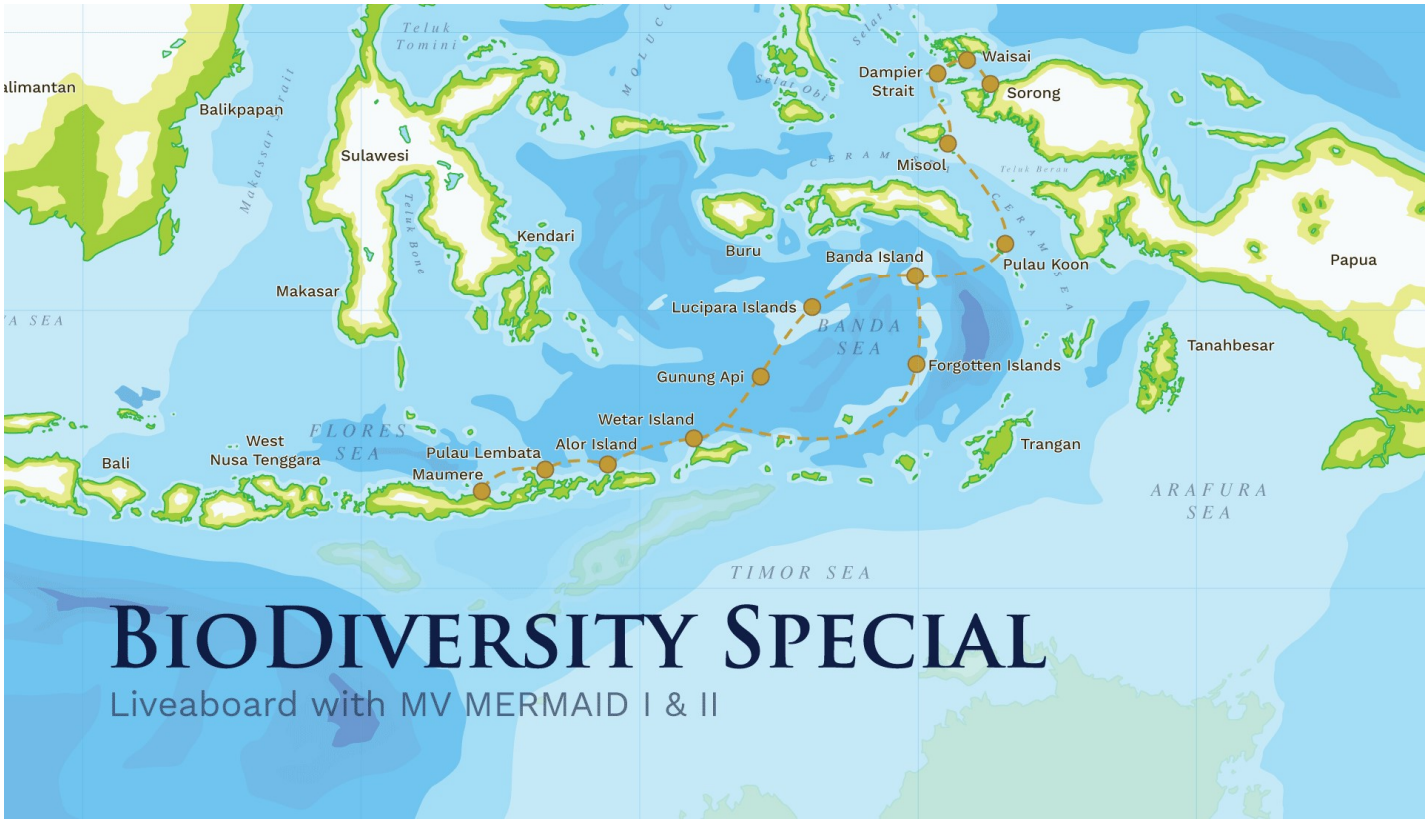

MV MERMAID I ITINERARY BIODIVERSITY SPECIAL 16 Days/15 Nights Raja Ampat – Banda Sea – Alor - Maumere		Dives
Day 1	Check-in on board MV Mermaid I. As our guest arrivals take place all through the day depending on flights, you are welcome to board when you arrive and spend some time unpacking and setting up your equipment, etc. Following the boat and safety briefing, Mermaid I will cruise for 5 to 6 hours to the Dampier Strait area.	**0**
Day 2-3	The first two diving days of the trip will be spent around the Dampier Strait, the strait between the island of Waigeo, the Bird's Head peninsula and the northern side of Batanta Island. The Dampier Strait is known for a huge variety of diving, from giant mantas to mangroves, beautiful reefs, many pinnacles and sea mounts covered in schooling fish, aggregations of sweetlips, schooling barracudas, bumphead parrotfish, fusiliers and lots of wobbegong sharks. It is also a great location for critters and macro subjects, with several species of pygmy seahorses and a large variety of nudibranchs. There are also several jetties to do some great night dives, where you can see the Raja epaulette shark, toadfish, frogfish and crocodile fish. Cruise overnight to Misool, 90 nautical miles.	**7**
Day 4-5	The next 2 days will be around the island of Misool, where there literally hundreds of dive sites. Misool is a heaven for wide angle photographers. The prettiest soft corals reefs in the world are located in Misool, as well as having multiple pinnacles surrounded by masses of schooling fish, barracudas, jacks and snappers. There will be some excursions with the tenders through some amazing inner lagoons, fantastic scenery and wild life sightings. Cruise overnight to Pulau Koon.	**7**
Day 6	Pulau Koon is a small island on the southeast of Ceram, half way between Raja Ampat and the Banda Islands. Walls covered in soft corals, and sandy slopes with hard coral bommies. But the most interesting feature of this island is the amount of schooling fish and pelagic, barracudas, bigeye trevallies, aggregation of red snappers, pompanos, batfish, and giant groupers. Cruise overnight to the Banda Islands	**3**
Day 7-8	The next two days will be spent in the Banda Islands, formerly known as the Spice Islands. Many of the dive sites around the Bandas are wall dives. The walls are covered in massive gorgonians, soft corals, barrel sponges and have some very interesting swim throughs. But there are other attractive dive sites such as pinnacles with enormous groups of schooling pyramid butterflyfish, triggerfish and pelagic fish such as tunas passing through, spectacular hard coral reefs next to the volcano, and great muck dives with lots of mandarin fish at the local jetty. The Banda Islands are much more than diving. It is also a cultural and historical experience. You will spend one morning walking around the village of Banda Neira with a local guide, visiting the local	**7**

	museum, the old Dutch fort, the old colonial governor's house, the local fish market and a nutmeg plantation, where you will have breakfast. Cruise overnight to Manuk, 55 nautical miles.	
