

Floating Surveillance Station "Penyu Laut" Launched For Patrol and Surveillance of Berau Marine Protected Area

Berau September 11, 2008, The Berau Steering Committee for Coastal and Marine Management, in cooperation with [The Nature Conservancy](#) (TNC), [WWF-Indonesia](#), and [Conservation International-Indonesia](#) officially launched the Floating Surveillance Station FSS "Penyu Laut" to protect the area from illegal fishing, poaching of endangered species and destructive fishing practices in the Berau Marine Protected Area (MPA) in East Kalimantan.



This program is a follow up to Berau Bupati's Decree No. 208/2007 on the establishment of the Berau MPA Integrated Patrolling Team. The aim of the decree is to ensure the achievement of Berau MPA's goals and objectives, amongst which is to protect the extremely rich marine and coastal biodiversity and to protect the marine and coastal promising potential in the area.

Supported with a 6-member crew and capable of accomodating surveillance team of 10 people , FSS "Penyu Laut" is 23 meters in length, with a width of 5.25 meters and weighing 74 GWT, powered with a 280-HP 6-cylinder engine. The vessel is designed for a 10-day surveillance at sea on each mission, patrolling 1,2 million hectares of the Berau MPA.

The Head of the Berau District, Drs. H. Makmur HAPK, MM, in his speech welcomes and expresses his high appreciation to the Steering Committee and TNC-WWF Joint Program, for providing the FSS "Penyu Laut". The District Head in his speech further admits that there are still a long list of issues in the marine and coastal sector, and in particular with resources sustainability.



"There is still a lack of understanding by coastal communities – local fishers as well as those from outside the area – on the existing rules and regulations on fisheries and conservation of natural resources." Considering the size and the importance of protecting and managing the area, he request further support from Ministry for Marine Affairs and Fisheries and provincial government to improve infrastructure to support implementation of this policy.

Project Leader for the TNC-WWF Berau Marine Joint Program, Hirmen Syofyanto, explained that "This is part of our commitment to support Berau District in the management of Berau MPA". He continued to say that, "It is expected that all of these efforts would result in the sustainable use of Berau's natural marine and coastal resources which ultimately will benefit the communities in terms of prosperity and sustainability of resources."

Meanwhile in his opening speech, Head of Berau's Marine and Fisheries Affairs Office, Dr. Ir. H. Achmad Delmy, M.Agr, emphasized the importance of intensive and integrated surveillance and management of marine and fisheries resources, "...so all can benefit from marine and fisheries resources in a regulated and responsible fashion, environmentally friendly, manageable, fair, and sustainable."

Cases of poaching and destruction of natural resources are on the increase. TNC-WWF's monitoring of resource-use finds that 80% of marine and coastal resources are exploited by fishers from outside the area, 45.65% of coral cover in the northern part of the MPA and 35.05% in the southern part are destroyed. According to local fishermen reports, this directly results in the 60-80% decrease in their fish catch in the last five years. Apart from that, there were several cases of turtle poaching in the area, resulting in over 700 turtles killed in 2005-2006.

FSS Penyu Laut is expected to provide the support in protecting the natural resources and in ensuring local communities' well-being by patrolling the fishing grounds to prevent violation of no-take areas by local or non-local fishers. Berau MPA consists of more than 30 uninhabited small islands, part of them are in the most remote northern border area, so ensuring the protection of the area is a matter of priority for Berau district government. The recent development of marine ecotourism, visiting tourist vessels in particular, also needs to be better managed.

Since the Berau area was declared as an MPA or Kawasan Konservasi Laut (KKL)" through Bupati (Head of District) Regulation No. 31/2005, surveillance and patrolling activity comes consequently as a priority. One point in the decree mentioned that MPA surveillance and patrolling activities are jointly conducted by related cross-sector institutions.

The Berau MPA, especially in Derawan, Sangalaki, Semama, and Kakaban is extremely rich in marine and coastal biodiversity, coming second after Raja Ampat in West Papua. The Nature Conservancy Rapid Ecological Assessment in 2004 found the Derawan archipelago to harbor approximately 444 hard coral species, 872 species of colorful reef fishes, endemic stingless jelly-fish, 16 species of sea-grass, 33 types of mangroves, and 5 species (of total 6 in the world) turtle species, 22 species of marine mammals including Dugong and Irawaddy dolphin, as well as Southeast Asia's largest nesting ground for endangered green turtles. Besides functioning as an area of marine conservation, this MPA is also important to support the livelihoods of local communities and holds a great potential as a world-class marine and underwater tourism destination.



The Berau MPA, located in the Sulu-Sulawesi eco-region, is located in the "heart" of the Coral Triangle, the most diverse, rich, and productive marine ecosystem in the world. The complexity of oceanographic-tectonic history eventually created unique features; salt-water lake with stingless jellyfish in Kakaban Island as well as variation of tropical marine habitat and many known types of reefs, (atoll, fringing, patch and barrier reefs), not to mention a "jungle" of mangroves.