



for a living planet®

Marine protected areas guard against environmental degradation and climate change. But in the Coral Triangle there are too few of them, and many have no finance and function ineffectively. This has to change. ►

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

For hundreds of species, marine protected areas represent safe havens from rapacious fishing fleets and wildlife traders, while for thousand of communities they provide a ‘bank’ where fish stocks can recover.

“Managing a global network of MPAs in which 30% of each habitat type is protected is estimated to cost US\$ 12–14 billion annually. That is comparable to the estimated government expenditures on fishing subsidies.”

– Balmford et al., 2004



THE CORAL TRIANGLE — the nursery of the seas — is the most diverse marine region on the planet, covering 6 million km² of ocean across six countries in the Indo-Pacific region. It is home to 3000 species of reef fish and commercially-valuable species such as tuna, whales, dolphins, rays, sharks, and six of the seven known species of marine turtles.

Many MPAs are not delivering

But in the Coral Triangle and beyond, too many existing MPAs are not functioning. Several of those suffer from inadequate management and a lack of enforcement in no-take zones, areas where fishing is prohibited. This severely limits the ability of MPAs to replenish fish populations.

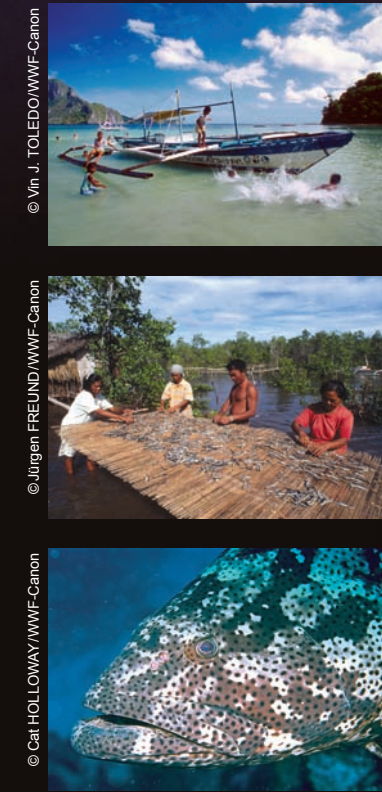
Why MPAs?

The biodiversity in the Coral Triangle is the fundamental resource that provides millions of people with an income. But with overfishing, destructive fishing, unsustainable tourism, and climate change, this resource base is fast eroding.

Enter Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), regions of the ocean that are set aside to offer benefits for people and the marine environment. These areas provide safe havens for endangered species to thrive and for depleted fish stocks to recover—whether as small, community-managed reserves or multi-million hectare protected areas that span nations.

The best available scientific information tells us that to protect biodiversity and manage resources, we must establish representative MPA networks across 20-30 percent of our seas and oceans, with substantive no-take areas. The Coral Triangle urgently requires political and financial commitment for MPAs to meet this goal.

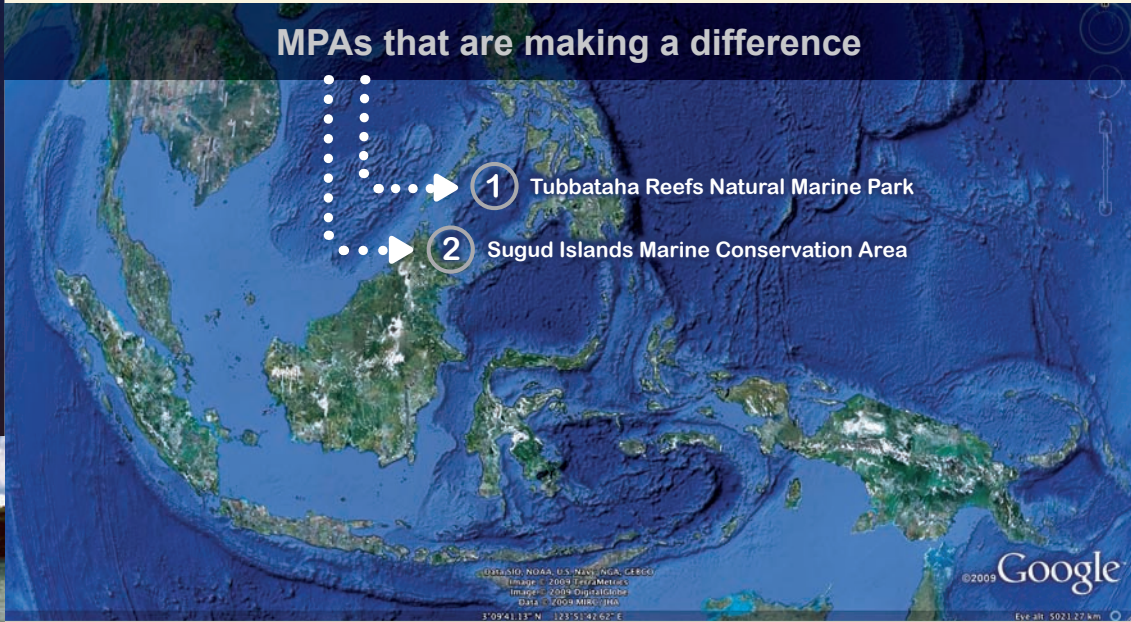
Failing this, the risks of food insecurity, fisheries collapse and loss of significant economic value will be much higher.



