

# Special Designed Artificial Reef for Tourism in Phuket, Thailand

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Tourism activity on natural coral reefs is an important cause for coral reef degradation, especially new scuba divers and dive students who easy to damage the corals. In addition, the Indian Ocean Tsunami incident on December 26, 2004 had affected the coral reef along the Andaman coast while the damages varied according to the morphology of each coastal area. Therefore, the diving spots in Thailand have been reduced and deteriorated. Department of Coastal and Marine Resources and Ramkhamhaeng University have jointly conducted a study and designed the artificial reef to increase the diving spots, to reduce the damage, to lower the density of the diving activities along the natural coral reef, to enhance the number of visiting divers and to encourage the growth and diversity of natural resources and marine organisms. Racha Yai Island was selected for establishing special designed artificial reef in Phuket Province because it's natural coral reefs were visited by many tourists. Because Phuket was interested by many foreign travellers, so Thai identity should be showed as special designed artificial reefs such as elephants, Thai pavilion, Thai designed signboard, and Thai traditional art arches with a pair of Thai demons. In addition, Phuket had named as "Pearl of Andaman", so the large pearl oyster was built. Diving in artificial reef areas would be a good conservation and recovery strategies of coral reefs. It is directly reduce number of diver in natural coral reefs. If these artificial reefs are popular for diving activity, coral reef ecosystem should receive lower human impacts.

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