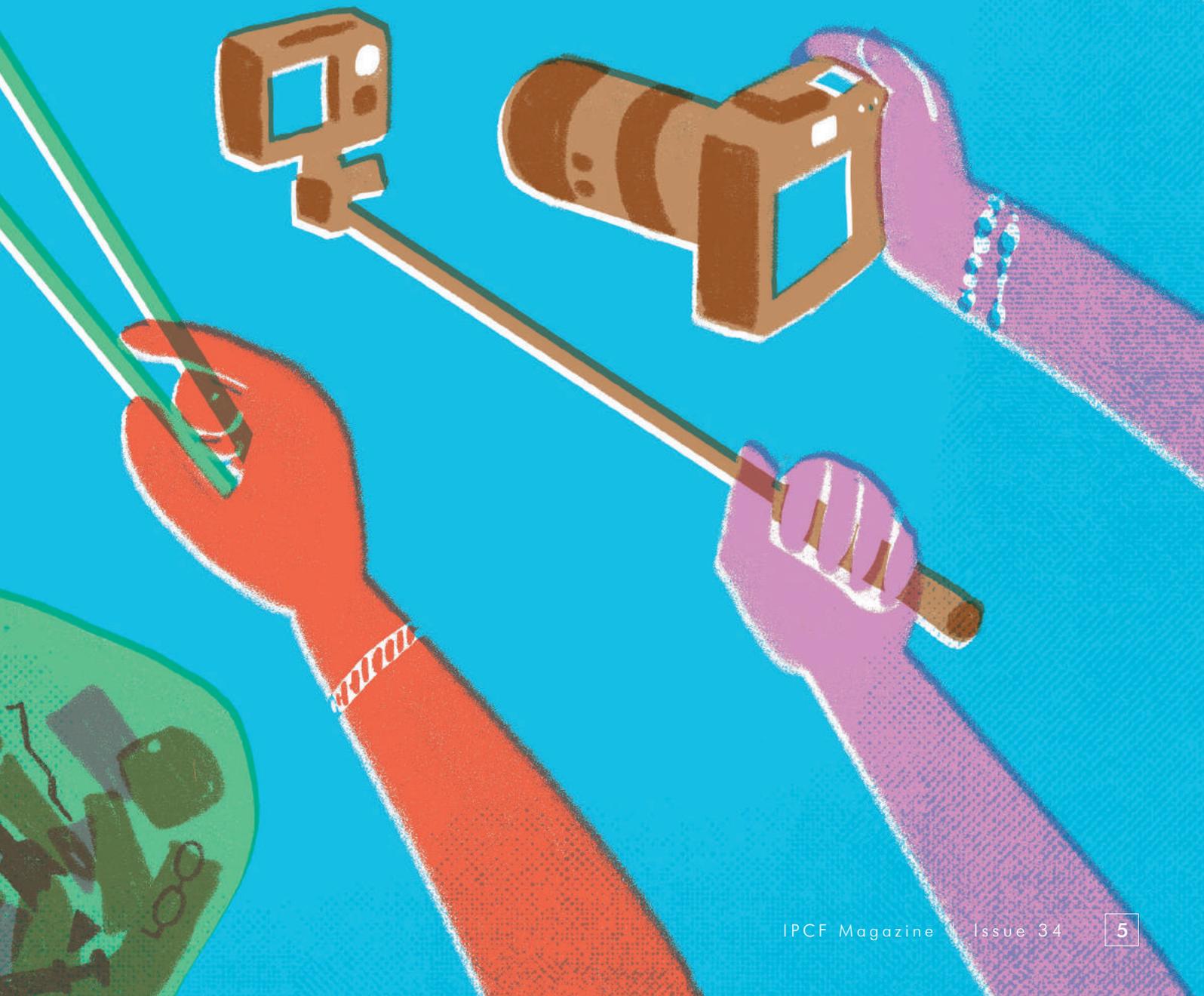
We find the sea has changed. We hear her cry. We decide to do something, in the water. What do you want when you go to the sea? The rush of adrenaline from fighting the waves? The comfort of wandering the beach? Or the tranquility and surprise of diving the ocean's depths? What do I want when I go to the sea? Nothing. I don't want to gain anything. I just want to hold on to something.



Sinbilan: tmllyung?



Note: "sinbilan: tmllyung," means "passing the baton: river work passed down by our elders" in Atayal language.



A Traveler Between the Sea and Land

Futuru C.L. Tsai

27 years have passed and the young man who rode his bike all the way from Taipei to 'Atolan now has already become a member of the indigenous age stratum that actively engages in community affairs. He documented and preserved indigenous culture, and promoted community autonomy and branding. Futuru set his mind to carving out a better future for the cultural continuity of his community which enthralled him years ago.

Written by **Qiu Mu-Rong**; Photo credits: **Tsai Che-Wen, Futuru C.L. Tsai**;
Translated by **Huang Szu-Yu**

*The Torch Bearer of Culture
for the Indigenous Community*





Indigenous people have lost too many things under the oppression of the mainstream Non-indigenous society.

Futuru and his fellow community members founded 'Atolan Style together with the hope to offer the general public easier access to indigenous life and encourage visitors to explore 'Atolan.



Known for its sugar factory and surfing destination, 'Atolan means "a place with many rocks" in Amis, implying that Amis people have settled here for generations. Nestled between mountains and the sea, the rich natural resources have shaped the culture of this indigenous community which has been passed down from generation to generation. However, after the 1970s, urbanization started to drain local population, tearing a cultural gap in the community. The absence of generations of people forecasted a crisis of the community culture continuity.

In 1994, a Hakka young man from Hsinchu, Futuru Tsai rode his bike alone and arrived at 'Atolan for short-term field observation. He cycled toward south along the eastern coast. "I rode past Marongarong Community and they were performing traditional ceremony. There were many teenagers and they looked exhausted as if they were overworked. But when I got to 'Atolan, there were no teens at all." That observation became a turning point. From that point on, Futuru dedicated the later half of his life to 'Atolan.

Restoring the Tradition of Pakalongay and Showing a Path That Leads Teens Back to Their Community

Maybe it is his easygoing personality or just destiny that got him invited to the age stratum of the indigenous community as an outsider after a short period of his field observation. "I did not know that joining the age stratum means you stay for life. And I am grateful that the community took me in as one of their own." Futuru said with a smile. When he joined this indigenous community, he became a member of a big family. Futuru's age stratum decided to restore Pakalongay, the youngest group of Amis age-based social structure.

Therefore, Futuru, director Lin of Dulan Junior High and other like-minded community members traveled between north and south to recruit young people to return home and pick up traditional knowledge. They designed the curriculum and teaching materials which covered knowledge like wild plant collection, tool making, traditional tunes and dancing and applied modern summer camp model to train



'Atolan Style presents 'Atolan as a place where Amis people call home and shows their daily lives, giving visitors an authentic 'Atolan experience.

Pakalongay before the traditional ceremony took place. “Many elders shed tears upon seeing more than 40 teenagers showing up on the ceremonial ground,” Futuru recalled.

Since the first edition of the Pakalongay training camp, teenagers have been holding hands and participating in the voluntary training program before annual ceremony year after year for more than two decades. The fostering of Pakalongay is a long term process during which they explore mountains and the sea together to learn about nature while taking care of each other. In addition to one-off events, the next step toward restoring community engagement is to bring people back to nature.

Sea is the Path to a Human-Sea Connection

“Sea is more than a space. It is a living organism.” Futuru observed that Amis culture sees sea as a being with spirituality and vitality. Also the sea is not a separate feature of nature; instead, it is a part of the ecosystem also consisting of land and rivers.

Amis language indicates their body of knowledge derived from the sea and rivers. “For example, the names of creatures in the sea correspond to that of the land. There is wild boar on land so there is wild boar in the sea; there is grasshopper on land, so there is also grasshopper in the sea.” Futuru gave an

example: *Acanthurus lineatus*, or commonly known as striped surgeonfish is called riri’ in Amis, meaning grasshopper, because the fish is usually spotted fast moving in the wave zone, just like grasshopper.

Plectorhinchus lessonii is called Kakita’an no foting (or mitilidan ni Diwa) in Amis implying that the fish is like a community leader: they always come in pairs and bring along other fishes, benefiting Amis people. The name also has to do with the pattern on its body. Amis people believe the colorful pattern is a gift from sea god Diwa.

However, the Amis names of these fishes have gradually vanished from the vocabulary of those under the age of 60. In light of the problem, Futuru constantly went diving in order to learn from fellow indigenous divers. He also worked with the community to produce teaching materials and write books to preserve these names. However, armchair reading is not the way to learn culture, you have to be there. In recent years, Futuru would dive with fellow members of his age stratum, encouraging younger community brothers to return to the sea by setting an example through his actions.

