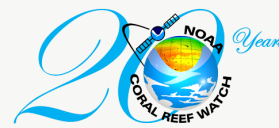




Timor-Leste



Regional summary of 8 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.



Coral Health Index: TBD

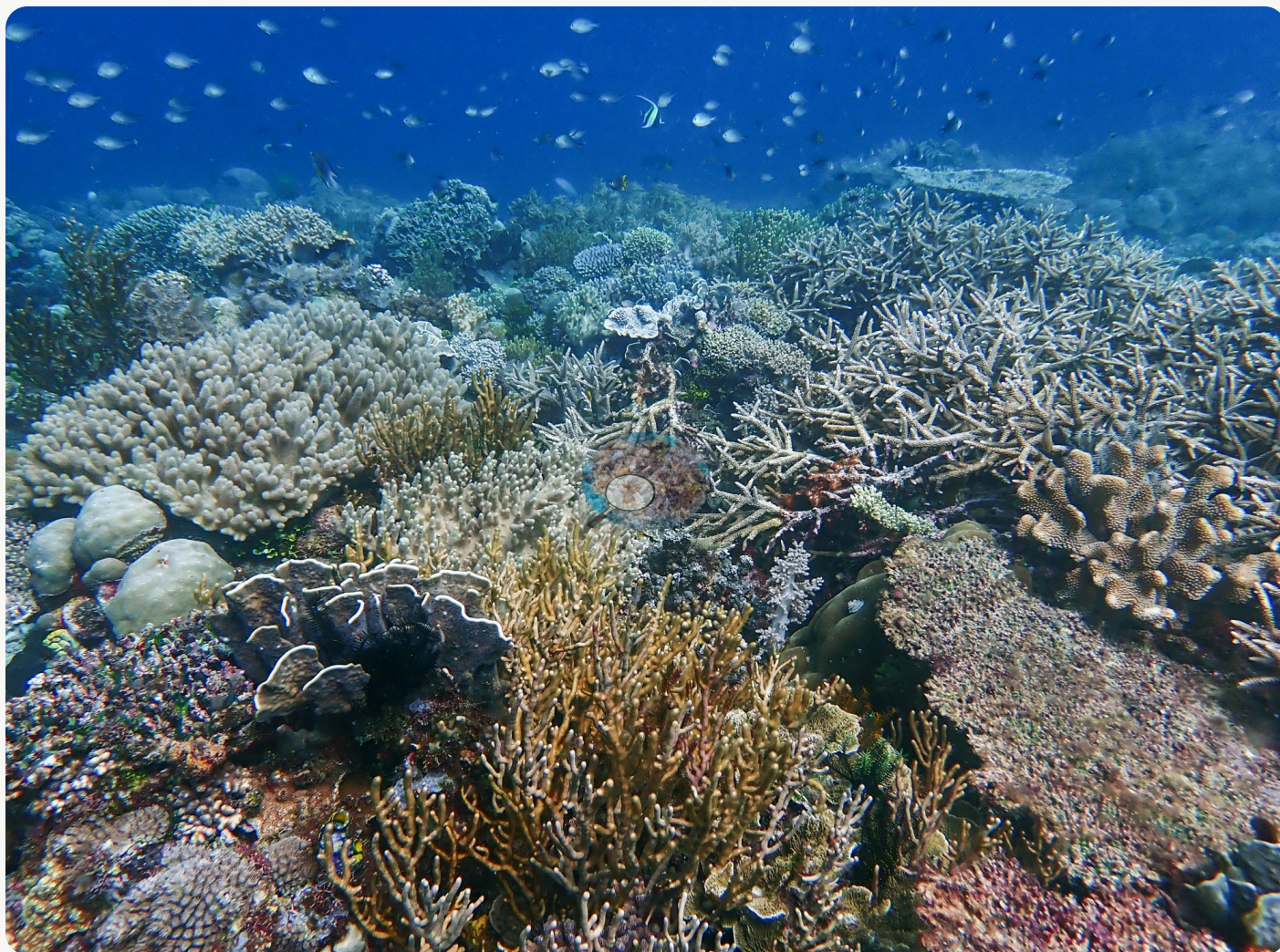


Photo: Anderson Mayfield/Coral Reef Diagnostics — [Atauro](#) - Raiketa

COUNTRY

Timor-Leste

SITES

8

each linked below

HARD CORAL COVER
(REGIONAL MEAN)

