

Final Report

Using tested methodologies, the team surveyed sites within the PMM selected using a variety of rapid assessment techniques including surface snorkels, manta boarding and aerial observations. The coral reefs of the PMM are diverse and areas of healthy coral coverage were seen within the marine park. A total of 90 invertebrate species were identified, over 20 coral families (many of which were identified to genus and species level), 205 reef associated fish species and 16 pelagic fish species. The average coral health was 29.56% (SD±13.00, n=74), which varied with site and the healthiest coral was seen at shallower depths.

There was no statistical evidence to show that sheltered areas showed increased coral health. The regal angel fish (*Pygoplites diacanthus*) was found to be suitable as an indicator species as there was evidence to show it correlated with coral health ($P=0.023$, $Cor=0.646$). Further studies should be carried out to continue monitoring coral health within the area. Equipment was donated to host nation groups and monitoring strategies were planned for the coming three years, so that coral monitoring could be continued. Other research into sedimentation and its links with increased agriculture within the Islands would also be of great interest and allow integration into local management plans.

Community involvement in management plans is indicated within our research. Education of both children and adults is essential to promote conservation issues and start the process of sustainability within the area, especially if there is an increase in tourism within the coming years.

The expedition was conducted in a safe manner and no medical or diving related injuries of significance were noted upon the expedition. A fire was encountered on the expedition, but this did not affect the outcome of the expedition. The expedition was slightly over budget, mainly due to the late change of destination due to the political problems within Madagascar at the time. The success of the expedition is also greatly indebted to Projet Biodiversite, the IUCN, AIDE and the village associations of Moheli as well as to our UK sponsors.