Showcasing the Sea and Land, 'Atolan Style Explores a Way Forward

For more than two decades, Futuru took part in the restoration efforts like bringing young people back

home, back to diving, and documenting culture. However, they also realized that it would take more than the community's efforts to accomplish their goals. Surrounded by the sea and mountains, the daily routines of Amis people reflect immediately the changes of the natural environment. When the mountains and the sea suffer irreversible destruction, the community would also lose their means to foster good bond between the members of age strata and pass on their traditional knowledge about nature.

"Indigenous people have lost too many things under the oppression of the mainstream Non-indigenous society," Futuru then explained that in terms of system, the indigenous community is not a legally recognized autonomy. The current legal framework only allows a community register as a juridical association where the community leader serves as chairperson. However, those that matter the most—marine resources, land development, ecological environment—are beyond the control of the indigenous community. This is why indigenous people want to fight for autonomy and sovereignty. "But on the other hand, indigenous people have never signed any treaty which surrenders their sovereignty to the state," Futuru said with a dry laugh.

Being excluded from the decision-making circle does not mean that the community has given up on their rights. For instance, seeing the decrease of marine resources in the 'Atolan's territorial waters, the community began to discuss about their approach to marine conservation since 2020 and developed

To better introduce to the general public indigenous culture, the indigenous community organized sea culture experience tour to give the general public a taste of indigenous lifestyle. Photo courtesy of 'Atolan Style



Photo credit: 'Atolan Style



Photo credit: Mark Chu

Diving and fishing are the essential skills that 'Atolan men have to acquire.

internal self-regulation guidelines. The community also has worked on the legalization of these rules. "It's like our refrigerator broke down so we are trying to fix it." In addition to the issue of marine resources, Futuru also added other examples. Pollution caused by the use of pesticide to eradicate of apple snails and the cultivate custard apples on land also impacted the natural environment on which indigenous people depend for their livelihoods. "We still need to negotiate with parties like the county government, fisherman's association, and Non-indigenous people. There is still a lot of work to do going forward."

Goals like cultural continuity and the establishment of indigenous autonomy can not be accomplished overnight. Futuru and his partners have never given up on any possible solutions. 'Atolan Style is their latest attempt. Advertised as a community-owned corporation, 'Atolan Style runs a diversified business, offering local agricultural produce, tours, professionally selected products on an indigenous-oriented platform. The brand will give the public the opportunity to better understanding indigenous people and community under the wave of emigration and tourism. 'Atolan Style does more than allowing young people to return to the community. Its proceeds will also be invested back to shared community affairs, supporting members of the community.

The First Youth Magazine of Orchid Island

952 VAZAY TAMO

952 VAZAY TAMO, an Orchid Island based youth magazine founded by six young girls, flaunts bold and bright design alongside with diverse and interesting content. Readers would find cultural stories written from a young person's perspective, opening up a window that gives people a glimpse of the young minds of Orchid Island.

Written by **Chen Yi-Ru**; Photo credit: **Lin Jing-Yi, si oyatan**; Translated by **Huang Szu-Yu**

The Cultural Voice of Young People



We threw in all the elements we wanted into the magazine. Our principle is doing whatever we like and this creates a lot of possibilities.



952 VAZAY TAMO, an Orchid Island magazine for young people.

952 is more than just a postal code for Orchid Island. For the six girls born in the 1980s, it is a code that have access to a platform on which young people's voice can be heard. 952 VAZAY TAMO was born in 2015. This Orchid Island based magazine offers young people's perspectives on local matters, voicing the views of the young generation.

Compared to the indigenous peoples of Taiwan, reality gives those indigenous youths of Orchid Island almost no choice but to leave their native isle. There is only one high school on the island and no university at all. To pursue higher education, Tao kids have no choice but to leave their homeland. si oyatan and si namet also left for Taiwan to study and work once. High urban living expenses and separation from their families are the reasons why they have always wanted to come home. "You just feel that your feet are not grounded in Taiwan," si oyatan admitted.

Interpret Culture in a Way That is Attractive to Young People

Six years ago, the two came back to Orchid Island successively when they were about 25 years old. In

addition to their daytime job, they exchanged ideas with their friends and 952 VAZAY TAMO was the brainchild of that effort. Consisted of six members, they built a "biracial" team. si oyatan, si namet and si matnaw are all Tao who grew up knowing each other. Lu Szu-Ying, Wu Hsin-Chieh, and Lin Mu-Yin are Non-indigenous from Taiwan. They all met and became friends on Orchid Island.

They share a love for magazine, writing and images. When they observed that most of the publications of Orchid Island are mostly news type and local matters were rarely covered in a fun and intriguing manner, the idea for creating a new magazine was born. "It would be fun if the magazine offers young people's thoughts and perspectives while setting up an open environment for issue discussion or cultural interpretation in ways that intrigue young people," si namet said.

With limited budget, only four issues were published, and the publication was temporarily halted in 2016. However, the arrival of the magazine filled a gap of the long-term absence of young people's voice. VAZAY TAMO in the title means "our issues, our job" in Tao language.



After the isle was open to tourism, most of the houses in the outer ring have been repurposed as B&B and some traditional Tao semi underground homes have been preserved.

The feature story of the first issue was “What is your name?”, starting with the most essential issue about self-identity and encouraging young people to reclaim their own indigenous name. The second issue “Island Symbols” introduced the common Tao totems and the stories behind totem culture to young readers. The third issue “The Best Attire” presented traditional Tao costume as well as new designs that combined both traditional and innovative styles. The fourth issue “An Isle” told the legends of each Tao community and illustrated the cultural root and landscape of their home isle.

The Magazine Covers Stories of the People You Know!

When you flip through the magazine, you would easily notice that a diverse range of ideas were juxtaposed next to each other. There is a section talking about soft issues like turning the traditional nimay (tarot cake) into fancy western pastry by adding pie crust. There are also sections which talked about the arrival of a 7-11 branch on Orchid Island and gave young people a chance to voice their views. Of course there is no shortage of young creativity. For example, the Tao language section translated classic movie lines into Yao; fun personality tests would tell you what kind of Orchid Island seafood you are or what kind of role would suit you during the flying fish festival. “We threw in all the elements we wanted into the magazine. Our principle is doing whatever we like and this creates a lot of possibilities,” si oyatan said.

Publication of the first issue was deliberately scheduled in February during Lunar New Year holiday because this is the period that sees most homecoming Tao young people. As there was an annual basketball game on the isle, the editorial team even went to court to promote their magazine. “We used the speaker and loudly announced that you will find your kids, brothers and sisters in the magazine,” si namet laughed at the memory.



Taro field

“The tactic worked. At first, we were worried about circulation, but were surprised that the 500 copies of the first issue sold out quickly. Although we decided the approach of the magazine, but we welcome everyone. For people of our communities, they knew all the interviewees and thus the magazine gave them a sense of familiarity,” si oya-tan said.

Great Introductory Reading about Orchid Island

As the magazine received extensive positive feedback, Tao people started to look forward to the next issue and young Tao also started to learn about their culture. “For example, our first issue was about Tao names. Many people only knew their names but not the meaning. One of my cousins went to the older generation and asked about the meaning of his name after he read the article,” si namet explained.

Sometimes people would also question and challenge their content. For example, one published article was about tatoos and some members of the older generation were concerned that the article would mislead outsiders to believe that Tao people love tattoos while it is not a part of their culture. However, it was not the team’s intention to be judgmental but to explain why some young people got their tattoos and the meanings of their patterns. “There is a person who had five flying fish tattoos and one of the fish represented his father. That is a lovely story.” But si oya-tan also admitted that “it could be a little frustrating when you heard criticism from the older generation, but we knew that they were only concerned about us not being thoughtful enough.”

The influence of the magazine not only stayed on Orchid Island but also traveled to Taiwan. si oyatan recalled that when she was studying in Taiwan, some classmates thought that Orchid Island is located in Yilan County or the only outlying island they knew was Green Island. “This magazine would be a great introductory reading about Orchid Island, with its soft and fun content. The reader would also be exposed to more diverse perspectives about Orchid Island.”

Learn the Culture in the Way You Like

si oyatan and si namet both think that indigenous peoples are facing a crisis of cultural gap. The most obvious problem for the thirty something generation is the inability to fluently speak in their mother



Although the publication of the magazine halted for the time being, si oyatan (left) si namet (right) have carried on their cultural learning journey in the fields of their interests.

tongue. “Although I feel sad and sorry, I am not going to lose my culture only because I could not speak fluent mother tongue.” si oyatan continued to add “as long as you want to learn, you can restore the culture. The real concern is that when our tradition is not respected and overlooked, the cultural gap will be widened.”

