

Bali's Fresh Water Crisis and How We All Can Help

By Jade House - July 17, 2017



Previously on the Buffalo Tours blog, we shared the issues facing Bali's marine life and coastal communities. Today, we are going inland to understand more about Bali's fresh water crisis; an issue that is facing the island and all who call it home.

What is Bali's Fresh Water Crisis?

Densely populated coastal areas are experiencing a serious problem of salt water intrusion, driven by the extraction of fresh water. In particular, in areas where tourism is concentrated, fresh water is being extracted at a rate much faster than is capable of being replenished naturally by rainfall and mountain springs.



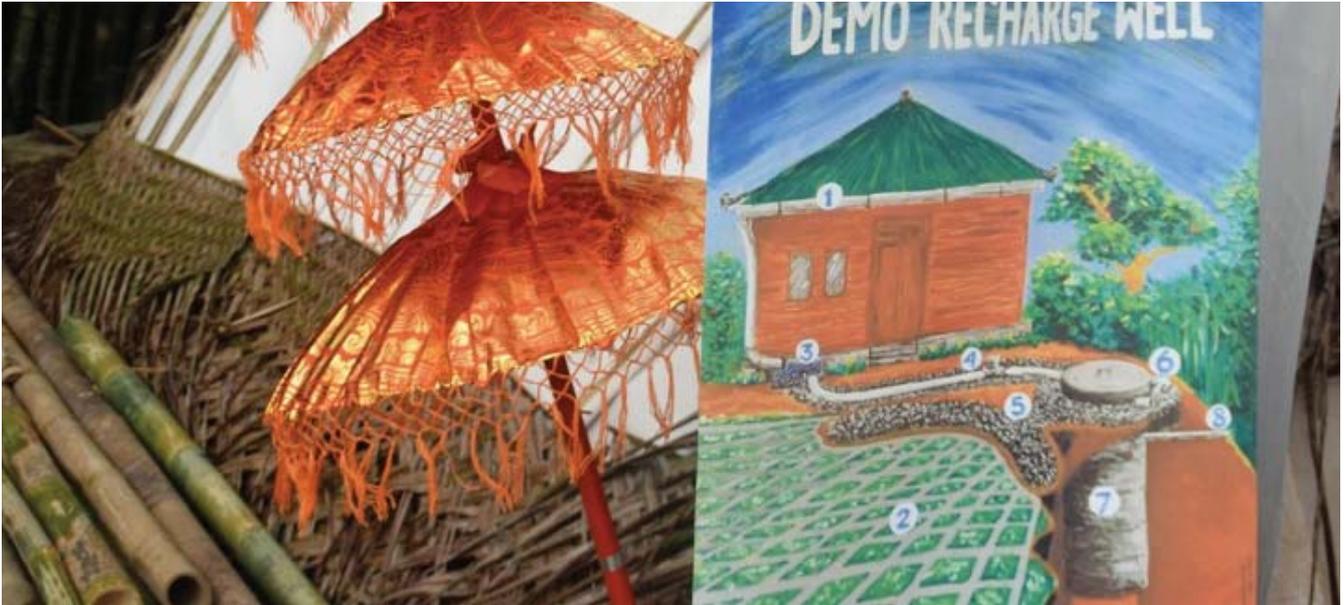


Islands are always more vulnerable to water scarcity, but Bali is a very special case. The tourism industry, especially the hospitality sector, has a tremendous demand on water. Bigger properties can use up to 100 liters per person per day when taking pools, showers and food preparation into consideration. If all stakeholders of this issue don't accept the responsibility to protect the fresh water in Bali now they will eventually threaten the success of their own business.

With Bali continuing to be one of our most popular destinations, with travellers across the world, it is clear that we have a duty to help.

Our Bali team has connected with the inspiring IDEP Foundation on their Bali Water Protection Program (BWP). We sat down with Julien Goalabre from the Communications and Fundraising Team to talk about the collaboration.





Hi Julien, thanks for taking time to answer a few questions. Can you tell us about the BW
 The project “Bali Water Protection” (BWP) is aiming to ensure the sustainability of freshwater for the Bali. We aim to use our grassroots approach to create long lasting change in the way water is managed on the island of Bali and small sister islands of Nusa Lembongan, Ceningan and Penida.

The program revolves around 3 subprograms:

Adopt A well: we are creating a network of 136 recharge wells harvesting rainwater into the ground to increase the availability of freshwater supply and stop coastal saltwater intrusion, which happens when the ocean pressure on the land fills the gap left by the extraction of groundwater. We will research the best locations thanks to our technical partner Politeknik Negeri Bali.

Adopt A River: this education program using comic books will educate kids of 132 schools about the water cycle and the sources of pollution in the river that reduce the amount of water available for consumption. It will empower river stewardship for the kids to be our ambassadors to protect rivers from pollution.

Adopt Water: the biggest threat to water is ignorance of the issue. Not enough people know that water is a danger, so we are carrying out a large scale media campaign to raise awareness about the issue and encourage people to save water. We aim to favor sustainable behaviors from both population and businesses and influence policy making.





What are Buffalo Tours doing to help BWP?

We are extremely thrilled to have Buffalo Tours as a partner as they have a great passion to protect Bali's freshwater! We are very grateful for the funds donated to the Bali Water Protection (BWP) program to help in making this amazing project a reality.

Buffalo Tours has taken a bold action in emailing all their partners to invite them to join the Bali Water Protection program. It is rare that tourism actors have the courage to acknowledge a responsibility of water usage and doing so is an amazing proof of sustainable tourism leadership.

Since the water issue still needs to be better known by the public, the decoration of Buffalo Tours cars with a strong message to save Bali's fresh water, is a great awareness campaign and an open invitation for everyone to save water.





How can businesses in Bali conserve and reduce water use?

The first thing to do is to carry out a water audit to show where the major water costs are and where can be made as we can't manage what you don't measure.

Then companies can take different actions depending of what business units they are in. Since more of Bali's freshwater is used to cater for tourism needs, this category is in a potential leadership position. Hotels are definitely the biggest players to assist our efforts to conserve water. Fortunately, there are things that can be done, such as reducing shower pressure; offer incentives to guests to reuse their towels; watering gardens in the evening and recycling waste water.

Educating staff to empower them to save water at work and at home can also make a big impact.

However, actions also need to be taken outside of the business premises as most of the time their water comes from areas that need to be protected. Joining the Bali Water Protection project, installing rainwater harvesting is the complementary measure to in-house water savings. We call it "water usage offsetting".





What can travellers themselves do to reduce their water use while in Bali?

Travellers can take positive action before they even come to Bali by booking their holidays through [Buffalo Tours](#) who are committed to preserve Bali's water resources. On arrival they can ask their accommodation about their water saving measures to either apply them if they exist, or communicate their care and [take action](#).

Practical steps to save water include reusing towels and bed sheets to avoid excessive laundry. They turn off the tap when brushing teeth or applying shampoo and soap, and of course take shorter showers. In the same way as businesses can offset their water usage, travellers can also compensate their consumption by [donating to our crowdfunding campaign](#).

Have you been to Bali or do you dream of visiting one day? Help us to help keep travel to Bali sustainable by travelling with us and connecting with the inspiring IDEP foundation.

Share this:



Jade House

Jade is the current content queen of Buffalo Tours and loves nothing more than researching, planning and embarking on new adventures. Life in chaotic and charming Hanoi suits her just fine.