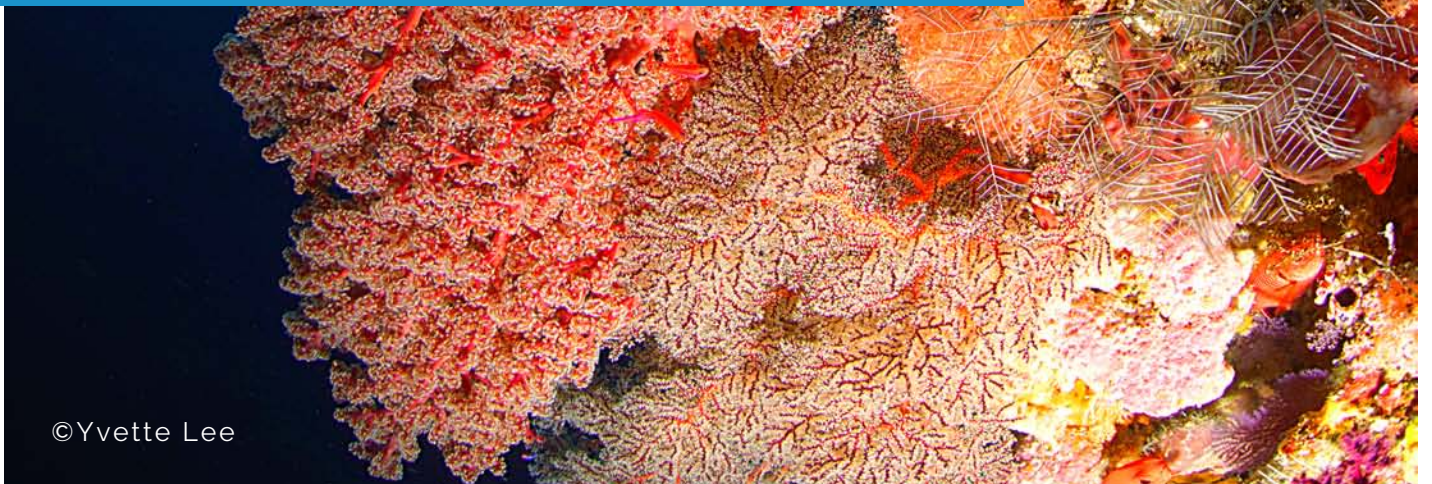


# 2020 Tourism Report



©Yvette Lee



TUBBATAHA MANAGEMENT OFFICE

+ (048) 716 1631 | [www.tubbatahareefs.org](http://www.tubbatahareefs.org) | Manalo Extension, PPC

## PREFACE

---

This tourism report intended to provide the TPAMB, stakeholders, and partner with information on demographics, conservation support, compliance, issues, and recommendations from the private sector.

In 2020, the world is facing an unprecedented global health, social and economic emergency with the COVID-19 pandemic. Travel and tourism are among the most affected sectors with airplanes on the ground, hotels closed, and travel restrictions put in place in virtually all countries around the world. In an unprecedented blow to the tourism sector, the COVID-19 pandemic has cut international tourist arrivals in the first quarter of 2020 to a fraction of what they were a year ago. (Impact Assessment of the COVID-19 Outbreak on International Tourism, UNWTO).

Consequently, the Tubbataha Management Office and the fifteen (15) commercial dive operators were greatly affected by the pandemic with 96.5% of trips canceled due to mandatory lockdowns imposed by the Philippine Government to prevent the spread of COVID -19.

In 2019, conservation fees collected supported 48.6% of management costs to protect and conserve Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park.



