

the Coral Triangle

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2010

The Coral Triangle, the global centre of marine biodiversity, is a 6 million-km² area spanning Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands.

Within this *nursery of the seas* live 76% of the world's coral species, 6 of the world's 7 marine turtle species, and at least 6,000 coral reef fish species.

IN THE NEWS

A Deep Ocean Expedition in the Coral Triangle

In a joint expedition, one American and one Indonesian research vessel are discovering new marine life as deep as 3,700m.

► [Full article](#)

X-rated Egg Rush in Terengganu

Market traders in this Malaysian town are openly selling endangered turtle eggs, much to the shock and dismay of the state authorities.

► [Full article](#)

Extinction in a Bowl of Shark fin Soup

All told, up to 70 million sharks are culled annually for the trade, despite the fact that 30% of shark species are threatened with extinction.

► [Full article](#)

Record Pacific Catch Sees Japan Raise Fears for Skipjack tuna

New research shows the tuna catch in the Pacific hit another record high in 2009, coming in at over 2.4 million tonnes. That is 70,000 tonnes above the previous record set in 2008.

► [Full article](#)

WWF's vision for the Coral Triangle is to protect its unique wildlife, conserve its natural resources, and create sustainable economic opportunities for the people and communities of the region. Our work addresses tuna, live reef fish, turtles, bycatch, protected areas and climate change.

► more at panda.org/coraltriangle



Coral Triangle Programme featured at Int'l Fisheries Forum



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The WWF Coral Triangle programme was prominently featured at the Fifth International Fisheries Forum (IFF5) held in Taipei during August 2-6, co-hosted by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and the Fisheries Agency of Taiwan.

Flowing from a long stream of past successful Forums started in 2000, IFF5 had adopted the theme of marine spatial planning and managing fisheries bycatch. Dr Lida Pet Soede chaired a special session on "Market-based mechanisms and fisheries bycatch", allowing the opportunity to report back to over 300 participants on the outcomes of the inaugural Coral Triangle Fishers Forum (itself inspired by the IFF program) where the role of the market in advancing bycatch best practices, as well as the application of marine spatial planning in bycatch management, was widely discussed.

The special market-based session stimulated much constructive discussion which should be of great benefit to the WWF Coral Triangle Programme as we move our reformative agenda forward. Other sessions provided a wealth of useful information and new ideas related to the technical underpinnings of mitigating bycatch through marine spatial planning.

[Find out more about the IFF5 meeting report and Declaration](#)

WWF-Japan Organizes Responsible Tuna Consumption Symposium

WWF-Japan organized a Symposium on the Responsible Consumption of Tuna early this month. This unprecedented event brought together consumers, local fishing industry players, and relevant government stakeholders in Japan to learn and discuss critical conservation issues facing this prized seafood delicacy of which Japan is the largest consuming country in the world.

WWF-Japan Marine Programme Leader, Dr Tobai Sadayosi facilitated the symposium, which was led by a panel of experts, including: WWF-Japan Fisheries Officer, Dr Aiko Yamauchi; WWF-International Mediterranean Fisheries Policy Officer, Dr Susana Sainz-Trápaga; WWF-International Global Seafood Leader, Dr Mark Powell; and WWF Coral Triangle Programme Tuna Strategy Leader, Dr Jose Ingles, who each gave a presentation on WWF's work on sustainable tuna fisheries.

Also gracing the panel were Japanese fishermen who shared engaging personal accounts of their lives as tuna fishers and the challenges they face amidst the urgent environmental threats surrounding their industry today.

Through the symposium, WWF was seen as a leader in tuna sustainability issues in Japan and was recognised for its fisheries expertise and field experiences in other parts of the world such as the Mediterranean and the Coral Triangle. In turn, WWF gained a keener perspective on the kind of messages that need to be disseminated about tuna consumption. And most importantly, Japanese consumers were able to make a stronger link between consumption habits and the depletion of marine resources in other parts of the world.

Sabah Stops Export of Endangered Iconic Fish

Fifty endangered humphead wrasse fish were released at Tunku Abdul Rahman Park on 30 July 2010, in conjunction with the Annual Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion (SSME) Tri-National Committee Meeting – a committee that involves the governments of Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines on conservation and management of networks of marine protected areas, sustainable fisheries, and threatened, charismatic and migratory species. This release of the humphead wrasse is a joint effort of Department of Fisheries Sabah (DOFS), Sabah Parks, Universiti Malaysia Sabah and WWF-Malaysia – with funding from the United States Agency for International Development's Coral Triangle Support Partnership.



© WWF-Malaysia/Irwanshah Mustapa

A DOFS and WWF-Malaysia survey in 2008 found that populations of humphead wrasse were declining in Sabah. That led to DOFS imposing a total ban on export of humphead wrasse out of Sabah from 1 January 2010.

[Click here to see a video of the fish release](#)

THE MONTH AHEAD

81st Meeting of the Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission

Sept 27-Oct 1, 2010
Antigua, Guatemala

► [Find out more](#)

STAFF DEPARTURE



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Lene Topp

Lene Topp has been very important in raising the support and profile of marine conservation in the Coral Triangle. Her work with WWF-Indonesia, WWF-Philippines and WWF's Coral Triangle Programme has allowed us to illustrate the critical connections between conservation, fisheries management, poverty, economic development and coastal community livelihoods. Thanks to her passion for whale sharks and sea turtles, more knowledge on where these animals move in the Coral triangle is now available, and is used for management advice. Throughout the years and on all their amazing field trips, Lene and husband Claus have photographed the beauty and issues of the Coral Triangle and won several awards with their art. As we are very sad to see them leave the Coral Triangle and will miss them in our work, we hope that they continue to use their experiences, amazing art and passion for this region and its ocean animals to tell their stories to the world.

