



Meaningfully involving locals in making effective MPAs in the Maldives

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- **History of MPAs in the Maldives**
 - How MPAs came to existence
 - Purpose of MPAs in Maldives

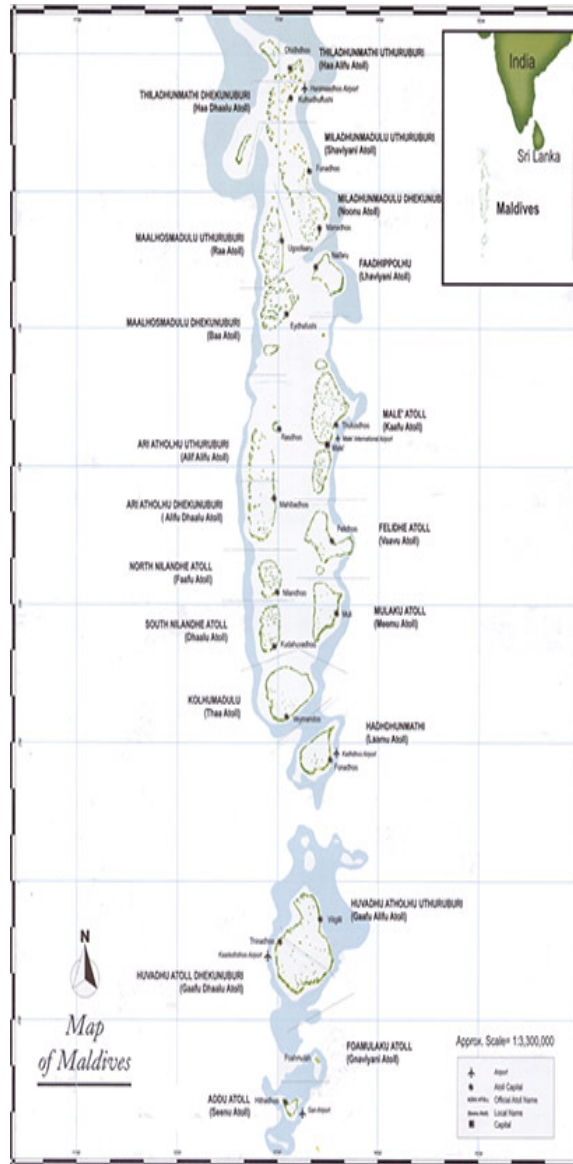
- **Current status of MPAs in the Maldives**
 - Where are we in 2014?

- **Opportunity for effective MPAs in Maldives**
 - Case study of South Ari Atoll MPA



MPAs in Maldives

- Maldives:
 - 1,000 islands
 - 4,500 sq.km coral reef
 - 200 local islands
 - Over 100 resort islands



■ First MPAs declared in 1995:

