



Integrated Conservation in Wakatobi



WAKATOBI, SOUTHEAST SULAWESI

Since 2003, Wakatobi, Southeast Sulawesi has officially become its own regency, separated from its former authority, Buton Regency. Out of the total 1,390,000 hectares area, 97 percent of it is covered by water and the rests are land coverage. The regency consists of eight districts, Binongko, Kaledupa, Liya, Timu, Togo, Tomia, Wangi-Wangi, and South Wangi-Wangi. Around 100 villages occupy the area with most of the villagers working as traders, farmers, fishermen, civil servants, small entrepreneurs, and private sector employees.

Wakatobi is considered unique due to the region's marine biodiversity as well as the scale of reef condition that makes Wakatobi the highest priority of marine conservation in Indonesia. At least four species of marine sea turtle are identified in this region, including green and hawksbill turtles. Beside sea turtles, there exist around 396 coral scleractinian species, 31 fungia species, 31 foraminifera species, 34 stomatopods, and up to 942 fish species. This priceless biodiversity has brought successfully Wakatobi to its formalization as a Marine National Park in 1996.

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THREATS

The biggest threat facing Wakatobi's biodiversity nowadays is the constant expansion of coral bleaching resulted from the dramatic temperature changes. Other threats come from non environment-friendly fishing activities like bombing and poisoning. Coral and land mining have also contributed further destruction to the area as well as reef closure by parasite algae and plastic waste.

WWF PROGRAM AND ACHIEVEMENTS

WWF activities in Wakatobi include three major programs which include monitoring, fisheries, and outreach.

MONITORING PROGRAM

WWF Monitoring Program in Wakatobi covers data collection activities of marine resource use and turtle species, monitoring activities towards mangrove forests, sea grass, sea birds, cetaceans and regional surveillance activities. Until recently the monitoring team have compiled and evaluated data from the past 5 years in order to evaluate the effectiveness

of zoning in Wakatobi National Park. Currently monitoring activities in Wakatobi are mainly focused on handling cyanide fishing cases, illegal sea turtle poaching and turtle release by local communities and fishermen.

Current monitoring programs conducted in Wakatobi focuses on cyanide fishing case and the handling of illegal trading and poaching of sea turtles. Monitoring program has also successfully performed data collection on throughout 2006-2009 period. Other monitoring programs include monitoring of fish spawning locations (2005-2009). Public are also engaged in handling the law enforcement of few illegal activities such as illegal trading and poaching of sea turtle.

Several success achieve under this program are:

1. Resource Use Data Collection 2006-2009. This data manage to covers information about: a) time of monitoring, b) beneficiaries of Wakatobi National Marine Park, c) type of fishing gears used by fishermen, d) permanent use of resources.
2. SPAGs Monitoring 2005-2009.

FISHERIES PROGRAM

Activities conducted under the Fisheries Program in Wakatobi include: 1) Data collection of tuna catch through 2008-2010 Log Book archive and 2) Product shipment trial of Reef Food Fish (RFF) source from fisheries applying better fishing practices to market requiring environment-friendly seafood. Currently, Wakatobi Fisheries Program is creating Best Management Practices (BMPs) guideline for Live Reef Fish and Tuna fisheries and facilitating interactions between fishermen groups with buyers which are looking for environment-friendly seafood products. Afterwards, Fisheries Program will focused its activities to conduct trainings to local fishermen about better fishing practices and identifying illegal fishing practices like blast fishing or cyanide fishing.

The main success achieved by the Fisheries Program so far is the success in introducing the local fishermen to market that is looking for environment-friendly seafood which eventually led to business transactions.

OUTREACH PROGRAM

Outreach Program in Wakatobi aim to support the overall WWF Program in the region and to encourage community participations and support toward the programs. Outreach program in Wakatobi developed the following activities to empower local communities based on the potential local resources:

- a) Facilitate community gathering to create a co-management
- b) Conducting workshop on eco tourism, Marine protected Areas and Community Outreach
- c) Organize behavior change among coral miners.
- d) Production of documentary depicting community conservation initiatives
- e) Clarification of Focus Groups Discussion with street vendors in Liya sub district
- f) Conducting workshop on sustainable fisheries in Kollosoha village



A Focus Group Discussion on co-management have recently been implemented at the village level. In the near future, the Program will continue the co-management program as well as running the regular trainings on Marine Protected Area. The work of outreach will further continue in MPA training, facilitation of government, community leaders, in order to promote the revision of zoning in the respective environment.

Success achieved so far in the Outreach program in Wakatobi include the implementation of the Workshop on National Park Management in December 2006 to streamline the perception of each island's consultation forum about National Park and provide capacity building for fishermen. The program had also witnessed a significant progress in 2005 where fishermen forum have been established in every islands. Among other things, the program have managed to conduct regular meetings of fishermen forum in each islands, Regency Workshop on National Park Management and modified the available MPA training materials into a new format with a more localized content.

For more information:

Wawan Ridwan
Marine Program Director
Phone : +62 21 576 1070
Fax : +62 21 576 1080
WRidwan@wwf.or.id

Veda Santiaji
Project Leader Wakatobi
VSantiadji@wwf.or.id



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