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3 November 2009

Dear *****,

We have been following the recent renewed correspondence about the proposed marketing of Safe Sea in Thailand. As you are aware, there are a group of us, including some well-known medical and marine biological jellyfish experts, who have been closely monitoring the situation with dangerous jellyfish in Thailand and we are all very concerned about the introduction of Safe Sea at this point in time.

Let us re-state some important facts:

1. There is definitely at least one variety of potentially lethal box jellyfish found in Thai waters. This includes the *Chironex* species as well as other chirodropids, currently unidentified, but probably just as venomous. There is absolutely no doubt about this as we have received good photographic evidence of these jellyfish, and have extensive evidence from numerous cases over more than a 20 years of the distinctive scarring caused by the stings of these particular jellyfish.
2. There have been numerous documented deaths caused by jellyfish in Thailand over many years: we currently have an article in print with details of a number of documented deaths and "near-misses". The death of the Swedish girl last year was certainly not an isolated case, although to date it was the one that received the broadest media attention. We also have a steadily increasing number of case reports of life-threatening stings, including those with permanent scarring as well as those producing Irukandji syndrome.
3. Substantial experience from northern Australia over many years has shown the importance of effective prevention strategies. To date these have included the wearing of protective clothing, suitable netting, appropriate signage and education. As a result, despite the presence of large numbers of dangerous jellyfish at certain times of the year, there are very few serious stings.
4. The Safe Sea may have been shown to be an effective barrier to the stings of certain species of jellyfish. However, it appears that there is absolutely no evidence that it is effective in the prevention of stings from life-threatening box-type jellyfish, especially *Chironex*.
5. We are further concerned that even if Safe Sea should someday be demonstrated to be "as effective" for *Chironex*-type box jellyfish as it claims for other species (i.e., 75% efficacy, in reducing the frequency and severity of stings), this is still unacceptably high for otherwise unprotected exposure to lethal species.

Divers Alert Network

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In light of the above, we consider it to be irresponsible and dangerous to promote an unproven product in an area where the consequences of using the product could prove fatal. It is likely that tourists and Thai locals would be lulled into what could well be a false sense of security by using Safe Sea instead of taking preventative measures that have proven to be effective. Severe stings or deaths occurring without added protection of these preventative measures we suggest could have ongoing consequences.

Receiving FDA approval from Thailand does not indicate that the product is effective against *Chironex*-type box jellyfish stings and can be misleading in this context.

For all the above reasons we implore you to refrain from marketing Safe Sea in Thailand until such time that it has been independently demonstrated to be effective against the potentially lethal species found there and it is established that this product effectively prevents envenomation when interacting with these species.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Lippmann".

John Lippmann OAM
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DAN Asia-Pacific

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Andrew Jones
Father of jellyfish sting survivor

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