



Responsible Tourism Policy

Introduction

Cempedak Island is a 17ha island in the South China Sea just 12km off the south east coast of Bintan, Indonesia. Two thirds of the island is covered in virgin rainforest and the coral reef surrounding the island is rich in marine life.

For the owners this is their second project having developed nearby Nikoi Island that opened in 2007. Nikoi has won or been selected as a finalist in a long list of sustainable tourism award programs.

Cempedak was a deserted island when the owners acquired the titles to the property. Very little is known as to whether the island was ever occupied. The current owners, are a small group of expatriates who were disenchanted with the standard of holiday accommodation on offer within close range of Singapore. Cultural sensitivity, vernacular design, privacy and simple luxuries seemed unheard of.

Instead of advertising the approach has been donate what might have otherwise spent on advertising to The Island Foundation, a registered charity in Singapore and Indonesia was established by the owners of Nikoi in 2009. This same foundation has begun work to help villages in the area around Cempedak.

Philosophy and Approach to Responsible Tourism

Cempedak Island is quite unique in many respects. The concept has challenged, at all levels, the preconceived norms of guests and stakeholders. From an environmentally friendly design that avoids the use of air-conditioning, to the use of fixed menus in the restaurants, to the establishment of a foundation, to the minimal use of energy and the recycling of water and waste; Cempedak like Nikoi are developments that go beyond what any other hotel in the region has done in terms of sustainability. In the process the owners have shown that responsible tourism can be profitable for all stakeholders and beneficial to the environment and without guests feeling that their comfort has been compromised.

From the outset, the building and operation of Cempedak has been along strict sustainable lines. The owners were keen to take what had been learnt on Nikoi and improve on it. As a member of the The Long Run, the objective has been to try and achieve an optimal balance of Conservation, Community, Culture and Commerce (the "4Cs"). This was adopted from the outset and has been a core component of the masterplan for the property.

Conservation

Cempedak's commitment to conservation is to ensure that not only is the environment protected, but also to ensure that where it has been damaged, efforts



are made to restore it. An important task in protecting the environment is to educate guests and the local population. There are guided nature walk and sustainability tours available for guests who are interested. Regular surveys of the flora and fauna have been undertaken and are updated by one of Singapore's leading naturalists.

A marine conservation consultant and a consulting naturalist have been engaged to help survey and better understand the local flora and fauna and marine habitat. It is the owners goal to try and establish a Marine Conservation Area that would include a No Take Zone. A program to replanting corals has been established in order to protect marine ecosystem.

The owners have wanted to show that luxury does not need to be a room full of electronic gadgetry and fancy fittings but rather simplicity, privacy, space and honest and friendly service are the pinnacle of real luxury.

Total energy and water consumption levels will be well beyond best practice. With the experience of operating Nikoi the owners have taken care to install the latest technology to reduce the impact on the environment. Their commitment to minimizing energy consumption goes even further with plans to install a 45kWp solar PV array and battery bank that allows the island's generator to be switched off for up to 12 hours a day.

During the build Cempedak has gone to huge lengths to reduce, recycle, reuse or upcycle any building waste. No single use plastic bottles are shipped to the island and chickens and a kitchen garden helped keep the construction team fed. Suppliers are asked to only ship in reusable containers. All recyclable waste (steel, aluminium and paper is returned to Bintan where it is sold/given to local collectors. Food waste is composted using an integrated system of biopods containing Black Soldier Fly larvae and red worms. A glass pulveriser processes glass bottles to fine sand that is used in cement. There is no glass recycling program on Bintan. Sewerage waste is treated in aerobic septic systems and then finished in waste water gardens that extract the nitrates and phosphates that cannot be removed through the septic systems. The resulting water can then be used for gardening and toilet flush.

Many of the goods and souvenirs sold on the island are made from recycled products. This includes flip flops made from car tyres and bags made from recycled rice bags.

Community

Not only was Cempedak built and is operated using local materials, labour and services but the owners have taken this one step further and taught many of their contractors and staff new trades and techniques. This not only makes operational sense but it also means that in the long run there is a mutual respect with the local community and the staff and tradesman take greater pride in their work. In a number of cases staff run micro businesses that support the business.

Cempedak buys almost 100% of its supplies in local markets and from small traders. Wherever possible middlemen are avoided and locals are actively helped to establish businesses that supply fresh, sustainable and organic produce. The owners have helped establish many businesses including a car rental business that has seen a ten fold increase in their business since the operation was begun several years ago. The supplier of 'alang alang' for the grass roofs is another example of where the owners have helped them set up by providing training and support to help improve their product and service ultimately allowing them to provide a better product and charge a higher price.

