

# 2021 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: The Sea Woman's Dream- Mao'ao Smile Bay

Ecotourism Project

Destination Name: (include any state, province or region)

NEYC - North East and Yilan Coast National Scenic Area

Country: Taiwan

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Position: Click to enter text.

Nomination Category: (Please check the boxes that indicate the focus of your story)

Please find detailed information for the categories below in the Top 100 training module 'Good Practice Story'.

- ☐ Localizing the destination supply chain
- ☐ Decarbonizing the destination supply chain
- ☐ Culture & Communities
- □ Environment & Climate
- Nature & Ecotourism
- ☐ Tourism Reset & Recovery

Find detailed instructions for submitting good practices in the Top 100 training module "Good Practice Story".

Should you have any questions on your submission please refer to our FAQ page or contact top100@greendestinations.org



# DESCRIBE YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

#### Issues faced

What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice? Click to add your text

Mao'ao is a small fishing village (population around 900 people) located in front of Mao'ao bay and is part of North East and Yilan Coast National Scenic Area(NEYC) in Taiwan.

Most residents of Mao'ao fishing village used to make a living from fishing. There are 12 fishing boats in the village. In front of Mao'ao Village is "Mao'ao Bay", because of it's curving shape, we also call it "Smile Bay" where used to have clean and pollution-free marine resources and abundant fishery products, providing residents with good living resources. Because it is by the sea, the traditional intertidal fishing and collecting (gelidium and seaweed) gave birth to "the shell diver culture", a precious intangible cultural heritage in Mao'ao. There are currently more than a dozen female The Sea Women over 70 years old in the community and "gelidium" is also one of the environmental indicators of marine ecology. (Gelidium is a kind of seaweed.)



# 1.Environmental Impact:

From 2012, the old Caoling 20km bike lane runs through Mao'ao Fishing Village, the tourism industry has boomed. And it becomes more popular after Mao'ao Visitor Station were set up in 2017. Due to the increase of tourists, Mao'ao Fishing Village has a high demand for seafood. Although "The Sea Farming Demonstration Zone" at Mao'ao in 2016 (note 1) and Government Marine Resources Rehabilitation







Organization carries out fish fry release every year, it still fails to meet tourists needs. In addition, fishermen's overfishing has led to the gradual exhaustion of fishery resources, which is no longer sufficient to maintain ecological balance. Meanwhile, it causes the current Mao'ao Bay is full of plastic waste and other pollution sources, resulting in a decline quality of tourism and recreation resources.

# 2. Community Impact:

The fishing industry has declined and the population has faced rural exodus. Now the majority of the residents in the village are elderly people with insufficient labor. They are facing declining birthrates and young people emigrating issues. The majority of the residents are elderly (161 elderly people over 65 year old accounting for 17.5% of the community population, so the community has become aging community), which also lead to "elderly care issue" in Mao'ao community. In the meantime, some of the land is privately owned by landlord, most residents don't own the land or house property. And the acquisition of community land by a consortium (financial group) triggered an impact on subsistence rights of local residents and which may change the context of the community.

Mao'ao and surrounding villages began to carry out a protest against consortium's acquisition of land in their hometown from 2019.

#### 3. Cultural Impact

Following the decline of the fishing village, the culture of The Sea Women gradually declined. The 100 years old stone houses, in the 1980s, were remained more than 30. Later land and stone houses were acquired by a consortium due to population migration. In 2012, New Taipei City Agriculture Bureau investigated 29 stone houses, and only 10 were in good condition. Because they have not officially assigned as cultural heritage, their existence still are at risk. Traditional culture has encountered culture gap and skill inheritance. In the meantime, most residents don't own the land or house property which will lead to relocate residents and demolish of stone houses down in the near future.













## Methods, steps and tools applied

How was the good practice implemented? Click to add your text

"The Sea Woman's Dream - Mao'ao Smile Bay Reconstruction Project" is proposed by Mao'ao Community Association. Mao'ao Community Association identifies community needs and opportunities, develops sustainable and resiliency strategies and adopts Satoyama & Satoumi Initiatives (eco-sea & eco-mountain) in implementing "The Sea Woman's Dream Experiential Tour" which combines "The Sea Woman's culture", reshaping gelidium product, environmental conservation and creating community economic benefits to raise "Senior Community Meals Fund" for elderly.

