



## CORAL TRIANGLE: ENVIRONMENT

The **Coral Triangle**, often referred to as the ‘Amazon of the seas,’ spans over 10 million square kilometers and encompasses parts of **Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, and the Solomon Islands.**

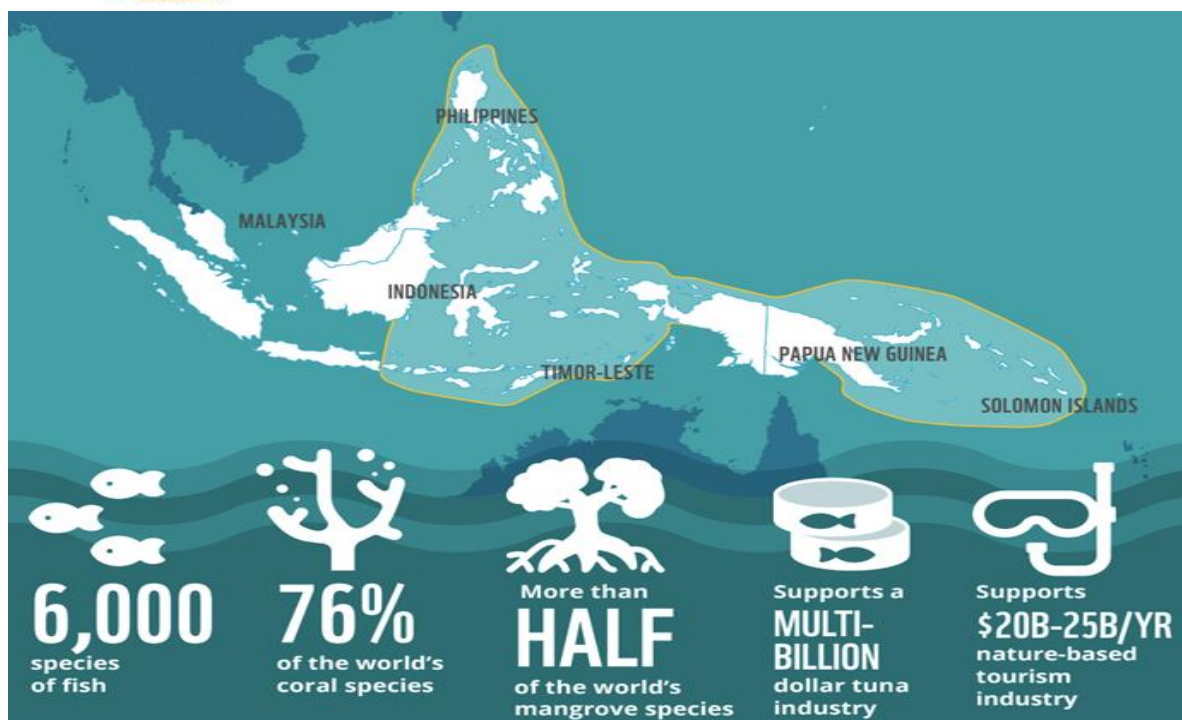
It is home to 76% of the world’s coral species and supports the livelihoods of over 120 million people who rely on its marine resources.



### Challenges Facing the Coral Triangle

The Coral Triangle faces several threats, including:

- **Unsustainable Fishing**
- **Coastal Development and Pollution**
- **Impacts of Global Climate Change**, such as coral bleaching, all of which jeopardize the health and sustainability of this crucial ecosystem.



## What Are Corals?

Contrary to common belief, **corals are animals**, not plants. They are sessile, meaning they remain fixed on the ocean floor.

## Mutualistic Relationship

Corals maintain a mutualistic relationship with **zooxanthellae**, a type of algae. Through photosynthesis, zooxanthellae provide nutrients to the coral, which, in return, offers the algae a safe environment to live in. Corals also use their tentacle-like appendages to capture food, directing it into their mouths.

## Structure of Corals

The fundamental unit of coral is the **polyp**, which forms large colonies by combining hundreds to thousands of polyps. These **coral colonies** share genetic similarities and create the vast coral reefs seen across the world.

**Source:** <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/wildlife-biodiversity/coral-triangle-at-risk-new-report-highlights-fossil-fuel-threats-and-impacts-on-biodiversity-and-communities>