All of the staff working for Cempedak including our GM are Indonesian, except one staff hired as Guest Relations Manager. Many of the staff started working for Nikoi during the construction phase and have gone on to learn new skills that have allowed them to work in front of house roles. Staff work a 5 day week whereas the standard working week in Indonesia is a 6 day one. A savings and loans scheme has been established that has helped the staff build nest eggs and borrow at more favourable rates than are available from local banks. Both formal and informal training is offered as well and a number of staff have external mentors.

The most significant impact that Nikoi has had on the local community has been through the establishment of The Island Foundation to work with the local community on Bintan and neighbouring islands to help them to help themselves. The programs being run by the Foundation are being rolled out in the villages near to Cempedak.

Initially the focus of the Foundation's efforts has been to establish a network of learning centres so that the local children can learn English and IT. This need was identified by villager leaders as one of their most pressing needs. In many ways these learning centres are becoming more like community centres as the programs being run have expanded to teach adults English and IT, health, nutrition, football sanitation and arts and crafts. The owners are extremely proud of what has been achieved with the Foundation dedicating significant time, money and resources.

Over 500 children are registered at the 7 learning centres that have been established to date. By educating these children in English and IT they have access to a whole new world of learning and education. The Foundation also provides teacher training workshops for teachers. These workshops are recognized by the Ministry of Education and allow teachers who attend them to obtain higher salaries. The impact has been much greater than for just the 500 children registered and we estimate that 8,000 villagers are benefiting directly from our programs.

In addition to education the Foundation established a retail brand (Kura Kura) to help sell and market arts and crafts as well as establishing the first organized sports program on Bintan for children. This program was developed in such a way that the villages have appointed their own committees and sub-committees to run it. The Foundation provides coaching staff, equipment (sold through a village shop on buy back scheme) and ground maintenance.



All of the Foundation's programs are run along secular lines. One of the villagers that we work very closely with is the indigenous Orang Laut or sea nomads. We have been working with them to develop an arts and crafts business, improved education and through our close contacts with the government opened up a dialogue with the government for them to address the issues that face this marginalized community. We introduced the idea of jewellery making and introduced them to designers from Swarovski Jewellery who helped them improve their techniques. This culminated in the exhibition of a fishing net sewn with crystals that was displayed at the National Museum of Singapore in January 2015. The net was auctioned off to raise money for a water treatment system that was installed for the village in 2016.

The fact that the Foundation is registered as a charity in both Singapore and Indonesia has made it more attractive to external donors and the day-to-day functioning of the Foundation more transparent. In this way the Foundation is growing to be a bigger entity than it would if the funding only came from Nikoi and Cempedak.

As a result of this the Foundation is now working with several institutions that support it through the provision of resources and donations (2 of which have committed S\$1mn to date). The Foundation has an excellent relationship with several schools in Singapore, notably United World College who have helped develop a bilingual curriculum, run teacher training workshops for local teachers, the provision of books and other teaching materials.

Culture

Bintan has always been relatively sparsely populated and therefore has lacked the strong cultural identity that you find in other parts of Indonesia. Migration from other parts of Indonesia has diluted this further. There are very few culturally significant sites on the island and none either on Nikoi itself or on Bintan. Nevertheless we have worked hard to help document and salvage what remains.

Included as part of the activities offered to guests is a Cultural Trip program which takes guests to local villages. These trips introduce Bintan traditional culture to guests. A fee is paid to the local village for each visit. This goes to helping them make improvements to the village.

The Foundation has helped document and promote local culture through several programs. We have funded cultural exchange programs and sponsored a number of local cultural events. The arts and crafts program that the Foundation has helped set up has developed revitalize a number of dying art forms. In addition the Foundation has been helping the villagers document their history, stories and traditions.

The business sponsors a local jong race (model sailing boats). These events have helped revive the racing of jongs on this coastline and helped create greater interest for the younger generation in this fascinating cultural tradition. In 2016 a coastal clean up of three fishing villages was organized, a first for the area. As part of that

even cultural dances and the food stalls were organized all without the use of any plastic.

Commerce

Cempedak is operated on the overriding principle that a profitable business is the most sustainable one. A significant portion of the company's profits are reinvested each year to continue to grow the business and develop further opportunities. The owners have a desire to continue to grow the business as expansion will allow the company to further build on their efforts in respect of Conservation, Culture and Community.

The company takes a holistic approach to commerce and by being seen as a valuable resource both in terms of employment and business opportunities for the community the community will see the benefits in working with the company. The most visible aspect of this has been the commitment to The Island Foundation.

All of the staff earn above market rates, have employment contracts and are provided accommodation, meals and medical cover free of charge. When medical treatment has not been available locally we have paid for staff and their family members to Singapore for treatment.

