

Waste management facilities built in Uluwatu

A local non-government organization, Project Clean Uluwatu (PCU), is building waste management facilities in Uluwatu to protect the island's top surfing destination from further environmental degradation.

The project has recently received funds collected from the second Annual Quiksilver Uluwatu Challenge, where 32 participants surfed against local Balinese pros and surfing legends. The surfing event is part of the Bali Big Eco Weekend, an annual festival to raise awareness for clean Bali beaches, protecting the environment and promoting sustainable tourism.

From the funds raised in the Uluwatu Challenge, Quiksilver, together with Coca-Cola and Garuda Indonesia, handed over a donation of Rp 50,000,000 (US\$4,295) to PCU.

Curtis Lowe, manager of PCU, said the much-needed funds would go toward completing the wastewater garden facility, which further purified wastewater and sewage after it had passed through the bio tanks. "The funds will also go toward building a public toilet facility in Uluwatu east parking area, as well as helping PCU implement an environmental education program at the two elementary schools in Uluwatu," said Lowe.

Over the last few weeks, PCU volunteers have been working hard on the gardens at the entrance to the beach.

"Once complete, all wastewater from the bars and restaurants will be pumped to the top of the gardens and filtered through the soil. By the time it reaches the bottom garden, it will be fit for re-purposing and will be used to keep the gardens beautiful," Lowe said.

Uluwatu has been one of the most iconic surfing destinations in the world for over 40 years. The wave at Uluwatu is world-renowned and steeped in surfing history ever since its feature in the seminal film *Morning of the Earth* in 1972. Yet, the growing popularity of the waves resulted in the environmental degradation of the area.

Although there is an average of 500 visitors per day, and Uluwatu was once used as a contest site in the ASP World Tour of 2009, no infrastructure for waste management had been installed.

As these and other environmental issues were not receiving attention from the local authorities, PCU made it its mission to address the environmental threats to Uluwatu, beginning with the obvious problems of waste management.

The organization started building the infrastructure needed to preserve the pristine coastline in the face of continuing development on Bali's famed peninsula. Since 2010, it has worked with the local community to provide solutions to garbage and liquid waste problems.

The group — managed by a committee of local business owners, residents and volunteers, also works to provide green alternatives, such as composting and community gardens.

The waste management system initiated by PCU has significantly improved the condition on the beach and efforts to preserve Uluwatu and restore the health of the local ecosystem have been successful, bringing about better awareness in the community that now works to keep the place clean.