THANK YOU SO MUCH for what you have done for all of us and the Coral Triangle!

WWF NEWS

First Loggerhead Satellite-Tagged for the Pacific

The WWF South Pacific programme, along with the Department of Fisheries, National Trust of Fiji, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) facilitated the first ever satellite tagging of three loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) turtles not only for Fiji, but for the Pacific region as well.

WWF and Indonesia's Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries Sign MoU on Sustainability in Marine Resource Management

Dr Efransjah, Executive Director of WWF-Indonesia, said, "WWF greatly appreciates the warm welcome by MMAF for cooperation [...]. We've done a lot of cooperation, but only now is this formalized in this MoU [...]"

► [Full article](#) (Indonesian)

A Turning of the Tide on Trade in Shark fin

In an editorial in the South China Morning Post, WWF Hong Kong's Dr Andy Cornish points out to a growing wave of support against shark finning, with a major shift in public opinion.

Saving the Leatherback Turtle

Jan Manuputty, technical marine advisor in Papua for WWF-Indonesia, said that WWF plans to set up a conservation area for leatherback turtles in the Kei Islands.

► [Full article](#)

Leatherback Turtle, Icon of the Kei Islands

Aulia Rahman, WWF-Indonesia Marine Programme Campaigner, describes how WWF collaborates with the SIRAN Foundation to help the local community to stop consuming endangered marine turtles, and focus instead on developing the area's tourism potential.

► [Full article](#) (Indonesian)

New Sea Turtle Nesting Sites in the South Pacific

WWF South Pacific programme has identified new sea turtle nesting areas within the Northern Lau group of islands in Fiji.



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LEADER CORNER

Dr Jason Clay, WWF-US

As a former farmer, anthropologist and human rights activist, I came to focus on the environment because of two basic truths that will shape our future – the steady increase in consumption of food and resources, and the steady decline in the quality and productivity of the oceans and soil around the world.

We have crossed the line of being in a sustainable relationship to the planet. Our work shows that we're currently living at about 1.3 planets. By 2050, population will climb to 9 billion, and people will consume twice as much as they do today.



© Jason Clay

Sustainability of the Earth's resources is critical to our species' survival. I believe sustainability must be a pre-competitive issue. The average European spends about 3.5 seconds choosing a product in the grocery store; the average American spends only 1.8 seconds. What can we do to have a world where all the products on the shelf are sustainable? 50 percent of seafood now eaten worldwide comes from a farm. This has great implications for the health and sustainability of our coastal lands, oceans and wild-caught fisheries. Our approach to aquaculture commodities is to form roundtables made up of representatives from both the supply and demand sides to create environmental and social standards for aquaculture production.

WWF recently launched globally verified, vetted, and certified standards for the responsible production of salmon, six years in the making, through the Salmon Aquaculture Dialogues. And this year the release of standards will continue with shrimp, oyster, mussels, clams, and scallop aquaculture, through the Shrimp and Bivalve Aquaculture Dialogues, of particular importance to the Coral Triangle.

Reducing the pressure on our oceans and coastal lands, while supporting our human needs, demands careful, considered standards that sustain our resources and protect our future. The Coral Triangle is an important eco-region in this effort.



How Big Brands Can Help Save Biodiversity

Convince just 100 key companies to go sustainable, and Jason Clay says global markets will shift to protect the planet our consumption has already outgrown. Hear how his extraordinary roundtables are getting big brand rivals to agree on green practices first -- before their products duke it out on store shelves.

[Watch the presentation at TED](#)

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First Whale Survey Conducted in Fiji

The Australian Marine Mammal Centre is funding work by WWF South Pacific programme, the Fiji Fisheries Department and the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society for a 3-year survey on the migrations of endangered humpback whales through Fiji waters.

In 2003, Fiji declared its Exclusive Economic Zone a whale sanctuary. "Key stakeholders have been working to finalise Fiji's whale sanctuary management plan, and this project proves timely in the provision of data to inform this initiative," said WWF's Marine Species Coordinator, Penina Solomona.

The Fiji Fisheries Department is currently responsible for collating data on whales and dolphin sightings and stranding. All cetacean species sighted during these surveys will be documented to increase understanding of cetacean biodiversity in Fijian waters.

Commencing in late August the survey will take place on the islands of Makogai and Levuka.

Humpback whales migrate from Antarctica to Tonga every winter to mate and give birth. Fiji.
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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Patterns and Ecosystem Consequences of Shark Declines in the Ocean

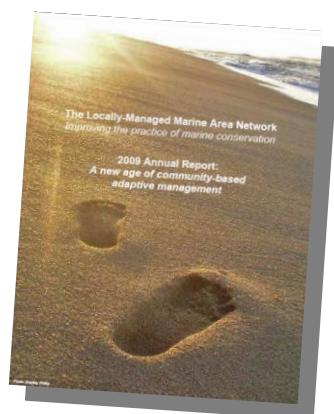
Phytoplankton in oceans account for approximately half the production of organic matter on Earth. Boyce, Lewis and Worm from Dalhousie University have observed phytoplankton declines in eight out of ten ocean regions, and estimate a global rate of decline of ~1% of the global median per year. The authors conclude that global phytoplankton concentration has declined over the past century.

► [Read the full abstract](#)

Locally-Managed Marine Area Network: 2009 Annual Report

The report details the activities of the LMMA Network, a group of practitioners involved in various community-based marine conservation projects around the globe who have joined together to improve their practice.

► [Download the report](#)



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