

WHY TIMOR-LESTE COMMUNITIES EXCEL IN MARINE PROTECTION

IMCC Malaysia 2018

CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL



TIMOR-LESTE FACTS & FIGURES





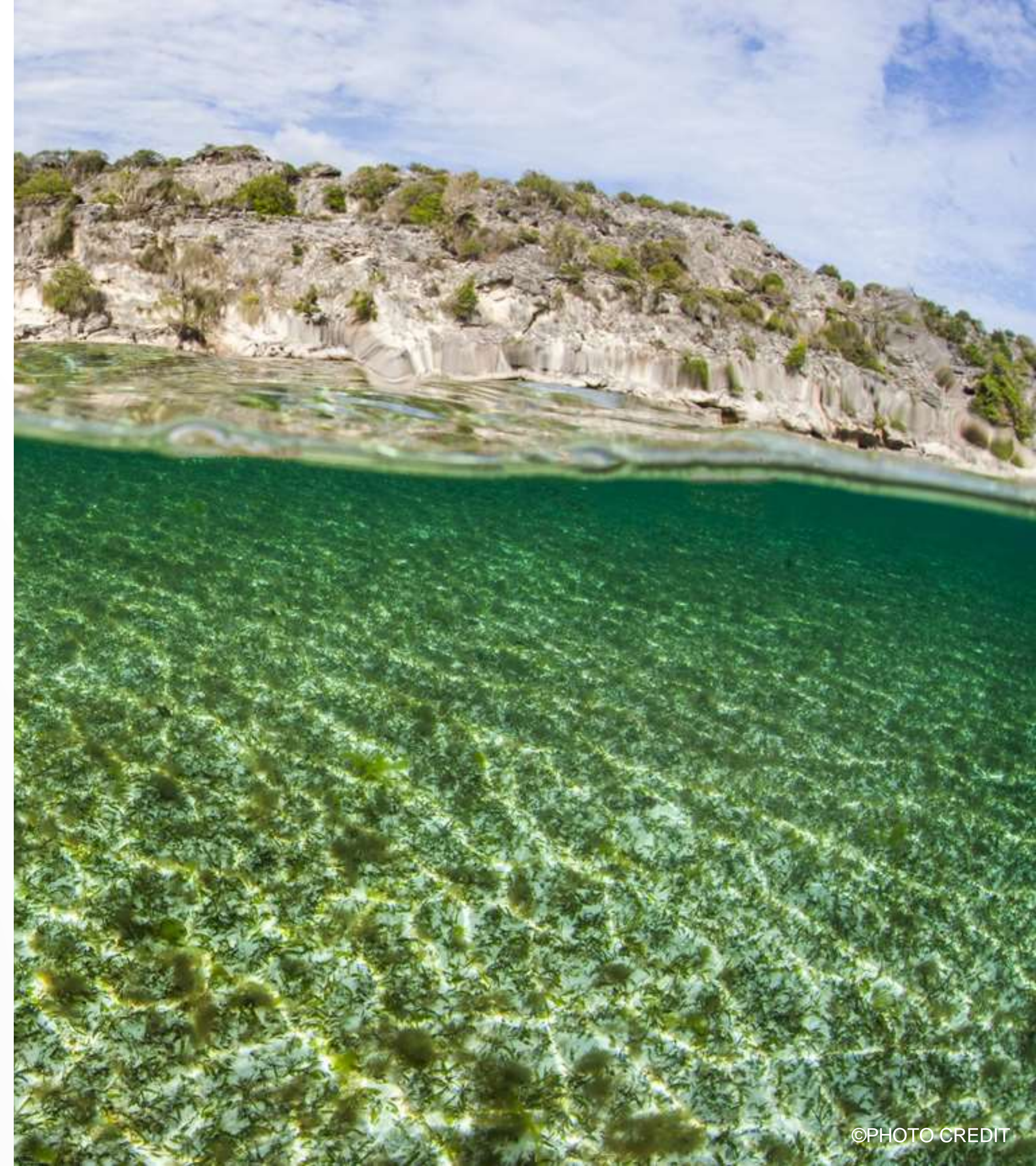
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LOCATION



OUR COUNTRY

- Timor-Leste is 15,410 square kilometers (5,400 square miles) in area
- With a coastline 706 kilometers (439 miles) long
- The highest peak is Tata Mailau at 2,986 meters (9,797 feet)
- The deepest point in the sea is around 4,000km
- We have more than 50 protected areas
- And some of the rarest species in the world
- We are one of the six Coral Triangle countries



WHO ARE WE?