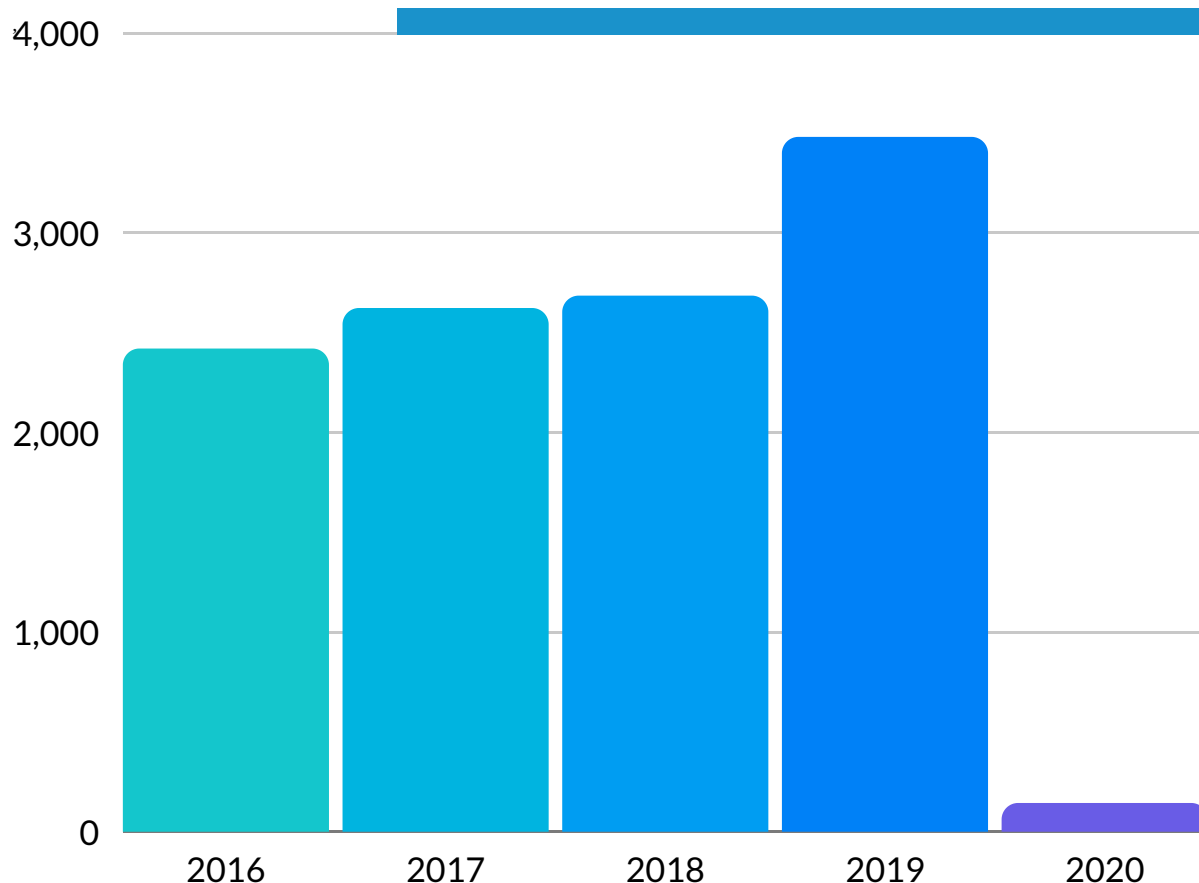
## DIVE TRIPS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

---

The 2020 diving season started with the entry of commercial dive boat, S/Y Philippine Siren from Cebu, the Philippines on 28 February. It ended when the Park was closed, and trips were cut short last 15 March to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Only five (5) out of 17 dive boats operated this season due to the pandemic.