The company has helped a number of start up businesses develop or expand. Cempedak has a preference for using local suppliers and service providers owned by local individuals.

Recognition - Awards

[HICAP Sustainable Hotel Awards 2017 \(Winner of Sustainable Design category\)](#)

[National Geographic Traveller Big Sleep Awards 2017 \(Winner of Castaway category\)](#)

[Conde Nast Traveller The Hot List 2017](#)

Achievements to date

Below is a list of the achievements that we have made under The Island Foundation:

1. Established 7 learning centres with plans to open more ☐
2. Developed a curriculum that helps children with their 6Cs (confidence, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, curiosity, cooperation)
3. 500 children registered at the learning centres
4. All children are assessed for their knowledge of English and IT ☐
4. Running daily classes in English and IT ☐
5. Provided employment for the locals staffing the learning centres ☐
6. Developed a strong link with UWCSEA to the extent that 10th grade students collaborate with TIF on a community project as part of their curriculum



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7. Developed an impact assessment so the impact of the teaching can be assessed
8. Registered the foundation as a charity in both Singapore and Indonesia ☐
9. Hosted batik workshops for 40 locals by Singapore's leading batik artist Said Sakarsi ☐
10. Hosted teacher training workshops in conjunction with UWC one of Singapore's ☐
☐leading international schools ☐
11. Established a retail brand (Kura Kura) to sell local arts and crafts ☐
12. Helped villagers develop artisanal products to be sold under the Kura Kura brand ☐
13. Planted mangroves and mahogany trees ☐
14. Arranged for school students from Singapore to teach at the libraries ☐
15. Organized for Singapore based musicians to perform at local schools ☐
16. Organized for Nikoi's naturalist to talk to the children about the environment ☐
17. Established a program for guests visiting Nikoi to donate books to the libraries
18. Raised hundreds of thousands of dollars from external donors to help fund the Foundation
17. In conjunction with the National University of Singapore designed and installed a PV ☐
☐system to power laptops for the libraries ☐
18. Filmed and documented local cultural events ☐
19. Helped locate patients for a Cleft Palate program run by Smile ☐
20. Organized a group of village leaders to visit the PDA programs in Cambodia and Thailand ☐
21. Helped organize and sponsor annual jong (traditional model sailing boat) races ☐
22. Worked closely with Orang Laut village in Berakit to protect 2 kilns to be used for alternative uses (the government was going to tear them down) ☐
23. Established a pilot program to show villagers how to control mosquito populations using ovitraps ☐
24. Developed a bilingual curriculum for learning centres ☐
25. Helped preserve two charcoal kilns to be developed as museums for local villagers ☐
26. In conjunction with Swarovski crystals helped the villages make a fishing net that was exhibited in the National Museum of Singapore. It was subsequently auctioned off to raise money to build a fresh water treatment system for the village that was built in 2015
27. Established a learning farm for growing organic products and doing experiment on composting
28. Established a weekly football program
29. Organised a medical screening for more than 100 villagers
30. "Plastic Ocean" movie screening in two learning centres attracting more than 200 viewers
established drinking water system and bottling plant to be managed by Panglong villagers

Below is a list of Cempedak's achievements to date:

1. A vernacular building design which has minimal visual impact ☐
2. Siting of all buildings and infrastructure to avoid cutting down trees and major☐earthworks ☐



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3. All natural materials and some recycled materials (ie driftwood), bamboo, along along, rubberwood, recycled teak furniture, sand floors, sand paths
4. Furniture built on site using driftwood, construction scraps and recycled timber
5. Natural ventilation instead of air-conditioning
6. Solar hot water systems installed throughout the property
7. Recycling of water for toilet flush and gardening
8. Minimal landscape lighting so as not to disorientate nightlife (particularly nesting turtles)
9. Low voltage LED lighting used exclusively
10. No tvs, dvds, phones or mini-bar fridges helping to reduce overall consumption of
manmade materials and overall energy consumption
11. Planting of indigenous trees and shrubs
12. Local building materials were used almost exclusively
13. Local tradesman (training many in the process)
14. Local produce is used almost exclusively and almost no processed food is purchased
15. Fairtrade Indonesian coffee used
16. Boats were constructed and are maintained by local shipwrights
17. Recycling of waste (aluminum, glass, paper, cardboard and kitchen waste)
18. Single use plastic drinking water bottles are banned
19. No imported or local mineral waters are sold on the island
20. Carbonation of Cempedak's own water for soft drinks and mineral water
21. Homemade syrups for soft drinks (ginger, lemongrass, hibiscus, tonic water, nutmeg)
22. No drinks in plastic bottles are sold
23. Banning of plastic straws (handmade bamboo ones are used)
24. Drinking water is provided in reusable glass bottles
25. No printed brochures
26. Minimal use of plastic both in operations and in construction
27. Almost no painted surfaces
28. No fogging for mosquito or insects
29. Natural mosquito control using an automated ovitrap
30. Lemon grass planted around houses to repel mosquitoes
31. Toiletries made from natural ingredients are supplied in reusable containers
32. Biodegradable takeaway packaging and bags used
33. Sunscreen sold on island is reef friendly
34. Naturally dried laundry
35. Implemented a fixed menu to reduce food waste
36. Homemade muesli, juices, jams, bread, sambal, bar snacks, coconut milk, ice creams
37. Herbs, spices and some fruits are grown on the island
38. Minimal processed food used
39. Compliance with WWF sustainable seafood guide
40. Daily cleaning of beaches and removal of garbage
41. Organised regular cleans up of neighbouring islands
42. Established a micro enterprise for villagers to collect polystyrene foam on nearby beaches and recycle it for fill in bean bags. Bean bags made from recycled sails.
43. Swimming pools all using salt water chlorinator and energy efficient variable speed