- Timor-Leste is a Post Conflict State which became an independent country in 2002
- The population is around 1.3 million people
- 25% of our population is under 28 years of age
- We are a Melanesian culture, which makes us unique in Asia
- More than 25 languages are spoken with Tetum being the most common
- Through all the years of conflict, we were able to maintain our traditions and culture

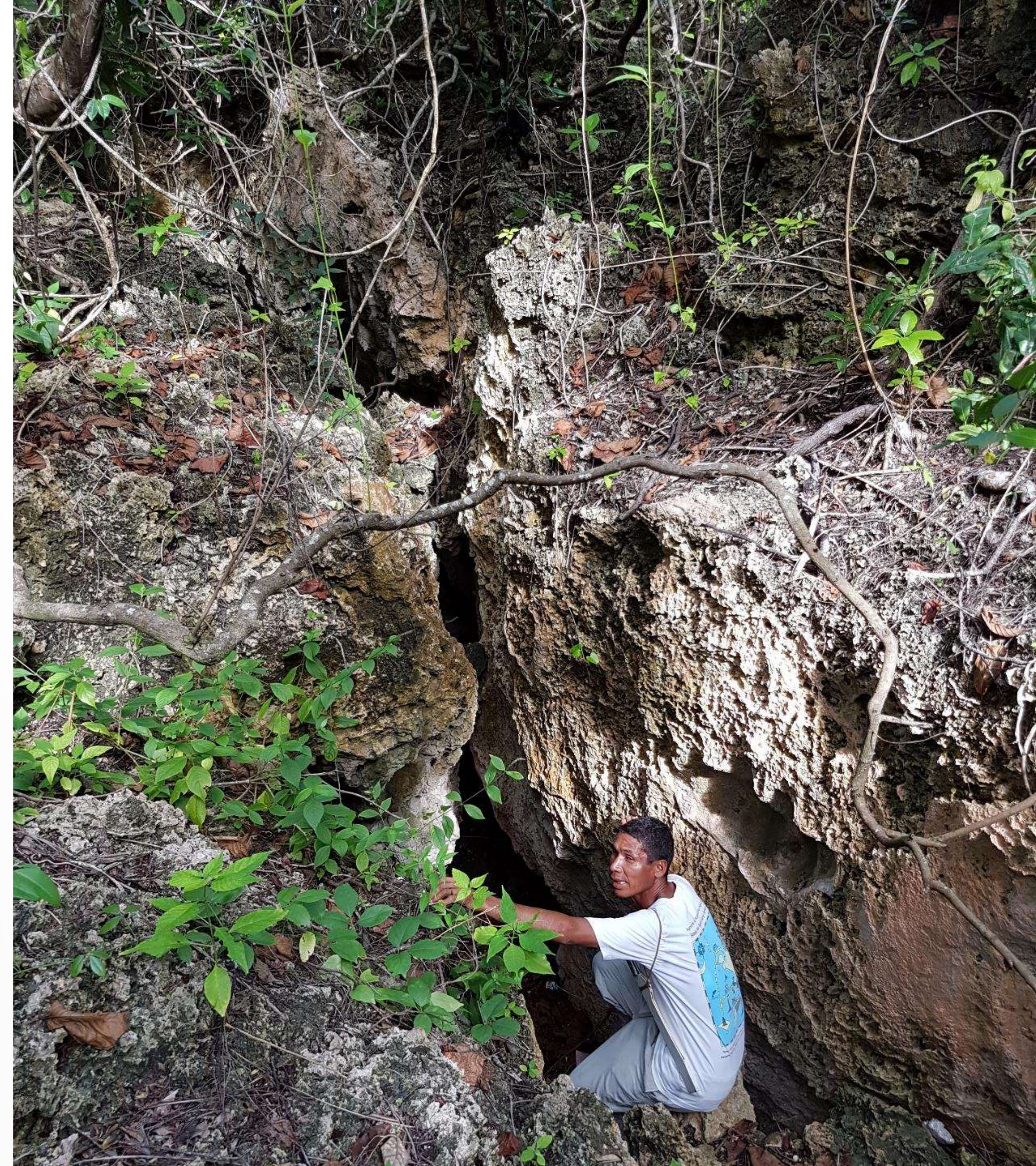


THE CO- MANAGEMENT MODEL



WHAT IS IT?

- It is a Collaborative Management Model between communities and the government
- It was developed between 2009 and 2013 by 3 communities, government, and Conservation International
- It incorporates 3 levels of protection (1 traditional & 2 government)
- It is a community led process
- It is based around the Timorese traditional governance system



HOW DOES IT WORK?

