

Pink Dolphin Campaign

Objective



Taiwan Pink Dolphins are found in the shallow coastal waters between Miaoli and Tainan. They are a critically endangered and on the IUCN "Red List".

There are several major threats to their survival, including by-catch, industrial activity, freshwater extraction and diversion in river systems, pollution and noise disturbance.

A recent threat to the dolphins has been the possibility of the construction of a petrochemical plant on Dachen coastal wetlands. The area is an important habitat for the dolphins. It is one which local residents, in particular oyster farmers, consider would have been disastrous for the diverse wetland ecology found there, had construction been allowed to go ahead.

To combat the threat a locally based conservation organization headed by a Dr. Tsai launched a campaign to sell 'shares' in 2000ha of the land to the public.

The campaign's aims were to block the proposed development and to then set up a trust to manage the mudflats for its long term protection.

Special points of interest:

- Taiwan Pink Dolphins on the "Red List"
- Public encouraged to "buy a patch of land"
- Taiwan's first campaign calling for the collective purchase of land

Approach

The trust encouraged the public to "buy a patch of the wetlands and save the pink dolphins" and to then entrust it to be sustainably managed by a conservation group.

This was Taiwan's first environmental driven campaign, calling out for a collective purchase of the land at risk, giving a voice to the public's concerns.

The campaign was supported by a planned set of concrete actions to advance the collective agenda. They were undertaken to demonstrate that the wetlands generate ecological and economic benefits that support the livelihood of both human and other life forms.

These activities included:

- a series of campaign events,
- press conferences,
- targeted protests, and
- lobbying.



INTO Involvement



INTO Director Oliver Maurice visited Taiwan's conservation groups on a trip organized by Taiwan Environmental Information Association. His input was made possible through sponsorship, and contributions from the organizations he then went on to meet during his visit.

He offered advice and support to various organizations dealing with heritage issues and also helped with the launch of the "Pink Dolphin Trust". During his visit he wrote to

the President of Taiwan to express INTO's concern about the unsustainability of the proposal. Since his visit he has continued to advocate for the campaign through his international network.

The main purpose of the visit was to:

- support the TEIA in their endeavours;
- begin the process of founding a National Trust for Taiwan;
- help with the launch of the "Pink Dolphin Trust" to save this

endangered species from extinction;

- to act as an advocate to the people of Taiwan, helping to demonstrate that environmental and cultural NGO's do have a role to play in safeguarding their natural and cultural heritage; and
- to offer advice and support to various organisations dealing with heritage issues.

Progress

Currently the team is working with three strategies. These are:

- to push for the draft wetland conservation act to be passed in the Legislative Assembly.

- Lobbying the government to recognize Dachen wetlands as nationally important wetlands.
- Continuing the pink dolphin trust campaign.

people succeeded in stopping the Kuo-kuang project, the fight is not over until it is made sure that pro-conservation laws and plans are implemented in the wetlands.

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