

Project Update: July 2001

The original plan was to combine work assessing the local trade in Banggai cardinalfish with a biological study of the effects of varying levels of exploitation on Banggai cardinalfish populations. However this proved to be unfeasible largely because of the difficulty of reliably assessing historical exploitation levels at different sites.

Instead, the team restricted its biological work to a short study on the daily movements of Banggai cardinalfish within a protected bay, with the intention that this data would serve as a baseline for future studies on the potential of marine protected areas for the species' conservation. Environmental education sessions for school children were also conducted. Trade interviews were held with fishers, buyers and government officials in north and south Sulawesi: this will be analysed over the summer of 2001 and subsequently published.

The team worked closely with Yayasan Pemerhati Lingkungan (YPL) - an environmental conservation group based in Luwuk, Central Sulawesi. YPL plans to conduct an in-depth study of the socio-economic importance of the trade in the Banggai cardinalfish to local fishers, and has gained governmental support to continue the education program begun with Kristin Lunn and Marie-Annick Moreau.