36% ± 8.9% (std. dev.)

n = 7 of 8 sites. range 20–46%

WATER TEMP. DURING
SURVEYS (REGIONAL MEAN)

27.1°C

n = 7 of 8 sites; surveyed Jan
2024

CORAL HEALTH INDEX
(REGIONAL MEAN)

not yet scored

n = 0 of 8 sites

MOST RECENT WATER
TEMPERATURE RECORD

27.3°C

16 Sep 2026 · [Timor-Leste](#)

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

5.7°C-weeks

2021–2025 · Timor-Leste

HIGHEST ANNUAL HEAT
STRESS

7.5°C-weeks

in 2020 · Timor-Leste

SEVERE HEAT-STRESS YEARS

0

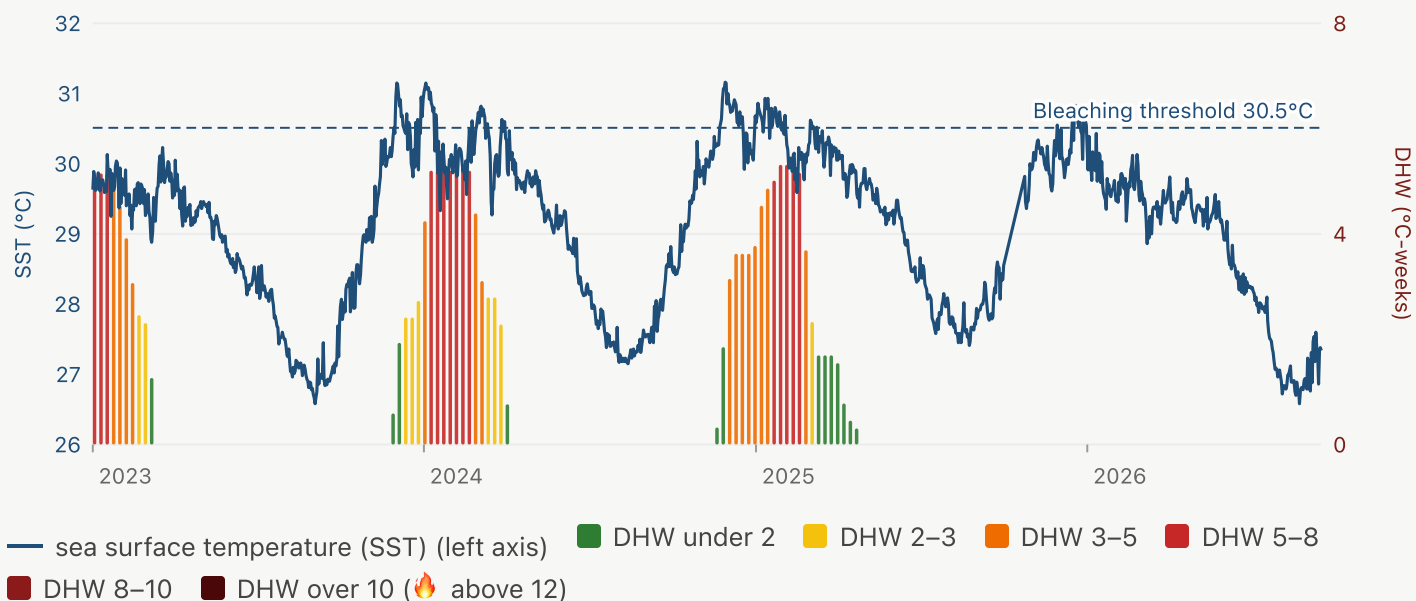
1985–2025 · 0 in the last 10 years

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

REGIONAL SUMMARY

[Atauro Island](#)'s reefs, dived in early 2024, range from a shallow snorkel garden to steep ridges and a deep pinnacle, dominated by near-continuous staghorn thickets under dense clouds of small fish. Dense coral mixes with rubble at every site, and no reef-wide [bleaching](#) was seen.

Heat stress



Daily SST (line) and weekly maximum Degree Heating Weeks (bars), Jan 2023–Sep 2026, [NOAA Coral Reef Watch](#) 5-km Timor-Leste virtual station. Dashed line: bleaching threshold (maximum monthly mean $29.5^{\circ}\text{C} + 1^{\circ}\text{C}$). 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: 0 years since 1985 reached 8 or more $^{\circ}\text{C}$ -weeks at [NOAA's](#) Timor-Leste station. [Download the annual DHW data \(CSV\)](#).



