

Indonesia increases estimate for cruise ship reef damage

March 22 2017



The 4,200-ton Caledonian Sky smashed into coral reefs in eastern Indonesia

Indonesia said Wednesday a cruise ship on a voyage organised by a British company had damaged about 18,900 square metres of coral reef, increasing the estimate of the devastation caused when the vessel ran aground.

The accident happened this month in Raja Ampat, eastern Indonesia, one of the most biodiverse marine habitats on Earth and a favourite with intrepid travellers and divers due to its palm-fringed islands, coral and

fish.

The 4,200-ton Caledonian Sky smashed into the reefs at low tide around Kri, one of hundreds of small islands in Raja Ampat, after taking tourists on a bird-watching expedition.

The boat, which was carrying 102 passengers and 79 crew, was grounded on the reefs and only refloated later on a high tide. Numerous attempts to free it using a tug boat failed, causing further damage to the corals.

An assessment led by a local university had estimated the damage from the March 4 accident at 13,500 square metres. But after a survey involving marine researchers, government and the insurers, authorities announced that 18,882 square metres (200,000 [square](#) feet) of corals had been affected.

Maritime affairs ministry spokesman Djoko Hartoyo told AFP that the government was still calculating the financial impact of the accident, and it would be announced early April.

"The company and the insurers are committed to paying compensation," Hartoyo added.

The incident in West Papua province infuriated the government, who last week summoned the British ambassador to protest, while local residents believe it will impact the tourism industry and the livelihoods of fishermen.

The Bahamas-flagged vessel is owned by a Swedish company, but the tour was organised by British-based firm Noble Caledonia, and the captain was British.

Noble Caledonia has apologised for the accident and said they are

working to reach a settlement with the [government](#).

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