

Youth Impact Communication

Environmental Conservation Of The Ecosystem Around Shenzhen Bay Area

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Summary

Most people are ignorant of the environment where we exist, live, and prosper. People leave trash everywhere. People free wild animals blindly. People think they are helping the environment, but they are not. People are unaware that their living place is being devastated by themselves.

Therefore, in this project, our group aimed to raise awareness for environment conservation in two parts: garbage pollution along the Shenzhen Bay Park seashore and invasion of alien species due to human activity. To convey our key message: "Preserving the present, creating the future," we have distributed surveys and collect feedback from the public. We also posted a video, to show the current situation and to let people more intuitively feel the need to protect the environment. We want to make people understand that help protect the environment is helping preserve the future of people themselves.

From this experience, our group has gained a lot. We understood that, although we are merely high school students, we are powerful to make some real impact on our community. We, as a team, are gathering tiny strengths from each member, and together finish our project, about the future of the entire human race. We will also continue on our project, to make a further impact and shape the idea of our community.

Identify the Topic

| Topic Description

We, as the generation that grew up together with Shenzhen Bay Park, are witnessing drastic changes in the environment these years. Mangrove ecosystems have been severely degraded and lost on a large scale due to human interference. Tons of sewage is being discharged into the sea by factories. The living space of the native mangrove trees is occupied and squeezed by alien species, and the soil nutrients are also plundered. Most importantly, tons of rubbish are being dumped nearby the seashore. What was supposed to be a home for mangroves and a habitat for animals has become a dumping ground for people visiting the park. We protect mangroves, not just because we want them to return to the way we remember them. As an essential member of the earth's ecosystem, mangroves play an unparalleled role in the global environment. In the form of litters, mangroves transform through the food chain to provide a suitable environment for the growth and development of Marine animals. Meanwhile, as the tidal gullies are developed in the mangrove areas, the animals from deepwater regions are attracted to the mangrove areas for foraging and habitat, and production and reproduction. As mangroves grow in subtropical and temperate zones and have abundant bird food resources, mangrove forests are winter grounds and transfer stations for migratory birds, as well as foraging habitats and breeding sites for various seabirds. Another significant ecological benefit of mangrove forests is its function of preventing wind and waves, promoting silting and protecting the beach, retaining the bank, and purifying seawater and air. The developed roots with interlocked roots can effectively trap sand on land and reduce the sediment concentration in the coastal waters. Dense and tall branches like a green wall, effective against wind and waves. Besides, marine garbage will be eaten by marine animals, which will lead to gastric discomfort and loss of appetite of marine animals such as sea birds, resulting in reduced reproductive function and even death. Marine garbage can also become entangled in animals, such as whales, making them unable to break free and even fatal.

Four or five years ago, this wetland area was a wasteland. Land reclaimed from the sea, which had not yet been included in the scope of garden planning and renovation. However, in just two or three years, invasive alien species arrived here with wind seeding and sea drift and began to grow barbarously on a large scale. When people discovered this wonderland, they wantonly devastate this ecological system. In China, the invasion of wetland species is mainly caused by blind

introduction and lack of management by people. The common characteristic of invasive species is that they generally overgrow, which can affect the local biodiversity and even destroy the ecological balance.

For the reasons above, we hope that mangroves can continue to contribute to the world's environment in the future, and garbage pollution can be reduced so that fewer animals would be harmed.

| Why it is important

Being one of the most symbolic places in Shenzhen, Shenzhen Bay Park bears by a large number of tourists every day. Through our team's field investigation, we found that massive amounts of garbage exist in the sea waters and forests of Shenzhen Bay. In the cracks in the sea rocks or on the surface of the beach, we can find tons of garbage everywhere, including the packaging of snacks, water bottles, plastic bags, etc. Even in the mangrove wetlands, pollutants can be found carelessly discarded. Many birds that breed in this land are suffering from pollution and have to migrate, flee.

