

**Trip report of the
TNC-CMPI field visit to
Wakatobi National Park, Southeast Sulawesi,
Tuesday October 30 – Sunday November 4 2001**

*This version does not include graphics. The full version can be downloaded from
www.komodonationalpark.org (PDF, 2.5 Mb)*

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The support of PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort for this field trip is gratefully acknowledged.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the visit

The purpose of this 6-day trip was to assess if The Nature Conservancy should become involved in protection of coastal and marine habitats in Wakatobi, and to get a first impression of local support for this involvement. The visiting team comprised Subijanto (Komodo Project Leader, TNC CMPI), Peter Mous (Senior Scientist, TNC CMPI), Anna Sylviana (PHKA, Jakarta), Dr Hugu. The trip was coordinated by Lorenz Maeder (Director of PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort).

Background

The Tukang Besih Islands, also known as Wakatobi (an acronym for the main islands Wangi-Wangi, Kaledupa, Tomia and Binongko), is a renowned dive destination, featuring pristine and diverse reefs. The main islands have fringing coral reefs.

Parallel to the archipelago there are three large atoll reefs:

- Karang Kapota situated ca. 20 km Southwest of Wangi-wangi (ca. 20 km long and 8 km wide),
- Karang Keledupa situated ca. 20 km Southwest of Kaledupa and Tomia (ca. 60 km long and 20 km wide),
- the atoll-like reef situated just Southwest of Tomia Island that includes Lintoa island (ca. 15 km long and 15 km wide).

A number of smaller reefs, mostly atolls, are situated in the open waters of the Southeastern part of Wakatobi. The Park is inhabited by ca. 85,000 people, whereof about half live in Wangi-Wangi. Many of these people depend on fisheries, but a significant portion also makes a living as inter-island traders and seafarers. Fishing is common throughout the Park, and there are frequent reports on destructive fishing practices being used. There are two main tourism hubs in the park namely, Tomia Island, in which PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort solely operates, and Hoga in Kaledupa Island, where the Operation Wallacea based its activities and several tour operators operate. Access to Tomia is served by the chartered flight and chartered boat operated by PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort. We did not have a chance to visit Kaledupa Island at this session.

The national park authority, PHKA, expressed a commitment to conserve these reefs by declaring the 1.39 million ha of waters around the islands as a protected area, Wakatobi National Park (TNKW, *Taman Nasional Kepulauan Wakatobi*) on July 30 1996 (Surat Keputusan Menteri Kehutanan No. 393 / Kpts-VI/1996). There is an endorsed zoning plan (Surat Keputusan Direktur Jenderal Perlindungan Hutan dan Pelestarian Alam No. 198/Kpts/DJ-VI/1997) that includes core zone, protection zone, use zone, traditional use zone, and rehabilitation zone. TNKW plans to revise the zoning plan to allow for socio-economic dynamics (Buletin Napoleon Edisi III,

Januari-Maret 2001, p. 8). To date, Park management has not been effective because of problems faced by most Parks in Indonesia: lack of funding, lack of experience with marine conservation, and Indonesia's social, economic and political crisis.

From the perspective of The Conservancy, involvement in the management of TNKW would fit in its strategy to leverage lessons learnt in Komodo National Park to other sites in the geographic area of high coral diversity (Fig. 2). One of the potential partners besides the Park authority is PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort. PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort (www.wakatobi.com) is a dive operator who targets the higher end of the dive tourism market. The resort has actively protected coral reefs around the resort from destructive fishing practices and over-exploitation by establishing conservation agreements with local communities (notably the villagers of Lamangau on the island South of Tomia, Omuabaa). PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort is now seeking partnerships with established conservation agencies (such as The Conservancy, WWF, and the USAID NRM project) that can help implementing a Park-wide conservation program. Therefore, PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort sponsored representatives of The Conservancy, the national Park authority and of local NGOs to visit the resort, to have a look at the reefs around the resort and to meet with stakeholders, decision makers and NGOs at the local, the district and the provincial level. A counter visit of representatives of Wakatobi National Park and of Pt Wakatobi Dive Resort to Komodo is planned for 2003.

