

DERAWAN ARCHIPELAGO EAST KALIMANTAN



THE NORTHERN REGION OF EAST KALIMANTAN IS ONE OF THE LESS VISITED OF INDONESIA. IN THIS REMOTE TERRITORY LIES DERAWAN ARCHIPELAGO, A GROUP OF 31 ISLAND, OFF SHORE BORNEO'S EAST COAST. FAR AWAY FROM ALL TOURIST ROUTES, RARELY WILL YOU FIND ANY OTHER DIVER BUT, FOR SURE, YOU WILL MEET LOT OF BIG FISHES, MANTAS, SHARKS, HAMMERHEADS, RARE CRITTERS AND OTHERS SMALL INVERTEBRATES. ALSO WE SWIM IN THE BIGGEST JELLYFISH LAKE ON EARTH. POSTCARD BEACHES.

SANGALAKI It is surrounded by a shallow lagoon and the reefs start a distance out from the island, dropping from 3 to 40 meters at some point. The island itself is known as feeding ground for mantas. The places where to spot mantas lies in the north-eastern part of the island. Here manta rays come from all directions, their wing tips breaking the surface at regular intervals and circle around you. They prefer to swim close to the surface, so snorkelling is also a good way to interact with them. They congregate here in large numbers and feed on plankton or are cleaned at special cleaning stations. Sometimes there might be as much 20 mantas hovering over the cleaning station.

In the south west of Sangalaki others good dive sites with hard and soft corals, gorgonian, colourful fish life and turtles. At lighthouse good place for gobies, scorpion fish, clown fish, jaw fish, nudibranchs, frog fish, mandarin fish and ribbon eels as well as tridacna giant clams. Sangalaki is a breeding ground for green turtles. At night female turtles come ashore and lay their eggs and small baby turtles can be seen regularly, when they hatch. The island and its surrounding reefs are protected as an Indonesian Marine Park.

MARATUA As Sangalaki is "mecca" for manta rays, Maratua call for big pelagics. Maratua is a

large island with a massive lagoon. The island just rims part of the lagoon; the rest is fringed by reefs with two small islands in the south. Maratua has several impressive drop-offs and you will have a good chance to see large pelagics like sharks, tuna, eagle rays and schools of barracudas, trevallies and mackerels. The best place is a big channel which connects the lagoon with the outer sea. The channel itself is literally swept clean by the very strong currents and only the edges are covered with nice corals. The dive usually starts at the outside reef and you are swept by the current into the channel. At the entrance of the channel you can watch the large pelagics that pass by: grey reef sharks, white and blacktips, tunas and barracudas. Another place is similar to this dive site, also a channel connecting to the lagoon. You might see hammerheads, napoleon wrasses, leopard shark and eagle rays. Both dive sites should only be dived, when the tides are right.

KAKABAN The island is quite steep with limestone cliffs covered with dense jungle right down to the water's edge. Barracuda Point is a steep wall where the current brings large pelagics like whitetip sharks, leopard sharks, jacks, tunas, snappers, trevallies and of course a large school of barracudas. You can do a drift dive. Currents can be strong with down currents.

REEF BASICS 	
Diving season	Mantas and turtles can be seen year-round, but April to October is usually the best time for diving.
Rainy season	November to March.
Water temperature	Warm, about 28°C year around.
Visibility	Can be as low as 3m and averages about 20m with a maximum of 30m. Underwater visibility may deteriorate if there has been heavy rain.
Depth	15-35m.
Currents	Usually gently but can be strong, particularly at Kakaban wall drops with upwelling, down current and reversing directions.
Surface conditions	Calm.
Experience level	Intermediate.
Dive sites	~40.
Length of stay	Recommended 5-7 days on liveaboard cruise.

TRIP ADVISOR →	
Airport	Tarakan. Fly from Singapore, Jakarta or Bali to Balikpapan, and then domestic flight to Tarakan.
Weather	23-32°C. The climate is warm, sunny and humid all year. Indonesia has two seasons: wet and dry. In most of Indonesia the wet season is from October to April and the dry from May to September. East Kalimantan wet season is from November to March and dry season from April to October.

