



# GROWTH REPORT 2 3





# INTRODUCTION

**NOORTASHA DEVI**  
FOUNDER



2023 has been a phenomenal year! We surpassed ambitious goals faster than we expected, a true testament to our passion and dedication to the reefs.

We finally reached our goal of planting over 10,000 and cannot wait to kick off the 2024 planting season! We also held our first coral restoration course, which was a fantastic experience made possible by our partners at Ocean Gardener. We're grateful for the opportunity to continue sharing their knowledge with the world.

We were also able to raise awareness to millions of people globally through social media, multiple international events we were invited to, and our Sounds for the Ocean music festival in both Indonesia and Malaysia!

Most importantly, we brought GaiaOne to my hometown, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. It has been a dream to give back to the very place that started my love affair with the ocean. And we are more than blessed to have our partners in Rainbow Island be a part this journey!

Despite all the challenges, I have to give all the credit to my amazing team who pushed forward and continued to be positive and passionate about what they do. None of this would have been possible without them!



GaiaOne is no longer a struggling dream but a manifested reality! We are stepping into 2024 with hopeful determination to create more blue opportunities that shift the status quo of tourism. I want the people on the ground who are striving so hard for the planet to be rewarded, to be commended, to be praised and respected. It is no easy feat and they deserve all the recognition for their efforts.

My team and I couldn't be more excited to share what we have in store for all of you this 2024! And if you haven't already, make some time for yourself this year to reconnect with Nature and remember that our beautiful Planet never fails us.





# IMPACT IN NUMBERS

14,152

CORALS PLANTED SINCE 2021

9,630

CORALS PLANTED  
IN 2023

1,317

KGS OF TRASH  
REMOVED FROM  
THE OCEAN

1M+

PEOPLE REACHED  
GLOBALLY





GaiaOne started as a dream to prevent the degradation of the local reef in Bira, Indonesia. But it was the rapid global degradation of all reefs that turned a small dream into a global mission to:

- Restore our oceans
- Clean up nature
- Empower local communities globally
- Create a circular economy in the eco-tourism industry

## MISSION

**EMPOWER AND  
UNITE GLOBAL  
COMMUNITIES  
BEHIND OCEAN  
CONSERVATION**







It has been 3 years since we planted our first coral in 2021 and we could not be more excited for what's to come.

Using the Ocean Gardener coral restoration techniques, we were able to hit our goal of planting over 10,000 corals in 2023 (14,152 to be exact!).

We ran our first coral restoration course; a month-long course where participants can learn about corals and the Ocean Gardener techniques. We were delighted to see the participants' passion and dedication to the ocean!

# **“CORAL RESTORATION IS A MARATHON NOT A SPRINT”**

We increased the number of genres from 11 to 18 by the end of 2023. 14 of them are hard corals and 4 of them are soft, staying true to our focus of prioritizing biodiversity above all else!

In parallel, we worked on our expansion to Malaysia to further protect the coral reefs within the coral triangle. After months of work, we partnered with Rainbow Island to bring coral restoration to Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia.

May 2024 be as fruitful and empowering as this year!





# CORAL RESTORATION







14,152

CORALS PLANTED  
SINCE FOUNDING IN 2021

THIS YEAR

9,630

CORALS PLANTED IN 2023

~250

SQ METERS OF REEF COVERED

18

PLANTED GENERA



Due to overfishing and destructive human practices, the ocean food chain is out of balance. Key marine species are disappearing causing outbreaks in coral predators like drupellas (coral-eating sea slugs) and Crown-of-Thorn Starfish (COTS).

These coral predators help biodiversity by controlling the populations of fast-growing corals. However, in an unbalanced environment, outbreaks from either species can decimate entire colonies of coral reefs.

Our team goes out once a week to remove them in hopes of reducing their impact on the reefs in Bira.

**THIS YEAR**

**2,923**

**DRUPELLAS REMOVED IN 2023**

**173**

**COTS REMOVED IN 2023**



# MEET OUR NURSERIES



INDONESIA

## TEVANA HOUSE REEF

Tevana House Reef was the first nursery we started. We started with the dome structures and quickly expanded to spiders, coral cookies, Christmas tree racks, and more recently, direct planting. Due to the nature of the reef, this nursery's main focus is to promote biodiversity and restoring the reef back to its original state. This allows us to use various planting strategies to achieve our goals and test the most effective methods!

