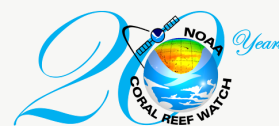




Indonesia - Banda



Regional summary of 7 dive sites. Figures are averages across the sites that report them (n = sites with a value); each site's own page has its individual values. Part of the [Indonesia - Maluku](#) overview.

0

5

Coral Health Index: 4.75/5



Photo: Anderson Mayfield/Coral Reef Diagnostics — [Indonesia](#) - Banda Islands: Airport (Banda Ara)

COUNTRY

Indonesia

SITES

7

each linked below

HARD CORAL COVER
(REGIONAL MEAN)

35% ± 11% (std. dev.)

n=7. range 16–55%

WATER TEMP. DURING
SURVEYS (REGIONAL MEAN)

29.9°C

n = 7 of 7 sites; surveyed Apr
2018

CORAL HEALTH INDEX
(REGIONAL MEAN)

4.75 / 5

n = 1 of 7 sites; 2.5 = average
(above average)

MOST RECENT WATER
TEMPERATURE RECORD

27.1°C

16 Sep 2026 · [Maluku](#)

MOST RECENT HEAT
STRESS RECORD

0.0°C-weeks

16 Sep 2026 · below alert level



MEAN ANNUAL MAX DEGREE
HEATING WEEKS (DHW), LAST
5 YEARS

8.9°C-weeks

2021–2025 · Maluku

HIGHEST ANNUAL HEAT
STRESS

9.7°C-weeks

in 2022 · Maluku

SEVERE HEAT-STRESS YEARS

9

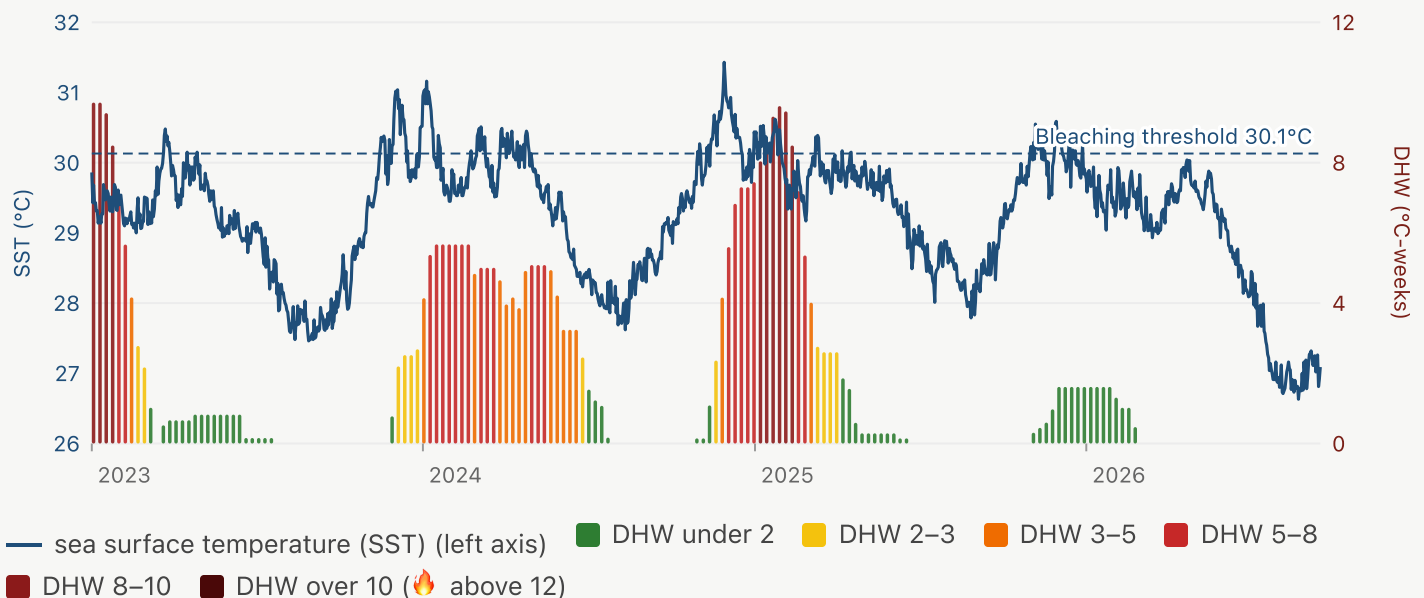
1985–2025 · 8 in the last 10 years

Heat-stress figures: [NOAA Coral Reef Watch](#) — [Maluku](#) 5-km virtual station. Each pill links its source record and carries the values behind it.

