



WWF

NEWSLETTER

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the Coral Triangle

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2010

The Coral Triangle, the global centre of marine biodiversity, is a 6 million-km² area spanning Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, TimorLeste 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

Turtle Eggs Seized in Raids

Over 200 turtle eggs were seized in two separate raids at Block 16, Old Slipway in early July, in Sandakan, Malaysia.

► [Full article](#)

Ocean Warming Affecting Marine Ecosystems

The ocean slows the rate of climate change by absorbing more than a quarter of the carbon dioxide and by storing more than 90% of excess heat in the climate system. But it does so at a price, Ove Hoegh-Guldberg and John Bruno of the University of Queensland in Australia observe in *Science*.

► [Full article](#)

Rare Giant Coral Spotted in Pacific

Researchers from James Cook University, Australia, say they have discovered one of the world's rarest coral species. The giant Pacific elkhorn has antler-like branches and is about 5 m wide and 2 m high. It was recently found during an underwater survey near the Marshall Islands, northeast of Papua New Guinea.

► [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



Source: Coral Geographic (Veron *et al.*, unpublished data)

WWF at the Diving and Resort Travel Expo



© WWF-Hong Kong

WWF received much public attention during the 3-day Diving & Resort Travel Expo held in Hong Kong in mid-July.

The event was the first-ever of its kind in Hong Kong and was one of the largest in the region, attracting thousands of visitors and hundreds of dive operators from Asia-Pacific and Europe.

Hong Kong being an important player in the live reef food fish and shark fin trade, WWF showcased its work in the Coral Triangle and shark conservation by presenting informative exhibition boards and the "[Nursery of the Seas](#)" video, which is about the state of fisheries in the Coral Triangle region.

Dr Andy Cornish, Director of Conservation of WWF-Hong Kong, delivered a speech at the event, giving an overview of WWF conservation efforts in the Coral Triangle and Hong Kong. Dr Cornish brought seafood consumption issues in Hong Kong to a more regional context and called for the public to start choosing sustainable seafood.

WWF's presence in the event also prompted dive and tour operators and divers to help ensure healthy and productive seas for ecotourism and fisheries.

www.panda.org/coraltriangle

At the Malaysian International Dive Expo

THE MONTH AHEAD

WWF Tuna Think Tank: New Solutions for Saving Tuna

August 31, Sept 1-2, 2010

The Netherlands

► [Find out more](#)

STAFF PROFILE



Aulia Rahman

Currently Public Campaigner at WWF-Indonesia's Marine Programme, exemplifies the diversity of backgrounds of the conservation organization's staff.

Before joining WWF, Aulia used his degree in Communications (Airlangga University) to first become a radio announcer and a journalist for a year, then worked at Customer Relations for Mandarin Hotel Majapahit in Surabaya, before spending another year with a local NGO.

He initially joined WWF as a project officer for the Climate Change programme and then took on the position of Web Campaigner before joining the Marine programme. He enjoys gaining new knowledge and skills, widening his network to support conservation efforts and meeting like-minded people.

When he's not at the office or in the field, Aulia can be found climbing walls, photographing nature, hiking, biking and basically indulging in a healthy range of outdoor activities.

WWF recently participated in the Malaysia International Dive Expo (MIDE)—one of the biggest annual international dive exhibitions in the region, in which hundreds of dive, tour and resort operators participate from Malaysia and around the world. The Coral Triangle programme teamed-up with WWF-Malaysia, sharing an exhibit booth where informative materials on the Coral Triangle and the Save our Seafood campaign (a collaborative effort by WWF-Malaysia and the Malaysian Nature Society) were displayed and distributed to the throngs of visitors that came during this 3-day event.

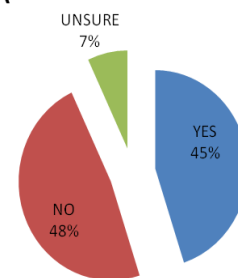
WWF-Malaysia's Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion (SSME) programme likewise participated in the event in collaboration with the Semporna Tourism Action Council (STAC) at a separate booth sponsored by the Sabah Tourism Board, which featured the collaborative management theme of "Conserving Semporna's Seascapes Together". WWF-Malaysia also provided informative talks on Save our Seafood campaign by Chitra Devi and on diving in biodiversity-rich Semporna by Ken Kassem.

Nielsen/WWF Survey Reveals Market Insights for the Coral Triangle

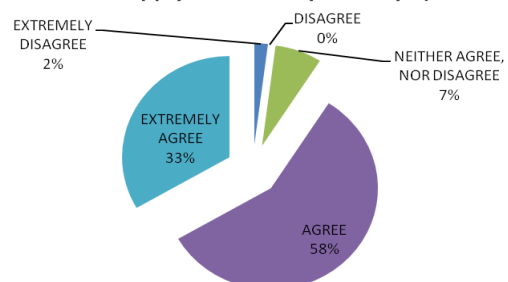
In June 2010, AC Nielsen Indonesia—a research and marketing firm—collaborated with WWF to survey public awareness and attitudes on the Coral Triangle. Reaching across to approximately 2,000 respondents from a wide range of ages and socio-economic conditions in Indonesia's largest cities, the survey reveals some fascinating insights (*see pie charts*).

