



Photo by Feri Latief

Southeast Misool

Marine Protected Area

Southeast Misool is the largest and southern most marine protected area (MPA) in the Raja Ampat MPA network and rests within the Coral Triangle – the global center of marine biodiversity. The MPA encompasses 366,000 hectares, spanning a long chain of ancient karst limestone islands with a mosaic of channels and intact marine lakes. Hawksbill turtles feed on sponges in the MPA and nest on sandy beaches, and manta ray aggregations can be found on submerged patch reefs. On land there are sacred caves and ancient rock art that serve as a touchstone for local culture. The MPA is also adjacent to a large forest reserve that covers the southern part of the island of Misool, or as it is locally known, *Batanme*.

Southeast Misool provides food and livelihoods to 5000 people living in 13 villages across the MPA. The majority of residents earn an income by fishing or through employment at the Yellu Mutiara pearl farm or Misool Eco Resort. Today however, the resources on which so many people depend are under threat. Illegal, destructive and unsustainable fishing practices continue to plague the MPA and enforcement, due to the MPA's remoteness, is an ongoing challenge.

Local actions are making a difference in Southeast Misool. Strong local claims to land and sea remain intact and many villages have revived their traditional management practice of 'sasi' (temporal fisheries closures) to manage key invertebrate and fish species or fisheries areas. Local communities have also identified at least ten no-take zones in the MPA covering a range of coral reef, mangrove and seagrass habitats, that they want to establish and actively protect. Through a partnership between communities, Misool Eco Resort and the local non-government organization (NGO)

- 🐠 Total area: 366,000 hectares
- 🐠 Primary sources of income: fishing, tourism and mariculture
- 🐠 Population: 5000
- 🐠 Main religions: Christianity & Islam
- 🐠 Over 387 species of coral
- 🐠 Diverse sea fans and soft coral communities
- 🐠 Large, intact marine lakes
- 🐠 Resident crocodiles
- 🐠 Nesting green turtles
- 🐠 Manta aggregations and dugong
- 🐠 Geologically unique limestone karst formations
- 🐠 Sacred caves and cultural sites

Misool Baseftin, two additional large no-take zones now protect 70,013 hectares of some of the region's most vital resources. But more work still needs to be done.

Southeast Misool MPA

In 2004, communities, all levels of government, and local and international NGOs came together in partnership to help manage the MPA. Protection for the area began with a legal decree in 2007 that established the MPA. Today, the partners are implementing six key conservation strategies to ensure the MPA is effectively managed and is delivering benefits to the communities of Southeast Misool.

Our Conservation Goal

The coastal and marine resources of Southeast Misool MPA are effectively and sustainably co-managed by local communities and government, and providing lasting, tangible benefits to the people of Southeast Misool.



Photo by Jones/Shimlock-Secret Sea

Our Conservation Strategies

There are six conservation strategies helping to achieve our goal:

Embedding the zoning plan within the larger management plan for Raja Ampat MPA network and within regency, provincial and national coastal and marine spatial plans and strategies.

Building stakeholder support through delivery of high quality communication, outreach and education materials.

Incorporating marine conservation agreements and pearl farm leases into the zoning of the MPA.

Empowering local authorities, communities and NGOs to enforce MPA and fisheries regulations to reduce poaching and illegal fishing.

Establishing a cost-effective biological and socioeconomic monitoring system for the MPA to evaluate the effectiveness of conservation strategies.

Building capacity of local communities and stakeholders to co-manage the MPA with the Raja Ampat government and contribute to decision-making processes for the MPA.

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