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ABSTRACTS SUBMISSION FORM

Abstract

EFFECTS OF THE TSUNAMI ON CORAL REEFS OF PHI PHI ISLANDS GROUP,
THE ANDAMAN SEA

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Phi Phi Islands group harbors a large area of coral reefs in the Andaman Sea, where are most popular tourist destinations. Ecological studies on coral reefs in Phi Phi Islands group have been carried out for a few years with focusing on changes of live coral coverage, density of coral fragment, density of juvenile coral colony and condition of partial mortality of coral colony. The results are important baseline data for comparing the conditions of coral reefs before and after the Indian Ocean tsunami phenomenon. The present paper highlights the impacts of tsunami on coral reefs at Koh Phi Phi and Koh Phai Islands. Severe damages on coral reefs caused by the tsunami were found only in a few reef sites. Live coral coverages at Ao Ling (Koh Phi Phi Island) and Koh Phai Island decreased remarkably. Number of coral fragment at Koh Phai Island after the tsunami increased from 0.21 fragment/m² to 3.13 fragments/m². Most coral fragments were *Acropora* spp. and *Montipora* spp. However numbers of coral fragment after the tsunami at some study sites of Koh Phi Phi Island, such as Ao Ling, Ao Loh Sama, were similar to those before the tsunami. Densities of juvenile coral colony at all study sites after the tsunami were lower, especially at Koh Phai Island. There was much variation of changes of partial mortality of coral colony between the study sites. A long-term monitoring program is urgently required to assess coral community change and natural recovery after the tsunami. The present study clearly shows importance of ecological baseline data for appropriate coastal management.

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