## LIUKANG

Liukang Nursery is the result of the head villager Pak Jaffar noticing the beautiful reefs were degrading at a faster pace than usual.

Using stick and rope as well as spider techniques, our aim is to expand the current reef to cover more areas while tackling the Crown-of-Thorn Starfish outbreak.

## DEGO DEGO

Dego Dego used to be the old harbour for boats to anchor during bad weather, turning the entire reef into rubble. Now, championed by our local ambassador Indis Rupez, we have planted 100+ ropes and 200+ spiders in the Dego Dego nursery. Biodiversity of reef fish is starting to increase and Dego Dego is beginning to regain its former glory as a naturally-protected thriving reef.



# NEW YEAR, NEW COUNTRY, SAME MISSION!

## MALAYSIA

We closed 2023 with the announcement of our expansion to Malaysia! This is a highly celebrated cornerstone in our journey as we set up a new home in Kota Kinabalu in partnership with Rainbow Island to protect the local reef.

As our team and community expand, we tangibly see the impact of blue economies on local communities and on our protected reefs. Our collective efforts are creating opportunities for everyone to join this revolution and we could not be prouder!

2024 is a year of expansion and focus on local communities as we set out to empower communities to start their own ocean conservation projects all over the world through our “We the Ocean” program! With your help, we are sure we can increase the size of protected reefs!



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# PROGRESS OVER PERFECTION

2023 was also about trying out new techniques that could either help us reduce the plastic usage of our cable zip ties or enhance the health and growth of the corals in our nurseries. In this attempt of replacing zip ties on our metal structures, we started experimenting with cotton ropes and learnt how to plant corals directly using cement.

## Christmas Tree

The Christmas Tree technique has been gaining a lot of traction in the Coral Conservation world so we decided to experiment with it. In short, corals are hung vertically on PVC pipes where they can obtain nutrients and light as they grow. We started out with soft corals which appeared to be doing well at first. However, after the 2nd or 3rd month, they started to disappear indicating that they are being eaten. In 2024, we will adjust our strategy to focus on hard corals instead.

## Cotton Rope

We were excited to try the cotton rope technique to reduce our plastic zip ties usage. We have learned that while the cotton ropes are more eco-conscious, they loosen with time, making it difficult for the coral to stay stable on the metal structure. This means corals take more time to encrust on the ropes, increasing the risk of algae growth. This is particularly problematic because algae seem to love these cotton ropes. We hope with enough diligence on our part, corals can still grow effectively.

## Direct Planting

Since there are many rubble areas on Tevana House Reef, we learned how to do direct planting using a cement mix to attach fragments onto the rubble. Fragments-of-opportunity are selected and placed based on how well they grow in specific rubble areas, which act as wave breakers, their growth rate, and how well they promote biodiversity. This technique is currently working wonders and brings true meaning to coral gardening.

We close 2023 with the unfortunate, but hopefully, temporary conclusion that cable zip ties are still the most effective way to attach corals to structures. We are hoping 2024 will bring more innovation for affordable biodegradable cable zip ties! Additionally, the Direct Planting method is proving to be ideal to promote biodiversity and we are excited to continue it in 2024.



# BEFORE OUR EYES

One of our key goals for 2024 is to identify and focus our planting strategy on super corals. These are corals with a higher resistance to increased temperatures and therefore, are stronger in the face of climate change. We also hope to revamp and expand our data collection to contribute vital information to the greater scientific body of knowledge. We hope that through collaborations with experts and open sharing channels, we can all gain insights that will empower us to further care for our coral reefs and the ocean at large!

After three years of coral restoration, we're noticing our House Reef is breeming with more reef fish! Corals that we collected from Pulau Liukang and Pulau Kambing are thriving on our House Reef as well.

Decrease in drupella sightings on the House Reef is a reflection of our population control activities. But, given the outbreak of COTS on Liukang Island, we have begun removing them from the reef as well.







# CLEANUPS





# OVER AND UNDER WATER

**Pollution, particularly plastic waste, poses a direct threat to corals and marine life through ingestion, entanglement, and facilitating the spread of diseases. Removing debris helps safeguard marine life, preserve ecosystems and promote their resilience in the face of climate change.**

Because of the changing winds, Bira beaches see an incredible amount of trash seasonally. As a result, we have been working with local businesses and members of the community to clean up trash consistently. We seek to continue cleaning our coastal areas around the world as we expand our operations!





