Strengthening conservation of mangroves and other marine and coastal resources at Thong Toam Yai Bay

Objectives
The long-term goal of this project was to rehabilitate and conserve coastal resources. Its specific objectives were to reforest mangrove areas and establish a conservation area for fish. This was to be achieved by integrating coastal resource management issues into community livelihood activities and into a community development plan.

Background
Thong Toam Yai is a small coastal community, members of which depend heavily on the marine and coastal resources of Thong Toam Yai Bay. Most are engaged in small-scale fishing and aquaculture, or work on rubber and oil palm plantations. Nine families in the village have started ecotourism activities and homestay ventures.

Target beneficiaries
The main beneficiaries were 203 households at Thong Toam Yai with a yearly income of about US$2,000–2,667 per person from small-scale fishing.

Outputs
- Planting of mangrove seedlings on deserted prawn farms covering about four hectares.
- Training for 35 members of a youth group and 30 members of the community on the “Revival of Thong Toam Bay”.
- Launching of activities to collect and dispose of waste, reforest mangrove areas and collaborate with surrounding communities on conservation activities.
- Establishment of a clearly demarcated fish refuge.
- Compilation of a plant species database for use in future conservation activities.

Accomplishments and challenges
Members of the project took part in a National Symposium on Climate Change Adaption and Disaster Preparedness in December 2010. Thong Toam Yai won first prize in the UNDP GEF-led search for the best community project to adapt to climate change. The award recognised the community’s innovative “eco-friendly tourism” which integrates climate-change-sensitive strategies. Mr Watcharin Sawangkan, the project coordinator, presented the history of conservation efforts in the area and accepted the award on behalf of the community.

As a result of winning this award, the project received national recognition for its community-led efforts and US$10,000 in additional support.
Contributions to cross-cutting themes

Climate change
Integrating climate-change-sensitive strategies into project activities proved of major benefit for the community.

Lessons learned
Artificial reefs made of degradable materials may last only one year. More durable materials would last longer but are more costly to transport and sink.

Partners and their contribution:
Community members made an in-kind contribution valued at US$13,894. The Darnsawi sub-district administrative organisation contributed US$967 in cash.