ITINERARY

Tuesday October 30 2001 (overnight in Wakatobi Dive Resort)

7.00 am – 9.30 am. Subijanto (TNC), Peter Mous (TNC), Anna Sylviana (PHKA, Jakarta) and Lorenz Maeder (PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort) fly with Garuda from Denpasar to Makassar, accompanying a group of ca. 15 divers who will be spending a 2 week holiday at Wakatobi Dive Resort.

9.30 am – 12.30 am. Transfer by chartered Pelita Air Dash 7 from Makassar to the airstrip of Wakatobi Dive Resort on Tomia Island (Marrongo Airstrip). Dr Hugua (Director of the local NGOs Bina Insani and Sintesa) joins the other members of the team in Makassar (Photo 1)

12.30 am – 1.00 pm. Transfer by minibus and local boat from Tomia Island (via jetty at Kumpang Waitii) to the dive resort on Omunabaa Island (Photo 2, 3, 4). First meeting with Hadj Baharuddin, one of the influential community leaders of Tomia Island (Photo 5). After having arrived at the resort, PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort staff members are introduced and the house rules are explained to the guests.

3.00 pm – 5.00 pm. Guided by Lorenz, Subijanto and Peter dive the house reef in front of the resort (Photo 28). The house reef is a wall featuring almost 100% coverage with highly diverse hard and soft corals and invertebrates. Lorenz points out pygme seahorses. The adjacent sea grass field also supports abundant and diverse marine biota. The reef features a relatively high abundance of valuable exploited species such as spiny lobster, grouper (various *Plectropomus* species and *E. fuscoguttatus*), snappers and Napoleon wrasse. Local villagers agreed with the management of PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort not to fish this reef. In compensation for lost fishing opportunities on this 1200 m long stretch of reef, the resort pays the village leader a monthly fee of 5 million Rp per month for community development projects. These revenues are presently been used to improve the paths and roads in the neighbouring village (Lamangau). Furthermore, the resort employs ca. 40 villagers and the resort has been involved in various other community development projects.

Wednesday October 31 2001 (overnight in Wakatobi Dive Resort)

8.15 am – 1.00 pm. The team (Subijanto, Hugua, Anna, Peter, Lorenz) travels by outboard engine-powered open boat to Waha, residence of the Kecamatan government of Tomia Island (a ca. 40 min drive, Photo 6). In Waha (Photo 7, 8), the team attends a 3-hour '*rapat masyarakat*', presided by the Wakil Camat (Photo 9, 10). The team is introduced to representatives of the local government and community leaders. Issues brought forward include tourism development strategies (homestay development vs. resort development, benefits for local people), resource use and conservation management. Hugua stresses the need for self-reliance of

local people. Remarkably, representatives of Wakatobi National Park were absent, even though there were invited for this meeting. Most of the men of Waha were at sea, working on freight vessels.

3.00 pm – 5.00 pm. Subijanto and Peter dive a patch reef facing Lamanggau, to the Northwest of Omunabaa Island. The patch reef features extensive and dense coverage of leafy hard corals, and an abundance of large-bodied fish species (trevallies, groupers and snappers). Local villagers agreed with the management of PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort not to fish this reef.

7.00 pm- 9.00 pm. Subijanto and Peter dive the house reef of Wakatobi Dive Resort.

Thursday November 1 2001 (overnight in Wakatobi Dive Resort)

06.00 am – 07.30 am. Peter and Subijanto dive the house reef.