These increased amounts of waste have affected the natural beauty of Shenzhen Bay Park and caused pollution to the surrounding environment. Still, most people haven't yet started to realize the need for increasing awareness among the public. If the condition continues to deteriorate, the whole ecology system of our city, even the world, will be facing severe problems, including massive extinction of species, breaking of the food chain, abnormal weather, etc. Therefore, we hope to make Shenzhen Bay better by launching a series of activities to raise people's awareness of environmental protection and to improve the current situation of the Shenzhen Bay Area.

| Project Objective

Our primary goal is to raise people's awareness of the importance of mangroves and the ocean environment and the need to protect them. As high school students, we hope to preserve our surrounding environment with our efforts. First of all, conducting an ecological survey of mangroves to let us make clear of people's opinions about this issue will lay a solid foundation for our subsequent work. We will call on people to clean up the mangrove and the coastline area around the Shenzhen Bay Park by themselves to let them experience the deteriorating ecological environment in person to make people aware of the danger to the mangroves from discarded waste, and set an example for the public. We will also use the forms of documentary or workshop to let more citizens have access to the real features of the mangroves, instead of relying on abstract text introduction and

lengthy picture teaching process. Besides, we will contact the relevant government officials to express our concern so that we would be able to rely on the power of the authorities to expand our influence further.

Identify the Target Audience

| Who Are They?

Our target audiences are mainly citizens and tourists in Shenzhen. This includes three different groups: students under 22 years old, young and middle-aged people from age 22 to 50, and seniors over 50.

For students, we typically refer to middle school, high school, and university students. The rising generation of young people can access various types of information, such as social media and news applications. Most of them receive good environmental education at school, so they understand the importance of preserving the environment. They live in different districts of Shenzhen, and they would like to choose visiting the Shenzhen Bay Park to release the stress from school. However, they mainly don't have too much sense of the real conditions of the ecological systems.

For people aged from 22 to 50, we refer to those who have already graduated from school and have a job. They don't have too much free time, so most of them spend their time visiting the park on weekends. This group of people plays a vital role in educating the youth and the elder to protect the environment.

For older people over 50, we refer to those who have retired. In their growing experience, they received little environmental education, so most of them don't understand the importance of it. Now they spend most of their time at home or visiting city parks like the Shenzhen Bay Park. This group of people consists of a large portion of the tourists in Shenzhen Bay Park. Also, some of the older people believe that releasing wild animals brings good fortune, which destroys the ecological balance. Therefore, it's most important to raise this group of people's awareness of the deteriorating environmental environment. We must convey the idea of environmental protection to stop them from littering, the bad habit.

| Why Are They?

The young people and students under 22 years old are the future of our city and country. Only from a young age to this group of profound environmental education, to make the cause of environmental protection continue in reality. When they grow up, they will be significant powers in the country. As the main force of future economic development, as well as the prospective environment owners and

users, the cultivation of young people's environmental awareness, will be the top priority in environmental protection work.

Also, China is stepping into an aging society, so it is a vital requirement to strengthen and enhance the awareness of environmental protection among the middle-aged and the elderly, and to promote its implementation. However, the environmental protection policies supported by the government have not been adequately responded to by the elderly. How to expand the influence of environmental protection policy in the heart of middle-aged and older people effectively is also a problem that the government and the society need to solve urgently.

Therefore, we chose these groups and tried to find out whether their age and education had influenced their views and opinions on environmental protection. We will use our power to call on them to contribute to the cause of environmental protection.

| What is your scope?

Our scope can be narrowed down to the citizens who have already lived in Shenzhen. They are the ones who are making a real impact on the environment in our city. They also have a better understanding of Shenzhen's current situations, so they should realize the degradation of the environment and pay more attention to protect it. On the contrary, the deterioration of the environment will be compensated by the decline of people's survival. Protecting the environment is protecting ourselves. Therefore, they must be aware of the issue and take action.

| How to reach them?

For teenagers, the most direct way for them to get in touch with new things is through social media, such as WeChat, QQ, Weibo, and so on. Besides, they are more willing to receive interesting and intuitive information or news from the web. For example, they tend to read cartoons rather than text messages. Therefore, we will use social media in a much more innovative way to communicate our ideas and to post information about our activities.

For the middle-aged and the elderly, they are more likely to read the news published by some authoritative figures, such as news on TV, from the newspaper, or news applications. They also like to go for a walk in the park in their spare time, so talking to them in person may be a good idea.

For field investigation, we will visit the Shenzhen Bay Park, and interview some of the tourists and sanitation workers in person. In this way, we can access to every age group and understand people's ideas about the issue simply and directly.