REGIONAL SUMMARY

Banda's steep walls, draped in sponges, sea fans, and soft corals, rise to shallow terraces carpeted in Acropora or leather corals, dived in April 2018. On Gunung Api's 1988 lava flow, plate corals now cover the old lava channel almost completely, though localized bleaching was photographed there.

Heat stress



Daily SST (line) and weekly maximum Degree Heating Weeks (bars), Jan 2023–Sep 2026, [NOAA Coral Reef Watch](#) 5-km Maluku virtual station. Dashed line: bleaching threshold (maximum monthly mean $29.1^{\circ}\text{C} + 1^{\circ}\text{C}$). DHW ≥ 4 : bleaching likely; ≥ 8 : severe bleaching and mortality likely. A bar is drawn only where DHW exceeds zero, so a stretch with no bar is accumulated heat stress of zero, not missing data — the SST line runs the full period.

Long-term record: 9 years since 1985 reached 8 or more $^{\circ}\text{C}$ -weeks at [NOAA's](#) Maluku station. [Download the annual DHW data \(CSV\)](#).



7 sites in this region — click a marker to open that site.

Read this summary in:

English

Bahasa Indonesia

Regional setting

In their Indonesia chapter, [Spalding et al. \(2001\)](#) use the Banda Sea mainly as a boundary. A chain of small archipelagos running from Timor east to the Aru Islands traces its southern margin, within a deep-water sub-region (the Moluccas and Irian Jaya) where islands a few tens of kilometers apart can be divided by more than 1,000 m of mostly clear, oceanic water. They add that the western Banda Sea holds many smaller atolls. Their protected-area list includes two sites named for Banda: the Taman Laut Banda Recreation Park (25 km², designated 1977) and the Gunung Api Banda Recreation Park (7.35 km², 1992). For Indonesia as a whole, they estimate about 51,020 km² of coral reef, 18% of the world total, and record 443 coral species, with 581–602 estimated for the wider biogeographic region. [Souter et al. \(2021\)](#) place the Banda Sea ecoregion in an East Asian Seas subregion of 20,568 km² that also covers Halmahera, Papua, Northeast Sulawesi, the Gulf of Papua, and the Arafura Sea.

[Souter et al. \(2021\)](#) estimate that average hard coral cover across the East Asian Seas was 36.8% in 2019, slightly lower than a decade earlier, a decline they tie to the 2010 and 2016 mass bleaching events; within the Banda Sea's subregion, cover swung widely over the record while

algal cover held roughly steady. They name overfishing, expanding coastal aquaculture, and siltation and nutrient enrichment from land-use change as the leading regional pressures, and add marine litter, noting that the region may produce as much as half of the world's marine plastic waste. [Wilkinson \(2006\)](#) had earlier reported that Southeast Asian reefs were still declining in 2004, with overfishing and destructive fishing the dominant direct threats, although Indonesia showed some signs of recovery.

Overview

The seven Banda pins come from 25-28 April 2018: Batu Kapal, an isolated pinnacle in the channel northeast of Banda Neira; Lava Flow, on Gunung Api's 1988 flow; Lighthouse; Airport (Banda Ara); Tanjung Pisang (Banana Island); and Shark Point and Goat Hall on Pulau Ai. Water ran 29.4-30.0°C and was mostly clear. Among the six stations whose recorded depth is a scuba dive, maximum depths ran from 13.7 m at Lava Flow and Lighthouse to 30.5 m at Airport, with Shark Point close behind at 30.2 m; at Tanjung Pisang the recorded 2.4 m is a snorkel over the flat, and the dive there reached 31.4 m. The typical profile is a steep wall or drop-off rising to a shallow terrace or crest. The walls are held largely by filter feeders, with [barrel sponges](#), [sea fans](#), black coral, and *Dendronephthya*; at Batu Kapal the deep face is sheeted in orange *Dendronephthya*. The tops carry near-continuous *Acropora* carpets (Tanjung Pisang, Shark Point, Goat Hall, Lava Flow) or wall-to-wall *Sarcophyton* and *Lobophytum* leather-coral terraces (Goat Hall, Batu Kapal).