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

Read this summary in:

English

Tetun

Regional setting

[Spalding et al. \(2001\)](#) give East Timor no separate account or reef-area figure. Its coast appears on the maps of their [Indonesia](#) chapter, and Timor falls in the sub-region they call the Moluccas and Irian Jaya, which includes a chain of small archipelagos along the southern edge of the Banda Sea running east from Timor to the Aru Islands. They describe that sub-region as one of complex bathymetry and deep, mostly clear oceanic water, with islands a few tens of kilometers apart sometimes separated by more than 1,000 m. In the Timor Sea, surface currents flow west throughout the year, and a 1990 image in the same chapter shows Luang and Ukenao atolls lying east of East Timor. [Souter et al. \(2021\)](#) report that by December 2020 the [Allen Coral Atlas](#) had produced detailed satellite-derived reef maps of the Timor and Arafura Seas.

Overview

Eight of the nine Timor-Leste pins are sites around Atauro Island, dived between 29 January and 1 February 2024. The ninth is a general Atauro Island pin with no dive record of its own. The sites run from a 2 m snorkel garden at Compass Reef and the shallow Inner Reef to a steep coral ridge at Raiketa, the upper terrace of Biqueli Wall, and the deep, dim Pinnacle, dived to 35.7 m. Haruine was dived by day and after dark.

Branching *Acropora* is the dominant community. Raiketa, Haruine, Biqueli Wall, and the single surviving frame from Watuwai all show near-continuous tan staghorn thickets, often under dense clouds of damselfish, fusiliers, and anthias; at Haruine thousands of small blue damselfish hovered over the thickets. Inner Reef had the widest mix of growth forms, with columnar and lobate *Porites*, branching and plating *Acropora*, mauve *Pocillopora*, and large tube-sponge clusters. Cabbage Patch is named for a colossal dome of folded foliose coral on a sand slope. Pinnacle differed from the rest: a turf-covered framework with scattered *Porites* heads, plating corals, big finger, and tube sponges, and an unusually high density of feather stars.

Photo-derived cover estimates ranged from 31.7% at Pinnacle to 44.5% at Inner Reef, where the two computer vision methods differ most (38.4% and 50.6%); Raiketa (41.3%) was the only other station above 40%. Every site mixed dense coral with rubble, sand, or older framework, most starkly at Biqueli Wall, where a single live table coral stood in a broad field of coralline-crustad dead *Acropora* rubble. No reef-wide bleaching was apparent. Local flags included pale or white colonies at Raiketa, Inner Reef, Pinnacle, and Compass Reef, recent basal tissue loss on a large *Porites* at Cabbage Patch, and a crown-of-thorns seastar in one Inner Reef frame.

Giant clams were wedged into the framework at Inner Reef, and Compass Reef combined a dense mixed coral garden with a seagrass-fringed flat of small massive colonies.

Highlights

- Eight Atauro sites dived 29 January-1 February 2024, from a 2 m snorkel to 35.7 m
- Near-continuous staghorn *Acropora* thickets at Raiketa, Haruine, and Biqueli Wall
 photo: Atauro
- Biqueli Wall
- Inner Reef: the widest mix of growth forms and the highest photo-derived cover (44.5%), with giant clams wedged into the framework
 photo: Atauro - Inner Reef
- Cabbage Patch: a colossal dome of tightly folded foliose coral
 photo: Atauro - Cabbage Patch
- Pinnacle: a sponge- and crinoid-rich deep reef rather than a coral carpet
 photo: Atauro - Pinnacle

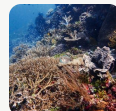
- **Compass Reef:** a 2 m snorkel garden with colonies packed edge to edge, beside a seagrass-fringed flat



photo: Atauro - Compass Reef

Notable observations

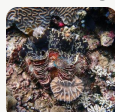
- [Atauro - Raiketa](#): A small number of pale-to-white colonies in the background; cannot be separated into bleaching, recent mortality, or pale pigment (pin also records a recurring pale-to-white branching signal across roughly a third of an earlier reviewed sequence)



