

Interactive comment on “Digital map of the Coral Triangle: An online atlas for marine biodiversity conservation” by Irawan Asaad et al.

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This paper represents a very useful contribution to information base for the Coral Triangle countries. The work of Asaad et al. appears to be the development of an online "atlas" rather than just "digital maps" and it could thus be labeled as such. But, one consideration is how the current work as described by Asaad et al. interfaces with the Coral Triangle Atlas as developed by the Coral Triangle Support Partnership and is currently housed in the WorldFish Center in Penang Malaysia and under the direction of the Coral Triangle Initiative Secretariat based in Manado, Indonesia. In this regard, the current paper/work of Asaad probably needs to make mention of the CT Atlas and how a partnership might be considered or suggested as a recommendation.

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Several questions about the datasets used that would be useful for the author to discuss in the paper are: 1. What are the gaps in the datasets used in terms of coverage of the coastal and marine areas in the CT? I would doubt there is continuous information for all of the coastline and thus a data layer that shows gaps would be very useful to see. This would help address bias introduced by present/absence of data for different geographical areas. 2. The authors might consider including the threat/climate data layers created by Reefs@Risk for Coral Triangle or at least explain why this data is not included? 3. Metadata: There is very little information about the data data used apart from the publications they come from which introduces biases and credibility issues that should at least be mentioned. 4. The mention of the Coral Triangle MPA Network (which doesn't really exist) should be clarified with reference to the Coral Triangle MPA System and Action Plan as described by the Coral Triangle Initiative publication of 2014. 5. People interested in this type of atlas/information are not average users but planners doing GIS at a broad scale who may want to access the raw data layers that the authors created. Thus making this available requires cleaning the data sets, filling in metadata and getting authorization which might be suggested for future work/recommendations? 6. Use of the word "biogenic" is not common and needs explaining. 7. Details of data such as species lists would be useful to expose. 8. Differences of scale of data need to be noted in some cases because scale makes some data layers not very compatible.

In the end, this work is very significant and will never be perfect and should be commended. Finally, I suggest the the conclusion be rewritten to include real "conclusions" and recommendations for the future work. As it stands, it is a brief summary of the work. Also, the sustainability of such an atlas is always difficult because they require resources to update and make them usable through time. In this regard the authors could make some suggestions about the main audience and how this will be updated and maintained. Also, partnerships with the CTI and CT Atlas could be suggested and pursued/recommended.

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