Although the publication of the magazine is temporarily halted, the two continued to pass on indigenous culture in their own ways. si oyatan and si namet are teachers in elementary school and kindergarten respectively. They often teach simple Tao to their students in their class. si oyatan, a lead singer of a band, also teaches her students Tao tunes. si namet is now learning traditional weaving techniques and hair dance while producing illustrations for Tao language teaching materials. “I learn the culture in the way I like and I believe people of my generation would find their own way too.”

In the past, young Tao people were most concerned about livelihoods when they came back home. Now more young people could return home and settle down with the rise of Orchid Island tourism. “Now we see more young people here than we did in junior and senior high!” si namet said happily. To tell the stories of the isle to tourists, young Tao people have returned to learn about their own culture. This not only created an opportunity to cultural continuity but also brought vitality and energy back to Orchid Island.

Returning to Their Language and the Ocean

lulay inam

“lulay inam (Lin Si-Long), a young man who could not speak his indigenous language and had only a vague impression of his identity, later went on to establish a Youth Club and reestablished his relationship with the ocean by actually diving into the waters. Through the process of learning his people’s language, lulay gradually learned more about himself and aspires to become the bridge between the older and younger generations. He hopes future generations can proudly identify themselves as “Kavalan”.”

Written by Qiu Mu-Rong; Photo credits: Lin Jing-Yi, lulay inam; Translated by Chen Deh-I

Taking the Initiative with Village Youths



In the past, before the tubantu lazing (sea ritual), boys were required to take part in a training session and were not allowed to leave the coastal area during this period. During this three-day and three-night event, the boys were taught knowledge regarding the sea and hunting and fishing skills. Now I want to bring back this training tradition and attract more youths to take part in ocean-related affairs.



lulay observing the coastal ecosystems and gathering shellfish.



When the Kavalan people were working hard on their name rectification campaign in the 1990s, children born in their communities were influenced by mainstream society and still used Mandarin Chinese as their main language for communication. The people's language became a language the younger generation could understand but did not know how to speak- a language that was familiar yet foreign.

For centuries, the Kavalan people have been overshadowed by the Pangcah culture. After the Kavalan successfully rectified their name in 2002, lulay inam, who had always attended Pangcah rituals, suddenly "became" Kavalan. Born in 1989, lulay hails from Hualian's Kodoc Community. However, back then he could barely speak his people's language and was unsure of his own identity. Since he had so many questions about his identity and regretted that he could chat with family elders in their native tongue, 29-year-old lulay decided to put his job on hold and fully commit to the revitalization of the Kavalan language. He returned to his community to learn the language from the elders by following them like an apprentice.

Do You Know How to Say "High Tide" and "Low Tide" in the Kavalan Language?

When lulay returned to his community two years ago, he began his language learning journey with basic daily expressions, including basic vocabulary normally accumulated during childhood and basic general small talk such as "have you eaten?" or "what did you eat today?". He also asked the elders about the local history and ritual to increase his understanding of his people's culture. However, it wasn't until the tubantu lazing held in April this year, when an elder asked him, "do you know how to say 'high tide' and 'low tide' in our language?" did lulay start to actually think about going into the ocean.

At that time, lulay's language learning project was in its third year and nearing its end. Yet he could not answer the elder's question. That's when he realized that he knew nothing about words related to the sea. Later, the elder who spoke to lulay not only taught him the words but also told him high tides are the best time for diving and low tides are good windows to gather shellfish along the shore.



The Legend of the Sea Turtle Rescue

lulay once heard the village elders say that if you encounter a sea turtle, you must never try to trap it. According to local legends, a village member fell into the ocean and was rescued by a sea turtle who carried him to an island. Since there were no other human beings on this island, the villager observed and ate whatever seaweed and creatures the sea turtle ate and survived. Later, this individual brought the knowledge back to his village with him. Therefore the community believes that if someone eats sea turtle meat, misfortune will fall on their family.

Village women gathering shellfish on the coastal reefs.

Motivated by this “ocean culture shock” incident and encouraged by community friends, lulay began to prepare himself for his ocean encounter, which began with diving lessons. lulay gradually trained himself to dive 15-16 meters deep (approximately the height of 5 to 6 stories) within 2 to 3 minutes, just like the village elders. He became familiar with the habits of lobsters and learned how to find and trap the critters. For his next lesson, lulay plans to learn how to use a fishing spear.

If We Do Not Try to Make Some Changes, We will Never Learn How to Fish

“Spirits by the sea, please pardon us for disturbing your peace. Later we will dive in these waters and collect some shellfish. Please let our trip be safe and smooth.”

Every invocation before going into the waters is a means of establishing a relationship with the sea, and the sea teaches the community members how to live in harmony with it. lulay recalled an experience he shared with his friends. “Many years ago during July or August, we discovered a lot of sea urchins. We gathered a whole bucket of it, there were probably a hundred urchins in there. But after we carried them back and opened the first one, there was no meat inside. The elders took one look at it and told us to dump the rest back to the shore because it was not their season and the rest would be empty as well.”

Thinking back on this experience, lulay realized that it was as if the sea was telling them, “the ocean has its own rhythm and rules, you cannot take whatever and whenever you want.”

As lulay slowly reconnects the ocean, he notices the catch volume is decreasing annually, just as the elders have remarked; but a more significant challenge comes from the invisible boundary set between the community and ocean by the government. The county government has established the area between the Kodic Community and Stone Stairs Platform as a conservation area for lobsters. The official announcement reads “if necessary, the government will announce the period when lobster fishing is allowed”. However, since they are uncertain when the announcement will be made, the village elders cannot make any plans at all. The regulation also creates an additional obstacle for younger generations who wish to learn how to catch lobsters.

Furthermore, traditionally before the tubantu lazing, village members will go out and catch fly fish together; yet the county government requires every person going out to sea must have a Seaman Book. Some community members who could not obtain the document have clashed with the Coast Guard Administration before. “In the end, the young people who do not have their Seaman Books had to stay onshore. But if this does not change, the younger generation will never learn how to catch fish from the elders.” lulay said with a sigh. “In order to comply



Lobsters in the nets.

Elders teaching lulay how to make the nets for lobster fishing.

with national regulations, we can only take more required training classes and get our documents as soon as possible.”

Ending the “Our Generation can Never Do Anything Right” Conundrum

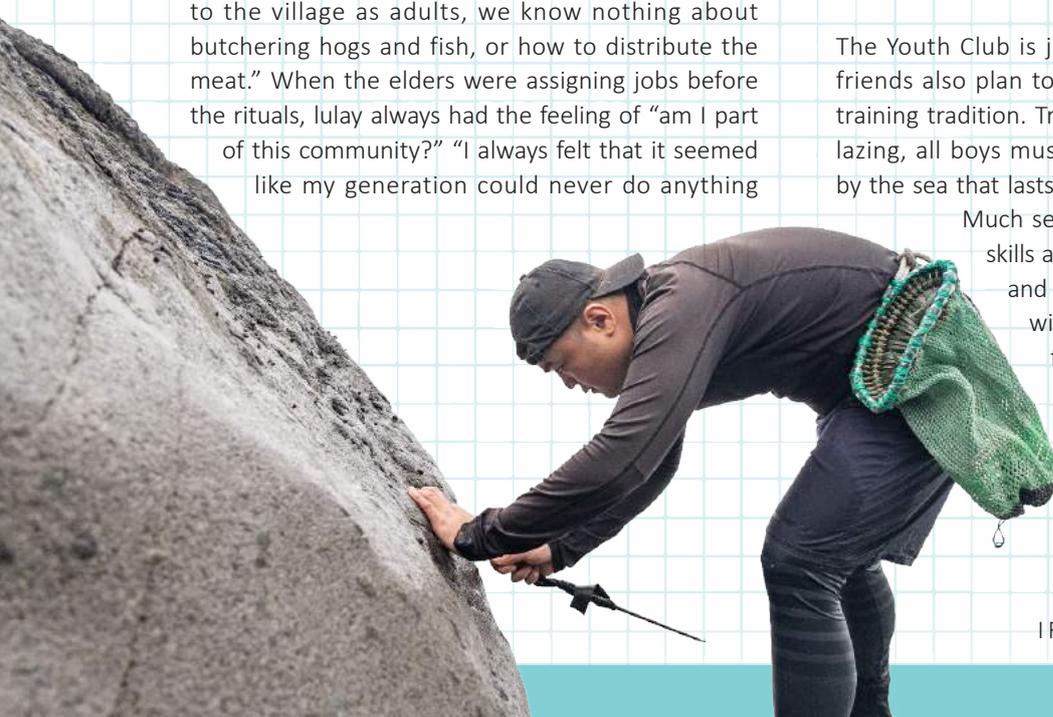
Growing from a child who can only speak a few words in his indigenous tongue to a young adult that is fluent enough to serve as an interpreter, lulay reconstructed the relationship between young people and the village through the process of language learning. “When we were children, whenever there were rituals or ceremonies, we just fooled around and never got involved. So later when we return to the village as adults, we know nothing about butchering hogs and fish, or how to distribute the meat.” When the elders were assigning jobs before the rituals, lulay always had the feeling of “am I part of this community?” “I always felt that it seemed like my generation could never do anything

right.” His thoughts actually reflect the situation of the younger generation living in an urbanized era.