9.00 am – 10.30 am. The team (Subijanto, Hugua, Anna, Peter, Lorenz) visits Lamangau, a Bajau village in the Northwest of Omunabaa Island with ca. 200 inhabitants (Photo 14). The houses of the seaside part of the village are built on stilts. Over a period of months or maybe years, the space between the stilts is filled up with coral rocks, resulting in a form of land reclamation (Photo 12). The village seems relatively poor (only one parabola). The villagers use revenues from the reef lease of Wakatobi Dive Resort to harden the roads and paths in the village (Photo 13). The village has freshwater that is piped from Tomia. Most of the men from Lamangau were out fishing for '*ikan merah*' or coral trout for which, according to an elderly man, it was the season. For the most part of the year, the Lamangau fishers fish for smaller pelagics such as *tongkol*, of which the price depends strongly on the extremely variable supply. The Lamangau fishers placed weirs at the Western side of the shallow channel between Omunabaa and Tomia Islands (Photo 30) that are used to strain the outgoing waters for fish that the fishers killed or stunned using *tuba*, a fish poison (Photo 11). The bottom of the channel is covered with extensive seagrass fields.

10.30 am – 4.00 pm. Lorenz needs to take care of business at the one million US\$ airstrip of Wakatobi Dive Resort, and the rest of the team the office of one of the NGOs chaired by Mr. Hugua. This NGO operates a water supply network that was funded through a German agency. Water is distributed to 1,600 households in 16 villages in Tomia Island and Omunabaa. Households pay a monthly fee that depends on the amount of water consumed. The revenues are used for operation and maintenance of the water supply network. By motorbike, the team visits the water reservoir that is situated in the hills, about 10 km from Usuku village. The water is pumped up from caves containing fresh water of excellent quality. From the reservoir, one of the villages with refugees from Maluku can be seen (Photo. 15). After having visited the reservoir and on the way back to the airstrip, the team visited the harbor of Timu village (Photo 17). A large stern trawler was moored in the open water off Timu

village (Photo 16). According to some locals this was a Korean vessel collecting medium-sized pelagics (but possibly also reef fish) from local fishers. A withered 'Save The Coral Reefs' sign at the jetty suggests that some local entity, possibly the Park authority, made an attempt at raising awareness for marine conservation (Photo 18). Many of the houses in this part of Tomia have protected birds as pets (Photo 19, 20). After meeting up with Lorenz at the airstrip (Photo 21) the team returns to Wakatobi Dive Resort.

4.00 pm – 6.00 pm. Guided by Lorenz, Peter and Subijanto dive a wall on the Northern side of the atoll that includes Lintoa Island. The wall extends to about 80 m depth, and features almost 100% coverage of highly diverse hard corals, soft corals and invertebrates. Again, large-bodied fish are relatively abundant. Peter spotted a dense school of squaretail grouper *Plectropomus areolatus*, consisting of dozens of very active individuals of about 50 cm length. This phenomenon was probably related to spawning (November 1 coincides with full moon), as these fish normally do not form dense schools. They may have been females migrating to an aggregation site immediately before spawning. On the way back to the resort the team encounters a large group (dozens) of spinner dolphins in the deep strait between Omunabaa and Lintea Island.

8.00 pm – 9.00 pm. Subijanto and Peter do a Powerpoint presentation on the Komodo project for the guests of Wakatobi Dive Resort.

9.00 pm – 10.00 pm. Peter does a night dive at the house reef.

Friday November 2 2001 (overnight in Bau-Bau)

6.00 am – 3.00 pm. Onboard the 'Cisca', a live aboard stationed in Tomia (Photo 23), the team (Subijanto, Hugua, Anna, Peter, Lorenz) sail from Wakatobi Dive Resort to Dongkala Village on the Southeast Sulawesi mainland. During the trip, team members agree that Park management should aim at coral reef conservation, while fostering sustainable fisheries and eco-tourism development. At the jetty of Dongkala, the team is welcomed by the head of Wakatobi National Park, Mr. Harianto and a representative of Wakatobi Dive Resort.

