

Ifaty fishermen join forces

Looking to their future the fishermen of Ifaty and Mangily have joined forces to create an association to look after their interests and those of future generations.



In a meeting at the end of 2006 attended by over 60 local fishermen it was agreed that the two villages should jointly manage the association and begin exploring ways of improving

fishing catches while safeguarding the ocean for future generations. President of Ifaty, Bruno Something said: "We need to look to the future and manage our fishing effort to ensure that we are making the most of the resources that we have."

The new association is to be called FIMI HARA (Flambanana Mlaro sy HAnaso ny RAnomasina) which means Association for the Protection and Conservation of the Ocean. One of its first tasks will be to put measures and practises in place for the management and dispersal of funds from the planned marine reserve to be set up around the Rose Garden (see below).

No fishing on the Rose Garden

FIMI HARA, the new Ifaty fishermen's association has accepted proposals to turn the Rose Garden in to an official protected area with 'no-take' fishing status.

With the help of Trajectoire in Toliara, which has donated mooring buoys to prevent the need for boats to anchor in the area, the Rose Garden will become a new source of income for Ifaty and Mangily.



Working with local hotel and pirogue owners, plans are underway to implement Marine Park passes for tourists to gain access to the site. The funds raised will be split between Ifaty and Mangily for the fishermen's association and community projects.

NEWS IN BRIEF

ReefDoctor welcomes a new dive instructor, Claire Bloomfield. Claire is a pharmacist and has worked as a dive instructor overseas and in her home of Ireland.



Claire will soon be joined by Remy Brice-Zephyr heading up the Science department. Remy specialises in sub-tidal ecology and spent six months at the Leigh Marine Laboratory in New Zealand mapping sub-tidal habitats within a marine reserve and analysing the consequences of 30 years of protection.



Work on Ifaty Primary School was completed at the end of 2006.

With the help of construction workers from Toliara that donated their time for free and ReefDoctor volunteers, we were able to repair the holes in the roof and ceilings, re-paint the inside, put in new window shutters and doors, and repair the kitchen and dining room. The children were pleased to get back to school in September and came along to clean the desks so that they could start studies after the summer holiday.



New business ideas

Entrepreneurs in Ifaty are to benefit from potential new income sources from business ideas such as a village bakery, help with subsidised rice flour for making mokary and the sale of local honey to tourists through local hotels and tourist shops.

These are just a few of the ideas being explored to help generate new business practises and incomes. Gerald Stewart, project coordinator at ReefDoctor, says, "Alternative incomes relieve the pressure on people to catch fish no matter what.



"With family incomes diversified over a number of different areas, it is possible for them not to fish when the weather is bad and fish catches are suffering.

Future plans include animal husbandry classes to help improve the quality of village livestock. In particular, villagers are keen to improve growth rates in their pigs to gain higher incomes from their sale.