Sites differ sharply. At Lava Flow the old lava channel now carries essentially complete plate-coral cover beside unbroken staghorn thickets and 20-plus hard coral genera, while angular young basalt in the shallows is only sparsely colonized. Lighthouse pairs a rich coral terrace with a slope of bare volcanic boulders, and Airport includes a long monospecific thicket of *Turbinaria*- and *Pachyseris*-type plates. Hard coral cover (Claude CV) across seven sites ranged from 16.4% at Batu Kapal to 54.6% at Lava Flow.

Condition was mixed across the group. Localized bleaching was photographed at Tanjung Pisang (about five large plating colonies stark white with tissue still present), Lighthouse (two bone-white corymbose *Acropora*), and Lava Flow, where 18 frames show white colonies among pigmented neighbors and 11 show recent staghorn mortality; at Airport, one *Stylophora* was half bleached and a 2 m *Acropora* table carried a clean-edged bare patch. Shark Point, Goat Hall, and Batu Kapal showed no bleaching, and no [crown-of-thorns](#) was seen on any dive. [Hawksbill](#) turtles were photographed at Shark Point and Goat Hall, and Batu Kapal produced a banded sea krait, two large morays, and a clown triggerfish.

Highlights

- Lava Flow (Gunung Api): the 1988 lava channel now carries essentially complete plate-coral cover beside unbroken staghorn *Acropora* and 20-plus hard coral genera



photo: Indonesia - Banda

Islands: Lava Flow (Gunung Api)

- Near-continuous *Acropora* carpets on the reef tops at Tanjung Pisang, Shark Point, and Goat Hall



photo: Indonesia - Banda Islands: Tanjung Pisang (Banana Island)

- Wall-to-wall *Sarcophyton* leather-coral terraces at Goat Hall and Batu Kapal

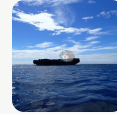


photo: Indonesia -

Banda Islands: Batu Kapal

- Hard coral cover (Claude CV) from 16.4% (Batu Kapal) to 54.6% (Lava Flow) across seven sites



photo: Indonesia - Banda Islands: Batu Kapal

- No crown-of-thorns seen on any of the seven dives; hawksbill turtles at Shark Point and Goat Hall



photo: Indonesia - Banda Islands: Shark Point (Pulau Ai)

Notable observations

- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Tanjung Pisang \(Banana Island\)](#): Bleaching confirmed in four frames: a cluster of roughly five large laminar/plating colonies (*Turbinaria*/*Echinopora*) stark white with tissue still present, one with a small central necrotic patch; a separate pair of pale *Porites*-type colonies suggests low-incidence paling scattered across the reef. No crown-of-thorns starfish (COTS), *Drupella*, or disease



- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Lighthouse](#): Two corymbose *Acropora* colonies fully bleached bone-white among normally pigmented neighbors; colony-scale and localized, not a whole-reef event. No COTS or disease seen



- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Airport \(Banda Ara\)](#): One Stylophora-type colony stark white to pale green over roughly half its surface (partial bleaching); a ~2 m tabulate *Acropora* with a sharply bounded bare white patch, consistent with white syndrome or a healed predation scar (the photograph cannot separate them); white lesion bands on a small massive colony and a smaller white patch on a faviid. No