But lulay did not give up. Five years ago, he and a couple of friends set up a Youth Club with young men between the ages of 20 and 40 as the main member group. They took the initiative and sought out the elders before the rituals to ask questions and actively participated in ritual preparations such as cutting down bamboo and building decorated archways. After the Youth Club was established, the elders knew they could assign work to the young people and allow them to learn through hands-on experience. “Later we realized that the elders were happy to teach us, they just didn’t know how to initiate it,” lulay said with a smile.

The Youth Club is just the first step. lulay and his friends also plan to restore the pre-tubantu lazing training tradition. Traditionally, before each tubantu lazing, all boys must go through a training session by the sea that lasts for three days and three nights.

Much sea-related knowledge and fishing skills are passed down during the event and the fish caught during that period will become the source of funding for the following ritual. Through the reintroduction of this training tradition, lulay hopes to reestablish the relationship between young community members and the ocean.



*A Young Couple Returning Home for Reacquaintance
with Indigenous Culture*

Knowledge about Harvesting in the Intertidal Zone

“ A young indigenous couple moves to Taitung’s Tomiyac Community to conduct field research for their theses. They spend a year befriending and establishing relationships with local elders who now treat them as if they were their own children. The couple chooses to stay and settle down with the ideals of preserving and passing on the village’s unique culture by keeping a record of local life. ”

Written by **Kuo Po-Jiun**; Photo credits: **Lin Jing-Yi, 831.studio**; Translated by **Lin Shih-Fen**

The Small but Beautiful
Community of Tomiyac

As a child, I've been proud of my indigenous identity and was never shy to admit it. But it wasn't until I grow up that I begin to realize what it means to be "indigenous."



Thanks to the rich diversity of marine species in the intertidal zone, tools and methods for harvesting vary greatly, depending on the accumulation of collective experience and knowledge about the sea.



Boasting an unimpeded view of the vast Pacific Ocean and endowed with numerous unique landscapes made by the movements of the earth's crust, Taiwan's east coast is lined with famous scenic spots that attract visitors for sightseeing all year round. Near the Stone Umbrella Scenic Area, a popular tourist attraction of Taitung's Chenggong Township, sits a young indigenous community: the Tomiyac Community, which was established by Amis migrants from Hualien's Rift Valley area 130 years ago.

The community has a population of over 700 people, but the number has been reduced because of severe population outflows. Currently, it is inhabited by merely 100 households or so with some elderly people living alone. Yet in recent years, this aging community, hidden quietly nearby the bustling tourist attraction, has been joined by a young couple who have set down roots and never given up the dreams of attracting more youths to return to learn about their own culture.

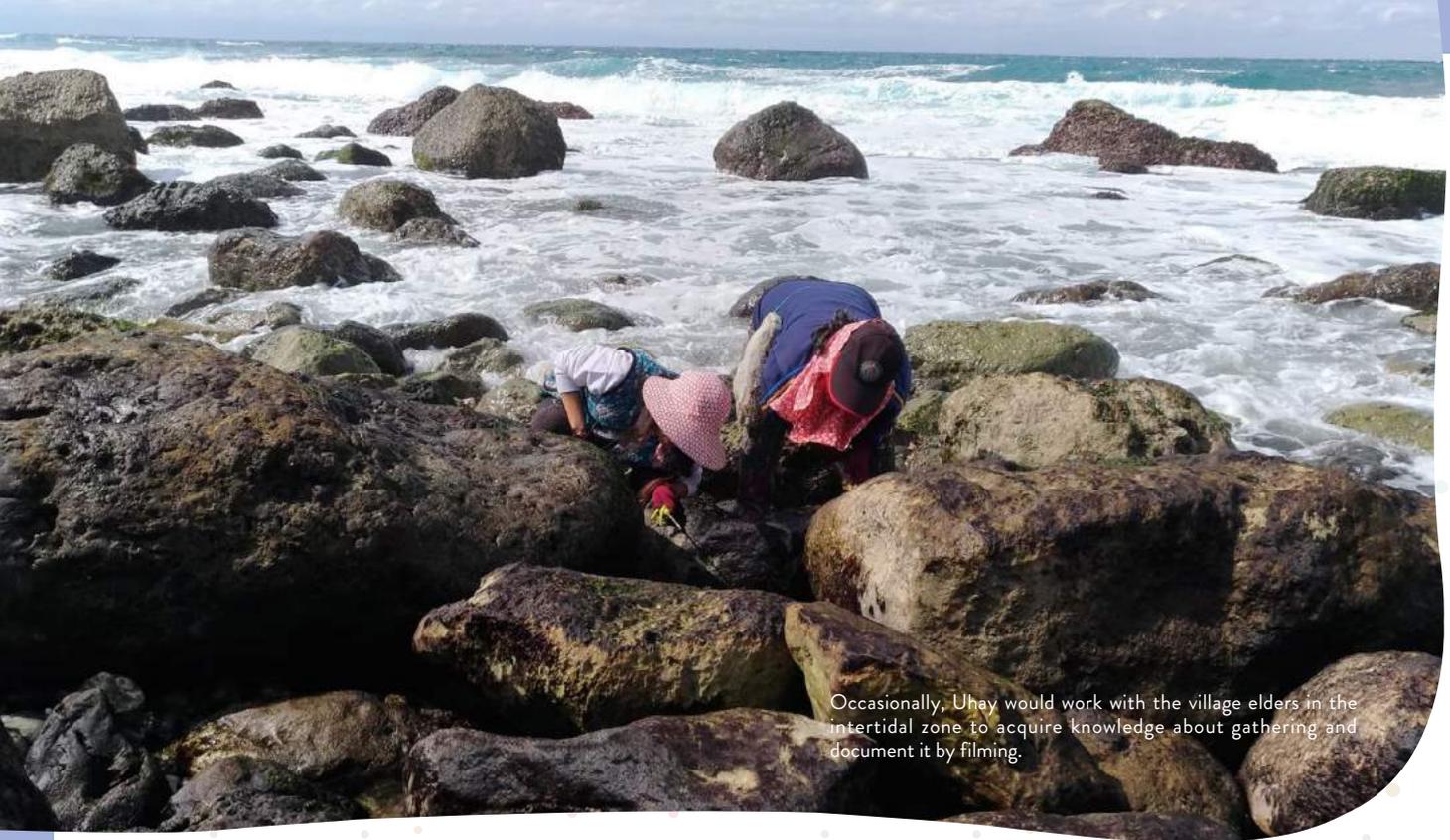
Reflecting on the Meaning of Indigenous Culture After Growing Up

The couple is two Amis youths: Uhay Putul, a girl hailing from Hualien, and Oseng Kuhpid Cuper, a

Tomiyac-born native. Born in the Ci Alupalan Community of Hualien's Shoufeng Township, Uhay moved with her family to the Fakong Community in Fengbin Township, where she grew up surrounded by "sea and seafood," as a child because of her father's work. As she recalls, her father would often take the family to the beach on weekends, when she'd see many local ina ("woman" in the Amis language) gathering ingredients in the intertidal zone. "Every time we visited friends as guests, all the dishes on the dining table were cooked with ingredients collected from the sea."

Unlike Uhay, who grew up in an environment closely connected to nature and indigenous culture, Oseng was born in Tomiyac but raised in Taoyuan, where most of his peers were from mainland Chinese families before he went to college. "As a child, I was aware of my indigenous identity, but I was so concerned about how my peers might look at me that I'd deliberately speak with big words and perfect pronunciation of retroflex sounds like Chinese mainlanders do. That's why Uhay likes to tease me by calling me a 'damned mainlander,'" says Oseng with a laugh.

The young couple, despite their completely different backgrounds, is attracted to the Tomiyac Community



Occasionally, Uhay would work with the village elders in the intertidal zone to acquire knowledge about gathering and document it by filming.

by a shared desire to understand the root of their culture. While in college, Oseng met a group of indigenous friends who were enthusiastic about promoting indigenous cultures. He was thus inspired to think about what he can do for indigenous communities. Uhay, on the other hand, was inspired by the shock she experienced while working in the Formosa Aboriginal Singing and Dance Troupe, which sparked her interest in exploring the indigenous culture. “I like who I am as a member of Taiwan’s indigenous community, but to be honest I don’t know quite much about my culture. It wasn’t until I got to understand the historical context behind the music and dance meticulously choreographed by other senior performers that I truly realized what it means to be ‘indigenous.’”

