# [***United Nations: Blue Carbon Society and UNDP team up on a 'masterplan' for Phetchaburi's mangroves and its coastal ecosystems.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5WWT-S021-DXMS-82RS-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

***Blue Carbon*** Society (BCS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) to develop a masterplan to sustainably nurture 24 km2 of ***mangroves*** in the western Thai province of Phetchaburi.

Phetchaburi is home to one of the world's most biodiverse marine environments. But urbanization and coastal activities such as salt farming have had mixed impacts on coastal ecosystems. To date, 17% of the province's ***mangroves*** remain untouched.

***Blue Carbon*** Society's co-founders, Dr. Jwanwat and Mrs. Thippaporn Ahriyavraromp, said the masterplan would aim at sustainable well-being for people as well as plants and animals.

The partnership will find ways for humans and the rest of nature to co-exist happily, said Dr. Jwanwat.

***Mangrove*** forests not only serve the well-being of our planet. They are also vital for local communities. Biodiversity-rich ***mangroves*** are nurseries and hatching grounds for species that are key resources for fishery and tourism. A key goal of the masterplan is thus to empower local communities to be custodians of their ***mangroves***.

***Blue Carbon*** Society commits on implementing this 3 year-year project in collaboration with UNDP. The initiative is expected to complement the development plan of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMRC) under Thailand's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

The Masterplan project aims to create a world-class 'Urban ***Mangrove*** Forest Showcase' at East Bang Taboon. This showcase will turn 400,000 sqm of ***mangrove*** forest into an inspiring model of ecotourism and sustainable development. Reclamation here will also tackle river-borne plastic waste, which is known to harm marine animals such as Bryde's whales. The project includes a further 'pilot' reclamation at Pak Thale to find ways to sustainably rehabilitate salt farm areas.

Lovita Ramguttee, UNDP Resident Representative a.i. said the project could provide huge benefits for Thailand's coasts and seas.

The Masterplan will address the biggest barriers to preserving critical coastal ecosystems, she said.

We need to involve local communities and local government in developing and implementing the project from the start. UNDP can play an important role in engaging stakeholders locally and globally in knowledge sharing and implementation. These efforts will contribute to the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), especially SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 14 (Life below Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

***Blue Carbon*** Society and UNDP will work with local stakeholders, public bodies, and experts from MQDC's Research & Innovation for Sustainability Center (RISC) and DTGO Corporation Limited's Urban Action Team in implementing this project.

The agreements to create the Masterplan were signed for ***Blue Carbon*** Society by Dr. Jwanwat and Mrs. Thippaporn Ahriyavraromp, its President and Vice-President, and by Dr.Wit Soontaranun, Director and Treasurer.

UNDP was represented by Lovita Ramguttee, Resident Representative a.i. and Mr. Saengroj Srisawaskraisorn, Team Leader of UNDP Inclusive Green Growth and Sustainable Development Unit.

About Thailand's ***mangroves***

***Mangrove*** forests rank among the world's most important but most threatened ecosystems.

***Mangroves*** play a vital role in combating climate change, storing about 1,000 tonnes of carbon in each hectare. They also provide homes and feeding grounds for many land and sea species. They support coastal communities and protect from ocean swell and extreme weather.

Thailand's coasts have about 1,900 km2 of ***mangroves***. These forests help the country maintain its exceptional biodiversity, hosting 9% of all species known to science.

Thailand has already lost 84% of its ***mangroves***, the greatest decrease for any nation. But the rate of loss has slowed with restoration work since the 2004 tsunami. The 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP) for 2017-21 aims to increase ***mangrove*** area as part of raising nationwide forest cover from 33% to 40%.

Phetchaburi's ***mangroves*** cover 14,839 rai (24 km2) or 17.27% of its area. These forests provide a habitat for 42% of the species in the upper Gulf of Thailand.

The coast combines ***mangrove*** forests, mudflats, and sandy beaches with a relatively shallow seabed (averaging 45 meters) that receives a high influx of nutrients and freshwater from Phetchaburi river and canals. There are 74 shorebirds, including rare migratory species that attract birdwatchers.

Phetchaburi is Thailand's biggest producer of lime, sea salt, and is famous for its ark shells. The coast here also has strong potential in ecotourism, agriculture, and coastal fisheries development.

About ***Blue Carbon*** Society

***Blue Carbon*** Society Association (BCS) was co-founded by Dr. Jwanwat and Mrs. Thippaporn Ahriyavraromp as a community of friends who wish to protect and conserve marine and coastal (or ***blue carbon***) ecosystems that help counter climate change. BCS aims at inspiring global action to improve the capacity of marine and coastal ecosystems to combat climate change by creating programs/activities that help human communities and natural ecosystems to co-exist in a balanced way, developing human capital and knowledge hub for sustaining marine and coastal biodiversity and ecosystems, and creating a network of alliances for ***blue carbon***.

(United Nations Development Programme)

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