

Asia-Pacific / Indonesia Program

SAVU SEA

Dramatic Mix of Coral Reefs, Underwater Canyons and Cetacean Highways

Encircled by chains of islands and dramatic deep-sea features, the Savu Sea lies within the heart of the Lesser Sunda seascape in the southern part of the Coral Triangle and supports diverse and highly productive reef and pelagic habitats. At the juncture of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, the Savu Sea is a major migratory corridor for 14 species of whales, including the rare blue and sperm whale species. Several islands in the area provide important nesting sites for endangered species of sea turtles, and the region experiences dynamic oceanographic conditions including exceptionally strong currents of the Indonesian Throughflow. The combination of strong currents and steep underwater cliffs causes major cold-water upwellings that could be a key factor in conferring resilience to the growing threat of rising sea surface temperatures associated with climate change. If properly protected, the Savu Sea could become a refuge for marine life and productive fisheries amid global climate change.

The Savu Sea Marine Protected Area (MPA) Development Project was initiated by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries to develop a large MPA (3.5 million hectares) in the Coral Triangle. The Nature Conservancy-



A school of bigeye trevallies © Mark Erdmann

Coral Triangle Center (TNC-CTC) is supporting the government with the design and implementation of a network of two interconnected MPAs in the Savu Sea, as a leverage site within the developing Lesser Sunda network of MPAs, in collaboration with the provincial government of East Nusa Tenggara and WWF-Indonesia.

Building a Strong Foundation for MPA Development

The provincial government of

East Nusa Tenggara is deeply committed in establishing the Savu Sea MPA which will further enhance the Indonesian government's pledge to expand the coverage of MPAs nation-wide to 10 million hectares by the year 2010 and 20 million hectares by 2020. This will also support the Indonesian government's commitment towards the *Coral Triangle Initiative for Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security*. The East Nusa Tenggara provincial government – through a Governor Decree – formed the



The proposed Savu Sea MPA comprises of two MPA areas, encompassing an area of 3.5 million hectares.

Savu Sea MPA Assessment and Development Team in 2006, tasked to design the MPA as well as socialize and build consensus for the development of the MPA.

The establishment of the Savu Sea MPAs is closely related to the climate change adaptation strategy in the Coral Triangle, which conserves the most resilient coral reefs, ensures protection from storm and waves, and provides important habitat for fish and other seafood sources.

The provincial government will also looking to use the MPA as the foundation for the province's economic development through sustainable fisheries and marine-

based tourism, international shipping passage, scientific and learning activities, transboundary cooperation and coastal zone management. The two interconnected MPAs in the Savu Sea will be integrated within the province's spatial plan that will help ensure sustainable use of marine and coastal resources.

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