Lifelong Quest for Knowledge about Intertidal Zone Harvesting

Having lived in the Tomiyac Community for nearly 5 years, Uhay considers herself still a beginner in terms of harvesting skills. She divides intertidal zone harvesting practices into three levels based on the difficulties of gathering. The main target for beginners is shellfish that live on rocks, such as cekiw (grata limpet), which would surface at low tide and are easy to spot and catch. Seaweed like kakoton (carrageen moss) is also accessible, but collecting it is a challenging task. This is because it grows on rocks within reach of the waves, which requires one to take advantage of the timing when the waves recede. “We do it in a cycle of five waves. The first three ones are larger, and we have to approach rocks at the

accurate timing as the third wave begins to recede and rush back before the next big wave comes. So it requires at least two persons to team up for the task, with one observing the changes in waves and sea conditions,” Uhay notes.

The intermediate level requires one to swim from one location to another as some targets live on coral rocks offshore, while the highest level involves diving 3 to 4 meters into the sea to collect seaweed and shellfish living down below. “I’m not good at swimming, and that’s why I am always a beginner and never upgrade to a higher level,” says Uhay laughingly. But even for beginners, there are many things to learn about the sea and how to deal with their catch. In addition to collecting, one must be able to identify the wide variety of sea creatures that can be harvested in the intertidal zone. And it is a whole field of learning regarding how to deal with these ingredients, and when and where to eat them.

Take cooking cekiw. To begin with, one has to rinse the shellfish in water, then blanch them quickly in boiling water with a sieve. When they’re cooked, add a sprinkle of salt, and the dish is ready to serve. Other shellfish, like pe’coh (barnacles), are used by locals to make soup. Sometimes seaweed is added to create a rich flavor. In most seafood restaurants, though, they are usually grilled. The seaweed that grows on sand is more trouble to prepare. Upon harvesting, it must undergo several rinsing processes both at the beach and back at home, until it’s clean of sand. Then the processed seaweed must be stored in the freezer before cooking.

As every living thing has its own lifecycle, the target of harvesting varies greatly from season to season. For example, the main catch at the junction of spring and summer is shellfish, which would come in abundant varieties in the summertime. During fall and winter, when the seasonal northeastern winds pick up, harvesting activities are suspended. This is the time for people to rest and for the ocean to recover. When spring comes, the season of collecting seaweed begins. "Seaweed collecting must be done at low tide, and the harvesting season only lasts until the end of April. Afterward, the weather will get so hot that seaweed is liable to be dried up by the sun," Uhay explains.

In general, there is a regular pattern of seasonal harvesting in the intertidal zone, it's not a golden rule that must be followed, though. "It's like calling friends out for playing basketball as casually as we normally do, which depends on the mood and weather of the day. If it feels right, the weather is fine, and waves are good, we'll go out to the beach together."

Be a Bellwether

Despite its vicinity to the sea, the Tomiyac Community does not have taboos or distinctive sea rituals like other Amis communities do. Oseng thinks this could be attributed to its historical background in that the Tomiyac Community relocated from Hualien's Rift Valley to the seaside township of Chenggong for the sake of livelihood. Their purpose of migration is to seek more resources for living, and therefore the village has a different concept of "taboos."

Despite their lack of established ceremonies or rituals to celebrate, the Tomiyac people are endowed with knowledge passed on by the elderly about

the environment they live by, through which a tacit agreement between humans and nature has been established. "The village elders know immediately that a certain kind of shellfish will be lacking upon seeing the depletion of certain seaweed it feeds on. When detecting changes in the environment, like spotting symptoms of illness, they know it's time to change to another location for harvesting to let the land rest and recover." Oseng explains that due to its short history and influence of foreign religions, what the sea ritual means to people here is more symbolic than substantial. "We base our harvesting practices on the respect for the environment and its ecology we live by," he concludes.

The Tomiyac Community owes its unique marine culture to its obscurity that prevents the interference of tourism, which enables its culture to remain completely intact. Yet this also becomes a major driving force that propels young people out of the community. "As the village is unable to develop its own industries, young people who move away from home are liable to be affected by the mainstream culture, failing to appreciate the value of their hometown. That's why we decide to play the role of a bellwether to attract more people to come back," says Oseng.

With a shared purpose of getting close to their root, the couple takes different approaches to recording and preserving Tomiyac's indigenous culture, with Uhay focusing on acquiring the knowledge about intertidal zone harvesting and Oseng emphasizing land issues. Their research happens to constitute a complete system of the community's traditional knowledge. The couple set up a studio and name it "831" after their house number. By doing so they intend to make it a reminder of Tomiyac as their starting point and mark their first step toward achieving their ideals by recording local stories and passing on the village's culture.



pe'coh

cekiw

It's Our Turn

A Glimpse at Present through Objects

to Do Something for the Community

“Easier said than done” is basically cultural revitalization work in a nutshell. When indigenous youths return to their communities, they have to not only adapt to community life, learn their peoples’ cultural knowledge, and figure out how to interact with the local elders, but also come up with cultural preservation and transmission strategies and possibilities in the modern society.

Written by **Kuo Po-Jiun**; Illustrated by **Lin Jia-Dong**; Translated by **Chen Deh-I**

Returning to the Community for Their Theses Nothing Comes Without Effort!

Indigenous youths return to their communities due to many reasons, and “to find a topic for my degree thesis” is among one of them. As more and more people receive higher education in Taiwan, almost everyone has a university degree nowadays; and if they chose to further their studies, eventually they will have to write a thesis. They only have little understanding of their people’s culture, and thus many of them chose to return to their communities to complete their thesis.

The biggest challenge these young students face after coming home is how to assimilate into the local community. Most community members are not that quick to accept outsiders because when the indigenous peoples first had contact with the Non-indigenous people, they were often tricked and lost their land. Yet, on the other hand, the local elders are happy to see the younger generation returning to learn about their native cultural knowledge, so it falls to the youngsters to figure out how to earn the trust of their elders.





Discovering Ways to Let More People Know About Us

The cultural knowledge of indigenous peoples is limitless and complex, and the natural environment of the villages is especially enticing. All of this creates a field of study that is extremely irresistible!

The indigenous youngsters also realize the challenges of learning and carrying on their culture; however, they have more ways to overcome the obstacles and share their traditional cultures with the world. After they have obtained a certain degree of cultural knowledge, the young people usually set up workshops or legal persons and invite community elders to jointly organize events and camps to increase public interactions and exposure. The activities provide wonderful opportunities to promote the value of indigenous culture and village youths can also learn cultural skills during the process.

Spoken Words will Eventually Disappear, but Text will Carry On Forever

Publications and magazines can transmit information and bring people together. The magazine *Kao-Shan-Ching*, published in 1983, was the first publication released by indigenous peoples. Other publications later followed: *Singing for the Mountains*, *Indigenous News*, *Hunters' Culture*, and *The Sounds of the Indigenous Peoples*. Most of these publications cover indigenous social issues and offer a platform for indigenous community members to voice their opinions. But...do all magazines have to be so serious? Take a look at the magazine *952 VAZAY TAMO* and you will see a whole different story!

Founded by six young people who met in Orchid Island, *952 VAZAY TAMO* introduces the indigenous island culture of Orchid Island to the public in an easy-going, down-to-earth manner. Although the publishing circle often jokes, "if you want to make a person's life miserable, tell them to go start a magazine." But look at the impact generated by the magazines mentioned above- the power of words should not be underestimated.

We Control the Outcome of Bringing Tourism into Our Community

Tourism used to bring negative impacts to indigenous communities. Yet nowadays, as tourism trends gradually shift to ecotourism and experience-oriented itineraries, communities are discovering new opportunities and beginning to see the effects of "using tourism to stimulate local culture and industries".

For example, the Pakara'ac Community in Taitung rolled out a new exploration tour that brings tourists to the intertidal zone, and the 'Atolan Community launched a coastal tour that invites guests to learn the indigenous way of living in harmony with the sea. At the same time, in-depth/immersive itineraries are appearing. Local community members serve as guides and introduce the local way of living to visitors. In Orchid Island, for instance, tourists visit underground houses where they can listen to community members talk about their lives. Another itinerary brings travelers into the sea to learn about the ecosystem and ocean environment of Orchid Island.

The tourism industry is a double-sided blade, yet it is also an inevitable trend. Indigenous communities have to change their mindsets and develop opportunities to benefit from the tourism industry.



Making Eco-Friendliness the Norm

Indigenous Water Governance and Possibilities

for Transformation

Written by **Kuljelje · Paljuvaqan**; Photo credit: **Kuljelje · Paljuvaqan** (Associate Professor, Master's Program of Green Energy Science and Technology, Feng Chia University)



Left/Great Chaozhou Artificial Lake and indigenous communities.
Photo credit: Guo Zhi-hao



Right/Er-Feng Canal next to Lai Yi Elementary School.
Photo credit: Lai Yi Township Office Pingtung County

My indigenous name is Kuljelje · Paljuvaqan. I grew up beneath the beauty of Dawu Mountain. Dawu Mountain is famous for its clean water. Linhousilin Flatland Forest Park lies at the mountain's base, a natural environment with vast grasslands, rich forests, and pure spring water from Dawu Mountain.