3.00 pm – 5.00 pm. By means of two Kijang vans the team is brought to Bau-Bau, the capital of the district Buton (1.5 hours drive). Extensive cutting of the remnants of rainforest along the road is evident. According to the head of Wakatobi National Park this problem is caused by refugees from Maluku who are making a living from selling the timber. In Bau-Bau the team catches up with Hadj Baharuddin.

7.00 pm – 8.30 pm. Meeting with the Bupati of Buton, Mr Kahar and various other District officials at the Bupati's official residence. The team explains the purpose of the visit and presents the Bupati with an information package on the Komodo project. The team also explains that a formal invitation by the district government would be a

requisite for The Conservancy to become involved in conservation management in Wakatobi National Park.

Saturday November 3, 2001 (overnight in Kendari)

9.00 am – 11.00 am. Meeting with all major players in the District government, with representatives from local NGOs (including Operation Wallacea) and representatives from the tourism industry (Photo 24). The Bupati cannot attend this meeting because he is called away for duty unexpectedly. The team explains its mission and asserts that it seeks cooperation with all stakeholders to foster conservation, sustainable fisheries, and eco-tourism development.

11.00 am – 5.30 pm. Transfer to Kendari by fast ferry (Photo 25), thereafter by Kijang van to the hotel.

8.00 pm – 9.00 pm. Meeting with various representatives from various local NGOs and a representative of the Environmental Study Center of Haluoleo University at the hotel. The meeting is coordinated by Hugua who lives in Kendari, and the team takes this opportunity to explain its mission to the local stakeholders.

Sunday November 4, 2001

11.00 am – 12.30 pm. Flight by Beech 19 aircraft from Kendari airport back to Tomia (Photo 31). Whereas the schedule was to fly by Garuda from Kendari to Makassar and from there to Bali, this flight presented a last-minute opportunity to fly to Tomia and from there directly to Bali. The Beech was flying from Solor back to Jakarta without passengers and the air carrier took this opportunity to have a look at the airstrip at Tomia and explore cooperation with Wakatobi Dive Resort (Photo 26-30).

12.30 pm – 1.15 pm. Stop at Tomia

1.15 pm – 3.45 pm. Flight from Tomia to Bali.

4.00 pm – 8.00 pm. De-briefing at the office of PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort in Sanur, and meeting with Mr Laode Kamaludin (Secretary to the Vice President), a native of Wakatobi who shows a strong interest in marine conservation and who seems committed to support a conservation coalition that includes Wakatobi National Park, PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort and The Conservancy. The team also meets other members of the management team of PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort (including Renee Maeder-Chew and Valentin Maeder).

MAJOR ISSUES DISCUSSED DURING MEETINGS

Meeting at Waha (Tomia) presided by the Kecamatan Secretary on October 31.

The meeting took place in the Tomia Municipal meeting house and was attended by the local leaders and the administration of Kecamatan (approx. 30 persons). The team introduced itself to the audience and explained its mission. The following issues were brought forward by the participants:

- The participants felt that the protection regulations were not properly enforced, especially by park rangers. Many were eager to recruit rangers from locals and demanded better facilities (such as patrol boats and ranger stations) and funding to support their operation.
- There are indications that many outside boats illegally practiced destructive fishing in Tomia waters such as blast fishing, cyanide fishing, and coral mining.
- Some expressed the opinion to market Tomia's reefs as a high-end tourism destination, but others commented that local operators should be given opportunity to operate in the area.
- Some participants felt that conservation awareness should be increased among locals, and that awareness materials should be distributed to schools.
- Participants felt that to strengthen local support for conservation, alternative livelihood schemes should be developed in cooperation with local communities. It was noted that some communities were successful with installing and operating Fish Aggregating Devices around Tomia waters, but that marketing their catch remained a challenge. Participants felt that external advice and support were needed.
- Participants felt that any investment in the area must include some community empowerment element as well as ensure sustainability of its marine biological resources. This issue was raised since there is a sense among some communities that the proportion of revenue generated from the local resources was not satisfactorily returned to the locals. Some participants suggested that Wakatobi should be closed for new fisheries investment.
- Participants felt that the Park zoning plan must be socialized as soon as possible among Park stakeholders. There was also concern on the strength and seriousness of the central government commitment in managing the Park.
- Participants felt that external support should not be in the nature of money, but rather of facilities and assistance managed by competent and credible agencies.
- Participants requested the local government to support sustainable natural resources management by issuing the appropriate local regulations (PERDA).
- The team again mentioned that it will carefully look over all the inputs and opinions, and the team explained that The Conservancy would seek a formal invitation by the Park, the local government and the communities before participating in the conservation management of Wakatobi National Park.