# The goals of the project:

- a. Marine environmental protection (gelidium as an environmental indicator)
- b. Visitor management: Community space maintenance and management actions
- c. Fishing village and the sea woman's culture preservation
- d. Give back to the community
- e. Eco-education on tourism (tourist behavior management)

#### Action Plans:

Part One: The Sea Woman's Dream Experiential Tour

1. Space renovation for tourist and education

(1)In order to set up a public space (classroom) in Mao'ao community, Mao'ao association applied grants from tourism bureau in transforming community meeting and dining space into a multi-functional space which is not only for







community use, but also for tourists and educational use.

(2) NEYC expects to arrange the stone house in early 2022, and hands it over to the community for operation through an open leasing model, so that the community can be used as a tourist space, and it will be planned as a native plant park for restoration native species on the ground.

## 2. Service preparation development

From 2020 till now, NEYC, Mao'ao community and Sandiaojiao Cultural Association collaborate together engaging in volunteer work every Wednesday in unused space in community. And put efforts in transforming tourism service infrastructures around, including parking lots (keep tourists car outside of the community), public toilets, waste water treatment and the reuse of a traditional stone house.

In the future, the house may be handed over to the community for operation through an open leasing model, so the space will serve as dining space for group tourists.

The time table of Mao'ao Service preparation development by the end of 2021 shows below:

- (1) Set up an external parking lot to reduce the traffic impact caused by vehicles entering the community.
- (2) Community open space will be used for gelidium landscape art created by residents, and preserves as the living space for the community.
- (3) Community guides are under training who implement community tours.

#### 3. Ecotourism Tour Plan

"The Sea Woman's Dream Experiential Tour" is guided by local residents, which includes neritic squid rice noodles, gelidium jelly and various local cuisines experiences to carry out local agricultural and marine resources education activities. The aim is to attract domestic and foreign tourists to experience immersive tour and traditional fishing village culture and the marine culture in life.

(1) From the sea woman's culture, guide visitors to understand the sea woman's







collection culture, and the connection between gelidium and marine environment

- (2)Understand the production of gelidium is washed and dried seven times (arrange tourists to assist in the preparation of washing or drying)
- (3)The marine resources of Mao'ao and the special cuisine of Mao'ao (such as neritic squid rice vermicelli)-taste local seafood dishes, understand where the seafood that Mao'ao people eat comes from.
- (4)Gourmet Tourism Gelidium jelly DIY
- (5) Food and Agricultural and Marine Cultural Education

In 2021, NEYC subsidizes community "Ecotourism Plan" which aims to reshape ecotourism product by introducing local sea women's story and marine resources (gelidium). Through the plan, community can deliver the environment, culture preservation messages to tourists while the local guide telling the story of gelidium and increasing economic income which can also benefit to "Senior Community Meals Fund".









# 4. Seniors Community Meals Fund

Senior Community Meals on Wednesday offers nutritional and social benefits for seniors which brings seniors together to enjoy meals and will keep seniors healthy as well as providing a platform where elderly can keep the relationship with community. The aim is to bring the seniors closer to each other. And most of the time, part of meal ingredients are donated by residents around as well.

The most important of Senior Community Meals is ensure the safety to those who are living on their own.



# 5.Reshape Mao'ao "Gelidium" as an indicator product

Local identity branding and marketing – With the subsidy of NEYC, community logo, eco-bag and gelidium product designing to promote local identity. The next stage is







expected to exhibit in public exhibition in other cities of Taiwan. To keep the marine environment clean through the promotion of gelidium jelly products and environmental education and. It can also remind the public not to grab swallow nests, because gelidium jelly has the similar effect as swallow nest, and it's animal-friendly. Also, locals plan to promote Mao'ao gelidium with "Gelidium Landscape Art" which is to shape gelidium into various interesting patterns during sun-dried process to attract tourists to admire a local spectacle.







# Part Two: Sustainable Actions Implementation

# 1. Marine Resource Sustainability

(1)Bay Clean up

Through Mao'ao Community Association and Sandiaojiao Cultural Association, three generations of the village were mobilized to clean up our Mao'ao Bay.

# (2) Neritic Squid Rehabilitation

Following by the government's restriction on the harvesting marine resource in Gongliao (Mao'ao) conservation area. The association plans to build Neritic Squid nest in the area for it Neritic Squid has high economic value in winter and also a good marine resource in local. Neritic Squid nest plan will set up in Mao'ao Bay in 2022 after pandemic. Local associations had collaborated with diving association and they will build up bundled natural bamboo under the seabed which provided a nice place for Neritic Squid egg laying and implantation to create ideal living surroundings. Continue





to carry out ecological rehabilitation and build marine environment education sites.