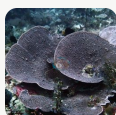
- [Atauro - Biqueli Wall](#): A single live table coral isolated within a broad field of dead, coralline-bound Acropora rubble (recorded from the larger gallery; the pin's four attached frames show coralline-crusted rubble beside living thickets). No bleaching, disease, or predation scars in the attached frames



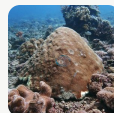
- [Atauro - Inner Reef](#): A crown-of-thorns seastar present in one frame; pale-to-white patches and small dead or overgrown lesions across roughly a fifth of the reviewed frames (both from the larger gallery, not the four attached frames)



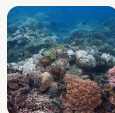
- [Atauro - Pinnacle](#): At least three colonies with conspicuous whitening (a branching soft coral, a table Acropora with a bleached patch, a second table Acropora); one small ambiguous white patch (bleached nubbin vs dead skeleton chip)



- [Atauro - Cabbage Patch](#): Exposed white skeleton around the base of a large massive Porites, consistent with recent basal tissue loss (cause not determinable)

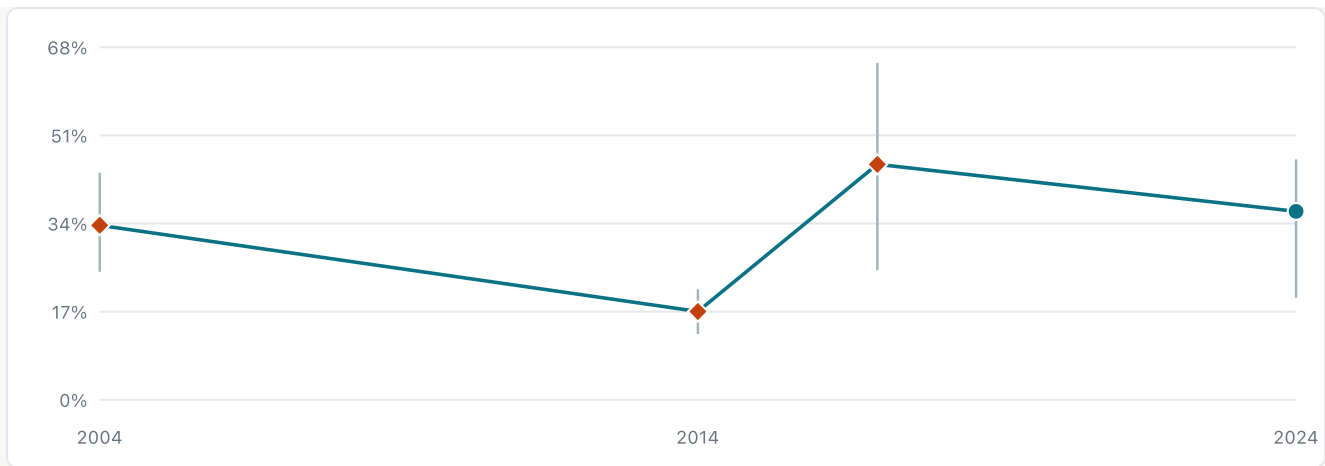


- [Atauro - Compass Reef](#): One pale gray-white branching colony among pigmented neighbors - pale pigment vs bleaching vs recent mortality unresolved



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. Non-CRD points are from [Reef Check Foundation](#) and [XL Catlin Seaview Survey \(University of Queensland\)](#). Marker shape: ● his own dives, ◆ other organizations' surveys.



Sites in this region

- [Atauro - Biqueli Wall](#) — 27% coral cover
- [Atauro - Cabbage Patch](#) — 37% coral cover
- [Atauro - Compass Reef](#) — 38% coral cover
- [Atauro - Haruine](#) — 41% coral cover
- [Atauro - Inner Reef](#) — 45% coral cover
- [Atauro - Pinnacle](#) — 20% coral cover
- [Atauro - Raiketa](#) — 46% coral cover
- [Atauro - Watuwai](#)

Nearby external survey stations

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

► Show all 17 records

All images from [Coral Reef Diagnostics](#). Data are from Coral Reef Diagnostics and [Reef Check Foundation](#) and [XL Catlin Seaview Survey \(University of Queensland\)](#).



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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. [\[PDF\]](#)