

THRESHER
SHARK
INDONESIA



Thresher Shark Indonesia
Impact Report
2023



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Thresher Shark Indonesia



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About Us

Thresher Shark Indonesia is an initiative initially started in 2018 by young Indonesian conservationists. Starting from a single project, we're now an established Indonesian Non-Profit under the Yayasan Teman Laut Indonesia. Our goal is to protect Indonesia's declining and endangered thresher shark population.

Our Vision

Conserve thresher sharks at Alor, East Nusa Tenggara, by providing policy recommendations through the studies of satellite and acoustic tagging technology, underwater surveys as well as providing alternative livelihood solutions for shark-dependent communities in Indonesia.



Our Mission

Working closely with local communities, governments, businesses, scientists, filmmakers, and other NGOs to develop long-term solutions that protect endangered shark species, as well as respect the rights of local people to livelihoods.

2024

in numbers



4920 *people*
reached & educated

102 *schools & villages*
Engaged

3 *regions*
Alor, Banda, Flores

6000
Mangroves sown

28 *women engaged in*
Livelihood initiatives

100% *decline*
in shark fishing among the
fisher group

2023 Projects

Photo by Samsul Basrun

1 Unraveling Thresher Sharks of Banda Neira



2023 marked the start of our new initiative in Maluku province. We have gathered invaluable information on the status and utilization of thresher sharks in Rhun Island, which serves as the epicenter of fisheries activity within the broader *Rhun and Ay Island Marine Protected Area (MPA)*. Our findings will contribute to the scientific understanding of thresher sharks and fill the existing information gap to reformulate targeted interventions to prevent their population from further decline.

Our commitment is the same: we ensured the active involvement of broad stakeholders in the consultation process. We aim to uncover a holistic understanding of thresher shark fisheries, community perception, and their willingness to engage in conservation initiatives. So far, we have engaged **37 fishermen**, **4 government agencies**, and **2 NGOs** in our collaborative conservation efforts to map the location of thresher sharks, as well as the *mitigation strategies to reduce bycatch*.

Fun Fact: Thresher sharks are called ‘hiu bendera’ or the ‘flag shark’ in Banda because of their fluttering tail!



We also collaborated with youth-led NGO Moluccas Coastal Care to mobilize education and outreach across 42 coastal schools in the Banda Island Chain - including Rhun, Ay, Naira, Banda Besar, and Hatta.

We've reached **1576 students** who are now the 'experts' of thresher sharks in Banda!



Outreach map of Banda Island Chain



2 Expanding Reach: From Alor to Flores



As of October 2023, our educational and outreach efforts in Alor have reached a remarkable milestone, engaging **1140 people across 25 coastal villages**.

Building on this success, we expanded our impact to **East Flores**, conducting outreach activities in **33 schools** from East to South Solor, reaching **1700 people**. This expansion into East Flores, particularly Solor Island, is a strategic move given the region's history of marine megafauna hunting that has been going on for centuries. Thresher shark fishing, previously reported in the area, has lacked formal attention and enumeration activities.

Our outreach initiatives in Flores aim to bridge this gap, offering a first step towards building an understanding of shark fishing practices in the region, extending beyond thresher sharks to encompass broader marine megafauna hunting concerns.

Moreover, a notable outreach aspect is central to the indigenous youth leadership, particularly our Thresher Shark Champions. These young individuals have been pivotal in our activities, providing invaluable opportunities to develop their hard and soft skills.

Their roles have been diverse and meaningful, ranging from computer operators to moderators, presenters, and coordinators. This engagement fosters a sense of responsibility, equipping them with the tools and experience necessary to continue the legacy of marine conservation and sustainable practices in Alor.



3 Better Livelihoods



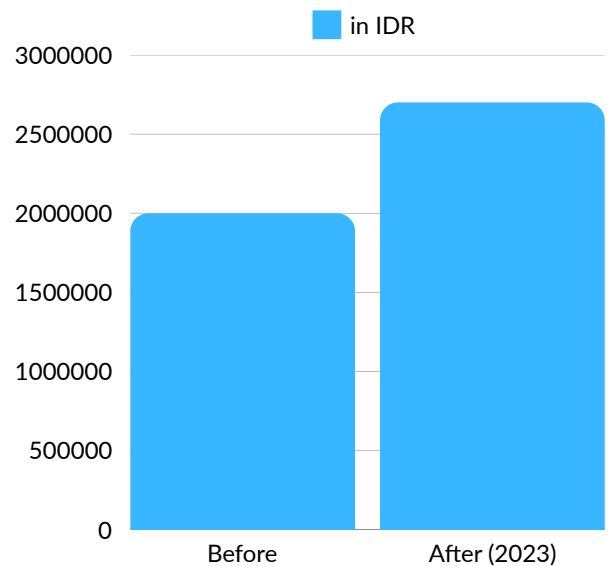


Our dedication to supporting thresher shark fishers and their families remains strong in their transition to sustainable alternative livelihoods. Despite the ongoing socio-political issues in the village and the uncertainty of tuna season, the fishers remained a part of the group and continue to adopt new livelihoods, hopefully for the long run.