Identify the Key Message

| The Key Message

Our key message is "Preserving the present, creating the future."

| The Tactics Behind

Now, in the coastal area of Shenzhen bay, mangrove forests reserve to prevent soil erosion and beautify the environment. But the invasion of exotic creatures and the inadvertent destruction of mangroves have reduced their number of them and influenced their growth. Our key message is short and powerful. By comparing the current situation to the future we want to create, we hope that through our key message, we can let people understand the meaning of protecting the environment now is contributing to our city's clean, vivifying future. We hope to improve on the existing environment situation and make the mangrove forest protection and Shenzhen bay better, with more people joining us to take action to protect the mangrove forest. Therefore, the future of the mangrove forest that we made would be more beautiful to have a better city.

Choose the Platform

| The Platform Chosen

Since the information transmitted online proliferates in China, it is usual that people use social media to acquire the latest news. Based on this situation, we primarily consider using WeChat official accounts and Weibo, as well as other kinds of social media (like video apps, news apps, etc.), which are popular applications to post some articles and introduce our organization. Besides, we will create an online survey for the public and distribute the questionnaires via online applications, which will help us to get into the next stage. It would be worked by Wenjuanxing, a professional online questionnaire platform, which can give us the direct result and some simple data analysis using bar charts or other types of diagrams. Moreover, we would record a documentary about the current situation of the Shenzhen Bay area, which will include interviews and about necessary measures to deal with this kind of problem and know what the public thinks about it. Then, we will post the video on Bilibili or/and Youtube.

For offline methods, we will contact some of the relevant environmental protection organizations and cooperate with them to hold offline activities for every citizen in Shenzhen. We will also draw pictures and write slogans and pull them up to our school's bulletin board to attract attention from students.

| The Alternative Platforms

We may contact some newspapers to help us publish relevant articles and convey our information to the public. However, this platform may lack an audience, as most people do not choose to buy newspapers to read nowadays. Its advantage is that it has a very high degree of authority, and some middle-aged and older adults who habitually read newspapers are more inclined to believe the contents of newspapers.

We also considered offering relevant clubs and extracurricular activities. We will try to cooperate with the school's volunteer team and the environmental protection club to promote our project so as to reach a wider audience of students on campus. However, campus activities will also have a narrow audience so that we might create a workshop, targeted to the whole society. This workshop is mainly to hold

some interesting lectures and forums to interact with everyone in order to mobilize the public to do some green activities to improve the current situation.

| The Criteria to Evaluate

First, we will evaluate the number and types of audiences we can reach by each platform. We hope to reach as many people as we can. At the same time, we expect the audience can come from different social classes and age groups to achieve diversity.

Second, we will calculate the average preparation time and money costs. Due to the limited time to complete the project, we will choose the less time-consuming activities. Our budget is also limited, so we need to plan and try to select the most cost-effective types of equipment and equipment and venue for the project.

Third, we need to know what types of information we can deliver on each platform. We will choose a platform in which we can easily upload our articles, videos, and pictures.

Our ultimate goal is to reach a total number of audience by 1000+ and gets more than 70 percent positive comments on our project, so we will use the platforms that will best help us to achieve it.

| The Rating Sheet

We have designed a rating sheet, and we rated each feature of each platform. The maximum score for each item is 10.

By evaluating them, we ranked the platforms as the following: WeChat > Weibo > Instagram > Twitter > Bilibili > YouTube > School Bulletin Board > Offline Activities.

 [rating sheet](#)

Set the Agenda

| Set the Agenda

< Mid February > Questionnaire Design

Location: Online

Zhixiu Zhu, Diqing Zuo

< Late February > Documentary Preparation

Zhixiu Zhu, Yuyang Liu

< Early March > Documentary Recording

Location: Shenzhen Bay Park

Yuyang Liu, Yunlin Chi, Zhixiu Zhu, Diqing Zuo

< Early March > Interviews

Location: Relevant Institutions and Organizations

Zhixiu Zhu, Yuyang Liu

< Mid March > Questionnaire Results Collection

Location: Online

Zhixiu Zhu

< Late March > Finish Video Compositing and Effects Making

Location: Online

Yuyang Liu

< Late March > Questionnaire Report

Location: Online

Yupeng Ye, Diqing Zuo

< Early April > Documentary Upload

Location: Online

Yuyang Liu

< Mid April > Impact Statistics

Location: Online

Yupeng Ye, Zhixiu Zhu

Design the Packages

 [Video -- "Preserving the present, creating the future"](#)