Courtesy visit in Bau-Bau to the Bupati of Buton District on November 2.

The meeting took place at the Bupati's official residence and was attended by approx. 10 officials (including Mr Harianto, Head of Wakatobi National Park). The team introduced itself to the audience and explained its mission. The following issues were brought forward by the officials:

- The local government acknowledged that the biodiversity and unique ecosystems of Wakatobi NP is the responsibility of various parties, especially the local government and the national government, but also the international community.
- The local government wishes that the park conservation and development should also contribute to the welfare of the local community and local economy.
- It was understood that to enhance a sustainable utilization of the region marine areas an alternative livelihood scheme should be developed. Meanwhile illegal and destructive

fishing practices should be banned. The issue of illegal fishing by outsiders should be also addressed by appropriate legal actions. Where necessary, proper local regulations should be devised that to protect Napoleon wrasse and groupers, sea turtles, and that prohibit gears used in destructive fishing practices such as the hookah compressor (cf. Manggarai Perda No. 11).

Meeting called by the local government on November 3.

The meeting took place at the Bau-Bau Regency Office. The 40 attendees represented local NGOs, international agencies, local parliament, the local government and Wakatobi National Park (represented by Mr Harianto). The meeting was co-chaired by the Vice Bupati, the local house speaker, and the head of Bappeda. and was attended by approx. 40 officials. The team introduced itself to the audience and explained its mission. The following points are excerpted from the discussion:

- All parties were in the opinion that the natural resources in the region are heavily exploited, meanwhile efforts to conserve and to utilize them in a sustainable manner still have to be implemented. Also, law enforcement should be strengthened.
- The existing local government policy emphasizes that any development in this area should contribute to the region's economy and foster empowerment of local communities. Conservation awareness in communities should be enhanced, their active participation on environmental efforts should be encouraged.
- There were also some skeptic comments on various local regulations that were inadequately implemented. Communities are eager to see tangible results in the field.
- The park zoning system should be revised and inputs should be solicited from the local community. Prior to its implementation, the zoning plan should be socialized with all stakeholders.
- There was a concern that tourism would be a too narrow basis for economic development of the area. Therefore, other development activities (especially fisheries) that are compatible to the main objectives of the park should also be explored. Development and conservation should also take into account the local culture.
- Some attendees expressed to need to have more transparency on the conservation program run by Wallacea Foundation in Hoga - Kaledupa Island.
- The meeting agreed that external and/or international assistance will be beneficial for the development of the Park, and that The Conservancy would be in a very good position to help with this process.
- There was a strong notion from the local legislature questioning the seriousness of the central government (PHKA) commitment on Wakatobi National Park program. Since it was sensed that only very limited funding, facilities and equipment are available to support the Park authority. The local legislature emphasizes that the central government's mandate to manage the Park (as stipulated in Act 22 of 1999) means that the agency involved must manage the Park professionally and seriously.
- The Park management and zoning plans need to be finalized in consultation with all stakeholders. Bappeda and Bapedalda assert that the Park management plan should be also endorsed by them.
- Based on the discussion the Bau-bau government recommended the following:
 - a. To compile an action plan to support the management of Wakatobi National Park.
 - b. To support the management of the Park by issuing local regulations.
 - c. To base community development on conservation
 - d. To improve law enforcement and to enhance cooperation among law enforcement agencies.
- The visiting team again mentioned that it will carefully look over all the inputs and opinions, and the team explained that The Conservancy would seek a formal invitation by the Park, the local government and the communities before participating in the conservation management of Wakatobi National Park.

