
Policy Plan 2020

Raja Ampat Research & Conservation Centre

Raja Ampat

Papua



1. Introduction

The Raja Ampat is located northwest off the tip of the Bird's Head Peninsula on the island of New Guinea, in Indonesia's West Papua province. This archipelago comprises over 1,500 islands with four main islands named Batanta, Misool, Salawati, and Waigeo, and lots of smaller islands like Fam and Wayag. In total the area encompass more than 46,296 km² of land and sea. The name of the archipelago comes from local mythology that tells about a woman who finds seven eggs. Four (Empat/Ampat in Indonesian) of the seven eggs hatch and become kings (Raja in Indonesian) that occupy the four main islands. The other three eggs become a ghost, a stone, and a woman.

The Raja Ampat is famous for her unprecedented biodiversity in flora and fauna. It harbours the richest reefs with coral and fish on earth. Scientists have discovered unknown species during the last few years. Worthy of mentioning is the Denise's Pygmy seahorse (*Hippocampus Denise*) described in 2003, the Epaulette shark (*Hemiscyllium Galei*), discovered in 2006, and most recently in 2013 several new species of the rainbow fish were found in the Kumawa region, of which one species is newly described as *Melanotaenia Sneiderii*. Furthermore the islands are famous for their insects species and endemic bird species, such as the wonderful Birds-of-Paradise.

Within the Raja Ampat the indigenous communities consist mainly out of Papuans. The Papuans are the native people of the mainland of New Guinea and neighbouring island consisting of Papua New Guinea and the Indonesian provinces Papua and West Papua. Nowadays it is approximated that there are nearly a thousand different tribal groups and around 800 different languages, making this part the most linguistically diverse area of the world. In the Raja Ampat the people do not only speak Indonesian, but also their local Papuan language, Biak Papuan. Nowadays many Papuans are Christian (Protestant, Roman Catholic) or Animistic.

When traveling the Raja Ampat in 1989 in search of Second World War remains (vehicle-, aircraft- and shipwrecks), Max Ammer fell in love with the area and its people. Being the pioneers, from day one, Max Ammer and his team decided not to tell others what not to do, instead, they worked to come with alternative solutions. People earlier involved in logging, bomb fishing, shark finning, turtle poaching and fishing with potassium cyanide started to work for Papua Diving and the RARCC and became conservation warriors. The first bomb fisher team in jail in Sorong ever (more than 25 years ago) was arrested by the Papua Diving team and since then, most of the former destruction practices have been 100% halted.

While the RARCC's mother company Papua Diving has been introducing conservation and community-based initiatives in Raja Ampat since 1993, it was time to restructure the work, and so the RARCC was established as an independent NGO in The Netherlands in 2009, and as an Indonesian foundation (Yayasan) in 2015.

In 2015, Max Ammer got the "Visionary Conservationist Award", granted by Conservation International, for his "tireless efforts to reveal and protect the stunning natural beauty of Raja Ampat and promote its sustainable use."

Due to Papua Diving and RARCC's conservation efforts and especially God's grace, the area surrounding the RARCC center host the richest diversity of fish in the world. In 2013, 374 different species of reef fish were counted. This is 91 species more than 11 years previously. Both surveys were conducted by Dr. Gerald R. Allen. This is in contrast with the the quality of the waters in Raja Ampat, which has been deteriorating.

2. Organization

The RARCC focuses on protecting, preserving and developing nature by involving the native communities in the Raja Ampat archipelago. It works in education for children and adults and engages indigenous communities in the deployment of financial self-reliant projects which stimulate conservation and protection for the people of Raja Ampat. Besides, it offers scientists and experts facilities to study the nature and population of the Raja Ampat.

The RARCC main facilities are located on Kri Island, in the heart of the Coral Triangle. The main building serves as an office, a laboratory and housing for the team and scientists. In fact, these facilities are owned by Papua Diving, but in exchange, the RARCC gives the diving company the harvested water at the RARCC hangar on the top of the hill. We have two hangars on Kri island, the one on the mountain and another one close to the ocean. The RARCC also owns a house for students close to the hangar in the mountain, and two teachers' house in Yerwerser, Batanta. The team is building a school in Yerwerser, in a land donated by people from the village.

The RARCC activities are coordinated from the office on Kri Island, but we also have staff working punctually from their homes and private offices in The Netherlands.