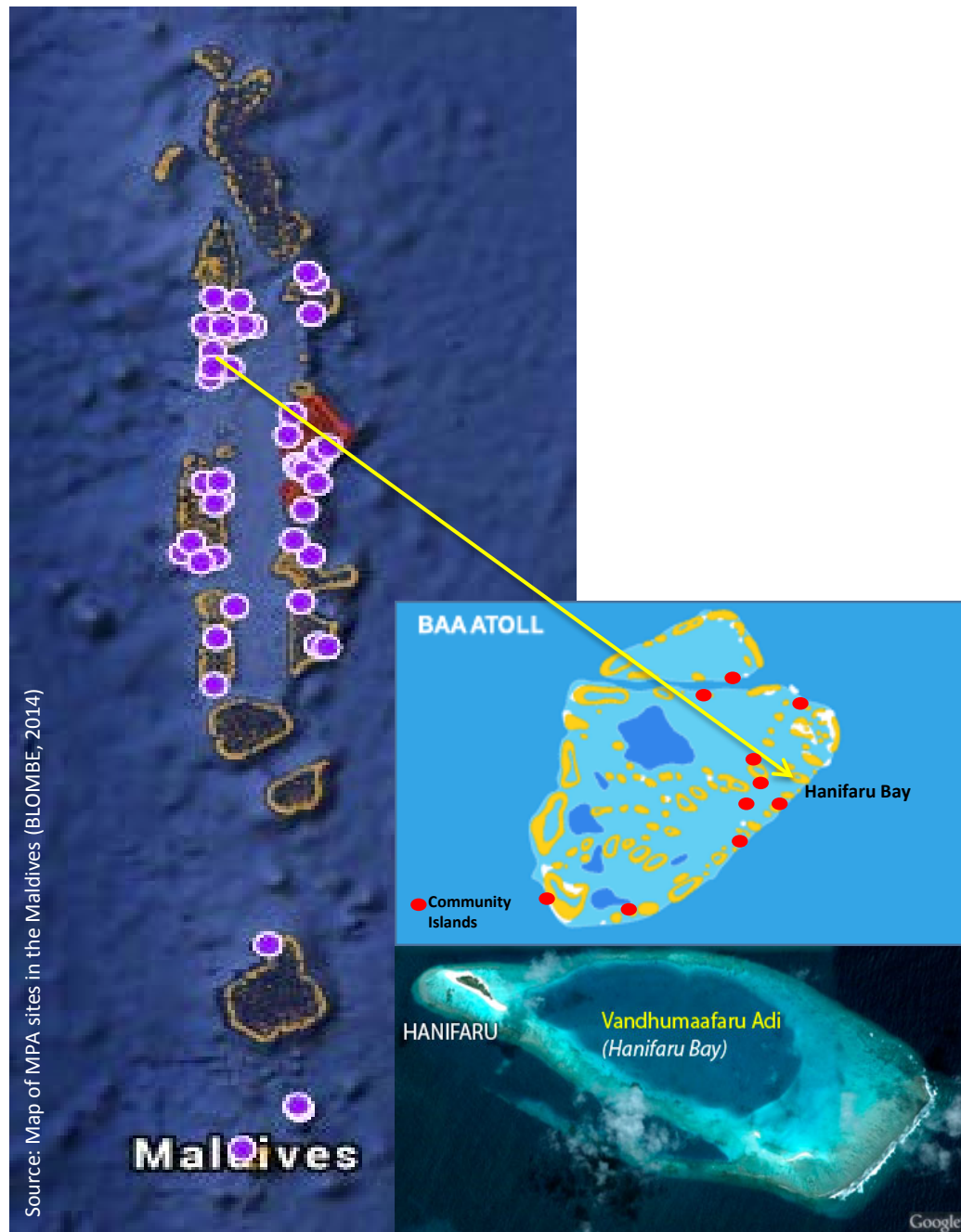
- Declared to protect dive sites
- Forbids extractive use of resources
- But did it work?

Regulations in Maldives applied for all MPAs in Maldives

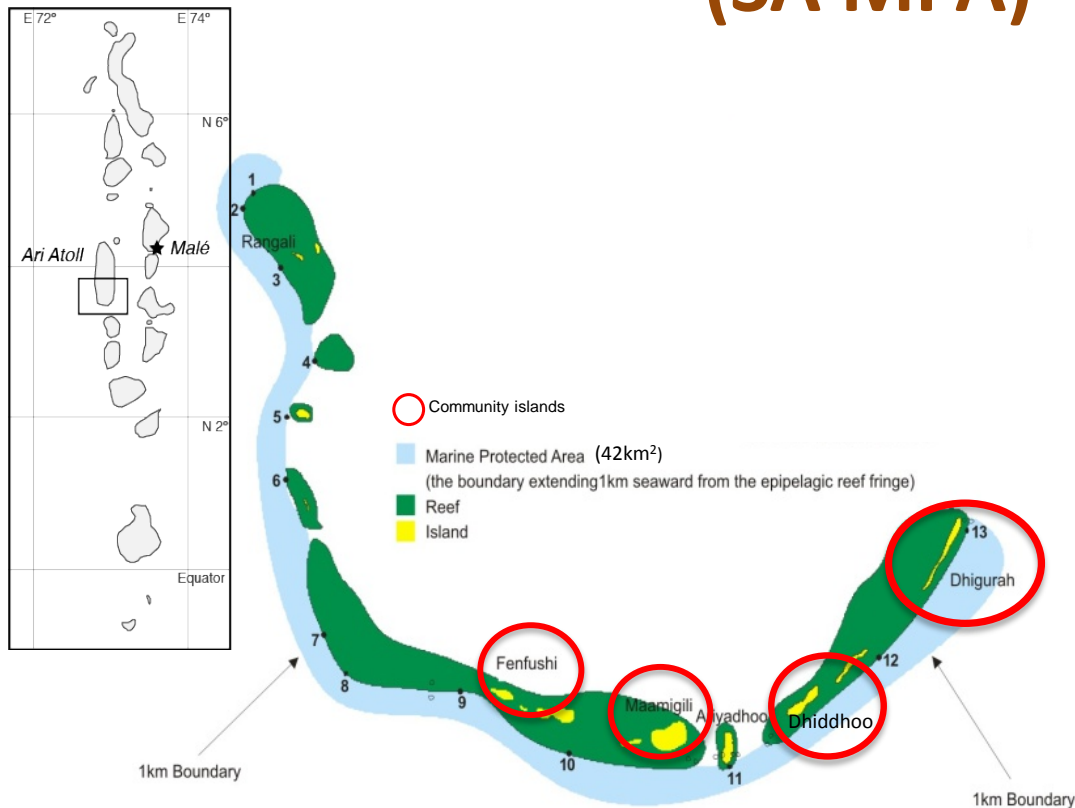
- No anchoring
- No coral and sand mining
- No removal of any natural objects or living creature
- No rubbish dumping
- No fishing of any kind except traditional bait fishin
- No activity which may cause damage to the reef area

