

# ROOTED



FIRST QUARTER 2020

Quarterly Report  
For Sustainability

“Embracing the Environment,  
Empowering People”

New This Quarter...

Launch of 25<sup>th</sup>  
Commemorative  
Book - Rooted in  
Sustainability

Now Available to Download – link inside

Property Highlights

Each month our Sustainability Champions produce a small summary of their property's monthly achievements and progress. Discover more inside...

COVID-19

Find out what our properties have been doing to tackle one of the biggest global challenges of our time - and the amazing support that has been demonstrated across the Banyan Tree Family

**PALU TSUNAMI  
& EARTHQUAKE**

Two years since the catastrophe, our team in Indonesia move onto second stage relief efforts



# Rooted in Sustainability

## Banyan Tree's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Book

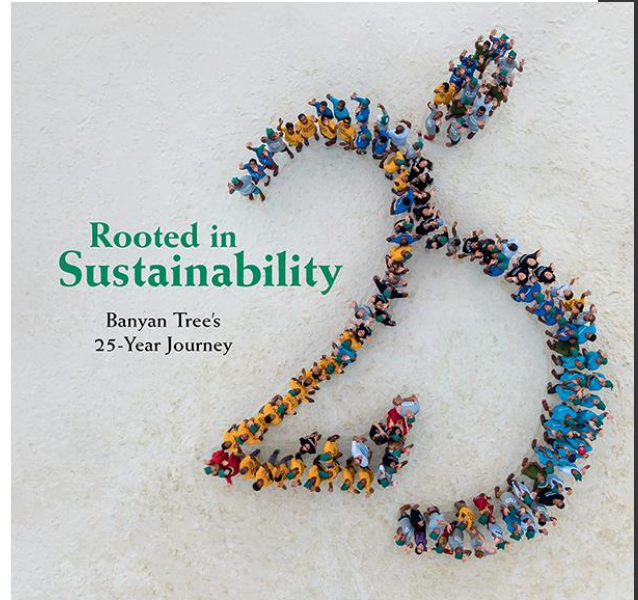
Following its soft launch at the end of 2019, *Rooted in Sustainability* is now officially launched in both hard and soft copies, with digital versions available for download (QR Code below).

Commissioned by Banyan Tree's co-founder Ms. Claire Chiang, as part of the special celebrations marking the significant milestone, the book reflects upon the journey of our Brand, the unique and caring culture demonstrated by all our associates, and the values that keep us all centred and rooted to Banyan Tree's core ethos of sustainability:

**“Embrace the Environment,  
Empower People”**

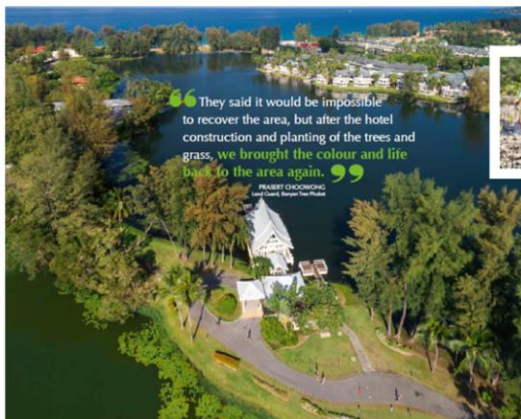
The book was produced by the Banyan Tree Global Foundation, who visited key properties involved in the conception and growth of the Banyan Tree brand, dug deep into old archives and interviewed dedicated and long-term associates, whose touching stories contribute to Banyan Tree's exciting 25 year journey.

It was impossible to include every story the team came across in just one book, but over the course of this year, we will look to feature on our various media platforms, some of these narratives, which are no less important to the Brand's story – so watch this space.



*Curious to learn more about Banyan Tree and its intertwined relationship with sustainability? Download and follow the journey with us...*

The first chapter returns to the group's humble beginnings at the site of Bang Tao Bay, once regarded by co-founder Mr. KP Ho as, 'A most incredible moonscape', and reflects on how the development of Laguna Phuket influenced the growth and development of the brand we know and love today.



**A Most Incredible Moonscape**

As Banyan Tree Phuket's official Land Guard, Phasert Choosong's job title is not one that is likely to pop up on a regular job search portal. It is so unique in his mind-set with the group that he has spent over 20 years with. At 67, he has lived through some larger changes in Bang Tao Bay, Phuket. His early career began in the very same way that were responsible for the degradation of the area, but he worked in the sense that once set in the heart of the main lagoon, directly opposite the site of the Quail Club, the first hotel ever built in Laguna, and next to where the Laguna Resorts 2 hotels offices are now located. His journey with Banyan Tree began even before the Ho family acquired the land on which the flagship property was built. Motivated for his dedication, tenacity and a willingness to assist wherever he can, Khun Phasert is one of many unassuming people who have played important roles in the story of Banyan Tree.

