

Triple win approach to turn Libaran around



Alex Yee's sorrows – mountain of garbage on Libaran's beaches.

KanYaw Chong

All signs indicated 650-acre Pulau Libaran ecosystem was going to the dogs – idiom meaning qualitatively going downhill all the way.

Horrendous piles of garbage and plastic bottles litter entire lengths of its once pristine beaches. Free roaming cows by the hundreds poop freely on the beaches, in front of mosques and the island's lone public health clinic – the antithesis of basic hygiene.

Coconut trees had gone sickly for lack of essential nutrients from depleted soil. Vegetables can hardly grow. Fish catches had dwindled sharply. War-tales-rich Libaran was going distinctively brown.

Even so, no body may have bothered. Until ex-policeman and island land owner, Amiril B Sayuti, raised the alarm about people collecting turtle eggs illegally from his land.

Short-handed Sabah Wildlife Department mooted a turtle hatchery idea in response and persuaded a green outfit which subscribes to the Triple Bottom Line or the Triple Win 3Ps (People, Planet and Profit) approach to development.



That company turned out to be Walai Penyu Resort owned by Alex Yee, a hotelier and proven n operator of famed Trekkers' Lodge.

Yee said yes, after a few fact finding trips to Libam and confirmed there were indeed regular fresh turtle dugouts at Ameril's beach front land and proceeded to lease the land to develop both a nature resort and the turtle hatchery sought by the SWD.

Using Triple Bottom Line concept to drive improvement in all fronts in Libaran

By itself, the Triple Bottom Line concept is essentially a reporting system that does not improve the company's impact on People or the Planet (environment) but it can be used to drive improvement in the way a company or organisation impacts People, Planet and eventually their own Profit by helping managers focus on what they need to do to improve all the bottomlines and keeping this work high on their agendas for an outcome that shows all parts of the system, gain!

Interestingly, I witnessed this drive to improve Libaran on all fronts at the fantastic first Walai Penyu Resort initiated island-wide Libaran dialogue session in 13 years, on August 22, chaired by the new village chief Jikral Kahar, and attended by a packed hall of villagers, the Sabah media, ESSCOM police, Sabah Wildlife Department, Public Health Department, Walai Penyu resort staff, JKKK and teachers.

Triple Bottom Line explained
Indeed, SWD realized the need to use a benevolent individual or company at least to some extent, which takes a true environmental stance side by side decent profits.

In other words, one that stands out from the typical cut-throat business world by the way it looks at profit as a way to benefit a much bigger picture.

For instance, the way it treats people (community) with a desire to empower them and promote them instead of exploiting and dragging them down and crucially, by the way it treats planet, that is, environment.

Best still, a company that recognises that green is definitely more profitable than brown in a fairly large island ecosystem and economy with 70 households, a population of 420, and sea turtles – a loud symbol of planet where all three Ps -People, Planet and Profit- all gain.

Quality guru Edwards Daming says that Total Quality is about looking at all organisations or the world as a system where all interdependent components must gain or else the imbalances coming from loss of essential functions in some parts will eventually tear the system apart.

Well, this writer's hunch is SWD had struck one that is going to somehow ensure people, planet and profit all gain.

At the moment, all three appear to be losing at Libaran.

So it needs what Triple Bottom Line founder John Elkings had advocated – a bottomline that continues to monitor profit but also measures a business' impacts on people and the planet.

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The Libaran Turtle Hatchery, in response to illegal egg collection.

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