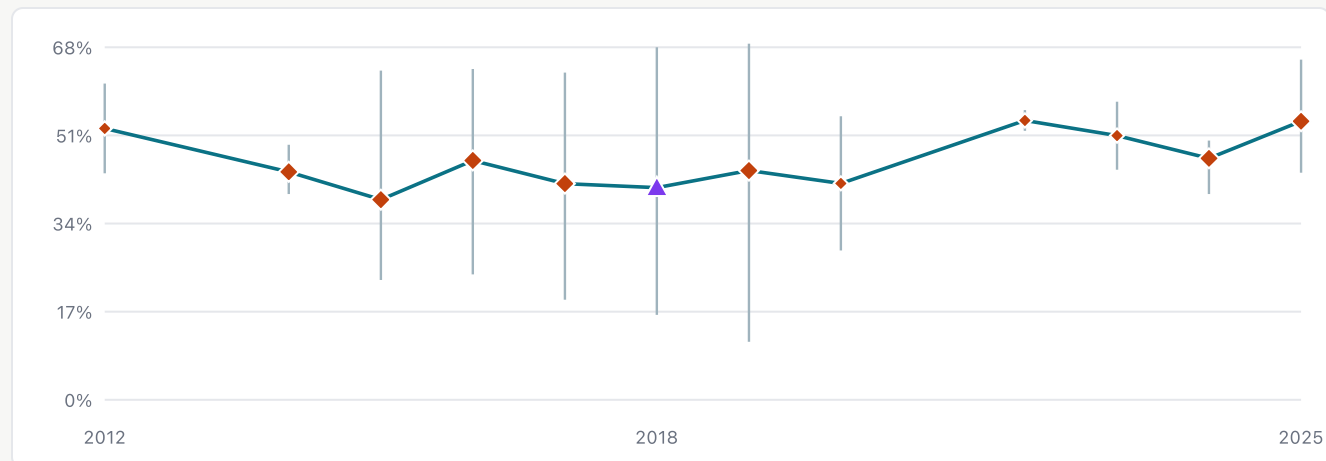


COTS

- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Lava Flow \(Gunung Api\)](#): Eighteen frames with stark-white colonies among pigmented neighbors (low-level, colony-scale bleaching in *Acropora*, *Pocillopora acuta*-type, *Seriatopora*, massive *Porites*); 11 frames of recent-mortality ground (disarticulated *Acropora* rubble, standing dead staghorn under turf); parrotfish bite scars on one plate. No *Acanthaster* or *Drupella*; cause not asserted 
- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Goat Hall \(Pulau Ai\)](#): Older partial mortality on one large massive dome (turf-fouled denuded patch); a pale lavender dome read as a color morph, not bleaching. No bleaching event, COTS, disease, or *Drupella* 
- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Batu Kapal](#): One pale cream-white massive dome shot at range, logged but not scored; extensive old, consolidated coralline rubble pavement. No COTS, disease, *Drupella*, or bleaching event 

Coral cover over time (pooled)

One point per year: the mean of every hard coral cover value available for this region that year — Anderson's own dives and every independent survey station within 5 km of them. The vertical bar is the full range behind that mean. Different programs use different methods at different stations, so this is a regional summary, not a single comparable series. Six values above 70% were excluded as best-patch figures rather than site means. Years resting on fewer than three values are drawn as smaller points (2012, 2020, 2022, 2023). Non-CRD points are from [Reef Check Foundation](#). Marker shape: ● his own dives, ◆ other organizations' surveys, ▲ a mix of both, that year.



Sites in this region

- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Airport \(Banda Ara\)](#) — 38% coral cover
- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Batu Kapal](#) — 16% coral cover
- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Goat Hall \(Pulau Ai\)](#) — 37% coral cover
- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Lava Flow \(Gunung Api\)](#) — 55% coral cover

- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Lighthouse](#) — 29% coral cover
- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Shark Point \(Pulau Ai\)](#) — 33% coral cover
- [Indonesia - Banda Islands: Tanjung Pisang \(Banana Island\)](#) — 36% coral cover

Nearby external survey stations

119 independent survey records within 5 km of a site in this region (deduplicated across sites).

► [Show all 119 records](#)

All images from [Coral Reef Diagnostics](#). Data are from Coral Reef Diagnostics and [Reef Check Foundation](#).



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References

- Souter D, et al. (eds) (2021) *Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2020*. International Coral Reef Initiative / [Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network](#). [\[PDF\]](#)
- Spalding MD, et al. (2001) *World Atlas of Coral Reefs*. University of California Press, Berkeley. [\[PDF\]](#)
- Wilkinson C (2006) Status of coral reefs of the world: summary of threats and remedial action. In: Côté IM, Reynolds JD (eds) *Coral Reef Conservation*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. [\[PDF\]](#)