We also worked with women's groups and assisted their leadership in small-medium enterprises. Their products now reached new markets and are now 'Halaal' certified, adding new substantive income to their households,

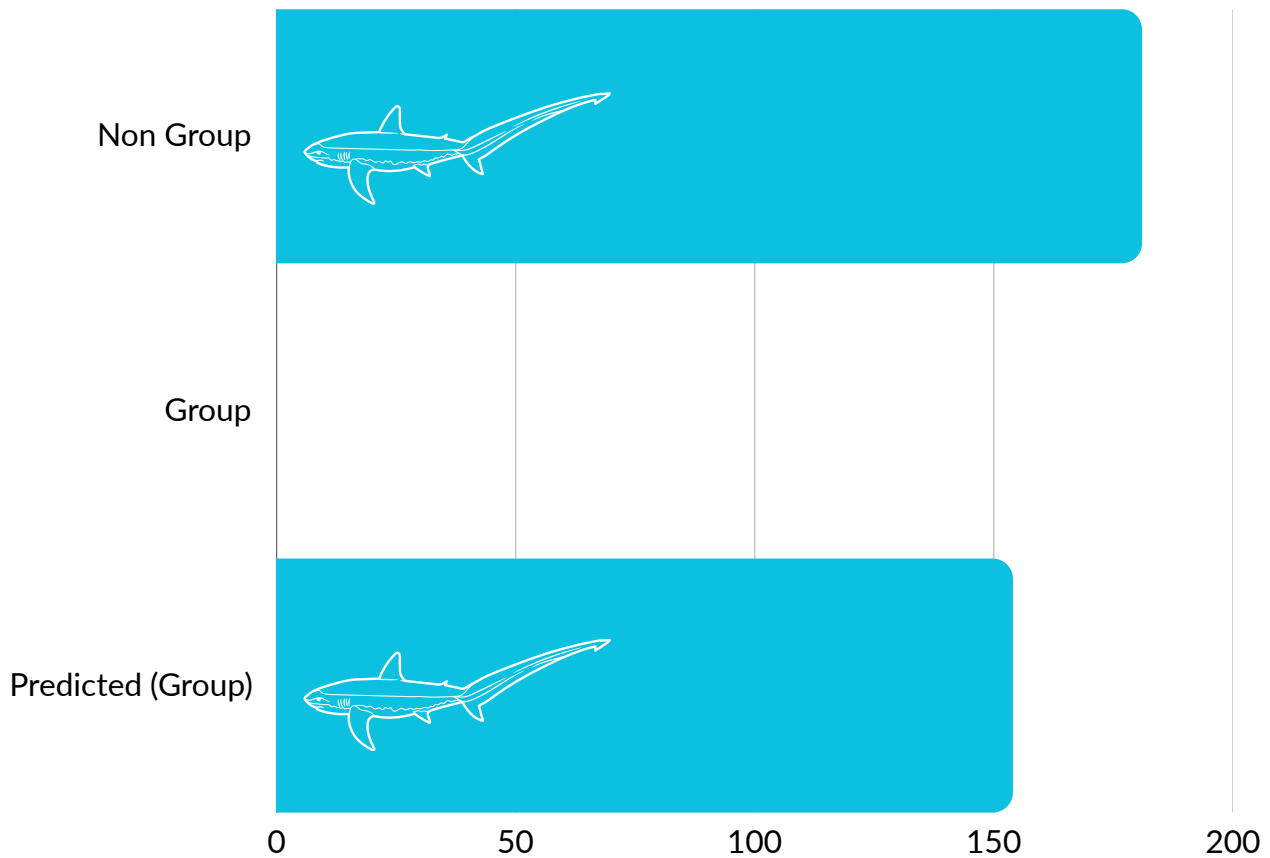
Income Data

Despite facing significant difficulties in catching fish for several months throughout the year, fishers still generally increased their average income by up to **25%**. This obstacle emphasized the complexity of transitioning from traditional yet unsustainable practices to more sustainable ones. It brought to light the need for continuous support and adaptation in our strategies to accommodate the realities of the field.



A woman in the SME group drying strings for making traditional woven fabrics indigenous to Alor.