# 139

## VISITORS THIS SEASON

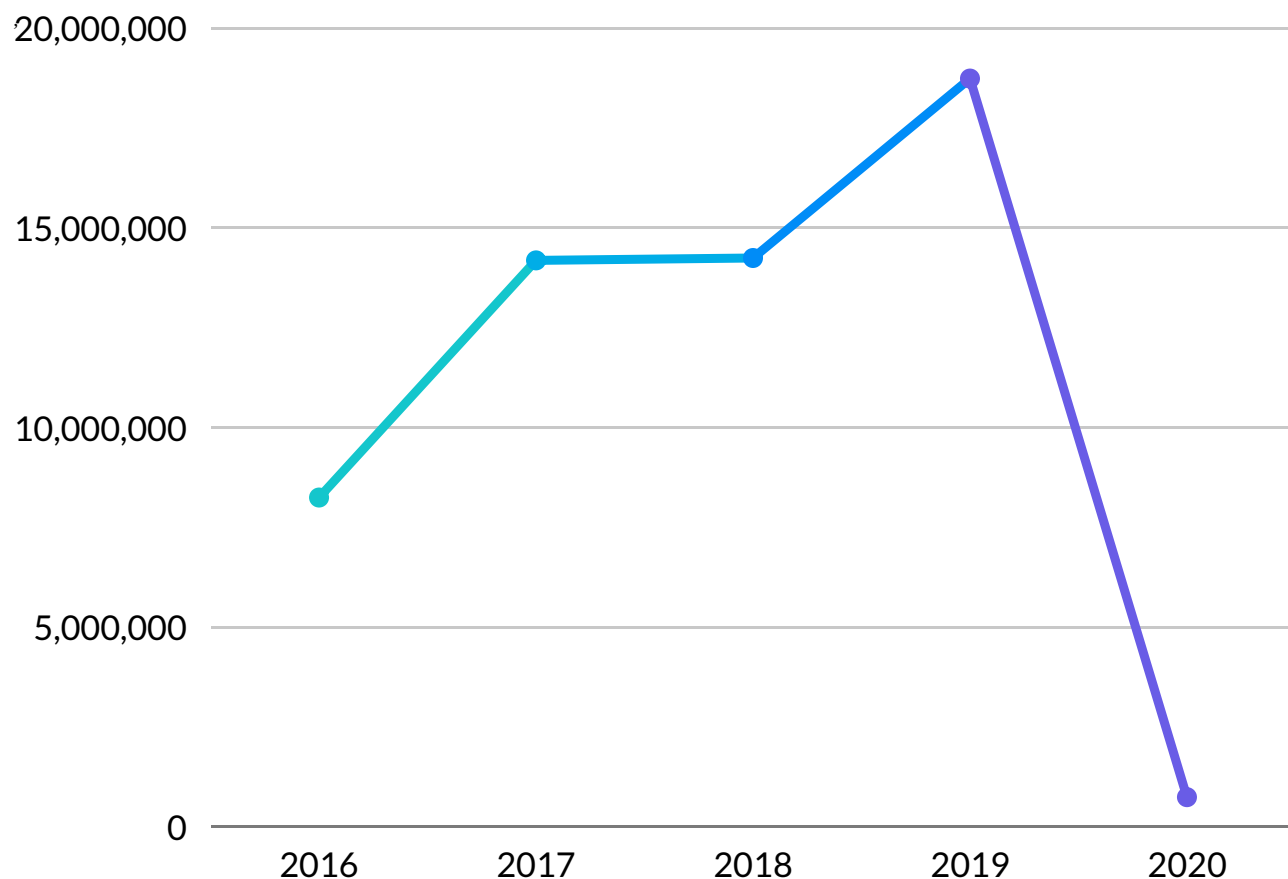


## DIVE TRIPS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

---

Only eight (8) trips were conducted, ninety-six (96%) less compared to the number of trips in 2019. Therefore, a ninety-six (96%) decrease in the number of visitors was recorded. From 3,475 in 2019 the number of visitors went down to 139 this year. The decrease was attributed to the cancellation of trips due to COVID -19 outbreak.

The revenue this season was P740,500.00 this represents a decrease of 96.05% compared to last year's collections.



## PRE- DEPARTURE BRIEFINGS

---

Each dive season, Tubbataha Management Office (TMO) conducts briefings for visitors preceding their departure for Tubbataha to lessen the possible negative impacts of tourism activities to the Park. On-board briefings provide:

- Increase visitor appreciation of the values of the Tubbataha Reefs.
- Increase visitors' understanding of the regulations and the rationale for their formulation.
- Provide a channel for visitors, diving professionals, and boat operators to present comments and suggestions to improve park management.



©Emma Tura

TMO staff Karl Joriel Amurao conducts pre- departure briefing for M/Y Infiniti guests on Park Rules and Regulations.