Note 1: To conserve fishery resources, the New Taipei City Government has announced tighter restrictions on the harvesting of lobsters, abalone, and sea urchins in three aquatic flora and fauna breeding conservation areas, Wanli, Ruifang and Gongliao(where Mao'ao located), as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021. (New Taipei City News)

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## 2. Community Environment Sustainable Management

With the increase in the number of tourists after 2019, there were five restaurants opened in the village. In the next stage, restaurants and stores in the area will be gradually guided to implement sustainable actions. One of five restaurants will use kitchen waste oil-water separator first and encourages other restaurants gradually to adopt kitchen waste management strategy to minimize the negative impact to environment around. Hopefully, SMEs in Mao'ao will implement global sustainable criteria by applying Global Green Travel Seal certification.

#### 3. Natural and Cultural Resources Collecting

The association actively promotes local guides, collects oral history, and records the culture of villages. On the other hand, Mao'ao also has abundant mountain and forest resources, such as butterfly, firefly and native plants along mountain routes, which provide ecological guides sufficient resources for the public. Therefore, the community intends to carry out ecological restoration in the mountains.

Key success factors







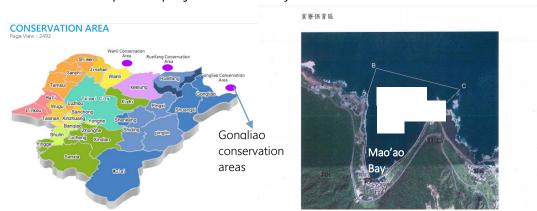
What helped you tackle the issues? Click to add your text

## 1.Community awareness and cohesion

In the early 1990s, residents rejected the development of yacht harbors to destroy the ecological environment and marine resources, in order to preserve the sustainable development of traditional fishery. Starting from the protest against the financial group's acquisition in 2019 and COIVD-19, the home-returning residents gathered and discussed the vision of hometown. The community has been empowered again and Mao'ao Community Association has new board members after the election in 2020. Unlike what happened before, many community partners contribute money and time for their vision.

## 2. Government policy in Gonglaio Conservation Area

Mao'ao Bay is assigned as "Gongliao Aquatic Animal and Plant Breeding and Conservation Area". Since 2007, offshore marine restoration work has been carried out, and the Area has gradually expanded in 2014. Local fishermen follow government's restoration policy to stop capture fishery at the specified time which did minimize the impact of the marine life. What is more important is the policy of the Gongliao Conservation Area did become the protecting umbrella for locals under the pressure of creation development projects in recent years.



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#### 3. Coalition of government and neighborhood stakeholders

What contributed to the amazing success of this project, was a strong coalition between Mao'ao community and Sandiaojiao Cultural Association and NEYC, Regional Government. And many community residents followed this coalition, aligning with the strategies that the coalition work out.

#### Lessons learned

While implementing the Good Practice what challenges were faced, and how were they overcome? Click to add your text

# 1.Land ownership challenge

Residents worry about the preservation of stone houses and forced relocation, as well as large-scale land development issues, which will impact subsistence rights of local residents, and the uncertainty about the future stops some residents from investing money and time to participate the project and actions. Community and stakeholders will keep on communicating with the consortium to conserve land wisely and try to achieve a win-win situation.

# 2.Lack of young manpower and high proportion of middle-aged and elderly people

There are around 900 registered residents in the Mao'ao community (17.5% are over 65 years old and about 43.9% aged 45-64 years old). Also, most young generations work in city with insufficient work capacity here. Middle-aged and elderly people become the main population living in Mao'ao. Labor manpower shortage become an issue when it comes to "tourism development" and "elderly care" at the same time. The Mao'ao Smile Bay Project tends to find a solution. The project invite local art







workers, architects, 50-year-experienced carpenters, and marketing professionals to participate in the community activities and encourage middle-aged and elderly people to participate volunteering work and training course to share life stories of Mao'ao with tourists. The participation of Senior Community Meals also creates opportunities to have middle-aged and elderly residents to interact with each other and to help the implementation in "The Sea Woman Experience Tour" and reshape of Mao'ao brand. The project tends to create more job opportunities which attracts young people to start businesses and live in Mao'ao.

At the same time, it also allows visitors to re-recognize Mao'ao Fishing Village to feel the beauty of Mao'ao, and the marine culture can be inherited and passed on to the younger generation.

Back to the execution of ecotourism tour and gift shop stall of gelidium jelly products which are specifically designed for middle-aged and elderly members (especially women). The community request for a customerized stall as follows.