- The community identify an area where they would like to protect for food security, cultural or spiritual purposes, or for other reasons
- The Co-Management Model walks them through the process of mapping the area, surveying it, forming a management group, developing rules and regulations, developing monitoring plans, etc
- Traditional Timorese culture requires consensus from all the community. It is bottom up – not top down
- *Tara bandu*, is a traditional law whereby the an area is marked as being prohibited, by conducting the *tara bandu* ceremony



An aerial photograph of a coastal village. On the left, a cluster of small houses with colorful roofs (red, blue, grey) is nestled among green trees. A sandy beach runs along the coast. To the right of the beach is a shallow lagoon with a visible coral reef, showing various shades of blue and green. The ocean extends to the right edge of the frame.

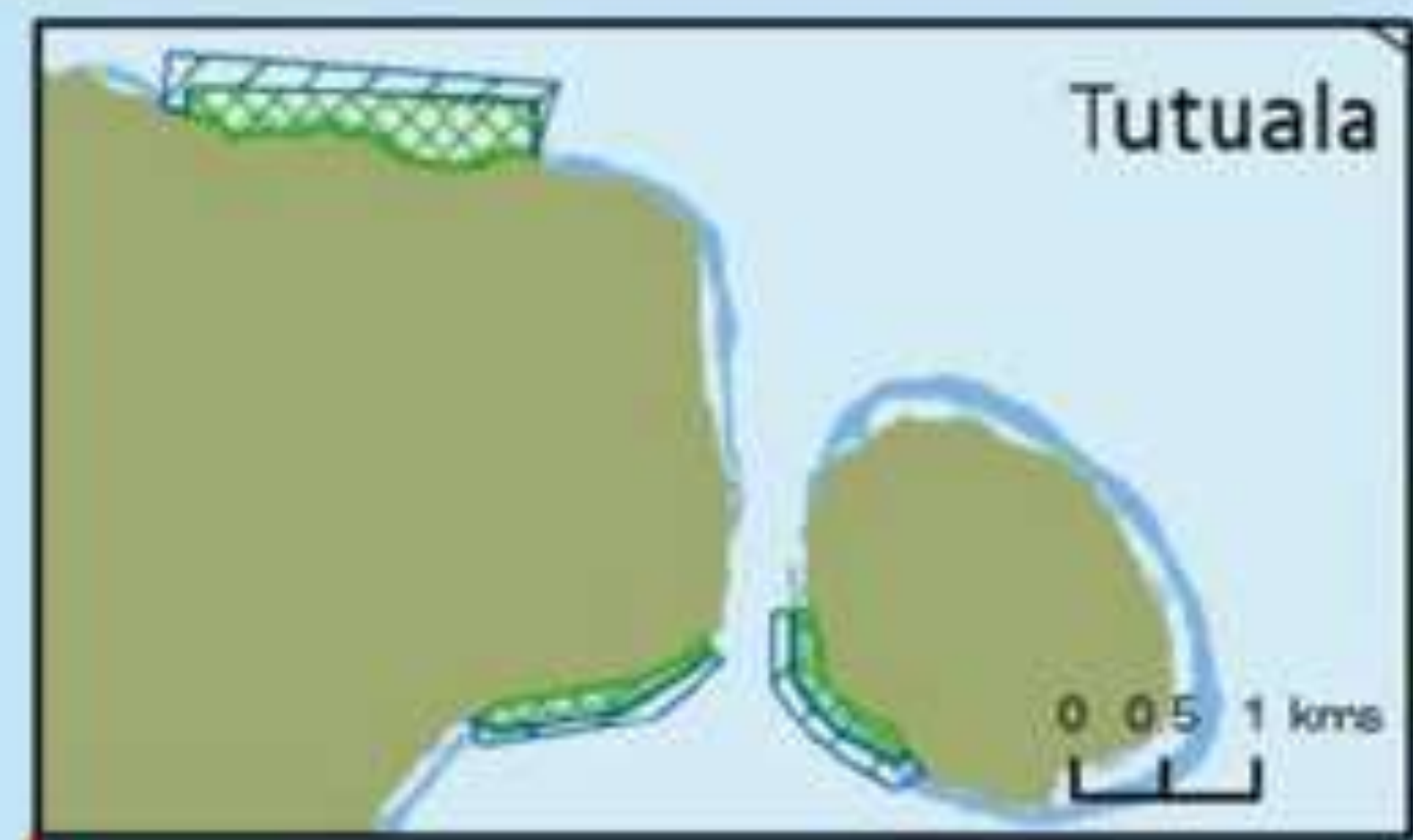
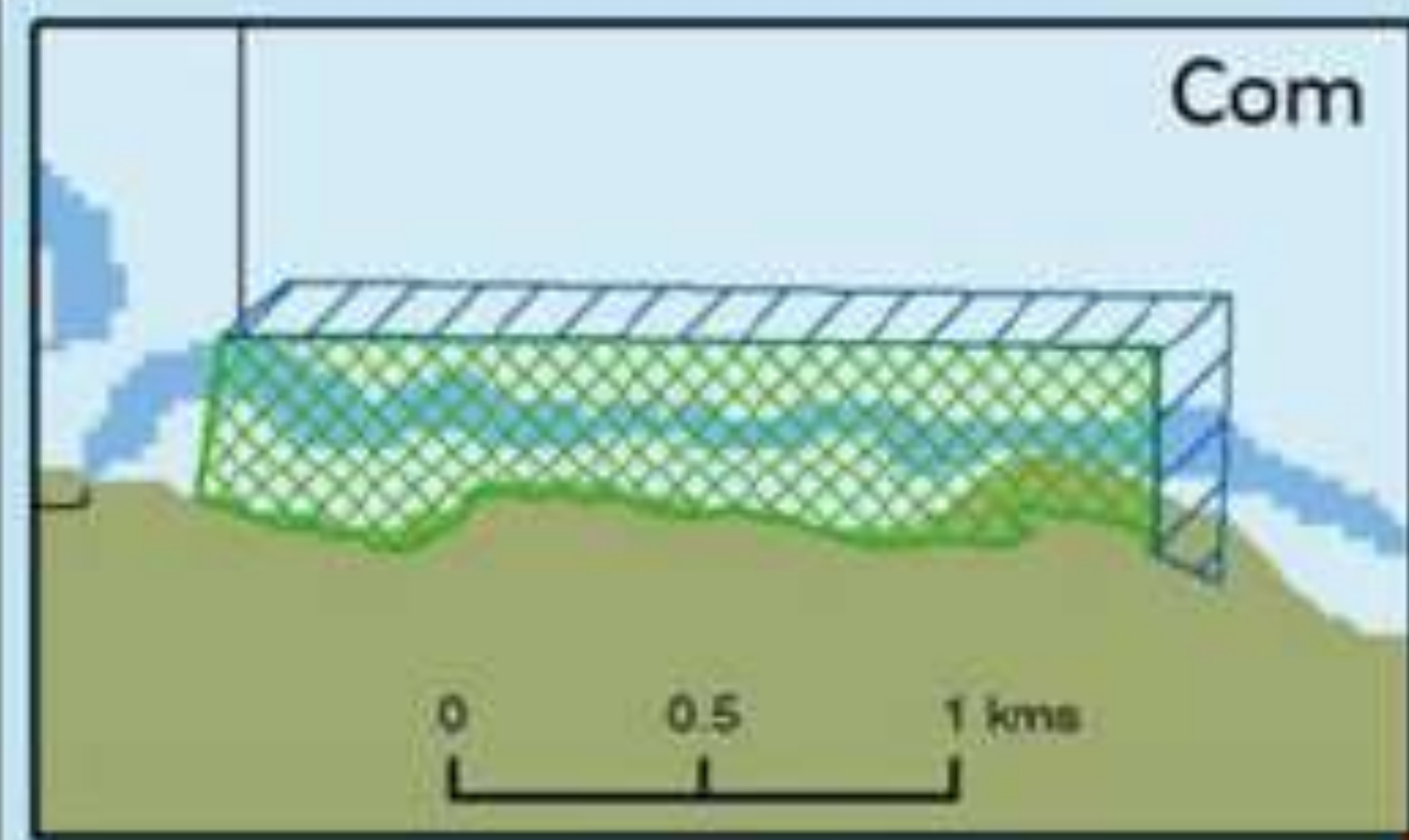
COM COMMUNITY AND THE DUGONGS