- In a side bar discussion the Head of Wakatobi National Park asserted to Subijanto that the Park authority and PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort still need to sort out some formalities on a tourism concession for operating in the Park.

De-briefing on November 4

A wrap-up meeting was arranged at the PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort Office in Sanur. Attendees were: Mr. Laode Kamaludin (Secretary to the Vice President and founder of Wakatobi Foundation), Mrs Renee Maede-Chew, Lorenz Maeder, several PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort staff including members of the executive management team, Subijanto, Mrs Anna Sylviana and Peter Mous. The following points were brought up:

- There is a strong willingness to put TNC CMPI on Wakatobi Program by the Wakatobi stakeholders. Mr. Kamaludin will catalyze the process to formally invite The Conservancy.
- There is an urgency to encourage PHKA into strengthening its capacity in Wakatobi National Park.
- The park zoning system need to be revised based on consultation and information collected. Its socialization to all stakeholders should follow immediately thereafter.
- The enforcement effort should be strengthened soon and some local supportive regulations (Perda) should be devised. Mr. Kamaludin will support to catalyze the process.
- To achieve momentum and stronger commitment on the development of the park, Mr.Kamaludin will encourage a joint visit of several ministers to the Park. Those are Minister of Forestry, Minister of Environment, Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, and Minister of Internal Affairs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The quality of the reefs and the immediate threats that they face from destructive fishing practices and over-exploitation indicate that there clearly is an opportunity for The Conservancy to export lessons learnt in Komodo to Wakatobi National Park. Furthermore, support for The Conservancy's involvement in conservation management of Wakatobi National Park has already been confirmed by the District Government (see attached letter below). The team's impression is that partners for a conservation coalition with the Park authority and The Conservancy can be readily identified. The conservation constituency already created by PT. Wakatobi Dive Resort will help to jump-start implementation of a conservation program.

The following conservation activities are recommended for implementation over the short term (as soon as possible), mid term (0 – 1 years) and long term (0 – 5 years):

- Establish The Conservancy as a member of a conservation coalition that includes the Wakatobi National Park authority, and help broadening the coalition (short term)
- Enhance Park authority's capacity to enforce the ban on blast fishing in cooperation with local authorities and communities (short term)
- Assist in the implementation of a community development project such as deployment of Fish Aggregating Devices (short term).
- Design and implement a basic monitoring strategy (short term)
- Collect available information on biodiversity and resource use, assess information gaps, and plan a Rapid Ecological Assessment if necessary (mid term).
- Design a process for Park planning, building on the present management and zoning plans and soliciting inputs from all stakeholders (mid term)
- Compile Park management and zoning plans, including modules that focus on community awareness and participation, law enforcement, alternative livelihood development, ecotourism development, and monitoring and research (long term).

Eventually, it may be strategic to assess whether Wakatobi national Park can be considered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



BUPATI BUTON

1. ...
2. File (letter?)

Bau-Bau, 20 Nopember 2001

Nomor
Lampiran : 556/3256
Perihal : Kerjasama Pengembangan Manajamen Konservasi di TNW

Kepada
Yth. Dr. Ian Dutton
Direktur The Nature Conservancy
Indonesia Program
di -
Jakarta

Dengan Hormat,

Bersama surat ini, kami atas nama Pemerintah Kabupaten Buton mengucapkan terima kasih kepada The Nature Conservancy atas kunjungannya ke Bau-Bau beberapa waktu yang lalu, begitu pula atas ketertarikan TNC dalam membantu pengembangan manajemen konservasi di Taman Nasional Wakatobi.

