

因为社区一个兴建海岸防风堤的议案，令旅居台湾的 Lee-Ann Ford 原本宁静的生活产生了翻天覆地的变化。当时，居民认为防风堤有可能阻挡海滩通道，因此对这个议案颇为不满，促使这位出生于加拿大的22岁私立语言学校主管决定前往镇民代表大会，提出替代方案。结果，她被拒在门外，地方官员说这事与她无关。

“于是，我成立了 Linking Individuals for Nature Conservation (LINC)，”她笑着说，“这件事唤醒了我的环保意识。没有人可以说自然环境与我无关。”

创办 LINC 至今，她一直全心投入，视 LINC 为责无旁贷的天职，勇敢接受各种挑战，平时只靠一家语言及翻译机构的收入维持生计。尽管经常在各种国际平台（包括联合国可持续发展委员会）发表个人对政策的意见，但最令 Ford 自豪的却是社区工作。她的目标是让环境保护议题透明化，让大众更加了解环保问题及可行对策。

本身修读外语教育和心理语言学的 Ford 表示，她要由自己做起，事事以生态为主导。

这种“我做不到”的态度让 Ford 成功地带动菲律宾的多个团体一起采取环保行动。2006年，她看到长滩岛的旅游广告，被画面上的细白沙滩和海天一色的美景所吸引，但是在抵达当地后，她却看到沙滩上到处是弃置的垃圾，珊瑚礁大量死亡，海洋生态严重影响了岛上的潜水旅游业。于是，她放下度假计划，展开个人最具抱负的项目，鼓励居民及商家加入保护海洋环境的行动。

## Through hell and high water

勇者无惧 环保女战士凭着一份“我做不到”的信念，全心为亚洲社区打拼。

撰文 Jo Baker 摄影 Gary Ng

Lee-Ann Ford's quiet life in Taiwan changed when storm blockers were proposed along a nearby stretch of coastline. The structures threatened to block access to the beach and local residents were upset, so the 22-year-old Canadian-born head of a private language school decided to research and present alternative options at a town council meeting. She was promptly shown the door by local officials, and told that the issue wasn't her business.

“That's when Linking Individuals for Nature Conservation (LINC) was born,” Ford says, with a laugh. “It woke up my soul. I just thought, no one can tell me that the environment isn't my business.”

LINC has become an intense commitment for its founder, who still supports herself financially with a language and translation firm. Although she speaks at policy level on various international platforms, including the UN's Commission on Sustainable Development, Ford most prizes her work among communities. Her aim is to demystify environmental problems and their possible solutions.

Having studied second-language education and psycholinguistics, Ford says she has had to learn “everything ecological” through basically doing it.

Such a can-do attitude has enabled Ford to rally communities in the Philippines to action. Drawn to Boracay Island on holiday in 2006 by advertisements boasting white sand and azure seascapes, she remembers being bewildered by the environmental degradation she had found instead. Garbage was being piped directly onto beaches, while the decimation of reefs and their marine populations had badly affected the island's scuba tourism. Shelving her holiday plans, Ford embarked on some of her most ambitious projects to date, encouraging local residents and business owners to get involved in protecting their marine surroundings.

“I was knocking on doors within about three days,” she laughs. “They said, ‘woah, who's this weird environmentalist girl’, saying, ‘we need to talk’. But they came. They were all aware of the problems.”

The following two years saw funds raised among local business owners, permissions obtained from the Philippine government, and environmental consultants flown in from the United States for various projects on the island. Ford involved different sectors in the community, from coastguards to holidaymakers, with tasks such as collecting the coral-eating snails, which had flourished without big fish predators. LINC also encouraged struggling fishermen away from dynamite fishing by training them as environmental liaisons. Under the guidance of a LINC ally, Dr Thomas Goreau of the Global Coral Reef Alliance, a coalition of volunteer scientists, divers and environmentalists built a new reef using simple biorock technology. Part of it was made possible by Shangri-La's Boracay Resort and Spa, which had approved the donation of useable construction waste.