COM COMMUNITY

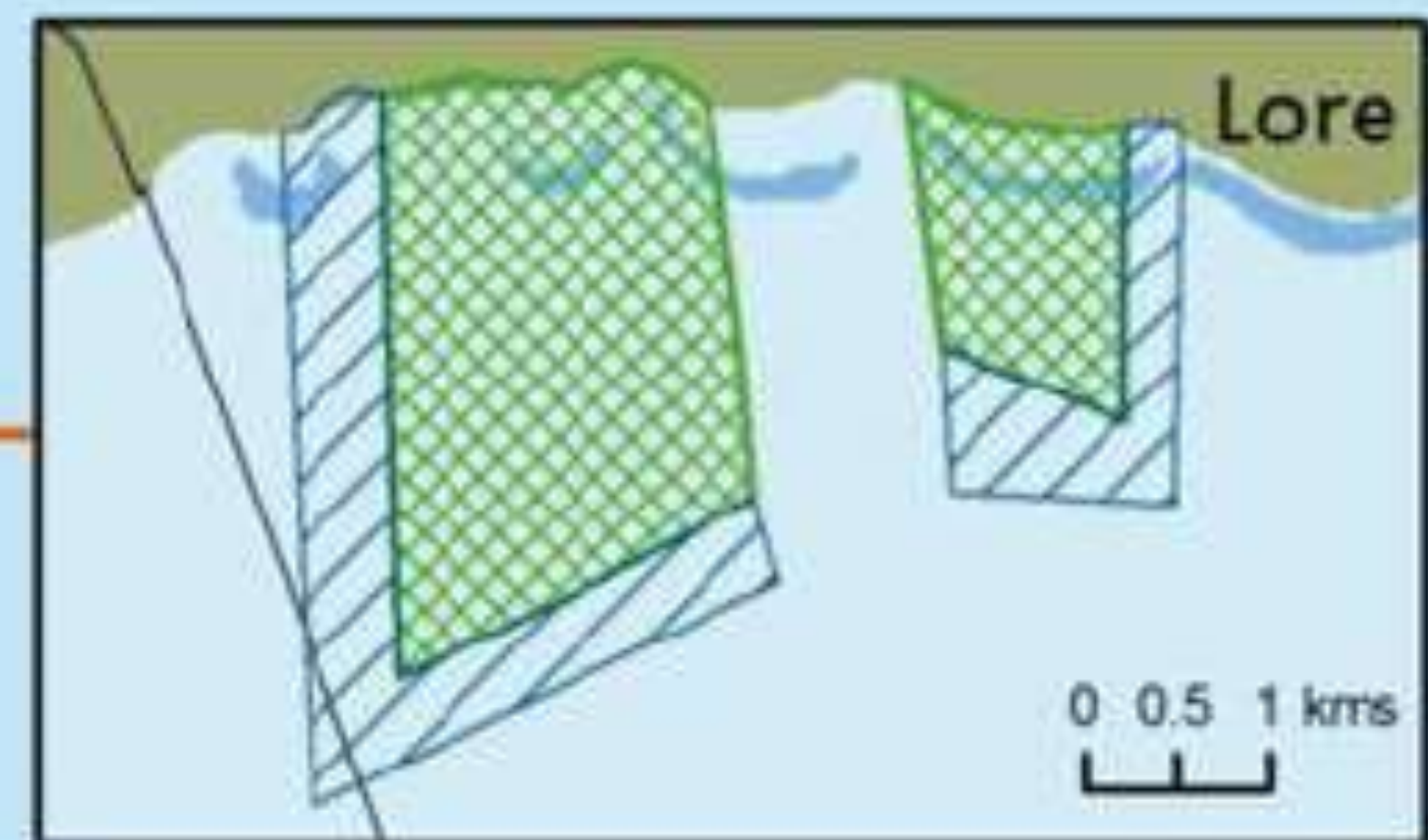
- Com is one of the 3 communities who were involved in developing the Co-management Model
- Com is located on the boundary of Nino Konis Santana National Park
- They created the first community based marine protected area in Timor-Leste
- They are a fishing community
- They are now catching more fish, bigger fish, and more species due to the “spill over” effect of the marine protected area
- They applied the first satellite tag to a sea turtle in Timor-Leste





Com, Tutuala, and Lore MPAs

-  No Take Zone
-  Buffer Zone
-  Coral Reefs



THE DUGONG

- Com community are part of the GEF funded *Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project*, being implemented in 8 countries
- The community has identified 5 dugong who visit their marine protected area on a regular basis
- One fisherman noticed dugong in another area of Com, and made a video
- The video shows 1 female, one sub-adult, and 3 males.
- The adults are displaying mating activity – the first ever recorded for Timor-Leste



WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

- The dugong is protected in Timor-Leste under cultural law
- “Ernesto” the fisherman, used to be Com’s turtle hunter. He is now a passionate conservationist
- Ernesto’s family and their neighbor’s, have a strong connection to dugong
- They decided to grant their *cultural* land over to dugong protection
- They are now in the process of making the first dugong protected area in Timor-Leste
- This will be the largest community based protected area in Timor-Leste
- It will protect 345 ha of dugong habitat





OBRIGADA



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