



Photo by Jones/Shimlock-Secret Sea

Raja Ampat

Marine Protected Area Network

The Raja Ampat Islands are located off the northwestern tip of West Papua Province, Indonesia, in the heart of the Coral Triangle – the global center of marine biodiversity. Raja Ampat is the undisputed heart of tropical marine diversity. Seventy five percent of all known coral species are found in these islands. Here, scientists have also counted more fish in an area of this size, than any other place on earth – some species in Raja Ampat are found nowhere else.

These rich waters provide 40,000 people living in 135 villages with food, livelihoods and shelter, and help to buffer communities from the onslaught of tropical storms. Local villages have strong cultural links and traditional claims of ownership of both land and sea areas. Legal frameworks are already in place formalizing the long-term protection and management of these Islands.

Sadly, these vital resources are under threat. Destructive and overfishing fishing practices, poor coastal development, unsustainable and illegal logging and mining are negatively impacting Raja Ampat's coastal and marine environment.

Today, thanks to the hard work of local communities, government and local and international partners, a Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network now exists for the Raja Ampat Islands. This effort is helping to contribute to Indonesia's commitment to the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security – a formal agreement by six governments committing to people-centered marine biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and poverty reduction within the Coral Triangle region.

- 🐠 Total area: Over 4 million hectares
- 👤 Population: 42,471
- 🐟 Primary sources of income: fishing, tourism and mariculture
- 🏛️ Main religions: Christianity and Islam
- 🪸 553 species of corals
- 🐟 1470 species of reef fish
- 🐳 8 species of whales
- 🐬 7 species of dolphin
- 🐘 Dugongs
- 🐢 Regionally significant nesting green populations, and hawksbill turtles
- 🤿 Globally important dive destination

Marine Protected Area Network

In 2006, the Raja Ampat government, in collaboration with local communities, The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International, became the first Indonesian regency to declare a MPA Network. MPAs are recognized globally as an effective tool to help sustain fisheries, protect vital marine habitats and ensure long term food and livelihood security for local communities. There are currently seven MPAs encompassing over a million hectares of coastal and marine habitats in the Network. (see map on overleaf)

With the MPA Network declared, local communities are now using ecological and socioeconomic data as well as traditional ecological knowledge, to develop zoning plans for each of the MPAs in Raja Ampat. Traditional practices such as 'sasi', are being incorporated into zoning plans. Each of the plans will be included in a larger management plan for the MPA Network. In 2010, the Raja Ampat government became the first regency to declare its waters a shark sanctuary, prohibiting the harvesting of sharks, rays, dugong and turtles within the region.

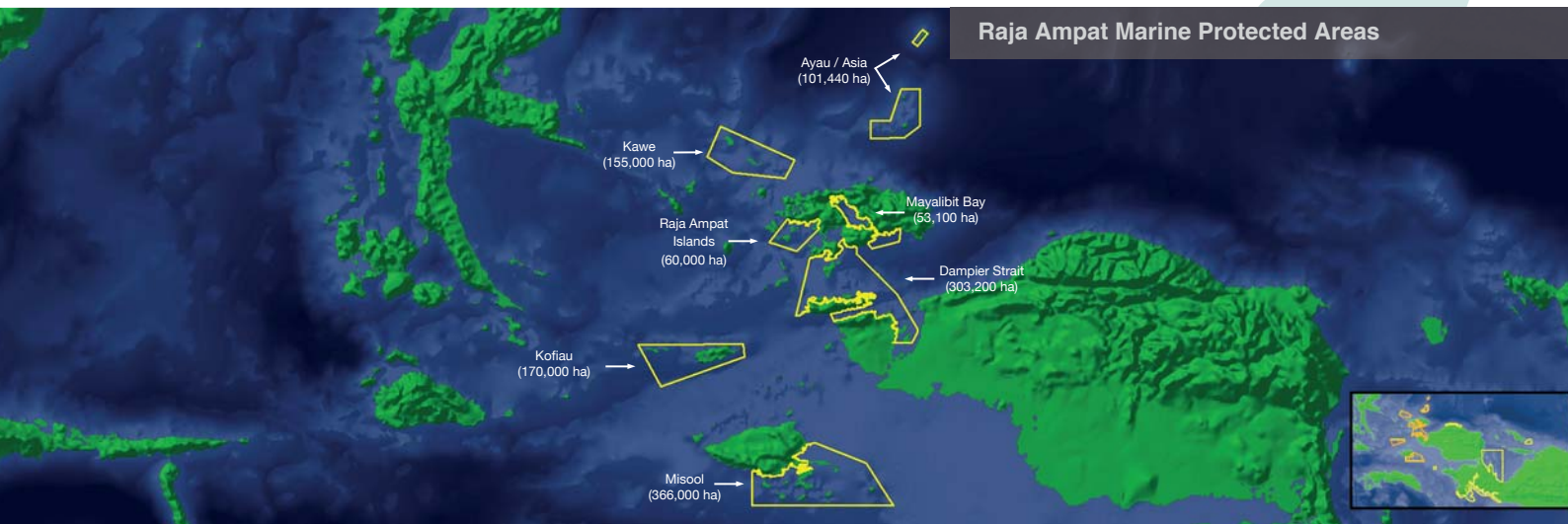


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Our Conservation Goal

The Raja Ampat MPA Network and its integrated management plan and management authority is granted full legal status and is supported by a conservation-compatible spatial plan, sound fisheries and development policies.

Conservation Strategies

There are five conservation strategies guiding the implementation of the MPA Network. These include:

Building a **governance structure and developing policies** that are sensitive to the environmental and social needs of the MPA Network.

Working to ensure local patrols have the skills, equipment and authority to **enforce fisheries regulations and zoning plans** within the MPA Network.

Providing **environmental awareness and education** to ensure continued stakeholder support for the MPA Network.

Regular biological and socioeconomic monitoring of the MPA Network to ensure conservation goals are met and strategies are effective.

Collecting the Raja Ampat visitor fee and ensuring it is fairly distributed amongst local communities.

Contact Information

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