When I was young, I used to swim, dive, and catch shrimp at the Er-Feng Canal. When typhoons hit, water from the Linbian River surged downstream, roaring as it collided on boulders in the river. After the typhoon passed, I'd walk with my friends from the village to the middle of the suspension bridge to see the swirling torrent. From that vantage point high above the river, you could gaze down on the fertile sugarcane fields on both sides of the river. There was no end in sight.

As I grew up, I learned that Linbian River drains into the Taiwan Strait and that Er-Feng Canal irrigates the southern Pingtung Plain. I realized the places seen with my young eyes were Dawu Mountain, Er-Feng Canal, and the Pingtung Plain. This is where I grew up, experiencing life near water.

The Concept of Water Resources

Some scholars of water conservation and environmental protection say that water governance is about nothing more than quantity and quality. In 1988, for example, UNESCO and the World Metrological Organization (WMO) defined water resources as “water available, or capable of being made available, for use in sufficient quantity and quality at a location and over a period of time appropriate for an identifiable demand”.

When my father was a teacher at Lai Yi Elementary School in Pingtung County, he often took me to see the night scenery. Next to the school’s night office was Er-Feng Canal’s primary water diversion facility. The water in the canal’s collection corridor was clear and pure, thanks to the indigenous communities upstream. Their land protection ensures the abundance of clean water that irrigates and nourishes fields downriver, which creates a culture corridor. It’s Lai Yi Township’s ideal location for environmental education.

As a child, I didn’t know it was the famed Er-Feng Canal. I only knew the water was always clean and pure. By 2021, the famous Great Chaozhou Artificial Lake sat in front of my family’s ancestral home. The lake’s construction was so important that President Tsai Ing-Wen presided over the ribbon-cutting

ceremony. The 300-hectare Great Chaozhou Artificial Lake was built to reduce land subsidence in Jiadung, Linbian, and Fangliao Townships. By replenishing groundwater through the lake, subsidence in downstream coastal areas is slowed, and 100,000 cubic meters of groundwater is supplied per day. The water comes from the upper reaches of the Linbian River, an area closely connected to indigenous territory.

Self-Sufficient, Sustainable Community Built on the Concept of Symnergy

My studies are related to green energy, bioenergy, and environmental engineering. I have researched technology to convert high concentration organic wastewater into green bioenergy. The problem of limited energy and resources is a bottleneck that scientists are committed to breaking through. We hope to find energy that takes into account both environmental protection and human development.

I conducted the Gaseous Biomass Energy System Demonstration in Rural Area of Manado City Indonesia under the National Energy Program-Phase II to help the flood-stricken Indonesian city of Manado build the Demo and Training Power Station of Two-Stage Biohythane Production (HyMeTek). This facility will convert manure and agricultural waste into electricity, and help deal with



Demo and Training Power Station of Two-Stage Biohythane Production (HyMeTek) in Manado.

local power shortages caused by a major disaster. Generating electricity from biomass can help reduce dependence on coal and oil. It's renewable, and it's very eco-friendly.

The idea to cooperate can be traced back to the APEC Energy Working Group conference held in Wellington, New Zealand in 2017. We learned that a flood hit Manado in 2014 that displaced about 2,500 families. The government tried to help affected residents relocate, but power shortages and organic waste created by local agricultural activities were problems. If the waste was not handled properly, it would cause serious pollution and waste natural resources. Then, "symnergy" (symbiosis bioenergy) was introduced to Manado. Organic waste is converted into energy using biomass conversion technology that can treat organic solid waste and wastewater and achieve dual benefits of environmental protection and energy recovery.

Symnergy is an integrated model of biological waste management. It can improve a community's environment, benefit the economy and education, and create jobs. Symnergy outputs biogas, bioelectricity, and bio-fertilizers in a cycle of biomass energy, bio-economy, and agricultural products that allows communities to reach sustainability.

Bailang Village in Indonesia lacks electrical supply. A neighboring slaughterhouse provides a source of biogas. Many flood victims live in this area. Low incomes lead to low education, fewer job opportunities, and a decreased standard of living. The local community accepted HyMeTek- and the difference new job opportunities makes to villagers. By replacing liquefied petroleum gas with biogas, villagers can earn additional yearly income from bioenergy generation. They plant chili peppers using bio-fertilizers produced by the biogas plant, and sell them to earn extra income. This confirms the Symnergy model's self-sufficiency and positive impact on the environment and community.

We built another biohythane-based power plant in Thailand's Northeastern Science Park. In my "smart city and environmental simulation" course at Feng Chia University's iSchool, I use the CDIO innovative teaching model to lead undergraduates, graduates, and Ph. D. students through problem solving projects. Using compound renewable electricity supply to "optimize smart green energy technology", biogas, solar energy, and hydropower generation are

integrated. We brought this model to Alang Gluban and the Green Birth Farm at Alang Togan. The circular economy model can be used for the application and transformation of indigenous resource governance concepts.

A Beautiful Hometown Starts with Eco-Friendliness and Sustainability.

When I was in the second or third grade, Taiwan Sugar built two hog farms in Pingtung, one beside the road between Dawu Mountain and Chao Zhou Township, the other near Er-Feng Canal. Around that time, my mom got a job at Taiwan Sugar's hog farm. I remember writing my assignments on the floor of a pen after it was cleaned. There were no bad odors, only the pleasant smell of pig feed. Over time, the equipment of forty years ago and poor procedures reduced wastewater treatment efficiency. Hog farms without wastewater treatment facilities and medium-sized farms that didn't want to increase wastewater treatment began relocating near indigenous communities to evade government inspections. They discharged untreated wastewater under the cover of night, the foul odor particular to hog farming wafting over the village from time to time.

This isn't an impossible problem. Northeast of County Highway 185 is the hometown of the indigenous peoples of Dawu Mountain. Paiwan and Rukai peoples there have a good farming environment and strong cultures. To the west is the Pingtung



A large-scale, high-efficiency biogas power plant in Europe.



Taiwan's first two-stage anaerobic pig farm biogas plant.

Plain, formed by the Linbian, Donggang, Ailiao, and Gaoping Rivers. The Pingtung Plain produces a wide variety of cash crops, like rice, bananas, wax apples, pineapples, Adzuki beans, red quinoa, red dragon fruit, black beans, coffee, and cocoa. In satellite images this land looks like the vast agricultural areas of Europe.

Drive for a few minutes across the countryside and you can see one of Europe's 20,000 large-scale, high-efficiency biogas power plant. To raise the proportion of renewable energy, those facilities treat the high-strength organic wastewater and agricultural waste and generate green energy. The biogas residue and slurry can be used as fertilizer that improves crop yields and maintains soil fertility.

In Nantou County I had the chance to meet the operators of Xin He Xing Ranch. They are keen to reduce the environmental impact of pig farming. We hit it off and decided to build the world's first biohythane power plant on a hog farm. Since it began operating in 2019, the plant has eliminated wastewater odors and generated income from selling energy on the wholesale market. If we can combine bioenergy and green technologies to convert agricultural waste for use in biogas power plants, we believe people, indigenous and non-

indigenous, can deal with the problem of organic agricultural wastewater. Crops can endlessly grow, and future generations can live and work in peace and happiness. Since the 21st century, humans have been suffering from the impact of climate change. The challenges we now face stem from our disregard for the environment and greed for resources. Humans must reconcile with the Earth. It's the responsibility of everyone on Earth to start from eco-friendliness and sustainability.

Vast fields extend thousands of miles. Intersecting paths in rice paddies. Magnificent clouds and blue skies. A boundless landscape. Pingtung Plain is like spring year-round. It's my beautiful hometown. As I walk down its country roads, the most wonderful moments between Heaven and Earth are etched into my memory to be cherished in my heart forever.

Kuljelje · Paljuvaqan

Associate Professor, Master's Program of Green Energy Science and Technology; Director, Institute of Green Products, Feng Chia University. Specialized fields: biohythane, bioplastics, fluidized bed engineering, hydrogen energy and green technology, circular economy.



International Perspective

Ocean Governance in Palau

The ocean environment in Palau boasts of the most diversified coral reef ecosystem in the Micronesia archipelago, it is also the international biodiversity hot spot between Polynesia to Micronesia and sits at the heart of species survival globally.

