

Sustainable Tourism

By Julien Goalabre

IDEP and its team dedicated to save Bali's freshwater are heading toward success in 2017. For Bali, top travel destination; it is a very special year as the United Nations has adopted 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

There will be a focus on three of 30 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) voted by the UN:

- SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all;
- SDG 12: Sustainable Consumption and Production;
- SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

In Bali, this is the chance for all tourism actors to help IDEP to play an important part in restoring Bali's aquifers and protect our rivers from pollution through the Bali Water Protection (BWP) program. The time to act is now as more and more tourists visit Bali while freshwater scarcity is real in many areas.

We are lucky to say that there is a growing shift in the tourism industry from ignoring the issue toward participating in the necessary efforts to protect Bali Holy water, Agama Tirtha.

Genuinely committed major players have decided to

support the BWP: Waterbom Bali, Five Elements, Buffalo Tours and Body Shop are now officially water lovers.. Thus, we are extremely confident that BWP will soon be financially viable for implementation, as for the time being the project is still seeking a large amount of seed funding to start.

Therefore, IDEP and its partners need more companies to compensate their use of water and join BWP's for the sake of protecting the environment but also to protect its economy, another important element of Sustainability because no water = No Tourism.

The increase in media coverage in the negative impact of tourism on the environment coupled with the increasing demand for sustainable tourism from visitors are just few of the signs that should lead to immediate action, but there is very few tourism actors who are ready to take the lead and drive change toward freshwater resilience in Bali.

To adopt sustainable tourism practices will save Bali's freshwater, an element that is the core of the island's social and economic stability as 80% of the economy and 28% of the workforce depends on tourism.

2017 is the Year of Sustainable Tourism and we need to take positive action now, for everyone's future, for everyone's benefit. We need to seize the moment and make sure that Bali becomes a leader in sustainable development in popular tourism destinations. 