The survey was provided *pro bono* by Nielsen in support of WWF's conservation work in the region. The data provides a valuable baseline against which results will be compared in subsequent runs of the survey.

Have you heard about the Coral Triangle? (Classes SES A and B)



How agreeable are you with the statement: "The wellbeing/health of the Coral Triangle is important for the continued supply of fish in my country" (all classes)



WWF NEWS

Mass Coral Bleaching Closes Dive Sites, Threatens Future of World's Most Diverse Marine Region

"[...] widespread bleaching is alarming because it directly affects the health of our oceans and their ability to nurture fish stocks and other marine resources on which millions of people depend for food and income," says Richard Leck, Climate Change Strategy Leader of the WWF Coral Triangle Programme.

► [Full article](#)

Snapshots to Preserve the Coral Triangle

"Presenting photos that tell a story of how we are negatively affecting our environment is the main goal of our expedition. It's going behind the scenes and getting it on image," says photographer Jürgen Freund.

► [Full article](#)

WWF Lauds Move to Close Dive Destinations to Protect Bleached Coral

Pre-emptive measures like closing the affected dive destinations to reduce stress to the bleached corals is important, said WWF-Malaysia. The closure of affected dive sites was a temporary measure to minimise further stress to the bleached corals.

► [Full article](#)

Food Culture and Seafood Guides

Oriental Daily article on WWF Seafood Guides around the Coral Triangle.

► [Full article](#) (Chinese)

How the Philippines is Saving their Coral Reefs – And how it is Good for Fishermen, Tourism and Communities

Feature story by WWF's Gregg Yann on Marine Protected Areas in the Philippines, and their significance to the Coral Triangle.

► [Full story](#)

Fighting a Crown of Thorns Invasion on the Reefs of the Philippines

Another feature story by Gregg Yann documenting the threats to coral posed by the Crown of Thorns starfish, and how the problem is being dealt with in the Philippines.

► [Full story](#)



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LEADER CORNER

Dr Efransjah, CEO WWF-Indonesia



During my first month at the helm of WWF-Indonesia, I had a priceless opportunity seeing leatherback turtles in Papua. After a six-hour boat ride from Manokwari, Papua, I finally arrived at Jamursba Medi beach, home of leatherback turtles. It is a series of beaches covering a 20-km stretch on the North coast of Bird's Head area in West Papua among a backdrop of steep mountains and pristine lowland forest. The short expedition with scientists has revealed an ironic situation that has been reported by other experts. Baby leatherbacks and their eggs are being destroyed in vast numbers by predators; wild boars and dogs. In addition, dangers at sea and human harvesting of turtle eggs also endanger them in many ways.

I realize how much more we have to do as a network on issues that affect these migratory species and their ecosystem. Moreover, a solid foot on the ground, or in the water so to speak, with meaningful Marine Protected Areas, fisheries and marine species strategies carried out by the national programmes are indeed crucial.

I believe the synergy between WWF programmes and Network Initiatives will ultimately provide the solutions for many of the conservation challenges we are facing.



SPECIES OF THE MONTH Oceanic whitetip

Photo released under the [GNU Free Documentation License](#).

Not the kind of marine life you would want to come face to face with, the **oceanic whitetip**, *Carcharhinus longimanus*, is an aggressive shark known to indulge in feeding frenzies. The species is identified by its long, white-tipped, rounded fins. Studies show a consistent decline in populations of this species as a result of exploitation for its fins, a much-valued ingredient for making shark fin soup. Like other shark species around the world, the oceanic whitetip faces increasing fishing pressure throughout its range.

Source: [Wikipedia](#)

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Climatic changes are changing the face of coral reefs in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific region



Since March this year, about 50 organizations and individuals have reported signs of coral bleaching in the Coral Triangle region. Up to 100% bleaching on susceptible coral species have been reported, and in some areas, severe bleaching has also affected the more resistant species. Coral bleaching is a phenomenon caused by global warming. Increased seawater temperatures, which in some regions have grown as much as 2°C above the long-term average maximum, can push the algae living inside corals beyond the brink, causing reefs to eventually turn white and die.

Photos (clockwise from left): © WWF-Philippines, © WWF-Philippines/Lory TAN, © WWF-Philippines, © WWF-Philippines/Lory TAN

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Patterns and Ecosystem Consequences of Shark Declines in the Ocean

Sharks are naturally abundant and diverse, but even light fishing pressure is enough to cause sharp population declines in vulnerable species, finds a recent study in the journal *Ecology Letters*. The study, authored by a team led by Francesco Ferretti of Dalhousie University, also concludes that such declines have sometimes led to cascading ecosystem changes.

► [Find out more](#)

A Framework for Social Adaptation to Climate Change - Sustaining Tropical Coastal Communities & Industries

The estimated 500 million people who depend on coral reefs worldwide regularly contend with change, including shifting demands of a global marketplace and political upheaval. This guide from IUCN suggests some social solutions for climate change for these vulnerable communities.

► [Find out more](#)



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