MPAs in Maldives

- Today:
 - 33 MPAs
- But only one MPA with a management plan – Baa Atoll Hanifaru Bay
- Hanifaru Bay MPA declared in 2009
- Measure to protect a globally unique whale shark and Manta Ray aggregation
- Hanifaru Bay management plan effective with local rangers in 2012
- But is it working?



South Ari atoll Marine Protected Area (SA MPA)

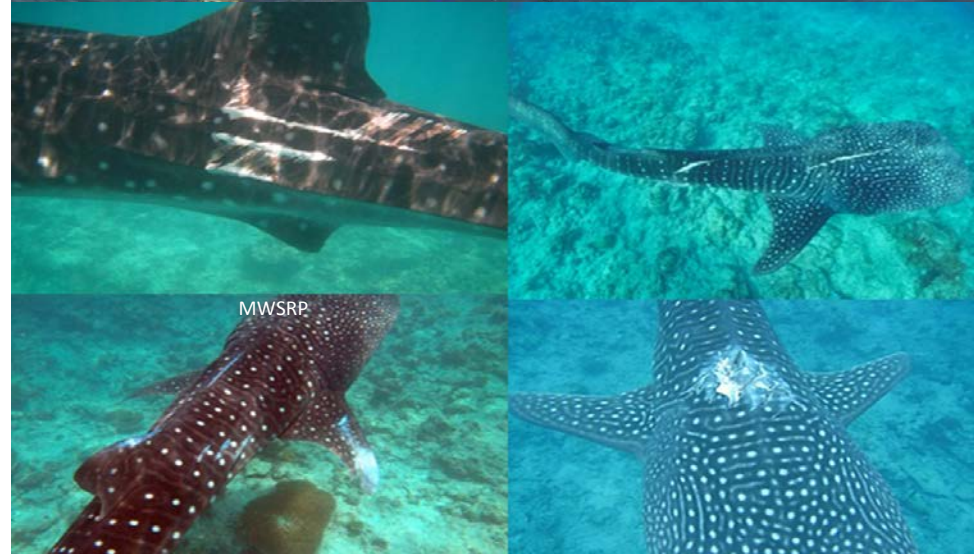


- Declared in 2009
- Protect a globally unique whale shark aggregation
- 4 local communities on the MPA
- 78,000 people visit this area every year
- Estimated expenditure on whale shark tourism is UD\$9.4 million

Need for a management plan

- On a single encounter, an average of:
 - Over 100 snorkelers
 - 80 plus divers
 - Over 40 boats

- 65% of whale sharks have some form of injury



Research Objectives

- **Assess local resource dependence**
- **Assess local perception on MPA as a management tool**
- **Understand local aspirations for the MPA**



**Locally Managed
Marine Protected
Area**

Main findings

- 90% use the MPA for subsistence
- 70% to support a management plan – but no restrictions
- 60% were interested in any form of participatory management plan
- The MPA seems to have a negative effect on the Whale Sharks – lack of management plan
- Only winners on the MPA were tourism stakeholders
 - Can market whale sharks and the MPA



Conclusion

- Currently the MPA has no effect on locals
 - In the future, locals to face restrictions spatially and temporally
- Communication and education
 - Needs a well structured consultation, and informing system
- Shared financial benefits
- Create a sense of ownership
 - By creating jobs, sustainable management strategies



Acknowledgments



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