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Local Marine Rangers Win International Award for Protecting the Tubbataha Reefs

The award comes with a U.S. \$10,000 grant.

by Micah Avry Guiao
Jul 27, 2023

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PHOTO BY YOUTUBE/MARINE CONSERVATION INSTITUTE

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(PHOTO) One of the Philippines' most heritage sites, **Tubbataha Reefs**, is often a victim of illegal fishing, marine pollution, and coral bleaching. Fortunately, its conservation is in the capable hands of [local](#) rangers who work relentlessly to ensure its safety, as recently recognized by an international award.

For this, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has awarded four members of the **Tubbataha Reefs National Park Ranger Team** the **2023 IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) International Ranger Awards** for their “dedicated service and commitment as marine rangers.”

As part of the award, they have also been granted U.S. \$10,000 to continue their efforts, as well as a custom uniform patch to remember this achievement.

“The awards recognise the outstanding work of protected areas rangers around the world, celebrating the dedication and bravery of people who protect and conserve natural heritage,” IUCN wrote in a [press release](#).

Also read: [Philippines' Tubbataha Is One of the World's Best Scuba Diving Destinations](#)

Tubbataha Reefs National Park Ranger Team wins the 2023 IUCN WCPA

Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park is a famous [scuba diving site](#) in Palawan for a reason: it is a highly protected marine area with everything to see. It is home to more than [1,200 marine species](#), including corals, sharks, dolphins, sea turtles, seabirds and marine mammals. It's known to have an exceptionally healthy reef ecosystem—but not without help.

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© Coral reefs abound in the waters of Tubbataha. PHOTO BY ADOBE STOCK

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TOP 10 LISTS

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“They have persevered in the face of COVID-19, [personal](#) problems, typhoons, injuries, sickness, and threats,” IUCN wrote in a [press release](#). “Alongside marine research and monitoring, and assisting and educating visitors, the team works tirelessly to intercept illegal fishers, and voluntarily assists in the education and rehabilitation of offenders. As a result of their work, initially resistant [local](#) communities have now been inspired to support the park.”

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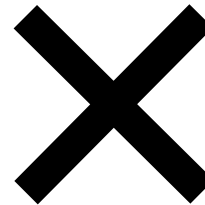
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Tubbataha Reefs IUCN Rangers Award 2023



“Ang akala namin ay hindi kami mapansin ng mundo dito sa gitna ng Sulu Sea. Kami ay locals na nagpapasalamat...sa pag-bigay ng award,” the Tubbataha Reefs National Park Ranger Team said in a video posted by the U.S. Marine Conservation Institute. “Ang pagkilala niyo sa ginagawa namin sa gubataan ay lalo’t pa nagbibigay sa amin ng lakas ng loob na pagbutihin ang aming serbisyo sa gubataan.” The rangers gave a shoutout to Protected Area Superintendent Angelique M. Songco, who is also dubbed “Mama Ranger.”

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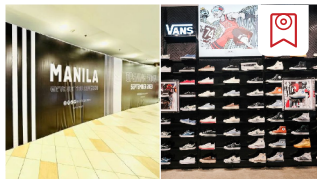


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