Berkaitan dengan hal tersebut di atas, dengan ini kami mengundang TNC untuk bekerjasama dengan Pemerintah Daerah Kabupaten Buton dan PHKA untuk mengembangkan manajemen konservasi di Taman Nasional Wakatobi, khususnya untuk pemeliharaan keanekaragaman hayati, pengembangan eko-wisata dan pengembangan budidaya perikanan.

Kerjasama tersebut selanjutnya akan diwujudkan secara bersama-sama dalam bentuk Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) yang dapat memberikan keuntungan kepada pihak-pihak yang melakukan kerjasama tersebut, terutama terhadap kepentingan kesejahteraan masyarakat setempat.

Demikian disampaikan dan atas perhatiannya diucapkan terima kasih.

27 DEC 2001



- TEMBUSAN :** disampaikan kepada yth :
1. Gubernur Propinsi Sulawesi Tenggara di Kendari;
 2. Direktur Jenderal PHKA di Jakarta;
 3. Ibu Rili Djhani, M.Sc
Direktur The Nature Conservancy - Coastal & Marine Program Indonesia di Bali;
 4. Ketua DPRD Kabupaten Buton di Bau-Bau;
 5. Kepala Taman Nasional Wakatobi di Bau-Bau;



Figure 1. Zoning plan for Wakatobi National Park.

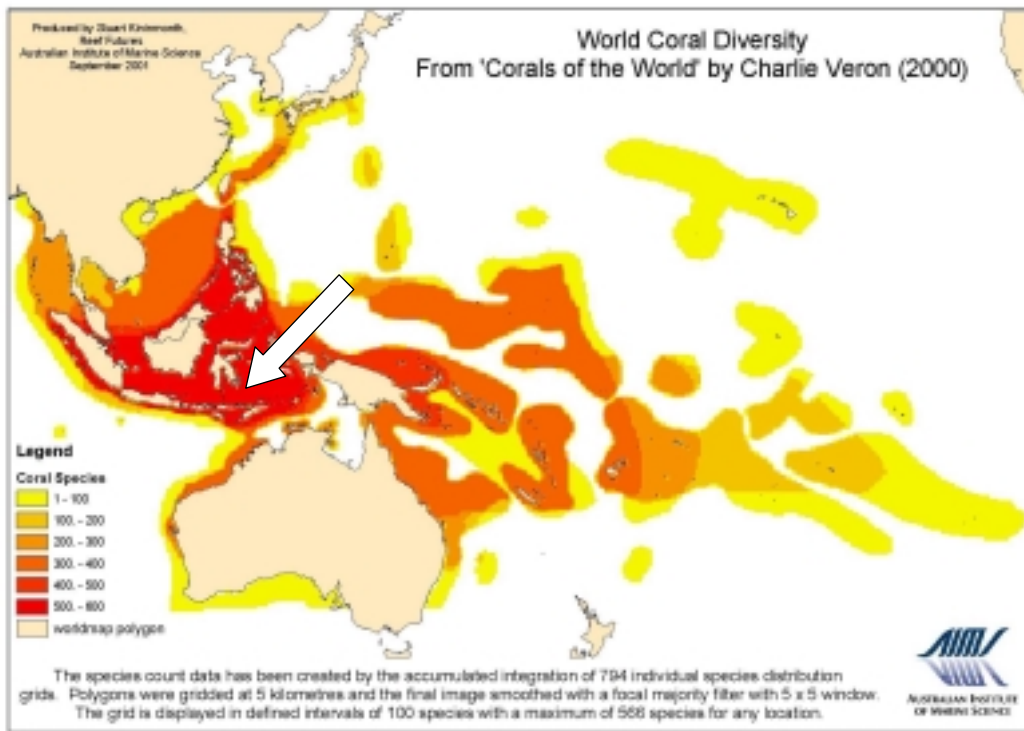


Figure 2. World coral diversity. Wakatobi National Park (arrow) is situated in the center of the bull's eye for coral diversity.