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pumps

44. Petitioning of Singapore port authorities to stop dumping at sea
45. Established a coastal surveillance system to monitor and report on illegal dumping
46. Ensured an undisturbed inter-tidal zone
47. More than two thirds of the island has been preserved as a sanctuary
48. Regular surveys of the island's flora and fauna (land and marine) by external consultants.
49. Camera traps to used to study flora and fauna
50. Flora and fauna information guides in each guest rooms
51. Detailed description on our environmental policy and CSR policies in the room guides
47. Program to protect nesting turtles and monitor their nests.
48. Program to eradicate rats that were resident on the island when it was acquired
49. Two natural grass tennis courts have been built
50. Developed a natural paint for marking lines on the tennis courts
51. English lessons and first aid training programs have been offered for all staff
52. Opportunities provided for all staff to learn new skill sets using external trainers (barista training, rock climbing, mixology, scuba, nature, sailing, windsurfing, tennis, cooking, first aid, life saving, wine training)
53. Re-introduced native Cempedak trees to the island
54. Established a program to allow staff families to visit and stay on the island
55. Installed an aerobic waste water treatment plant and waste water gardens
56. Linen is 100% organic cotton
57. Mosquito netting was specifically designed and fabricated for Cempedak using organic cotton
58. Glass recycled using bottle pulveriser
59. State of the art shower heads were installed reducing total water
60. Water saving toilets used throughout.
61. Establishment of a staff savings and loan scheme. This is a separate entity managed by staff.
62. The introduction of a 5 day working week. The norm in Indonesia is a 6 day working week.
63. Recycling of grey water for watering gardens and toilet flush.
64. Switched to a toilet paper made from bamboo fibre rather than wood pulp.
65. Routine quality measurement of drinking water, ground water and waste-water
66. Installation of rainwater harvesting and 600m³ of water storage
67. Provided equipment, boats and staff in numerous emergency or recovery situations
68. Provided guided nature walk program for the guests interested to know more about flora and fauna on the island
69. Empowered local business by supporting staff's family members to supply some of our needs such as the bamboo straw
70. Established a closed-loop system to compost food waste by using Black Soldier Fly larvae and Red Worm
71. Working together with international organization – Conservation International – to help in conservation and establish an MPA (Marine Protected Area)
72. Provided income for local villages through cultural trip which later can be used to

develop their infrastructure

73. Provided maintenance of village generators
74. Provided an English lessons for local village (small island nearby) children
75. Donated books and tennis balls to local schools nearby

Future commitment and goals

Short term

1. Expand permaculture gardens to increase vegetables and fruits grown on island
2. Help improve areas where the reef has been damaged
3. Establish a no fishing zone on the reef around Cempedak
4. Continue to improve our knowledge of food sources and continue to ensure that
seafood in particularly is from sustainable stocks and sources
5. Reduce plastic consumption by continuing to work with local suppliers
6. Help clean up local beaches of plastic and waste
7. Establish an artist in residence program for Indonesian artists

Long term

1. Establish a hatchery program for turtle eggs collected from neighbouring islands
2. Expand the no fishing zones around Cempedak
3. Employ local fisherman to help protect no fishing zones
4. Increase the use of renewable energy sources for power generation
5. Increase use of organic foods in our kitchen supplied by local community
6. Reduce carbon emissions to zero

This policy paper was reviewed by Andrew Dixon in January 2018 and is reviewed and updated annually. A copy of this paper has been translated into bahasa for staff who are not fluent in English.