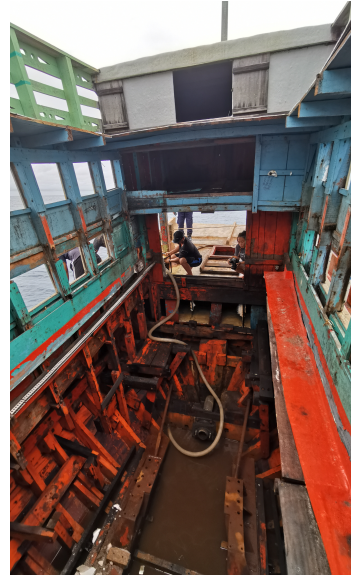
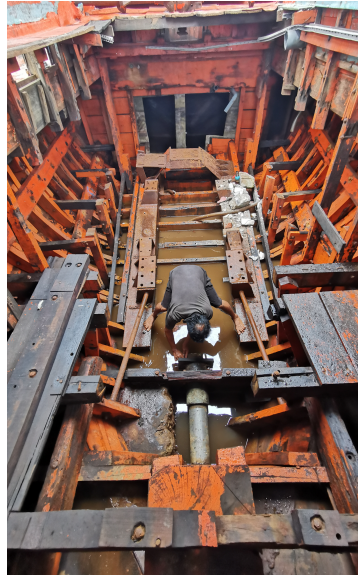


Restoring Oceans, one vessel at a time



We live on a blue planet, with oceans and seas covering more than seventy per cent of the Earth. These oceans and seas feed us, regulate our climate, and generate most of the oxygen we breathe. However, despite their importance, they face unprecedented threats and they need our help. Restoring oceans means reducing the pressure on ecosystems and allowing them to recover.

Restoring oceans also means that we understand how to make both ecosystems and communities work together in the face of this global challenge. Central Oceans depends on the oceans and seas for transporting complex and specialized transports, and we understand the importance of us and the oceans thriving together.

We realised we were presented with a huge and very unique opportunity to do our part for the oceans a few months ago. The Department of Fisheries in Sabah intercepted a fishing boat (which was illegally fishing for sea cucumbers in a Marine Reserve) as part of the Illegal, Unreported and Unrecorded (IUU) fishing effort currently plaguing the seas around Sabah, Malaysia Borneo. Usually, vessels like this are just left to rust, rot and pollute at an anchorage and we wanted to change that. We wanted to give the vessel a more meaningful purpose.

Together with the Department of Fisheries, Reef Guardian, Reef Defenders, the SIMCA Marine Reserve and Carbon X, we came up with a plan to use the vessel for reef restoration! We forged through the challenging process of making the vessel suitable for this operation, as the machinery onboard had to be taken out and the boat had to be thoroughly cleaned (with sustainable biodegradable soap of course!) to ensure no grease and oil was present. Environmental studies were also conducted to determine the best location for sinking this repurposed vessel. We chose a special name for our project, MV Sri Rahmat, which holds dear to our hearts and means a place that will always be blessed.

After months of preparations, we are very happy to announce that the MV Sri Rahmat will finally be ready to be sunk just off Lankayan Island and was towed to her final location today. This location has the best chance to improve local fish population and other marine life, but more importantly, will give shelter to the massive population of bumphead parrotfish. As explained earlier, these fish eat so much coral on a daily basis that they also produce a very large amount of faeces, which in turn play an important role in the maintenance of healthy coral reef habitats, replenishing nutrients while simultaneously keeping algae growth in check.

We are confident that the wreck will help to attract divers of nearby eco resorts and provide an alternative livelihood for local fishermen in the form of eco-tourism, while serving its main purpose of helping replenish the reef of that area.