Three reasons why MPA networks make sense

- **Ecologically:** A network of MPAs protects ecosystems that are interlinked and dependent on each other. As these ecosystems change under the impact of climate change (e.g. coral bleaching), MPAs will protect these areas from additional threats and make them more resilient. Protecting these marine habitats means protecting the food and livelihood of millions people in the Coral Triangle region and beyond.
- **Economically:** A network of MPAs supports the efficient use of resources, generate wealth and sustain livelihoods.
- **Socially:** A network of MPAs helps communities work with each other while safeguarding traditional practices and management.

MPAs that are making a difference



- 1 Famous for its magnificent reefs, the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Marine Park in the Sulu Sea, Philippines, is an offshore MPA with extensive lagoons and two coral islands. To fill the gap in park financing, the Tubbataha Management Board developed a fee collection and permit system with the diving community. US\$65,000 were covered over the course of two years, covering 28 percent of the annual recurring costs.
- 2 Off the coast of Sabah, Malaysia, the Sugud Islands Marine Conservation Area is proving that well-financed, effective management can create conservation successes. This sustainable source of financing allows Reef Guardian, a private management company, to deploy enough personnel to enforce regulations across a 467 km² conservation area. Rates of illegal fishing and turtle egg poaching are down, and there is a comparatively high abundance of commercially important fish such as groupers inside the conservation area.

MPAs – not one-size-fits-all

The Coral Triangle is vast, and local social and biological features vary tremendously from one place to another. For this reason, it is impossible to apply a generic MPA model at each location. From strictly protected to locally managed marine areas (LMMAs), a wide range of MPA types have evolved to meet the distinctive needs of this complex region.



We all need to invest more in better MPAs

WWF is working with governments, local communities, and other stakeholders as well as environmental NGOs to support the identification, establishment and sustainable financing of a network of MPAs across the Coral Triangle. We are doing this by:

- Identifying and setting up finance mechanisms such as public and private partnerships and payments for ecosystem services
- Helping to develop cost models that accurately estimate the operational costs of MPA networks
- Establishing coordinated MPA sites into networks to enable cost-saving and management benefits
- Researching the contribution of marine habitats in terms of goods and services, and how MPA networks can support this contribution into the future, protecting the natural systems on which it depends



You can join us

Support WWF's efforts to facilitate the creation of a fund for the sustainable financing of an effectively managed MPAs network. If you are in the travel or fisheries sector, or just a business that is keen to help, talk to us about opportunities to support MPAs.

www.panda.org/coraltriangle/mpa



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For more information

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WWF's Coral Triangle Programme

WWF's Coral Triangle Programme is focused on securing the health of the region's natural resources and the millions of livelihoods that depend on it. We are working to ensure that proper environmental, political and socio-economic management is put in place towards:

- Building a sustainable live reef food fish trade
- Promoting sustainable tuna fisheries
- Financing marine protected areas
- Protecting marine turtles and reducing their bycatch
- Reducing the impacts of climate change