- (1)Allow middle-aged and elderly members easily to move and arrange the stall, and have to fit the size of the gate which stores in.
- (2) It can resist strong sea breeze.
- (3)A stall can be easily disassembled, assembled and moved, and its size can be transported by a SUV for exhibitions in city or expo center.
- (4)The main structure uses natural materials, which must be able to withstand the seaside environment at least 3 years.

Therefore, a custom-designed structure can be assembled and disassembled easily with a house screwdriver and some plug-in pieces for resist the wind, for writing slogan and for visual layers, which also allows elderly members to operate and arrange easier.





#### 3. The speed of increasing restaurant and tourists

Tourism will bring substantial benefits and create employment opportunities to the community, such as specialty products selling and restaurants by developing tourism. At the same time, it will create more solid waste and waste, when there is no waste water treatment facilities in the area. The community has been aware of those negative impact and discussing strategies to encourage local tour operators to join the green consumption supply chain, adopt green label guidelines, provide sustainable tourism products, which will minimize tourism impact.

The challenge is to achieve a sustainable balance between people and the environment. There will be workshops and counseling for the community to better understand their advantages and develop their own sustainable tourism.

Next Step, NEYC will encourage the SMEs in the community to apply GTS (Green Travel Seal) certification step by step. The community will discuss, propose solutions, and record the status of consumption. "Neritic Squid Rehabilitation Project"initiated by local has been processed and hand on to local government (New Taipei City Government).





Inconclusion, most of the challanges we faced in the process were what is happeningin countryside. Unlike many others trying to only get grant from government for community empowerment and senior service, we learned that we need to initiate the action by middle and elder age members ourself and trying to find out a more sustainable way not only in environment, culture but also in economic. Even most of the time people would regard "bottom up" is more sustainable. And in this case, we learned that for those aged community, if we can have top-down and bottom up at the same time and interactive in both way. it will be a more effective way for sustainable practices.



#### Results, achievements and recognitions

What were the qualitative and quantitative results of the good practice? Has it received any rewards? Click to add your text

Mao'ao Community Association has 67members (2021), and among them there are 8 core volunteers involving in "Senior Community Meals" and ecotourism work.

From July 2020, the local association together with NEYC(DMO) have held 24 meetings in discussing the vision of the area, and the picture of "The Sea Woman's Dream - Mao'ao Smile Bay Reconstruction Project" were generated gradually.

Community issues have been fully discussed through local stakeholders' meetings. NEYC (DMO) provides government assistance programs to support association to be empowered. The issues and vision raised by locals can be divided into 3 pillars, environment, heritage and local benefit.

#### 1.Environment

- (1)NEYC and community volunteers and residents, did Mao'ao bay beach clean on 25t April 2021. The bay finally regained its clean, just like a smile with big white teeth.
- (2)concerning to the Mao'ao Offshore fishery resources, the "Neritic Squid nest setup and incubator actions" will hold per year by locals. Association has collaborated with Diving Association this year, but the plan is banned now and will postpone due to COVID-19.
- (3)The negative environment impact (waste and water) with tourism activities have kept on discussing for a better action plans. The purchasing of kitchen waste oil-water separator maybe the first action they will implement.

#### 2.Culture Heritage

There are, after the efforts of local stakeholders, 3 of 100-years-old stone houses in village have officially been recognized as "Historical Building" currently by Culture Affairs Department of New Taipei City Government.







# 3.Community Benefit

(1)Community volunteers and NEYC staffs clean up unused space every Wednesday since July, 2020 till now (except pandemic restriction period), Roughly, there will be 9 volunteers from local and government.

(2)And Wednesday is also the day of "Senior Community Meals" service. In total, it serves 25 seniors per Wednesday, 10-15 of them will have meals together in community centre, and 10 of them have home delivery.

(3)Under the grant supported by NEYC, Mao'ao association design the community "The Sea Woman's Dream Experiential Tour" and also the "Gelidium" products CIS design and design a wooden, elegant and disassembled display stands which can easily install by senior residents. The ecotourism plan stops now because of pandemic restriction, instead the Mao'ao team came out the "Mao'ao gelidium package" online trial sale on 24th Jun 2021. And it sold out in a week.

It becomes the kick off for raising the Senior Community Meals Fund, and the profit is estimated to be around 20% of the selling price, and NT\$10,000 (300 Euro) has been raised. (It's approximately one month's senior meals cost.)



