



*The **Tsunami Reef Action Fund** provides scientific and economic relief to local communities to help them rebuild their lives and the coral reefs on which they depend for food and tourism income. The Tsunami Reef Action Fund provides a hand up and not a hand out, which gives people an opportunity to re-establish their lives with dignity and manage the reefs for the long term. An important goal of the Tsunami Reef Action Fund is to raise awareness of the interdependence between humans and their marine environment; when both are damaged healing one heals the other.*

The SE Asia tsunami devastated coral reefs that were the lifeblood of the region. Coastal villages depended on them for food – 65% of dietary protein came from reef-associated fisheries. Dive tourism and fisheries, major sources of revenue, contributed \$500 billion annually to the region's economy. The tsunami overturned massive corals, smashed coral heads, and buried entire reefs. The receding waves dragged debris (including TVs, fridges, concrete pillars, cars, and even the kitchen sink) onto the reefs where the wreckage continues to destroy the corals today. These beautiful and extraordinarily diverse coral reefs are in trouble.

Many coral reefs protected people against the full force of the wave – where reefs were intact, the damage and loss of life was less. But now the communities lack the resources to restore their reefs and rebuild their livelihoods. The situation is urgent. Unless the debris is removed and the reefs restored and conserved, the crisis will deepen into a long term disaster for people and their natural resources. The solution is simple: provide the scientific and economic assistance that will help people to restore the reefs so they can resume their lives. This is the focus of the Tsunami Reef Action Fund.

The health of the community and the reefs is intimately linked. When one is damaged, the other suffers too. For many people who lost loved ones, homes, and income in the tsunami, healing the reefs is their way of healing and rebuilding their lives. Recognizing the powerful bond between the ocean and people, the Tsunami Reef Action Fund identifies local people including scientists, conservation groups, dive operators, fishermen, and community leaders who seek assistance in rebuilding their lives and reefs. By supporting and engaging the local community in reef cleanup and restoration, the Tsunami Reef Action Fund can help people rebuild their lives while fostering new approaches to marine conservation and management.



*Clown fish live among coral reef anemones.*

The Tsunami Reef Action Fund provides ecological and economic support by:

- Providing economic assistance to local individuals and organizations that suffered great loss in the tsunami to assess, clean up, and restore their marine ecosystem.
- Providing scientific expertise by sending scientists to work with local communities.
- Training local people in assessment, debris removal, and restoration techniques.
- Assisting local scientists with much needed equipment, supplies, and expertise.

## Tsunami Reef Action Fund Overview of Current Activities

Currently, the Tsunami Reef Action Fund is actively supporting six major efforts in Thailand and Sri Lanka, as well as several smaller projects. The Tsunami Reef Action Fund supports local people who were left homeless and without income by the tsunami. These individuals and groups are courageously working to restore their lives and give back to their communities. The Tsunami Reef Action Fund has sent scientists to help communities with clean up and restoration and sent divers to assist with debris removal. It has also provided scientific knowledge and techniques to restore damaged and broken reefs. At one of the project locations in Thailand, scientists and divers removed 150 tons of debris off the reefs. This effort continues with more debris removed daily in a slow and painstaking effort under difficult conditions. Reef assessment and cleanup efforts in Sri Lanka would not have happened without the Tsunami Reef Action Fund's support to local conservation and dive groups. The Center for Conservation Research called the Tsunami Reef Action Fund's support of efforts to monitor the tsunami-destroyed National Park "a God-send." Much work remains in the cleanup and restoration phase and the Tsunami Reef Action Fund is fully committed to help restore and rebuild livelihoods and reefs and to raise awareness of the link between oceans and people.



*Divers remove debris from coral.*

## Tsunami Reef Action Fund History

Dr. Deborah Brosnan, a marine scientist and president of Sustainable Ecosystems Institute, made a major donation to found the Tsunami Reef Action Fund. This was her way of giving back to the oceans and to the people of SE Asia who came to her aid after a devastating 747 plane crash in Asia. Drawing on her knowledge of coral reefs, her network of scientists, and her own experiences in ecological and personal disasters, she set up the Tsunami Reef Action Fund to be a scientific and economic resource. The Tsunami Reef Action Fund provides scientific and financial support to local communities in reef clean up, restoration and



*Dr. Deborah Brosnan removing a fishing net from a reef. The net was dragged there from the tsunami.*

management. The Tsunami Reef Action Fund has given comfort, economic help, support, scientific knowledge, and a hand-up to many who have lost loved ones, homes, and income in the SE Asia tsunami.