The RARCC team consists of a board of commissioners and a management and operational team:

Commissioner/Director: Max Ammer

Commissioner/Treasure: Jack Vroling

Commissioner/Secretary: Dirjen Vorderman

Director's assistants: Shannon Latumahina and Riryn Bowa

Research and Development Advisor / Education Projects Manager: Andreia Nogueira

Finance: Hanna Kombado, Debora Lumentah and Septian Tri Pamungkas

IT officer/Designer: Bryand Rellely

HRD Head: Evita Matahari

Some of these employees work only partially for the RARCC.

Teachers: Ritly Risakotta, Wulan Sinadia, Breysda Syauta, Patricia Maleke, Silfa Arimang and Ayu Pihuayuan

In addition to these permanent employees, depending on the projects, there are employees who work with daily payment, for instance in construction.

3. Mission statement

The mission statement combines information about what the RARCC does for the local communities in the Raja Ampat archipelago to achieve its goals. It includes vision, mission and values.

3.1. Vision

The vision describes the ultimate goal of the foundation. The RARCC's vision is to keep a sustainable Raja Ampat for the future generations.

3.2. Mission

The mission explains the intention of the organization. As stewards of God's creation, our mission is to support the indigenous communities and protect the natural environment in a way that is beneficial for both. We do so by providing alternative ways through which locals can generate an income, through education, and also by replacing destructive actions, such as illegal fishing and catching of bird or mammals living on the densely forested islands, and by protecting dense forests from being logged. It is our mission to create a welcoming work environment and facilities to support researchers working in the area as well.

3.3. Values

The values form a compass for the activities and describe how the RARCC acts in the world.

Responsible: Passionate can-do mentality

Apparent: Active in openness

Reliant: Financial self-reliant and sustainable projects

Considerate: Caring for the environment and Papuans

Collaborative: Together with indigenous communities and other stakeholders

4. Strategic statement

In this chapter, the mission statement is translated into strategy, general and concrete objectives, qualities, and principles through which we make our desired results clearer.

4.1. Strategy

The strategy is driven by the opportunities mentioned above and the competences and the resources available. The RARCC strategy answers the question: "what should the organization do to achieve the intended long-term objectives?" Unique added value must be offered for conservation and protection of nature and indigenous communities in the Raja Ampat archipelago. The strategy is structured as the following: The RARCC engages indigenous communities in the deployment of financial self-reliant projects and small businesses which stimulate conservation and protection for the present and future generations of the Raja Ampat archipelago. By working exclusively with Papuans, the RARCC believes it can achieve its objectives. Papuans have traditionally been the Raja Ampat inhabitants, so we want to work with as much Papuans from different areas as possible to impact more families and villages. By offering different projects and opportunities, the RARCC can assist more Papuans as well.

4.2. Objectives

Below are listed the goals that the RARCC wants to achieve in the coming years:

- Enrich the lives of 33% (16,500 people) of the total indigenous community (50,000 people) in the Raja Ampat archipelago before 2025;

- Keep making indigenous communities aware of the unique nature in which they live and make them understand that if they take good care of it, it can become a source of income for them;
- Teach students to make kayaks, speedboats, longboats, catamarans, and wheelbarrows from fiberglass, and how to start their own businesses;
- Teach Papuans how to become mechanics who can work in multiple areas, such as green energy, electricity, water systems, outboard motors and helicopters and airplanes;
- Teach Papuans to make furniture;
- Support local entrepreneurs by helping them to get guests in their homestays;
- Offer scientists and journalists support, facilities, and knowledge to conduct research in Raja Ampat;
- Keep teaching dozens of children and teenagers in Raja Ampat;
- Achieve higher returns and increase effectiveness at work;
- Achieve higher returns and increase effectiveness by 25% every two years through collaboration with other stakeholders such as NGOs, government and dive operators (dive resorts and liveboards).

4.3. Qualities

Below we approach the qualities in which the RARCC excels:

- Experience in the Raja Ampat archipelago since 1993;
- Passion for people, especially for the indigenous communities;
- Sharing experience, knowledge and skills;
- Faith and forgiveness;
- Can-do mentality;
- Perseverance.

4.4. Starting points

The starting points are ideas and visions that the RARCC team members and its stakeholders accept, share and pursue. These principles help to define the identity of the RARCC:

- Equality;
- Collaboration;
- Solidarity;
- Ecology;

- Support;
- Education;
- Build up.

5. Projects

This chapter introduces an overview of the different projects that fits the RARCC's direction.

5.1. Location

From Kri Island, the RARCC operates within the Raja Ampat archipelago and focuses mainly on the islands surrounding the Mansoear Islands group. The indigenous communities living in the area are involved because it is our aim to benefit them. However, due to a request from the village from Yerweser, we decided to assist this island in Batanta as well. The main focus of our projects is to offer people from small villages with low job perspectives and poor financial means education and eco-friendly alternatives to make a living.