Claire, Xuan Ping (XPI), his brother Xuan Cjan (XC) and their cousin Chiu Ping (Chiu) had come

to Phuket in the late 1980s looking for a small piece of land to build a summer house – a magical retreat from their urban lives in Singapore. Having found something suitable, they continued along the beach, only to chance upon "a most incredible moonscape". XPI remembers, with a strange glimmer in his eyes, they enquired after the owner of the land – leading them to a man named who was Mr. KP Ho. They got it all his hands. The next, as they say, is history. XPI says, "Up until now, that other small piece of land is still vacant – I still haven't built my summer house."

KC, Managing Director of Design Services for Laguna Resorts 2 Hotel, remembers standing on the moonscape site for the first time, repeatedly asking his brother where he thought the boundaries were. Equally mystified, XPI could only reply, "Well, damned if I know." KC asked about making the decision for where the first hotel should be built, saying he might as well have kindly pushed a pin into a map. It was in fact Khun Phasert who then came to their rescue and was able to identify all the boundary markers of the land site needs. He coordinated with the owner and local government members to confirm these boundaries, no small task at a time when most people were not equipped with mobile GPS devices or smart phones.

XC, Once divided 50 and part of a 10 acre, the lagoon project is only 100m Phasert Choosong has spent time inside with XPI.

SCAN QR CODE TO  
DOWNLOAD OR  
VISIT

[www.banyantreeglobalfoundation.com](http://www.banyantreeglobalfoundation.com)



# Property Highlights

## Our Environment

As a result of various isolation measures and quarantines imposed upon the planet during this year's difficult first quarter, we have in some ways begun to experience what our world might be like without access to a healthy natural environment.

Despite the challenges, our teams have continued in true Banyan Tree spirit, to embrace the environment, and a number of compelling events have taken place.



### Earth Hour

Our annual celebration at the end of March was far from normal, as guest occupancy dived in response to the spread of COVID-19. Nevertheless, a number of resorts found innovative ways to raise awareness about climate change, such as **Laguna Lang Co in Vietnam**, who encouraged people through social media to 'Run for Earth', and wherever possible get outdoors to embrace nature (whilst practicing social distancing guidelines). The virtual 60km run took place over a couple of weeks, with progress logged through the fitness app Strava.

Whether operational or not, most Banyan Tree properties endeavoured to switch off non-essential power, and around 4000 kWh's were saved, from the numbers so far.



**Resource Conservation** We continue to focus efforts on energy and water consumption, as well as our production of emissions and waste.

We are optimising our time during this low period to assess and analyse our business consumption patterns, and develop strategies that improve waste management.

In March, some Banyan Tree properties celebrated **World Water Day** raising awareness about water scarcity; especially important during this time of high global water consumption for the purpose of hygiene.



We continued observing Meat Free Mondays at most of our properties to raise awareness about the implications of animal agriculture for climate change, as well as practicing good health and wellbeing.



In March a food waste monitoring workshop was organized by Phuket Hotels Association and delivered in collaboration with ongoing efforts of **Laguna Phuket**.



As well as continuing food waste donations to Scholars of Sustenance (SOS), **Banyan Tree Bangkok** continues to lead by example when it comes to resource conservation, actively campaigning over the course of 2019 and achieving 20% energy and 30% water reductions, compared to the same time last year.





**Remediate** Our properties continued to raise awareness about the importance of protecting the natural environment. Community and beach cleanups were held in **China, Indonesia, Korea, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Seychelles, Thailand & Vietnam**, including the 'Pink Walk and Run Cleanup' to celebrate **International Women's Day** in **Phuket**, a World Wetlands Day mangrove cleanup in the **Maldives** & the 'One Island One Voice' cleanup in **Bali**.



## World Wetlands Day

To mark the occasion, associates from **Laguna Lang Co, Vietnam** took part in a special eco-quiz and our **Maldives** properties held a collaborative cleanup with local residents and school children on Huraa Island, and following this delivered a short presentation and Q&A about the role wetlands play and why they are so important for our planet.



Associates from our properties in **Laguna Phuket** also came together to plant 500 Mangrove saplings to support Greening efforts for the Bangpat community. Further Greening efforts were made in **China** and in **Vietnam**. **Laguna Lang Co** started a new project 'Trees Charity' with the Green Alliance – a group of forestry and conservation experts. The goal is to plant 7,500 trees of *Melaleuca quinquenervia* to sustain finance for Nuoc Ngot Social Protection Center.

for



## Status Update



EARTHCHECK

Five properties completed their EarthCheck audits for 2020 in the First Quarter – with **Cabo Marques, Mexico** and **Maison Souvannaphoum by Angsana, Laos** moving up to Gold status, **Banyan Tree Bangkok** retained its Gold Status and **Banyan Tree Seychelles** retained Silver. Well done to those properties and the teams involved!