Day 9	Manuk, an active volcano, is one of two places in Indonesia where there are huge aggregations of sea snakes: Chinese sea snakes and banded sea kraits. It is an incredible experience to dive surrounded on all sides by sea snakes. The island is surrounded by black sandy slopes with hard coral reefs and volcanic ridges covered in gorgonians with zillions of fusiliers and pelagic fishes such as Spanish mackerels and dogtooth tunas passing through. Cruise overnight to Serua Island, 55 nautical miles.	**4**
Day 10	Serua Island is probably one of the most emblematic spots in the Banda Sea to see schooling hammerhead sharks. Also an amazing site to see schooling fish such as big eye trevallies, pinjalo snappers and others. Surrounding Nila Island there are two atolls, Dusborgh and Nil Desperandum. It's at these two atolls that there is a good chance of seeing hammerhead sharks. Even without the hammerheads, the reefs are fabulous, with healthy walls and big schools of fish. Cruise to Damar Islands, 90 nautical miles.	**4**
Day 11	Today you will dive several small islands – Neus Leur, Terbang Seletan and Terbang Utara. The island of Damar and its three surrounding small islands have spectacular diving. Like many dives in the Banda Sea, there is crystal clear water and beautiful walls covered in massive sponges and beautiful soft corals. Cruise to Wetar Island, 150 nautical miles.	**3**
Day 12	After cruising every night for one week, Mermaid I will have finally crossed the Banda Sea and arrived at the island of Wetar. At Wetar, you will do three dives at the small island of Reong and at Cape Nunukae. Pulau Reong is a small island on the northwest coast of Wetar and is separated by a small channel only 700 metres wide. More walls, like many of the dive sites in the Banda Sea, covered in small soft corals but of a great variety of colours and zillions of triggerfish of every species. Cape Nunukae, about 6 nautical miles southwest of Pulau Reong, is a large ridge with slopes on both sides, covered with a hard coral reef on the shallow area of the ridge and soft corals on the slopes in the deeper areas. Strong currents can be had at the end of the ridge, where large aggregations of schooling fish can be found. Cruise overnight to Alor, 95 nautical miles.	**3**
Day 13-14	Alor is one of the old time favourite dive spots for divers coming to Indonesia year after year due to its variety of dive sites. Healthy reefs, pinnacles, walls, great muck dives, cold water, warm water, strong currents and protected areas. Alor has it all. Cruise overnight to Kawula Island (90nm) or Serbete Island (120 nm).	**8**
Day 15	You will do two dives today at Kawula Island (90 nm to Maumere) or Serbete Island (60 nm to Maumere).	**2**
Day 16	Disembark at 8 am. Mermaid I staff will transfer you to the airport or hotel. **This is a sample itinerary and is subject to changes beyond the operator's control. The exact itinerary, route and number of dives for your cruise may be adapted to best suit the weather conditions, tides and currents, season and other prevailing events**.	
	TOTAL DIVES	**48**

	MV MERMAID I ITINERARY BIODIVERSITY SPECIAL 16 Days/15 Nights Maumere – Alor – Banda Sea – Raja Ampat	**Dives**
Day 1	Check-in on board Mermaid I. We recommend all guests to arrive the day before the cruise departure. After all the guests have settle into the cabins and set up the diving equipment, we will start cruising overnight to our first destination at Kawula Island, 90 nautical miles.	**0**
Day 2	Dive Cape Bacatan and Lewaling Bay at the island of Kawula. Three dives along walls and ledges covered in sea fans and soft corals – chance for pygmy seahorse and critters here as well. Cape Bacatan is a good place to spot whitetips, blacktips and occasionally, grey reef sharks. Also a popular spot for eagle rays and Napoleon wrasse with loads of schooling fish. A great muck night dive will be done in front of a traditional fishing village. Cruise overnight to Alor, 70 nautical miles.	**4**
Day 3	Alor is a favourite dive spot for divers coming to dive Indonesia year after year due to its variety of dive sites. Healthy reefs, pinnacles, walls, great muck dives, cold water, warm water, strong currents and protected areas. Alor has it all. Cruise overnight to Wetar, 95 nautical miles.	**4**

Day 4	In Wetar you will dive at the small island of Reong and at Cape Nunukae. Pulau Reong is a small island on the northwest coast of Wetar and separated by a small channel only 700 metres wide. More walls, like many of the dive sites in the Banda Sea, covered in small soft corals but of a great variety of colours, with zillions of triggerfish of every species. Cape Nunukae, about 6 nautical miles southwest of Pulau Reong, is a large ridge with slopes on both sides, covered with a hard coral reef on the shallow area of the ridge, with soft corals on the slopes in the deeper areas. There can be strong currents at the end of the ridge, where large aggregations of schooling fish can be found. Cruise overnight to the Damar Islands, 150 nautical miles.	**3**