加拿大女教师 Lee-Ann Ford (对页) 辗转成为环保措施的代言人，她积极参与菲律宾长滩岛的海滩保育活动，与当地社区及志愿人士 (上起顺时针方向) 一起改良水质、收集蚕食珊瑚的蜗牛，及用 biorock 技术建构新珊瑚礁。

Canadian teacher-turned-environmental policy spokesperson Lee-Ann Ford (opposite page) has been actively engaged in the conservation of Bulabog beach in Boracay, the Philippines, where the local community and fellow volunteers (clockwise from top) have reduced water pollution, collected coral-eating snails, and attached pieces of broken coral on the area's biorock reef.

Lee-Ann Ford (左下起顺时针方向) 正与团队商讨菲律宾 Puerto Galera Big La Laguna 海滩的保育工作; 与珊瑚礁专家 Dr Thomas Goreau 在长滩岛视察环保工作的成效; Big La Laguna 海滩附近的居民与工程师一同建设 biorock 珊瑚礁。  
Lee-Ann Ford (clockwise from below left) discusses the Big La Laguna Beach project in Puerto Galera, in the Philippines, and surveys conservation efforts on Boracay with coral reef expert Dr Thomas Goreau. Meanwhile, engineers and locals build a biorock reef for the Big La Laguna Beach.



“我在三天内到处敲门!”她边笑边说,“人人都说我是个怪人,不过,他们都明白问题所在,所以最后都加入了!”

接下来的两年间,陆续有当地商家捐款、菲律宾政府批出许可证,就连美国环境顾问也飞来参与岛上的各项计划。Ford 深入社会各界,邀请海岸巡逻员以至度假游客共同参与,例如捡走因缺乏大鱼捕猎而大量繁殖、能够蚕食珊瑚的蜗牛。LINC 亦鼓励渔夫放弃使用炸药捕鱼的方式,训练他们成为环保尖兵;在全球珊瑚礁联盟的 Thomas Goreau 博士的指导下,一群志愿科学家、潜水员和环保分子也纷纷联手,利用简单的 Biorock 技术,成功建构了新的珊瑚礁。而香格里拉长滩岛度假酒店捐出的一批可用建筑废料也为这项计划的成功作出了贡献。

“人们并非不愿意行动,而是不知道该怎么去做;这不关乎黑白是非的问题。所以,我们要告诉这些有心人,让他们知道可行的方法。”

Ford 仍在继续在菲律宾及其它地方努力实践环保行动。LINC 的最新任务是在香港发展一个社区支持的农业计划,让人们可以享用到当地生产的有机农产品。

回顾十年的历程, Ford 自己感觉过得充实而又有意义。她以冷静及创意的思维努力消除大众对环保行动的戒心,在此过程中还把“我做得到的”坚毅精神注入亚洲的各个小社区。“担任最前线的环保工作者并不容易,因为你预见到了最坏的情况,然后要尝试启导他人,让别人明白地球正在逐步消失。有时,人们似乎无法了解,但是当你让他们看到自己可以重建珊瑚礁,他们的眼睛亮了,思想也改变过来!”

“我跟 LINC 都经历过大风大浪,度过艰辛的岁月,但是我相信历史是一本写不完的书。”

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“It’s not that people aren’t willing to act – there doesn’t have to be good guys and bad guys,” Ford says. “But [many] just don’t know what to do. So we talk to them – show them the possibilities.”

Ford continues to hone her bottom-up approach in the Philippines and beyond.

LINC’s latest mission is to develop a workable model for community-supported agriculture programmes in Hong Kong.

A decade on, in a reflective mood, Ford can also recognise the scope of her achievements. By helping to remove the fear factor from environmental activism, using calm and creativity, Ford has seen her can-do attitude infused through small communities across Asia. “It’s hard to be an environmental front-liner because you see the worst thing possible and try to relate it to people – that our planet is disappearing – and sometimes it doesn’t seem like they understand,” she says. “But when you show them [that they] can build an entire reef themselves, their eyes light up, and they change.

“I’ve definitely been through hell and high water with LINC, but I believe that history is constantly being written.”

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