Thresher shark mortality throughout 2023



Our approach encountered setbacks between March and June of 2023, primarily due to turmoil in the village's politics and activities. Despite our efforts to promote sustainable fishing practices and reduce thresher shark hunting, we observed a significant uptick in shark mortality during this period for fishers outside of the group, reaching 181 individuals. However, the fishers in our group remained committed, with **0 sharks landing**. We predicted we'd saved at least **154 sharks from the intervention in 2023** (see Figure above).

This increase in fishing is attributed to fishermen not participating in our initiative and engaging in more frequent shark hunting. Their actions undermined our progress in reducing shark catches. Incorporating these external fishermen into our conservation work remains a critical focus to ensure the long-term success of our initiative, and we strive to continue doing so!



4 Women in Sustainable Fisheries



In early 2023, we worked with the women's community of Kokar Village to improve sustainable fisheries practices. The project, funded by the Daughters 4 Earth grant and led by Laraswati Clarita Ola, exemplifies our commitment to **women's leadership**. Our collaboration with district governments led to the formation of a pioneering women-led group, carefully selected based on their leadership potential and socio-economic profiles.

We have engaged directly with 21 women and finalized a core group of 10. We provided capacity building, encompassing **leadership, financial literacy, and fish processing**. We also introduced them to **reusable ice packs** to improve post-harvest preservation, subsequently reducing plastic pollution. This represents progress in empowerment and sustainable development in the community.

By equipping Kokar's women with essential skills and knowledge, we aim to elevate women's roles in the traditionally male-dominated field of fisheries to achieve gender equity and community leadership.





5

Future Indigenous Marine Conservationists



As an extension of the Thresher Shark Conservation Champion 2, we provided Advanced Diving Certification and the Marine Biology Training Program for talented indigenous youths: Deven Malihing (M, 21), Yuliana Feby Maubuty (F, 20), and Esau Yakob Karmakani (F, 25).

Through a series of hands-on field experiences, Champions were invited to learn marine biology from a scientific perspective. They are now equipped with theories on the ecology of mangroves, seagrass, and coral reefs and also have practical skills to do various methods of ecological data collection and analysis. This expertise designates them to navigate the sophistication of marine ecosystems and, later, lead their own initiatives.

One interesting fact:
Feby (the girl in the photo) is Alor's first female indigenous diver who holds advanced dive certification!



6 Marine Conservation Curriculum



We designed and implemented a Marine Conservation Curriculum for elementary schools. This is a systemic approach to ensure that students can learn about marine ecosystems in their backyard and ignite their curiosity on how to safeguard them in the future.



We've distributed 180 copies of books to 10 coastal schools. We've also trained 10 teachers, and educational institutions to ensure effective delivery of this material. This book, is the first ever initiative in East Nusa Tenggara



7 Safeguarding Alor's Mangrove Belt





In late 2023, we partnered with *Coral Reef Care* to enhance our Alor's Mangrove Belt conservation efforts. This collaboration led to the initiation of a project creating 'green livelihoods' for Champions, who are now essential team members. They aim to plant 6000 mangrove seedlings across three coastal villages: Fanating, Pailelang, and Welai Barat. Currently, 8720 mangrove propagules have been planted. Through targeted outreach campaigns, we engaged children aged 10-14 in coastal areas, with 448 individuals actively participating in our efforts to educate the younger generation and create a climate-resilient future.



The Mangrove Project is led by 100% *indigenous leadership*! This brand new team is comprised of our Champion alumni who lead in the mobilization and restoration of mangroves in their villages and communities.

Features

- Deven Malihing was the 2nd Best Speaker at the National Symposium in Sustainable Development in Kalabahi, Alor.
- Co-founder Rafid Shidqi presented at Asia Philanthropy Circle's Panel on World Oceans Day in Singapore.
- Co-founder Rafid Shidqi presented at Harvard Natural History Museum at the MCAF Summit in Boston, Massachusetts.
- Former Member Bestari Ghea Dwilo received a Master's in Marine Conservation from the University of Plymouth, UK.
- Co-founder Dewi Ratna Sari represented at COP28 in Dubai, UAE.
- Co-founder Rafid Shidqi started PhD at Duke University, USA



Photo by New England Aquarium



Photo by Rahmad Larae

Thank you!
**Funders,
Partners,
Volunteers**

Ocean Blue Tree, McPike Zima Foundation, Daughters4Earth by One Earth, OASEA Laboratories, Coral Reef Care, Found at Sea Collective, Save Our Seas Foundation, Rumah Foundation, Marine Conservation Action Fund by New England Aquarium, MAC3 Impact Philanthropies, Darwin Initiative by the UK Government, Flipflop and Treacle, Desy Kadriani

Air Dive Alor, Aliansi Bahari Alor, University of Oxford, Dr Hollie Booth, Rahmad Larae, Balqie al Hafizh, Jihan Nabila, Moluccas Coastal Care



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