This map shows where the RARCC office is located (turtle) and the area where it mainly operates (within the red circle).

5.2. *Project guidelines*

New projects must fit the mission and strategy of the RARCC to ensure continuity and financial self-reliance. The guidelines for the projects are:

- Provide useful knowledge and skills and share them;
- Create alternative sources of income for the indigenous communities, but make sure they do not endanger and/or harm the nature;
- Financially self-reliant when possible.
- Depending on the project, the focus may be on a specific target group, for example age category or background knowledge;
- Stimulating the protection and preservation of the nature;
- Long-term benefits;
- Fit the scale of the foundation, both financially and in terms of required manpower.

5.3. *Current projects*

At the moment, there are fifteen fully operating projects.

5.3.1. Bird-of-Paradise Tours

The interest of the world in the colourful feathers of the Birds-of-Paradise lead to hunting by indigenous communities for a long time, because selling the feathers of the birds was a source of income. Till the early 20th century, hunting occurred heavily and nowadays the Birds-of-Paradise are protected by legislation. The project Birds-of-Paradise was set up in 1997 by Papua Diving to provide an alternative to hunting. The project gives the guests of Papua Diving and kayakers of Kayak4Conservation the opportunity to do a sightseeing trip on Waigeo for the Red Bird-of-Paradise and the Wilson's Bird-of-Paradise. These two species are found nowhere else except on the islands Waigeo and Gam. Papuans became conservation warriors to protect the Birds-of-Paradise since nowadays they get an income every time they welcome guests and show them the birds.

5.3.2. Children's education

Indonesia ranked at 62nd among 70 countries analyzed by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2015. One in five teachers is absent from schools in Indonesia, a 2014 survey by the Analytical and Capacity Development Partnership showed. The RARCC built two teachers' house in

Yerweser, Batanta, and is building a 2-floor school in the same village. At our education center there, we offer a holistic approach. We also put an emphasis on environmental education, which includes cleaning up the reefs, recycle, etc. The RARCC sent four workers to get teachers' training in another province. Nowadays, we have six teachers, including one teaching in the school in Sawandarek. Sometimes, the RARCC also helps other teachers working in Sawandarek with logistics, transportation, etc. The RARCC also purchased hundreds of educational books, stationary and educational toys.

5.3.3. Fiberglass training

The RARCC offers Papuans the opportunity to learn from zero how to make boats, such as speedboats, longboats and catamarans, besides single and double kayaks, and wheelbarrows from fiberglass, whose main ingredient is glass. Since glass is made from sand, an abundant and natural resource, this is a sustainable solution, especially compared to the wooden boats predominant in Raja Ampat. The demand for these final products is high, because there is little to no supply, or it is of low quality. Not only we have been giving jobs to the local people and teaching them how to build these things, but they also learn discipline with values and norms about how they can run their own enterprise.

5.3.4. Catamarans building

Catamarans use less fuel compared to more common monohull boats, are unsinkable, stable and safe and can operate in shallow waters. The diesel-powered designs we are building have as power source the newest, lowest emulsion level engine design available (Kubota) on the market today. This is in contrast to the most commonly used dive tender, which uses a two stock engine design dated back 40 or more years and which is banned from being sold in most countries due to their high carbon footprint. We are also developing fully electrical powered catamarans. Besides lower total carbon output, the money saved per investment in diesel-powered catamarans is at the moment better compared with the investment in electrical powered catamarans. This is, however, changing fast and we work together with designers of the engines, the batteries, and the solar panels. We also plan to keep studying and communicating with fuel cell design companies.

5.3.5. Advocacy for an effective mooring system

Anchor damage is one of the most serious threats to the marine environment in Raja Ampat. Without many public moorings and 'no-anchor zones' marked by special buoys, coral reefs in Raja Ampat will continue to be destroyed at an accelerating rate as tourism grows rapidly. The RARCC plans to keep working to try to bring to attention the necessity of solving the root cause of anchor damage, which is a silent killer, by engaging different stakeholders to work towards conservation by suggestion win-win suggestions. The RARCC plans to keep actively advocating against the anchor damage and defending, for instance, that fees from mooring buoys can pay for management and maintenance, while fee-collectors can become de facto patrol officers. The RARCC will try to keep mediating the talks between the local government and the Indonesian Liveaboard Association (Jangkar), to make sure the captains have moorings in the exact locations they need them. From our perspective, it is a good opportunity to bring the liveaboards to work with the local communities. We will keep reporting to the authorities any action against fauna and flora in Raja Ampat as well.