 [WeChat official account](#)

Create and Track the Impact

| The Execution Plan

1. At the preparation stage of the project, we will create our WeChat official account for subsequent materials (video, articles, etc.) posting.
2. We will distribute questionnaires for comprehensive communication and understanding of our subject. We expect to receive more than 300 surveys from Shenzhen citizens by Mid-February. In the poll, we ask them to provide suggestions on the current understanding of the Shenzhen Bay area's environment situation. We will collect the public's feedback and write a report. We will use "Wenjuanxing" to edit questionnaires and see results.
3. After this, we will draft the documentary script according to the feedback collected. We will finish an approximate 5-minute-video script by Late-February. We will create an outline and specify some essential shots needed to compile the video.
4. We will contact some relevant organizations (Shenzhen Urban Management Bureau, Mangrove Conservation Foundation, etc.) and ask for permissions of interviews so that we can collect more professional knowledge and add to our video. This step will make our propaganda more credible and persuasive. At the same time, we will conduct a field study on the mangrove forest in Shenzhen Bay and take video clips for later editing. We need a camera and a small microphone for this.
If we aren't able to conduct a face-to-face interview, we will use the WeChat voice call. This task will be due by Mid-March.
5. Next, we will finish video composition and effects making by Late-March. We will use the software called Adobe Premium CS6.
6. We will also write a short article regarding the issue. We will combine the information we collect by interviews and internet searching.
7. Then, we will post our video online and attract the public to watch it by Early-April. The video will be posted on Bilibili and WeChat official account.
8. For the wrapping-up stage, we will collect feedback by checking "Likes" and "Comments" from the materials we posted on social media.

| Impact Statistics

A total of 371 questionnaires were issued, and 370 were returned. The respondents of this survey were mostly Shenzhen citizens. Questionnaires were distributed through random sampling. From the questionnaire results, we concluded that about 49% of the citizens had seen bad behavior that is harmful to the environment (littering, water pollution, not sorting garbage, etc.). Although each act is not severe, it is detrimental to the environment. Citizens also participate in environmental protection in a variety of ways, including donations, volunteer activities, public awareness activities, etc. Among them, the majority of volunteers have participated in the volunteering activities, accounting for 54%. Donations are also one of the main ways Shenzhen citizens contribute to environmental protection.

In the WeChat official account, our video received 304 views and 81 forwards. The data is collected on the WeChat official account management platform.

In the Bilibili website, we posted both the English and Chinese versions of the video. They received a total of 107 views, 7 likes, 4 forwards, and 4 people put the videos into the archive.

In total, 411 people viewed the video, and more than 100 people made positive comments on it.

 [Questionnaire Report \(includes data statistics\)](#)

| **Collect Feedback**

Feedback from random volunteers who submitted the questionnaire:

"From the generation of waste control, garbage classification to the prevention and control of pollution, comprehensive utilization, treatment and disposal, and finally the safety of landfill, everything done, I believe that Shenzhen will be a little more beautiful."

"The environmental protection of mangroves has been very good, but some citizens do not know enough about it. If there are enough videos to let the public know about the mangroves, the biological diversity, and the importance of protecting the ecological balance of mangroves, it will be good."

"Very good. I hope your project can influence more people to participate in environmental protection."

"It is hoped that more and more people will pay attention to the problem of environmental protection. Start from the side, start from their own, start from less trash. The more of these activities, the more people will be affected."

Feedback from a staff of Mangrove Conservation Foundation:

"You did an excellent job in making a video about the mangroves and Shenzhen Bay. That really helps convey the idea that our environment should be protected."

Although there were some scientific nature mistakes, after correction, it looks good."

Feedback from the school's counselor:

"That is quite good! I think you guys did a great job with the subtitles. It feels pretty professional, especially for a first documentary."

