

Sipadan to close

In May this year it was announced that all the dive operators on Sipadan have to dismantle their developments on the island and vacate by the end of 2004. The aim of this is to try and help the island and marine environment recover from decades of concentrated tourism and diving.

To anyone who has visited Sipadan recently I understand this should hardly come as a surprise. Such intensive activity on so small an island was bound to have a detrimental effect on the island and the marine life.

What concerns me about this news is that the dive operators are not happy with the decision so I can only assume that they would be willing to carry on attracting divers to the island until they have sucked out the very last drop of the island's resources then there would be nothing left to attract divers and their businesses would go bust.

This attitude is fairly typical in today's business led, profit motivated world but it doesn't stop with just the dive operators. Some dive travel agents could be accused of piling in dive tourists to such fragile environments regardless of the consequences until the ecosystem can take no more and we, the travelling divers, are as guilty for creating the demand to visit and dive such places. The result is that we are all, more or less, guilty.

I wish there was a solution where dive activity and natural resources could be balanced but I guess I'm asking for the impossible because there is always a section of society who want to shoot the very last elephant or eat the last shark fin.

Editorial

The amazing internet

As I am sure you know, the beauty of UwP and the internet is that there are no printing and distribution costs which helps to keep it free but another amazing thing about the internet is shown by how UwP19 has been finalised ready for downloading.

My responsibilities are to put together each Issue of UwP to as good a standard as possible from my base (it's more of a desk, really) near London and Deb Fugitt handles the website design and marketing from Fort Worth, Texas. Everything was going well with the production of UwP19 when Deb got an offer to do some research for a future project in Indonesia. This meant she would be away at the time UwP19 should be published but with the twin miracles of a laptop computer and an Internet Cafe in Tulamben we have been able to get UwP19 out to you in time.

The other amazing thing about the internet and UwP is that the deadline for each issue is really only a few minutes before the Issue is uploaded to the server so to prove just that here is a photo of Deb in Tulamben uploading the files for the website.

Now that I've got the photo I can add it to this page and make the final pdf file of UwP19 (which is laid out in Adobe Pagemaker, since you asked).

With that done it takes a couple of minutes to upload to the server and be available worldwide at no charge!

Who said technology isn't amazing?

I realise that web site operators will be saying to themselves "What's the big deal? We are



constantly updating our website from wherever we are in the world". Well, yes I agree but UwP is a like traditional magazine with good old fashioned deadlines and when each issue is finished, that's it. It doesn't get changed, just like a traditional magazine.

The other benefit is that all Issues of UwP are still available to download and the next Issue will be the end of our 3rd year.

Where has the time gone?

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