## PRE- DEPARTURE BRIEFINGS

---

From 01 March to 12 March, five (5) pre-departure briefings were conducted by TMO staff. The staff showed the videos on Tubbataha and explained the Park Rules and Regulations in detail. The pre-departure briefings only reached 93 visitors. Meanwhile, in Tubbataha, marine park rangers conducted briefings on vessels on transition trips.

## COMPLIANCE

---

There was one hundred percent (100%) compliance with the permitting system and adherence to park rules and regulations by five (5) dive operators and visitors. P/Y Atlantis Azores, M/Y Infiniti, M/V Seadoors, S/Y Philippine Siren 2, and M/V Dolphin these dive boats were able to conduct few trips before the lockdown due to coronavirus outbreak.



## RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT TRIPS

---

In 2020, thirteen (13) entry permits were issued to trips related to tourism while a total of seventeen (17) entry permits were issued for other trips such as research and management activities as of July.

The Tubbataha Management Office (TMO) contracted M/Y Zamerdius, vessel owned by one of the local commercial dive operators in Palawan, for the conduct of research and management trips: fish and benthos survey, seabird survey, coral bleaching assessment, water quality monitoring, and beach reforestation.



## RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT TRIPS

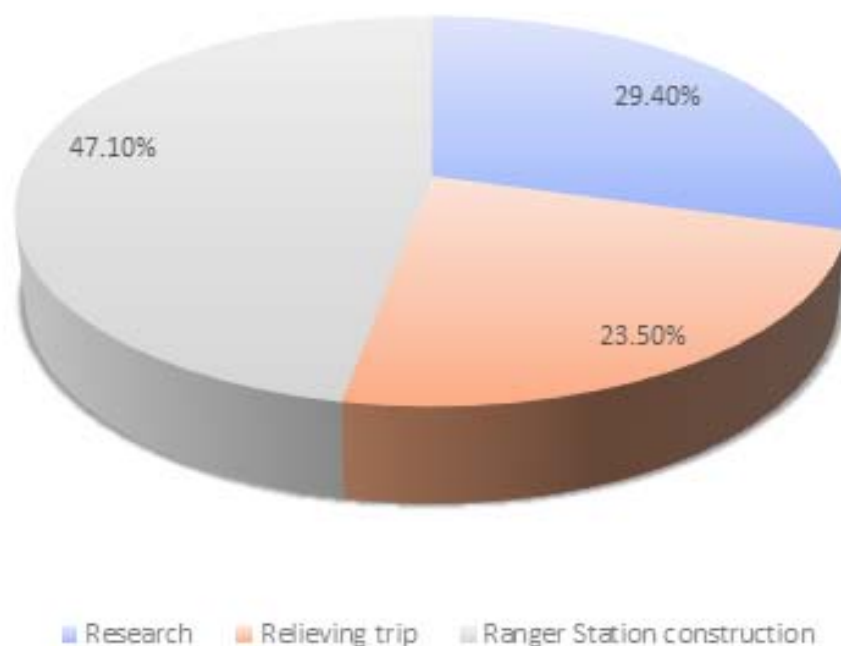
---

Other vessels that entered the Park this year were MTUG Nikolas Tristan, BARGE LB610, and M/L Princess Aikah - 5 commissioned by Construction & Industrial Corporation, contractor of Provincial Government of Palawan for the new ranger station project in North Islet.

Lastly, M/L Dolphin, passenger vessel based in Cagayancillo, were committed and PS70 of Philippine Navy, PC381, and BRP Cabra of Philippine Coast Guard to transport marine park rangers, supplies and materials.

