



Sinub, Tab, Tabad and Laugum Wildlife Management Areas



Madang Lagoon, Madang Province
Papua New Guinea



Four Unique Marine Protected Areas

Location: Madang Province, immediately north of provincial capital Madang

Language: Bel **Villages:** Riwo and Siar

Purpose : All four WMAs were set up as multi-use managed areas to provide refuge for marine life and habitats, to manage fisheries and to restock fish populations. They provide an important function for food security in Madang Lagoon. **Tab Island Wildlife Management Area (WMA)** was established by Siar Village and is an important site for international dive tourism. **Tabad Island WMA** is a smaller island and was established by the *Tagalafun* clan of Riwo Village. **Sinub Island WMA** was established by the *Azonanen* and *Badinanen* clans of Riwo Village and has reefs of international significance. It contains exceptionally high soft coral cover as well as several sites of cultural significance. **Laugum WMA** was established by the *Dauzagaz* clan of Riwo to protect three inner bay islands, mangroves, seagrass beds and mainland fringing reef. Customary owners also hope that all WMAs will encourage eco-tourism.

Management and Support : Responsibility for management of the WMAs lies with the WMA committees who are elected by the local landowning community. Monitoring, technical and logistical advice and assistance are now being provided by Wetlands International – Oceania and WWF. Dive operator, Aqua Ventures Pty Ltd assists with management and collects fees from divers on behalf of communities.



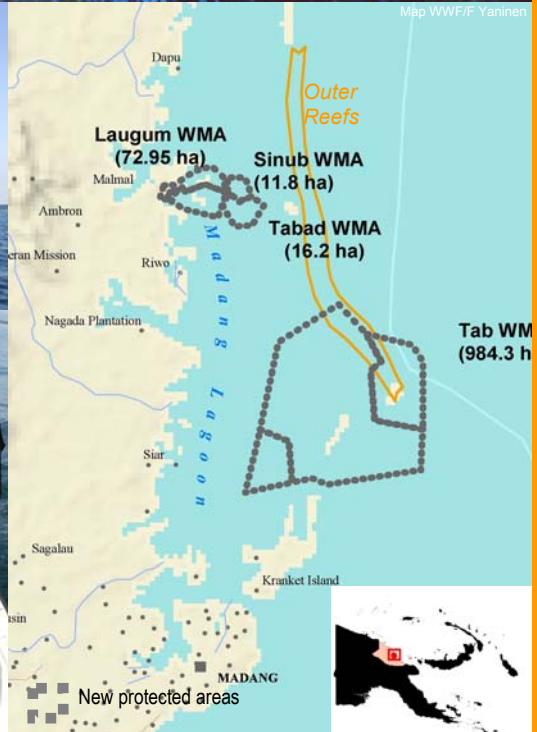
Madang Lagoon reef Photo: T Mayne



Tabad Island WMA Photo: P Chatterton



Water quality monitoring Photo: A Benet



Madang Lagoon WMA Committee members Photo: N Mitchell



Humphead wrasse Photo: T Matyne

Madang Lagoon - A Globally Important Reef System

Madang Lagoon is considered one of the most biologically diverse marine sites in the Asia Pacific. It has around 700 species of coral and over 1000 species of reef fishes – as many as the Great Barrier Reef in a fraction of the area - is the largest and most diverse lagoon on the north coast of PNG.

This extremely complex lagoon contains at least three endemic reef fishes (Blackstripe blenny, Collette's blenny and the Whitespot damselfish), at least two globally endangered fishes (Humphead wrasse and the Giant grouper), feeding grounds for the endangered Hawksbill turtle and Green turtle and feeding populations of several vulnerable marine mammals including dugong, spinner dolphin, bridled dolphin and transient pods of Pacific pilot whales. Madang lagoon has a mosaic of habitats including mangroves, inlets (back harbours), fringing reefs, seagrass beds, shallow and deep patch reefs, barrier reefs, coral rubble islands and rivers.

This rich and fragile biodiversity is under ever increasing threat as overfishing, the use of dynamite, pollution, reef removal, sedimentation grow at an alarming rate.

At the southern end of the Lagoon is Madang town. This is PNG's third largest city and an important port for coastal trading, tuna fishing and major tourist destination. The Lagoon is an important resource for town inhabitants and communities.

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