Review and Reflections

| Overall Self Check

This part is absent or not available temporarily.

| What Are Successful

Our team has been successful in quite a few aspects. To start with, our online questionnaire has received more than 1000 answers city-wide, which gave us a clear direction to work on as well as some constructive advice. We also interviewed the visitors and workers at Shenzhen Bay for their opinion on our project. Combining the new ideas that we received and our original plans, we made a video clip on the current environmental situation of Shenzhen Bay. We published it through multiple social media, aiming to raise public concern on the Shenzhen Bay ecological issue. Other than appealing to the public, we also tried to contact the authority, providing them with related data we collected from both the public and Shenzhen Bay itself. Although the Coronavirus has forced us into putting off our offline meeting with authority, we are still in contact via email. We would schedule a meeting as soon as it is considered safe to do so. In conclusion, despite the fact that we are yet having some trouble to establish further collaboration with the authorities due to the corona virus, our project had reached our objectives in general.

| What to Improve

We believe that although we generally reached our objective in the beginnings, there still are a few aspects which were different from what was planned and caused some unexpected inefficiencies. Firstly, our time management could have been better. One of the difficulties of working as a team is that everyone has their schedules, which makes it hard to make plans as a whole. We didn't realize this problem until it has caused us great time loss and had to hurry things up. Another unexpected inefficiency is that we had trouble using specific technical devices. Instead of practicing how to use them before-hand, we put them to apply directly and confused use.

| Summarize Learnings

Our team has learned a lot through the carrying out of our project.

To start with, we learned to have more social responsibilities in us. As teenagers, we used to think only of ourselves and our close ones, but as we are getting older and more mature, it is crucial to learn to think of other things in society as well. The older we get, the larger our responsibilities are, and our project was the first step of us finally taking social responsibilities: we learned to care about other people and the environment around us and to strive to help make them better.

Besides, teamwork was definitely something we worked and got better on. In a few months, we went from a group of disorganized people who worked individually to a team as a whole, already showing great team-spirit and cooperation. This ability to work within a team is not only useful in developing our project. Still, it would also be vital as we go on into society when we become a part of larger groups.

Another skill we gained through the process was managing our time effectively. At the very beginning of our project, we put off all our work until the last minute and had to finish everything in a hurry. We learned from our flaws and made timed plans to supervise our progress, which resulted in better time management as well as a work that is finished more deliberately.

Last but not least, we learned to maximize the dissemination of our ideas to the public. We got used to operating media tools, such as video editing software, WeChat official account, survey-making websites, and so on.

Team Credits

Zhixiu Zhu:

I am the leader of the team and the founder of the project. I am responsible for assign tasks to team members and set the execution plan, including exact dates and tasks. I also wrote the video script and designed the questionnaire. I am in charge of operating the WeChat official account, including setting layouts, composition, and mass-texting messages. I went field trips to Shenzhen Bay area and took shots with my teammates.

Yuyang Liu:

I am in charge of setting the execution plan and helping the leader to assign the task to the team leader. I am also one of the founders of our team and the project. I not only design the project but also involved in writing the script of our video. Apart from these, I am also the one that contacts with MCF and shot the video when we researched the Shenzhen Bay Park.

Yunlin Chi:

In this project, I collaborated with my teammates to conceive the essential outliers of our project and finish writing the documents required, like "why it is important," "identify the key message," and "choose the platform." I also went to the mangrove forest to do the on-the-spot investigation, and I took some pictures and filming some videos which are contributed to our project evidence. Besides, I tried to contact some companies in our city to ask for collaboration with them.

Yupeng Ye:

I am responsible for writing the articles that we published in our official account, making the outlines of our activities, and helping design the content of our propaganda.

Diqing Zuo:

I am responsible for the questionnaire design. I also helped dubbing the video.

Judge Comments

" There are so many positive aspects to this project. One thing particularly strong is how you focused on a topic that was very narrow -- protecting Shenzhen Bay Park - - but you can absolutely see how your efforts could be expanded to focus on other parks or broader ecological concerns. That's exactly how you want to manage a public information campaign: Start small and practical, with the opportunity to scale up if your efforts are successful. Similarly, segmenting your target audience into three separate groups makes a lot of sense because it allows you to target not only your message, but the medium based on their information-consumption habits. I would have liked to have seen a little bit more research or statistics about those consumption habits; I fear that you are simply using your own assumptions to make generalizations about those audiences, and that's a bit dangerous. Finally, a strong applause for the work you did with your WeChat account and your video. The video is well sequenced and has a wonderful mixture of information and scenery shots, although from a technical perspective some of the shooting could be more stable (use a tripod, for example, and don't rely on panning shots as much), and make sure to protect your audio -- ducking in and out when changing scenes, or using microphones for all voiceovers. Would love to have heard from more live sources. They probably have a lot to share on the topic, too. "