Day 5	Today you will dive several small islands – Neus Leur, Terbang Seletan and Terbang Utara. The island of Damar and its three surrounding small islands have spectacular diving. Like many dives in the Banda Sea, there is crystal clear water and beautiful walls covered in massive sponges and beautiful soft corals. Cruise overnight to Nila Island, 90 nautical miles.	**3**
Day 6	Surrounding Nila Island there are two atolls, Dusborgh and Nil Desperandum. It's at these two atolls that there is a good chance of seeing hammerhead sharks. Even without the hammerheads, the reefs are fabulous, with healthy walls and big schools of fish. Cruise to Serua Island, 20 nautical miles.	**4**
Day 7	Serua Island is probably one of the most emblematic spots in the Banda Sea to see schooling hammerhead sharks. Also an amazing side to see schooling fish such as big eye trevallies, pinjalo snappers and others. Cruise to Manuk, 55 nautical miles.	**4**
Day 8	Manuk, also known as the Snake Volcano. Don't need to be afraid! The site also offers a black sand reef dive with loads of fish and pretty hard and soft corals. We will spend the whole day here doing four day dives, then cruising to the Banda Islands, 60 nautical miles.	**4**
Day 9-10	Banda Islands for the next 2 days! Walls, swim throughs, sponges and sea fans – good diving and great for wide angle. Several sites have swim throughs large enough for several people to go through at the same time and is especially nice for wide angle shots, as they are covered in soft corals and sponges. Dive sites in the Banda Islands drop down thousands of metres, offering spectacular walls and stunning reef tops, with visibility usually in the 40-50 metre range. The sunset dive is at the pier in front of an old colonial hotel! Black sand and volcanic rocks with an unusual amount of large and not shy mandarin fish – also great for critters. For the second day here, in addition to great diving, you will go on land for an excursion on the island of Banda Neira visiting the local museum, Dutch fort, nutmeg plantation and local market. You will even get to have breakfast at the nutmeg plantation! Cruise overnight to Koon Island, 80 nautical miles.	**7**
Day 11	Pulau Koon is a small island on the southeast of Ceram, half way between Raja Ampat and the Banda Islands. Here you will find walls covered in soft corals and sandy slopes with hard coral bommies. But the most interesting feature of this island is the amount of schooling fish and pelagics, including barracudas, bigeye trevallies, aggregations of red snappers, pompanos, batfish and giant groupers. Cruise overnight to Misool, 100 nautical miles	**3**
Day 12-13	The next two days will be spent around the island of Misool, Raja Ampat, where there are literally hundreds of dive sites. Misool is a heaven for wide angle photographers. The prettiest soft corals reefs in the world are located in Misool. In addition, there are multiple pinnacles surrounded by masses of schooling fish, barracudas, jacks and snappers. There will be some excursions with the tenders through some amazing inner lagoons, with fantastic scenery and wildlife sightings. Cruise overnight to the Dampier Strait, 90 nautical miles.	**7**
Day 14 -15	The Dampier Strait is known for a huge variety of diving, from giant mantas to mangroves, beautiful reefs, many pinnacles and sea mounts covered in schooling fish, aggregations of sweetlips, schooling barracudas, bumphead parrotfish, fusiliers and lots of wobbegong sharks. It is also a great location for critters and macro subjects, with several species of pygmy seahorses and a large variety of nudibranchs. There are also several jetties to do a great night dive, where you can see the Raja epaulette shark, toadfish, frogfish and crocodile fish. The last two dives of your cruise will be done in the Dampier Strait area. Where big schools of fish and glorious corals are simply amazing! After the second dive Mermaid I must go back to Sorong. The crew will take care of rinsing your equipment and there's time to pack during this 5-6 hour run.	**6**
Day 16	Disembark at 8 am. Mermaid I staff will transfer you to the airport or hotel in Sorong.	

This is a sample itinerary and is subject to changes beyond the operator's control. The exact itinerary, route and number of dives for your cruise may be adapted to best suit the weather conditions, tides and currents, season and other prevailing events.

TOTAL DIVES 49