---

Non-Tourism Entry Permits

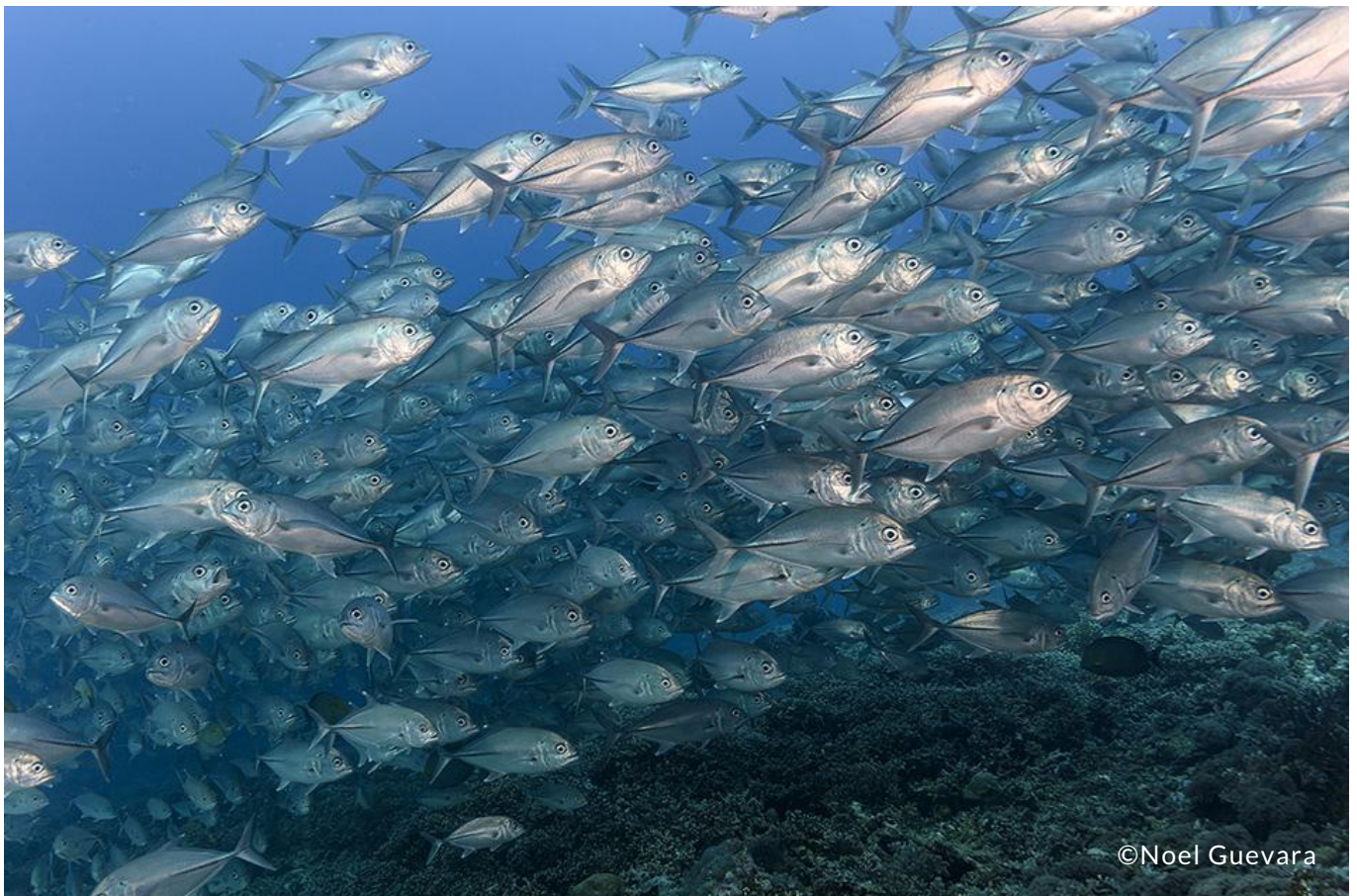




## PRIVATE SECTOR CONTRIBUTIONS

---

In - kind contributions were received from dive operator, M/Y Infiniti is supporting the development of the Tubbataha website and donated (2) pcs. plastic buoys for moorings. Also, the transport of merchandise, materials for mooring buoy (chain and shackles), and food provisions to the Park was also provided for free by M/Y Infiniti.



## ISSUES

---

Below are the issues detailed by dive operators, diving professionals, and marine park rangers:

- Marine debris (fishing nets) on the reefs.
- Unavailability of sea ambulance.
- PCG Palawan has no equipment to control chemical spills, only for oil spill.