5.3.6. Aviation Mechanic training

There is a real need for mechanics and pilots in the more remote areas of Papua and West Papua. Due to the wildness and the fastness of the interior of Papua and West Papua, air transportation is often the only viable option. Many Papuans dream to become pilots to assist their isolated communities with medical assistance and education. In many areas, people have no means of transportation to go to the hospital. It is not unusual for a person who is seriously ill to wait days to get to a hospital. In this rugged terrain, a one-month hike can be done in a 15-minute flight. Within the RARCC's flying club, the Mansoear Flying Club, we give individuals and students the opportunity to get acquainted with aviation and combustion motors. We have built one helicopter Bell 47G-B3-1 up from the ground on Kri Island, and several students participated in the process in cooperation with foreigner aviation mechanics. This training helicopter will also be used to support scientific expeditions, to monitor the area and to support missionaries, who often are the ones providing medical services and education in remote areas in Papua. We also did a medical evacuation by this Bell 47. Funds granted by the Conservation International were allocated to this project, besides private donations from our friends and partners. We built a hangar with two storage rooms and an office, a helipad, and a helicopter platform above the water in front of our office. We are putting together a second Bell 47G-B3-1, and next, we want to build some Piper Super Pacer aircrafts.

5.3.7. Frontier Aviation

The organization Frontier Aviation resulted of a dream of a team of volunteers from different countries, backgrounds and organizations, including the director of the RARCC Max Ammer, to train Papuan people to be able to work as pilots and aviation mechanics in order to do medical emergency and support mission work in remote areas. Missionaries are usually the ones who often dare to go to remote areas in Papua and West Papua and stay there to teach children and to provide medical services. We plan to keep the process to prepare all the paperwork and licences needed for Frontier Aviation. In the future, we want to teach people how to fly.

5.3.8. English classes

The RARCC plans to keep offering English classes to the local people, from dive guides and boat captains to aviation students and kayak guides. At our education center, we offer a bilingual education from kindergarten to primary school. We purchased many English books focused on tourism, technical work, health, HIV, etc. in Papua New Guinea because it is proven that educational material related to the local culture makes learning more effective among Papuans. We also bought many English books, dictionaries, learning cards and games to use at our education center in Yerweser.

5.3.9. Research facilities

The RARCC plans to keep assisting students, scientists, conservationists, writers and documentary filmmakers with logistics, lodging, and a base to work from. We have a dormitory with a kitchen and a guest house. There are in and outdoor working areas and tools, and our main building is connected to a jetty. We supply field assistants and boat crew, who have been a great help to our guests. We also have several workshops (fiberglass welding, and woodwork), and we can assist our guests with repairs or constructions.

5.3.10. Organization of expeditions

The RARCC wants to keep organizing expeditions upon request to different locations in Indonesia. Working in this area for several years, the RARCC is now well-equipped to organize long and complex expeditions through rivers, the sea and deep forests, and to rent equipment for different situations. We have not only diverse types of boats for different needs but also a helicopter. The RARCC staff who knows the

area and the culture very well is also skilled to make surveys to prepare the work of the scientists before their arrival and to accompany them. By doing so, the researches save their time and money and have a more enjoyable trip. The RARCC is blessed with old and recent books and detailed maps of the area as well. Last but not least, by working for many decades in Papua and by supporting the community in many ways, we have developed contacts that have been proved to be useful in organizing expeditions, especially in remote areas.

5.3.11. Raja Ampat Dive Resort Association

The RARCC is committed to make sure the Raja Ampat Dive Resort Association flourishes. The association was created to address some problems within the Raja Ampat Marine Park and have a stronger voice. If nothing is done, many problems will eventually destroy Raja Ampat and no tourists will come anymore. The owners of the resorts share many concerns, such as an increase in shark finning, destruction of reefs due to the lack of moorings, harassments of mantas, vandalism, much trash in the water and illegal logging. The main goal of RADRA's members is to help the local authorities to work in sustainable tourism and to protect the area. This can be done, for instance, with more effective patrols to stop illegal fishing and illegal entry, by promoting safety in diving and by discussing ways to create new regulations. We plan to keep assisting RADRA to organize more meetings, including with other stakeholders, and start its own projects, if agreed by its members.

5.3.12. Cleaning and recycling

We will keep cleaning up the islands and beaches in the surrounding areas, with the assistance of Papua Diving and Kayak4Conservation. We will keep separate plastic, paper, glass and metal and send it to the recycling center in Sorong, the Bank Sampah. We plan to keep teaching the villagers where we have education projects to do the same.