Ongoing efforts at our ocean-based properties continued: coral restoration in the **Maldives**, turtle conservation in **Indonesia & Mexico**; in **Samui** Front Office associates were taken on guided snorkels with a marine scientist, to improve understanding of the beautiful world below the waves and engage with guests. Perhaps relating to the reduced human disturbances on Samui during covid-19 lockdown, Green Sea Turtles came ashore to lay a total of 5 nests in February and March, directly in front of our property – the first time in 8 years this has occurred! Meanwhile, in **Bintan** 3 sea turtles were rehabilitated and released after being found tangled in ghost nets on the beach.



To continue inspiring the next generation of leaders in the **Maldives**, an ongoing partnership saw youngsters from the Maldives Girl Guides Association return to Vabbinfaru for a day of conservation and sustainability focused activities. We have also entered the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the Maldives shark conservation project, assessing the efficacy of the Maldives shark fishing ban using Baited Remote Underwater Video (BRUV), conducted in



partnership with PhD students from Newcastle University, UK

# Property Highlights

## Our Community

**Education** Supporting the educational needs of both our own associates and local community members remains one of our top priorities and during the First Quarter we saw the completion of two more Banyan Tree funded school projects, from our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary campaign last year.



This included **Banyan Tree Bangkok's** efforts to provide and install clean drinking water filtration systems for 3 schools in northern rural Thailand. **Banyan Tree Mayakoba, Mexico** finished their plans to renovate parts of a pre-school, including installing sanitary facilities. Our property in **Ungasan, Bali** celebrated its 10th

anniversary in January, inviting the local kindergarten's marching band to perform, which was also sponsored as part of the school projects campaign.



Internally, as well as training to develop and refine hospitality-specific skills, our annual sustainability training has begun for all associates, delivered by our learning departments and sustainability champions, with the main goal of improving collective understanding of Banyan Tree's sustainability framework and objectives. **Laguna Phuket** developed a suite of e-learning materials to help this objective, as well as holding a workshop for department heads, specifically focused on the needs of annual sustainability reporting. Further webinars and training at groupwide level are in the pipeline for 2020, to boost operational understanding and efficiency of sustainability reporting



In line with COVID-19 guidelines, learning opportunities for children were promoted in our local communities, including our ongoing signature Seedlings programs and various vocational internships in **Morocco, Indonesia, Laos and Thailand** – these often focus on providing exposure to the hospitality and tourism industry, combining practical learning with theoretical education, delivered by Banyan Tree associates and leaders. Special talks were delivered to students from Singapore National University & Polytechnic Negeri Bali.

In other areas schools have closed due to Covid-19. **Laguna Lang Co** in Vietnam took this time to document the teaching methodology, lesson plans & experiences drawn from their "English is Fun" programme into a teacher's book. Providing guidance to deliver English lessons on 20 different topics for secondary school students aged 12-15, they hope this material can act as a good reference for English teachers and contribute to the modernization of the local education system.



# Health & Wellbeing

This first quarter has been dominated by the growing impacts of COVID-19 coronavirus, and Banyan Tree has strived to assist victims and support those affected however and wherever we can. In Phuket, the Red Cross faced blood shortages the whole of March, due to the global pandemic. In response, **Laguna Phuket** organized a blood drive activity, with 41 associates donating a total of 18,450cc. Not only was this a significant contribution, but in fact a milestone—as the total amount of blood donated by [4,449] associates since 2003 reached 2 million cc’s.



Blood donations were also carried out in **Tamouda Bay, Morocco and Samui, Thailand** as part of annual routine donations by Banyan Tree associates to promote good wellbeing and support localised health-related issues, such as Thalassaemia in the Maldives.



To further promote a healthy lifestyle, associates in the **Maldives** participated in a 5k run, raising awareness about the global plastic problem. Monthly swims across the ocean channel between the sister islands **Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru & Angsana Ihuru** also commenced, with one specifically held to celebrate International Women’s Day.



# Fundraising

Various events were held in the first quarter to raise funds and awareness for specific charities and causes, including making donations to disadvantaged children by our associates in **Phuket** during February, the ‘Singing for the Blind’ charity event held by associates in **Bangkok**, who also organized a campaign to raise support funds for the Australian bushfires that occurred at the end of 2019 and continued the start of 2020.