Written by **Chen Yu-Ping**; Photo credits: **Chen Yu-Ping & Top Photo Group**; Translated by **Ker Nai-Yu**



For the longest time, Palauans have prohibited fishing during the reproduction and foraging periods to maintain ecological balance. This method has now been broadly applied to cover the majority of the country's exclusive economic zone. In 2015, the Palau government adopted a law to set up the Palau National Marine Sanctuary (PNMS), which was officially launched on January 1st, 2020. The Palau government has closed 80% of their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and banned all fishing and marine resource gathering activities, while the remaining 20% of the EEZ is reserved as Domestic Fishing Zone (DFZ) in support of local food security and economic opportunities.



Giant oceanic manta ray in the waters of Palau.



This extremely “advanced” ocean protection project combines traditional conservation ideas and scientific knowledge of ecology and is built on the existing Palau Protected Area Network (PAN). They have in recent years collaborated on the Pristine Sea Project with the National Geographic Society to evaluate a marine protected area, then engaged in collaborative research with Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions before executing the project in 2020.

bul, the Traditional Ocean Governance

Prior to being ruled by western countries, traditional leaders and their kinship had the customary marine tenure in Palau. Customary marine tenure is defined as “a special group with official or nonofficial rights to the coastal areas, and according to customs, their right to use and access to marine resources is exclusive, transferrable, and mandatory.” This definition includes bul (meaning restrictions, as in temporary cease of fishing or gathering) and religious taboos in the Palauan concept. Violation of such principles or taboos will lead to punishment, exile, humiliation, or even death by execution, such cultural practices also maintain the sustainability of marine resources.

The Spanish first colonized Palau in 1885, followed by Germany, Japan, and the US. During the Japanese and US ruling periods, the introduction of their legal and economic systems weakened the power of traditional ocean governance, fishing became open to all without restrictions, and hence the reduction of fish stocks over the years. Palau declared independence in 1994 but is still politically tied to the US government, the Palau federal government

also continues to adopt the American political system including bicameralism, respective constitutions for all 16 state governments, and state governors are legally elected; the national constitution also grants local governments powers including the power to enact and execute laws. All state governments incorporate traditional law in their local government system, which causes tension between the execution of traditional law and statutory law. Such tension is also reflected between the traditional leader and elected leader, and further extended to the governance of marine resources.

Throughout the entire 1990s, traditional leaders, state governments, and the nation fought over control of marine resources. Later, the court supported the nation's right to establish and execute regulations regarding the use of marine resources, giving users of such resources (various state governments) a high degree of autonomy and the right to establish a collective decision-making mechanism and rules regarding marine resources.

The Essential Concept of the Multi-Centered Governance of bul

In the 1980s, various state governments actively executed their right to manage their resources, and by the mid-1990s to early 2000s, almost every state control fishing activity via the practice of bul and establishing the Marine Protected Area (MPA), the Palauan government collectively named bul and MPA as conservation areas. In 2003, there were at least

26 conservation areas in 13 states, and starting in 2007, every state has at least one conservation area.

According to the collective decision-making mechanism then, the power to establish rules regarding the conservation areas was given to chiefs and state governments. In some cases, the co-management commission includes traditional leaders, the state government, and community members, NGOs are allowed to take part as well. The rules managing the conservation area all vary, mostly including rules regarding borders, surveillance, and conflict-resolving, with different levels of sanctions from humiliation, penalty to incarceration. The high degree of local self-government then led to a multi-centered and individually planned management of the conservation areas.

Create a Multi-Centered Decision-Making System through PAN

In 2003, Palau drafted the Protected Area Network (PAN) Act. The main concept is proposed by Palauans/non-Palauans, and they wish to develop a science-based national protected area network to maintain marine biodiversity. With structural reform, relevant authorities within local conservation areas are included in the new national authority, and in doing so, some local administrative power is transferred to the central government. The legitimate reason for this power transfer is to maintain the natural status of the ecology, therefore the scale of conservation areas must be expanded.



Palau is determined to preserve its natural ecology, so human destruction is rarely seen along the coastline.

With marine ecology recovered, animals can often be seen along the coast.



There were two forces pushing for the establishment of PAN, one was the mass whitening of coral reef in 1998 which raised public awareness on the threat of climate change. The public believed that to maintain the continuity, expression, and resilience of the ecology, a larger scale of protected areas is required, instead of the individually managed conservation areas demarcated by each state. Ecological continuity became the first priority of conservation, in turn facilitating structural reform while achieving the redistribution of decision-making power. Secondly, in response to the 2002 Convention on Biological Diversity, the nation began providing financial support, and through the originally multi-centered management, PAN covered conservations areas across state borders, making the nation and NGOs the main opinion leaders instead and thus enabling a more centralized decision-making mechanism.

However, state governments were worried that they would lose ownership of their conservation areas and also concerned that they have no resources available to sustain the operation of PAN, so no member signed on to join the PAN from its enactment in 2003 until 2008. In 2008, the Palau government amended the Act ensuring the ownership and management of state governments. By creating a Management Council, the roles played by the nation and NGOs are restricted, giving official power to resource users, including the power to make comprehensive planning and system management projects, and resource users are all entitled to raise opinions and make decisions. Meanwhile, an amendment was also made to collect a \$15 USD Green Fee from every visitor starting 2009. The amendment eased the concerns of various state governments and joined the network one after another. With PAN leading the structural reform, the basic multi-layered co-management model in Palau gradually took shape and showed the world that a collaborative network is only possible when local authorities have the power to make their own decisions.

Establishment of the Palau International Marine Sanctuary

In 2015, the Palau government planned to establish the Palau National Marine Sanctuary (PNMS) by 2020, with the duty of operation shared by the Palau Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment, and Tourism, Ministry of Justice, and International Coral Reef Center. The former two authorities are responsible for establishing administrative rules and providing legal support, while the latter is responsible for scientific research and education campaigns.

Economic income in the area will support the operations of various organizations in Palau, including fishes caught within restricted areas taxed if exported, and every inbound visitor is charged a \$100 USD Pristine Paradise Environmental Fee upon entry at the airport.

Global warming is increasing affecting the ecological environment of island countries. The reason Palau is able to establish such an advanced marine protected area is not only because of bul, the Palauan traditional knowledge, but also because PAN has laid the foundation for multi-layered cooperation. With integration and pooling of resources, external resources and scientific knowledge is combined with planning and management and becoming the key capability to combating the critical challenges posed by climate change in the world today.

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Nation vs. Community

How should We Depend On This Ocean?

Fisheries Act and Coastal Zone Management Act

Pangcah people living on the coast always dub the ocean “our refrigerator.” We feel very at home in the ocean. As the concept of “nation” emerged, however, the enactment of regulations has intervened how we use the ocean. “Our refrigerator” has hence become so distant and inaccessible because we, who are afraid of unconsciously breaking laws, keep our distance from it.

Written by **Hafay Nikar**; Photo credit: **Top Photo Corporation**; Translated by **Lai Yu-Hsuan**

The indigenous peoples living along the coast rely on the oceans not only for gathering food, but also passing down their heritage. Take the Makota’ay Community in Fongbin Township in Hualien County as an example. Their religious belief in the God of Sea drives the villagers to be grateful for the fishery resources. In the interaction of human with nature and the supernatural, what oceans bring about are not only limited to material resources, but also the bond that links people, and so become a crucial locus for social relationships.

As the government has continuously enacted regulations pertinent to oceans, how indigenous peoples rely on the sea has been gradually restricted. We have to stay alert while we go fishing. We look back to the shore from time to time trying to check if coast guards are around, as if we are teetering on the brink of law violation. To make things worse, drowning incidents resulting from marine recreation have been exacerbated by the mass media, and oceans hence have been labelled “dangerous,” “frightening,” and “unsafe.” Oceans have then become unapproachable; our environment has become distant.



For now, national laws relevant to indigenous peoples' use of oceans include "Coastal Zone Management Act" and "Fisheries Act," from which a myriad of branch laws result, bringing far-reaching impacts to indigenous peoples. These two acts will be described further in the article. Other regulations such as "Wildlife Conservation Act," which governs the species of fish approved for fish catch, and the "Laws of Ships," which manages ship registration and entry/exit of the border, also affect the extent to which indigenous peoples rely on oceans, but the intervention is less prevailing.

Fisheries Act

The "Fisheries Act" as the principal law governing fishery activity extends over an extensive area of matters including the creation of fishing rights, the practice of fishing, conservation and use of fishery, and relevant penalties. Among most decrees, indigenous peoples are hit hard the most by this act.

Focus of the Act:

- Fishing licenses: fishery operators shall obtain fishing licenses approved by competent authorities.
- Creation of fishing rights: only fishermen's associations or fisheries production cooperatives are qualified for exclusive fishing rights. To exercise fishery access privilege, it is imperative to join either organisation in question.
- Marine and fishery conservation zone: when appropriate, competent authorities can establish conservation zones to regulate conservation targets and fishing gear, fishing methods, fishing areas, and fishing periods.
- Restrictions: fishing with poison, dynamite, or electric charges is prohibited.