17,727

TONNES OF TRASH REMOVED  
SINCE 2020

THIS YEAR

1,317  
TONNES REMOVED

440  
BEACH CLEANUPS

CORAL RESTORATION 15





# EDUCATION







The only way we can ensure long-lasting impact is by educating and empowering as many people as possible to continue this critical work. To that end, we combine local education for children and adults alike with global outreach.

These vary from long courses to short workshops focused on coral conservation, marine identification, planting techniques, coral disease, sustainable fishing, reef protection, and more! Be it in schools, fishing villages, our own site, or social media, we use all tools at our disposal to plant conservation seeds in curious minds.

**"EDUCATION IS  
THE KEY FOR  
PROTECTING  
AND RESPECTING  
THE OCEAN...  
AND IT STARTS  
WITH THE  
CHILDREN."**







LOCAL

SINCE FOUNDING IN 2021

319

PEOPLE EDUCATED LOCALLY

36

LOCAL WORKSHOPS

THIS YEAR

296

PEOPLE EDUCATED LOCALLY

24

LOCAL WORKSHOPS

IMPACT

We are a small team and it's impossible for us to care for the entire ocean making local education and empowerment critical for ocean conservation.





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THIS YEAR

1M+

PEOPLE REACHED

5,144

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

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Conservation awareness and support is not only needed from those near the ocean but from everyone on the planet. This year was particularly inspiring as we saw exponential growth in our global community. We doubled down on sharing our mission across in-person events, online platforms, and collaborators. And, the impact is clear!





# BLUE ECONOMIES







# REVOLUTION ERA

The message is loud and clear: the time for “business as usual” is long gone. It will take collective effort involving all of us to restructure our financial, political, and social systems to address the climate crisis. We believe it is our responsibility to demonstrate how businesses can be successful while prioritizing sustainability and social justice.

There is no perfect society with perfect socio-economic systems. But pure prioritization of financial rewards is among the most destructive models which has pushed us into the crisis we face today. The revolution starts with a paradigm shift that places equal value on finances and cross-species climate justice.

That is why we introduced the Ocean 4 All program in 2023! Our goal is to continue the partnerships started with conscious brands that consistently strive to redefine business-as-usual. These partnerships will help us further expand our educational programs while raising funds to keep protecting local reefs.







2023 was a year of growth as we launched Ocean 4 All and partnered with conscious brands all over the world! This business-to-business program aims to empower businesses seeking to contribute back to our planet through our ocean conservation mission.

A thriving ecosystem is deeply interconnected, supporting each other through mutual growth. These partnerships create channels for collaboration and mutual accountability as we all navigate paths towards more sustainable and conscious businesses.

Program members pledge a percentage of their sales to finance conservation efforts from anywhere in the world. Together, we are not only restoring our reefs, but also strengthening our educational impact by becoming advocates for the ocean and spreading knowledge, creating a domino effect.





# MIGHTY TEAM OF [6]

Our restoration efforts are dreamed of and carried out by a full-time team of 6, but 2023 also blessed us with over 20 different influencers, interns, videographers, designers, engineers, dive instructors, and more, who worked with us along the year to help us accomplish our mission.



An underwater photograph showing two divers in blue wetsuits and fins working on a coral reef. The water is clear blue, and the reef floor is sandy with some coral structures. The text is overlaid on the image.

# WE DO IT SO YOU CAN TOO

2023 was a year of transformation as we designed educational models, communication styles, and outreach programs intended to give the next generation of ocean gardeners the tools to protect their own reef.

There is absolutely no room in restoration and conservation work for gatekeeping models like patents. We simply cannot afford to not collaborate, exchange all learnings, share resources and unite in the face of this climate crisis. And, 2023 proved to us that we are on the right track.

Our growth would not have been possible without the immense support from our ever-expanding community. So, if you want to join this love movement, reach out to us to bring restoration and conservation to your home! Ready or not, here we come, 2024!

ETERNAL HOPE - ETERNAL HOPE - ETERNAL HOPE





2023  
GROWTH REPORT

