

Short communication:

**A PRELIMINARY SYNOPSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN TSUNAMI
ON THE CORAL REEFS OF WESTERN THAILAND**

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ABSTRACT: The Indian Ocean tsunami caused very limited damage to the coral reefs of western Thailand with negative impacts being greater in the northern provinces than in the south. The major damaging effects included overturning of massive corals, breaking of branching corals and smothering of coral tissues by sediment. Long-term monitoring studies suggest that coral reefs which were not affected by the tsunami are in good condition and currently show as high a coral cover as ever recorded during the last 25 years. Such background conditions, together with rapid coral growth rate and high regeneration potential, should aid recovery of most damaged locations over the next 3–5 years.