Most unfortunately, **Nguyen Hai Hue**, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader supported by **Laguna Lang Co’s** Seedlings program, was diagnosed with stage 4 Nasopharyngeal cancer. The associates at the property showed great care and support, raising

USD \$4000, with a further USD \$3000 provided by BTGF to help sponsor his medical treatment and care.

Some of our properties in **Thailand, Laos and China**, continued efforts to help disadvantaged sectors of society through the Feeding Communities initiative, providing meals to local monks and those in need—this included providing lunch for the Laos Red Cross emergency services during the start of the covid-19 lockdown.



# Culture & Heritage

Despite the adversity posed by COVID-19, our properties and associates have still found plenty of ways to celebrate our collective diversity and the various cultures that contribute to our fabric.



In Vietnam, the start of the New Lunar Year witnessed traditional celebrations for the Tet Holiday – these were combined with a period to reflect upon the significant contributions made by the property and its associates, towards our shared sustainability goals.



Chinese New Year is traditionally a momentous occasion for the Banyan Tree family, and whilst many of our properties in **China** restricted by quarantine and social distancing guidelines, other properties around the world were able to celebrate together. In **Lijiang**, a traditional Dongba blessing ceremony was held by members of local Naxi people.



**Thailand's** National Children's Day has been a highlight celebration since Banyan Tree first opened its doors in Phuket in 1994, and continues to capture the souls of our Thailand-based associates each year.



At Angsana Velavaru, Maldives local artisans from the Maldives Art Community (MAC) an NGO that support local talent, were invited to the island to share their creativity and local inspired artwork with guests.

# Recognition

**Laguna Bintan** continues to set high practice standards across the industry and efforts were acknowledged in the form of the Certificate of Recognition in 8th Sustainable Business Awards in Indonesia.



Much of this stems from their ongoing efforts to develop partnerships in **Bintan** between various sectors of society, and spearheading the Sustainable Tourism Development Forum.



Bangkok's General Manager Khun Nopparat Aumpa, was also shown recognition as an Influential Leader Honoree, by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB) – for being a role model and a positive force in society. She was also invited as guest speaker at CanCham's Women in Leadership 2020 "Vision for Impact" conference.

2020 Influential Leaders Challenge Honoree

**Nopparat Aumpa**  
 Senior Assistant Vice President/General Manager  
 Banyan Tree Bangkok  
 Sasin School of Management

#AACSBleads



# Central Sulawesi Earthquake and Tsunami Relief 2019 – 2020

On September 28th 2018, the Palu earthquake and tsunami devastated parts of the Central Sulawesi region in Indonesia. Seven months later, on 28th April 2019 Bangga village and surrounding areas suffered a flash flood that caused critical damage to various buildings and houses. In response to these catastrophic events, the Banyan Tree Global Foundation (BTGF) sought collaboration with local partner IBU Foundation (IBU) and began developing a two-stage support and rehabilitation programme for the affected communities.



The first stage of the programme conducted in 2019, included provision of psychosocial support for the affected Bangga village inhabitants, donations of essential items and materials, increasing community capacity relating to waste management, and supporting livelihoods by developing markets and small businesses focused on recycled products.



Having demonstrated positive impacts on the recovery of the inhabitants and area, the second stage of the programme has now begun. In collaboration with ISKINDO (Indonesia Marine Scholar Association) this includes providing training and strengthening capacity for local fisherman and women's groups, in addition to providing traditional fishing boats and tools.

# COVID-19 *our response*

It is often said that how a person or entity such as a business responds to adversity, defines them. Banyan Tree and its associates are veterans of catastrophes out of their hands, having stood firmly together through the SARS outbreak, the 2004 Asian Tsunami, multiple earthquakes, volcano eruptions and flooding, as well as political protests and riots.

The 2020 global pandemic has come fraught with its own unique challenges and difficulties that have impacted industries and societies across the world. The tourism industry in particular is suffering, as a result of the lack of global movement and isolation impositions. Nevertheless, Banyan Tree properties were quick to respond and have kept at their very heart the safety and wellbeing of its stakeholders.



In addition to standard safety and health precautions being carried out and observed, such as sanitation of public spaces, temperature checking, isolation and quarantines—Banyan Tree's associates have been exploring other means to assist and support the crisis. This includes providing meals to frontline workers in **China, Morocco, Laos and Thailand**, providing masks and other materials in high demand to victims or disadvantaged sectors of society. In **Thailand**, efforts included a charity talent event, with proceeds going to Covid-19 response units and victims.

## “I am with you”

Our collective message during this time defines our congruent mindset and speaks of our founding philosophy, to ensure that we operate as a responsible business focused towards peace, people, planet and mutual prosperity for all.

We have taken this time to assess and strengthen our sustainability programmes, to consider long-term support for those affected and build greater resilience through partnerships, for vulnerable segments of society.