Dr. Brosnan has donated her time and expertise to the Tsunami Reef Action Fund. She traveled through Asia after the tsunami to help restore coral reefs, to meet, work with, and support scientists and local communities, and to seed several local projects. The Tsunami Reef Action Fund is supporting numerous projects and people

in the region and has sent scientists and divers to SE Asia to assist in the effort. In addition, the Tsunami Reef Action Fund works in partnership with PADI Project Aware. Many individuals and corporations now support the Tsunami Reef Action Fund, including the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund.



*Coral broken by the tsunami.*

On a global scale, Dr. Deborah Brosnan and the Tsunami Reef Action Fund are scientific resources for those who need assistance in ocean conservation and restoration following natural and human disasters.

You can read more about the Tsunami Reef Action Fund and its activities at:

[www.tsunamireefactionfund.org](http://www.tsunamireefactionfund.org)

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

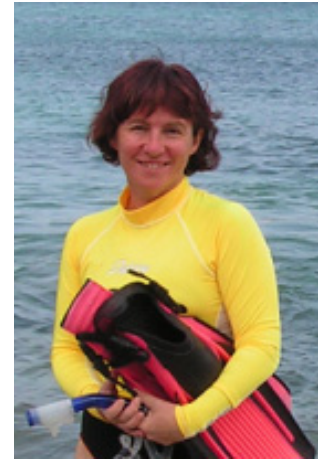
Read about Sustainable Ecosystems Institute at:

[www.sei.org](http://www.sei.org).

## About Dr. Deborah Brosnan

Dr. Deborah Brosnan is passionate about science and the oceans. She is on the front lines, as a strong advocate for the use of science in conservation decisions and as a catalyst for biologists to participate in the global forum. Connecting science with communities is her goal.

She is the founder and president of Sustainable Ecosystems Institute (SEI). SEI is a leader in engaging scientists, governments, and private and public sectors to work together and to use science to reach sustainable solutions. Dr. Brosnan has recruited 250 of the nation's top scientists to SEI's Conservation Science Forum, managed millions in funds, and directed major efforts including Everglades restoration, conservation of endangered species and marine reserves, Missouri River and Columbia River management plans, and California Redwoods research. She advises governments and other sectors on science, conservation, and science policy. She has given expert testimony on science and endangered species before U.S. Senate and House committees.



Her adventurous spirit and love of marine science have taken her around the world to work with communities and to study unique ocean habitats. She has worked in national and international seas in pursuit of greater understanding of ocean dynamics, and she has dived under active volcanoes to understand how eruptions affect coral reefs and fisheries. When a volcanic eruption threatened, she successfully moved an entire coral reef to allow an emergency jetty to be built, and saved both the reef and the community. She subsequently survived the Montserrat volcanic eruption when the volcano sent plumes of gas and pyroclastic flows into the ocean where she was diving to monitor the reefs.

Dr. Brosnan grew up in Ireland and received her BS from the University of Galway, where she was the first woman to qualify as a SCUBA diver. She received her MS in fisheries science from the Shellfish Research Lab at the University College Galway. She moved to the U.S. where she was awarded her Ph.D in marine ecology from Oregon State University. In addition to her science-policy work, her research ranges from the Pacific shores of North America to tropical coral reefs. Her groundbreaking research into human impacts on rocky shores was the backbone of the Oregon Territorial Sea Plan, which has been used to protect coasts worldwide. She founded the Tsunami Reef Action Fund to provide scientific and economic support to the communities and reefs devastated by the SE Asia tsunami.

Dr. Brosnan was awarded the Whitely Scholarship for writing. In 2001, returning from coral reef work in Asia, she was in a plane crash that injured her and killed many others. The Red Cross presented her with a hero's award for helping passengers to safety from the burning wreckage. She is the author of numerous scientific papers, reports, and popular articles. Dr. Brosnan contributes to science and to society as a speaker and as a member of several boards including UC Davis SeaDoc Society, Oregon State University College of Forestry, Washington State University Science Advisory Committee, SeaShepherd Advisory Board, and the National Ecological Observatory Network. She chaired a blue ribbon scientific code of ethics panel for the U.S. Government and co-chaired the National Science and Policy Forum. She has been featured on National Public Radio, Public TV, 48 Hours, and The Oprah Winfrey Show.