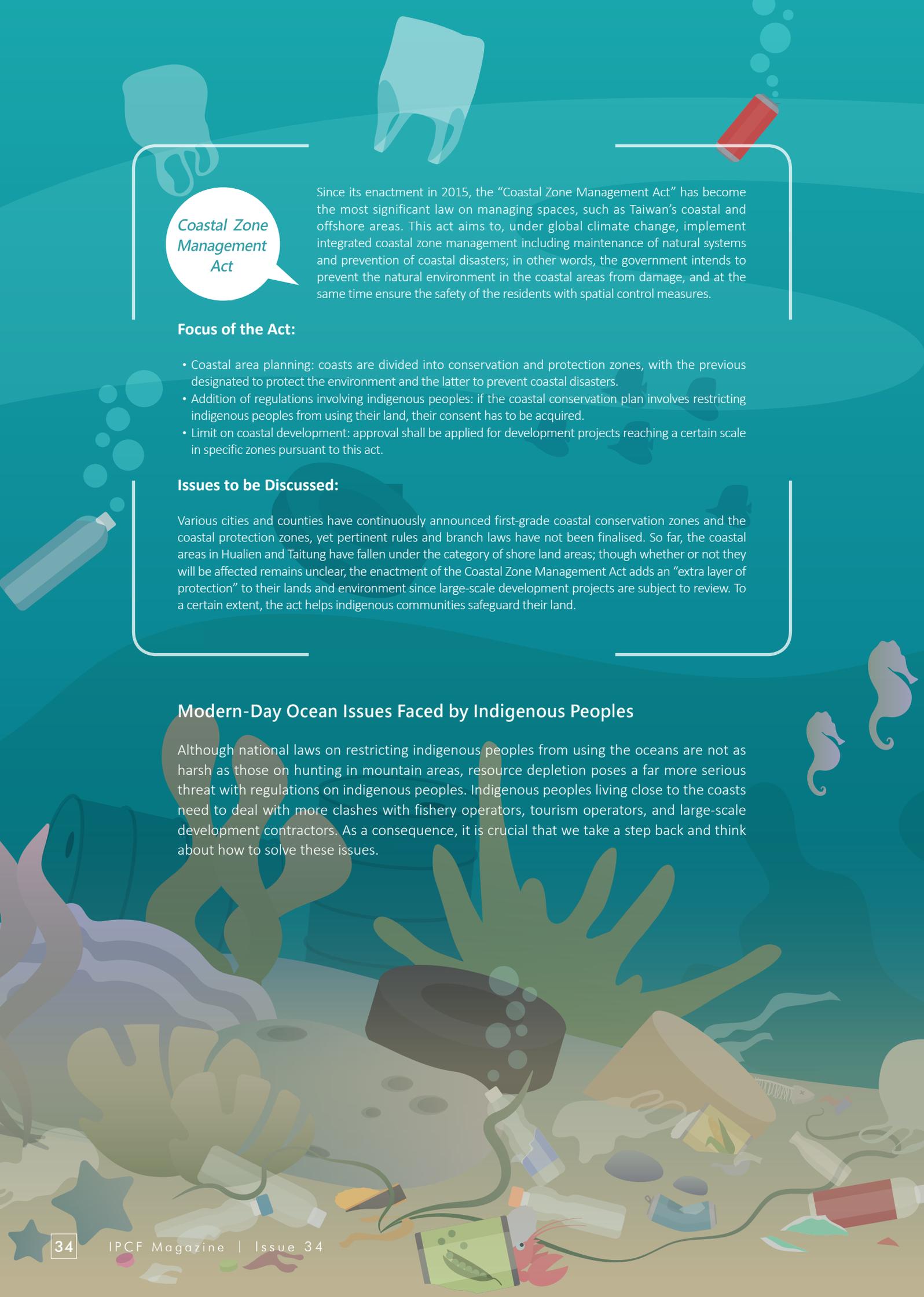
Issues to be Discussed:

• Restrictions on fishing vessels

In the past, a large number of indigenous peoples went fishing on fishing vessels or bamboo rafts, which had been built by themselves. Examples are fishing nets made up of hemp twine by Kavalan and Pangcah people along the east coast and the planked, wooden fishing boats built by Tao people on Orchid Island to catch flying fish. In accordance with the present regulations, however, to fish on fishing boats requires membership of a fishermen's association. Whether or not a fishing vessel has to be registered also depends on its operation, not to mention the qualification of crew members. Endless red tape has gradually turned fishing on fishing boats too specialised.

• The repercussions of the establishment of marine and fishery conservation zones

The Fisheries Act stipulates that competent authorities can set up conservation zones, but this decree does not include public participation; nor does it specify the need to obtain consent from indigenous peoples. For instance, a conservation zone has been established in the vicinity of the Makota'ay Community's fishing area. Although only lobsters and Taiwan abalone are targeted for conservation, which is recognised by the villagers, the real culprit that puts marine creatures in peril is, in effect, large-scale commercial fishing. Therefore, comprehensive control and management, instead of limitation on single species, is what really matters.



Coastal Zone Management Act

Since its enactment in 2015, the “Coastal Zone Management Act” has become the most significant law on managing spaces, such as Taiwan’s coastal and offshore areas. This act aims to, under global climate change, implement integrated coastal zone management including maintenance of natural systems and prevention of coastal disasters; in other words, the government intends to prevent the natural environment in the coastal areas from damage, and at the same time ensure the safety of the residents with spatial control measures.

Focus of the Act:

- Coastal area planning: coasts are divided into conservation and protection zones, with the previous designated to protect the environment and the latter to prevent coastal disasters.
- Addition of regulations involving indigenous peoples: if the coastal conservation plan involves restricting indigenous peoples from using their land, their consent has to be acquired.
- Limit on coastal development: approval shall be applied for development projects reaching a certain scale in specific zones pursuant to this act.

Issues to be Discussed:

Various cities and counties have continuously announced first-grade coastal conservation zones and the coastal protection zones, yet pertinent rules and branch laws have not been finalised. So far, the coastal areas in Hualien and Taitung have fallen under the category of shore land areas; though whether or not they will be affected remains unclear, the enactment of the Coastal Zone Management Act adds an “extra layer of protection” to their lands and environment since large-scale development projects are subject to review. To a certain extent, the act helps indigenous communities safeguard their land.

Modern-Day Ocean Issues Faced by Indigenous Peoples

Although national laws on restricting indigenous peoples from using the oceans are not as harsh as those on hunting in mountain areas, resource depletion poses a far more serious threat with regulations on indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples living close to the coasts need to deal with more clashes with fishery operators, tourism operators, and large-scale development contractors. As a consequence, it is crucial that we take a step back and think about how to solve these issues.

1 Lack of Fishery Resources

Overfishing stemming from the development of the fishery economy is ubiquitous in oceans around the world. Environmentalists point an accusing finger at indigenous peoples, who fish with spearguns, over damaging the environment, causing tensions between the two, but these environmental issues remain unsolved.

The clashes of this sort cannot be resolved simply with governmental order. You can think about what we can do under the circumstances to strike a balance between conflicting interests; namely fishermen's lives, sustainability of indigenous cultures, and protection of natural systems.

2 Marine Debris

Floating marine debris along with microplastics that are not compostable spreads all over the world. For indigenous peoples who dub oceans their refrigerators, marine debris that accumulates along the coasts seems like keeping litter at home. This is not simply havoc on ecology, but home invasions.

For now, the world relies on civil groups organising the clean-up of beaches or oceans. However, there is still seafloor marine debris such as abandoned fishing nets, PE bottles, and plastic products getting stuck in reefs, which is literally a nightmare for indigenous peoples fishing under the water.

3 Marine Recreation

In recent years, more people have started to take part in marine recreational activities ranging from early-day whale watching, sea fishing, snorkelling, and diving to recently popular jet-skiing, stand-up paddling, canoeing, surfing, etc. The number of people using the beach for leisure increases year on year.

In order to plan more space for new types of marine entertainment, tourism operators invade the oceans once used by the indigenous peoples for daily life. Fish escape to other places as their habitats are disturbed by tourists, turning up in hordes. This development changes the original ecological systems and creates conflicts between villagers and operators of aquatic tourism.

The national policies of earlier days forced indigenous peoples to stay away from sea, which then became available for fishing. Thus, the connection between indigenous peoples and the oceans became disconnected. Nowadays, however, ocean ecology has experienced tremendous change, and problems resulting from the change cannot be dealt with by a single community or group. This is the time when the governmental authority is indispensable for restoring marine ecology and raising public awareness of protecting marine environment. When it comes to marine issues, the nation and communities have to work hand in hand. What are the possibilities for collaborations to defend this great blue homeland?

New generation taking up the baton!
See the 34th issue for the section *Seasoned* >>