#### 4. The Value Assessment Expectations for the Project





To reach sustainable goals of community, economics, culture and environment, through the establishment of sustainable development indicators for Mao' ao community, one of the most critical and basic key is the reconstruction of economic autonomy of community while protecting the environment and heritage. According to the project, we estimated cost, annual income and output value are as follows.

ltem	Content	Amount(NT)	
Cost	Visual landscape creation, atmosphere and facility installation creation	240,000	12,400,000
	Water, electricity and various expenses	1,000,000	
Income	Based on an estimate of 60 people per week, each		1,800,000
	tourist spends NT\$500. The income is about		
	NT\$30,000 per week.		
	Roughly estimate NT\$1.8 million a year.		
	Mao'ao Ecotour / per tour	1,600	
	Fishing village cuisine specialty/person	300	
	Squid Rice Noodle all you can eat	150	
	Gelidium jelly DIY / person	100	
	Souvenir-Dried gelidium package	199-399	
	Souvenir- Seaweed 350/kg	350	
profit	Part of profit from this project is intended to be returned to the senior community meals		5,600,000
(Income			
minus cost)			
Peripheral	With an average consumption of 1,404 per person		4,380,000
output value	per day revealed by Gallup Statistics study in the		
	area. 3,120 consumers can produce a total of NT\$4.38		
	million in peripheral benefits.		





卯澳海女織夢 輕夏日美麗特惠組

石花菜3包 價值750元 2. 輕薄濾布袋3個 價值90元 3. 玻璃小圓瓶 6組 價值180元













Mao'ao Fishing Village has the precious clear waters. The gelidium is picked by the residents to make gelidium jelly, which is non-polluting, natural, organic and healthy. This project takes "Gelidium" and "The Sea Woman" as the core value through the environment, production, life and market products, to create Mao'ao gelidium as a representative local product that combines Mao'ao environment, culture and life.

And through the "The Sea Woman's Dream - Mao'ao Smile Bay Reconstruction Project", Senior Community Meals will be also contributed by guided ecotourism fees. Through efforts of all people, in the process of deep interaction with the land, we try to shorten the distance between human and nature.

Community stakeholders hope to reshape the branding of Mao'ao community, and implement sustainable actions through "The Sea Woman's Dream – Mao'ao Smile Bay Reconstruction Project".



Sustainable certification will be the next step and goal to "green"the supply chain in NEYC area and conserve marine resources, local identity.

#### Additional references

Provide links to further information. Pictures and videos should be available for download either from Youtube, Vimeo or other Cloud-based (Google/ One Drive) download URL.

#### 1.Mao'ao Community Association

https://www.facebook.com/%E6%96%B0%E5%8C%97%E5%B8%82%E8%B2%A2%E5%AF%AE%E 5%8D%80%E5%8D%AF%E6%BE%B3%E7%A4%BE%E5%8D%80%E7%99%BC%E5%B1%95%E5%8 D%94%E6%9C%83-108389647350371/

#### 2. Sandiaojiao Cultural Association

https://sdcda.org.tw/

https://www.facebook.com/MagangMaoao/

#### 3. Senior Meals news

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RarP5XLjQNA

#### 4. "Mao'ao gelidium package" online trial sale and fish fry release news

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQfm47ZttvY

#### 5.THE MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

(New Taipei City News) To conserve fishery resources, the New Taipei City Government has announced tighter restrictions on the harvesting of lobsters, abalone, and sea urchins in three aquatic flora and fauna breeding conservation areas, Wanli, Ruifang and Gongliao, as of January 1, 2021.

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5.New Taipei City Gongliao(where Mao'ao located), Wanli and Ruifang Aquatic Animals and Plants Breeding and Conservation Areas and Restrictions or Prohibitions of Harvesting > is announced on 2020.09.11 which conserve Mao'ao bay marine ecology.

- ✓ The harvesting of gelidium is prohibited from October 1st to April 15th of the following year.
- ✓ Harvesting is prohibited if the length of abalone shell is less than 5 cm.
- ✓ Harvesting of lobsters is prohibited from March 1st to July 31st each year, and lobsters that are less than 20 cm long are prohibited from harvesting during the rest of the year.
- ✓ Sea urchins that do not contain thorn shells and are less than 8 cm in length are prohibited from harvesting. The Green Sea Urchin is prohibited from harvesting from September 1 to June 15 of the following year.
- ✓ The harvesting of Eucheuma is prohibited from September 1st to March 15th of the following year.
- ✓ Harvesting of Triton's trumpet (Charonia tritonis), corals and reefs is prohibited.
- ✓ Harvesting of coral reef fish whose body length is less than 20 cm is prohibited.
- ✓ It is forbidden to use diving equipment to collect gelidium, eucheuma, abalone, lobster, sea urchin, big snail, coral reef fish, coral and reef, etc.
- ✓ It is forbidden to use non-fishing gear to enter the conservation area for operations.

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