5.3.13. Protect and restore coral reefs

In times when global warming and human hands are slowly destroying the world's coral reefs, we are committed to protect the richest house reef of the world. Raja Ampat still remains a pristine paradise for hundreds of marine species, but the massive and uncontrolled tourism on and under the sea and on the land and untreated sewage discharged to the ocean, among other issues, are putting this idyllic place under serious stress. For instance, the number of Crown-of-thorns starfishes (COTS), a seastar that eats coral polyps, is growing in this part of the

world. The RARCC will keep working with Papua Diving to restore coral reefs and kill the COTS and also keep teaching the local people, especially children and teenagers, to do the same.

5.3.14. Hydroponics Organic

The RARCC and Papua Diving will start a farm for hydroponics to plant vegetables and fruits on Kri Island. With this method, we will grow plants in a water based, nutrient rich solution, instead of growing the seeds in soil. By doing so, we plan to reduce our carbon footprint by reducing the number of trips needed to go to Waisai or Sorong to buy fresh goods. This method has also the benefit of requiring less water, making it more suitable for places with shortages of water, such as remote islands without sources of fresh water.

5.3.15. Pilot Goggles

The aim of Pilot goggles is by re-assembling and selling Aviator sunglasses from Bausch & Lomb used by American pilots during the Second World War, an income stream is generated. The revenues of this project has been used to fund other projects. As only the frames and some small parts are in the possession of the RARCC, the other parts need to be produced as original. Parts that are being made as original are cushions, glasses, straps, and screws. After producing the parts as original, the pilot goggles will be re-assembled and stored in copies of original boxes.

5.4. *Future projects*

The following sections provide an overview of the projects that the RARCC wants to develop in the future. These are projects that don't have the needed resources yet or are in the final preparation phase.

5.4.1. Saltwater Crocodile Research

We look to cooperate with an institution to research why the number of saltwater crocodiles is growing in Raja Ampat. Is it happening because the local people are not hunting them like they used to do, or is it because their habitat has been destroyed? This is one of the questions we would like to see answered.

5.4.2. Dentistry

Many Papuans suffer from toothache due to a poor diet and lack of prevention measures. On top of that, many of them fear dentists. If untreated, dental problems can lead to death. We hope that we can attract a volunteer to come to Kri island and treat patients at the RARCC dentist clinic, which was set up with the kind help of Dr. Joseph Safirstein, from Braces by Dr. Joe, and the organization Adventist Aviation Indonesia. We would like to bring this help to the villages around by boat, by setting up a mobile dentist clinic as well.

5.4.3. Glass Bottom Boat

The tourism industry in Raja Ampat is rapidly expanding in an alarming way, bringing in tourists and guests from all over the world. However, we have witnessed several groups of people who desire to enjoy the natural world underwater, find it challenging to swim and snorkel without stepping on and harming delicate coral animals and habitats. By building a glass bottom boat, we hope to address this issue by creating an alternative way for tourists to view the underwater world. The boat is almost finished, but we need a person to lead this project independently. By employing a local community member, we are also creating a sustainable source of income through eco-tourism, creating a unique niche for the responsible family to market themselves. We hope the trips will start with a briefing focused on marine conservation in order to bring awareness about the importance of protecting the reefs.

6. Finance

The majority of Papua Diving's net profit goes to the RARCC, as well as 100% of the profit of the internationally award-winning project Kayak4Conservation. Even though this is a RARCC project, it is now under Papua Diving to allow us to sell the kayak trips internationally through agents.

The RARCC ultimately wants to become financially independent, and our goal is to set up projects in such a way that they will generate the money we need. In this way, we will ensure the continuity and success of these projects. The money can be used in the same project or in another project developed by the NGO. Money is used for projects that contribute to education, conservation, protection, and development of the Raja Ampat archipelago and its people.

At the moment we still rely on kind donations, and we couldn't do most of our work without the help of generous people and organizations. Therefore, the RARCC tries

to reach potential donors through publications, promotional activities and the website and social media.

Management and supervisory directors do not receive any financial compensation for the work they perform for the RARCC. Staff at the executive level get free accommodation and wages for their work.

For expenses above € 5,000, a joint decision must be taken by the commissioners.

The executive team tracks the financial flows and report them to the treasurer quarterly. The annual financial statements are published on the RARCC website (www.stichting-RARCC.org). The financial statements are prepared by the independent administration office Jongerman, and published on the website www.stichting-rarcc.org annually.

The Stichting RARCC has a current and savings account with the ABN AMRO bank based in Hattem (the Netherlands). There are an Euro account and an US Dollar account. The Yayasan RARCC has a current and savings account with the Maybank based in Sorong (Indonesia). There are an Euro account, an US Dollar account and an IDR account.