Special feature is the huge jellyfish lake. It is a mangrove fringed lake, slightly above sea level, where thousands of non-stinging jellyfish live. The jellyfish consist of four different species. They are non stinging, having lost their natural defence system because of the lack of major predators in the lake. This place is similar to Jellyfish Lake in Palau, Micronesia. The Kakaban Lake has warm brackish water and the bottom is covered with marine green algae. There are other animals living here, some sea cucumbers, gobies, anemones, tunicates, crustaceans, nudibranchs, orange purple and yellow clams on the branches and snakes. The lake is at most 17m deep and visibility is not so good.

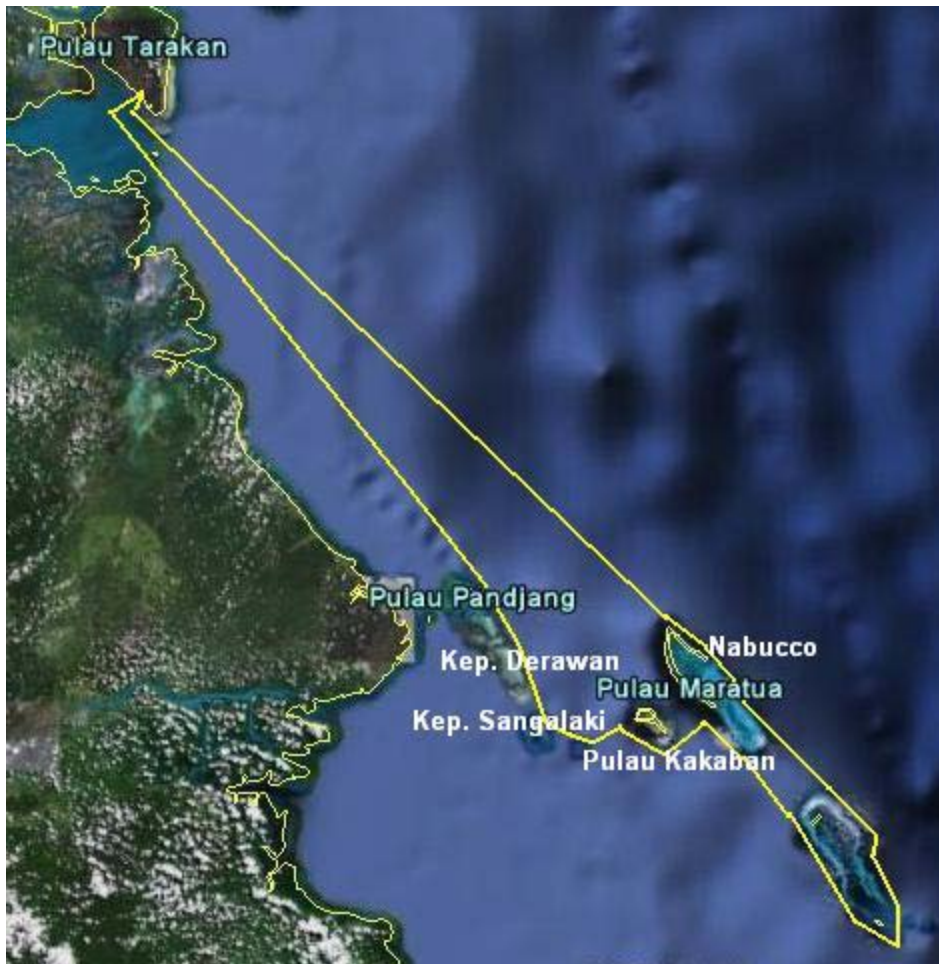
NABUCCO It's a recently developed island inside Maratua Lagoon. It is known for critters such as frog fish, scorpion fish, ghost pipefish, mandarin fish and invertebrates like nudibranchs and special shrimps.

DERAWAN This island can be reached from Sangalaki but also has its own dive operation. Visibility is not so good. The best diving is at the Jetty in shallow 5m, where you can find some very interesting critters such as flamboyant cuttlefish, squat lobsters, ghost pipefish, blue ring octopus, nudibranchs, seahorses, ribbon eels and scorpion fishes.



OTHERS ACTIVITIES	
Trekking:	Adventure trip for exploring the Orang-utans' habitat.
Hiking:	In the rain forest to spot wild life.
Tour:	Mahakam River cruise trips in to the deep jungle of the Dayak Country.
-PLEASE INQUIRY FOR DETAILS IF INTERESTED- ✉	

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Derawan Archipelago

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