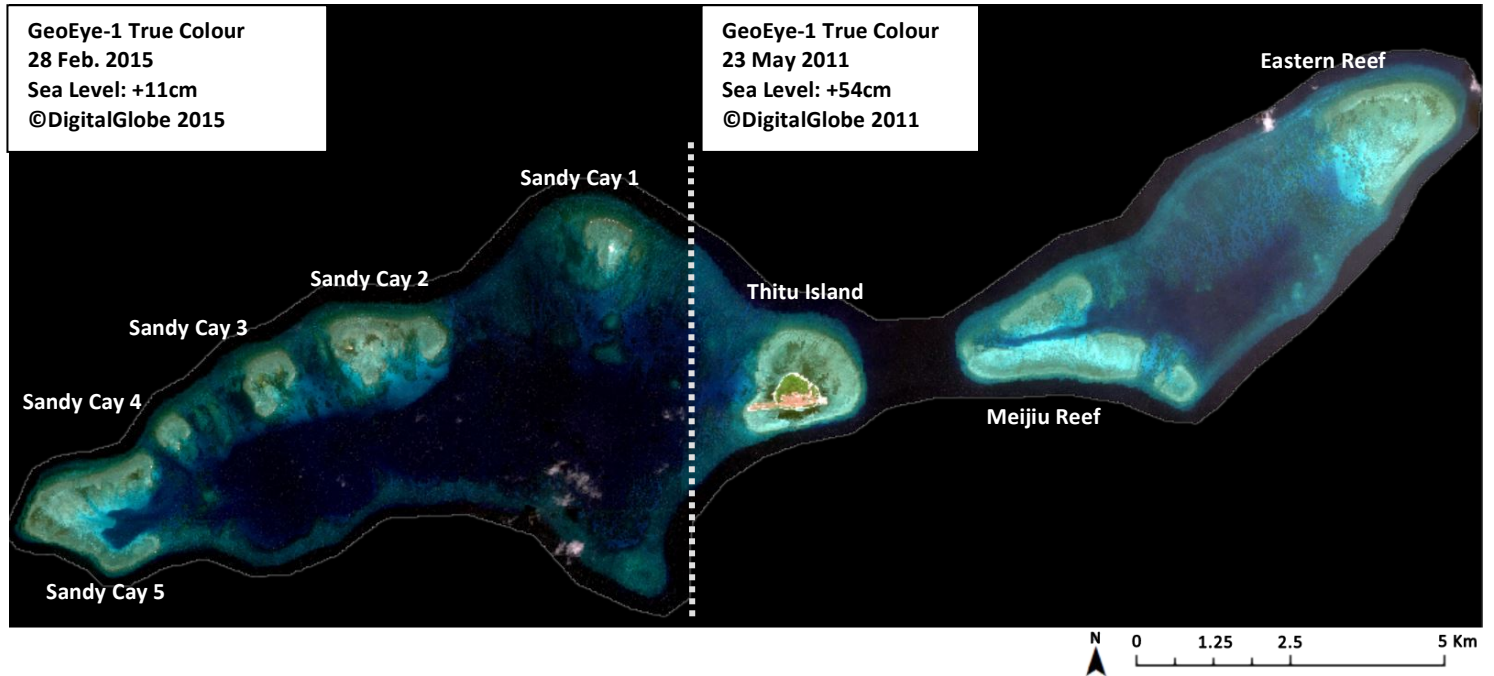


THITU REEFS OVERALL

11°03'29.20"N, 114°16'21.46"E

Geographic area

Thitu Reefs designate a collection of reef platforms located on two atolls that are just under 1NM away from each other. No deeper reef that could connect them is visible. They are located in the northwest part of the Spratlys, 17NM south of North Danger Reef, less than 7NM northeast of Subi Reef and over 19NM north of Loaita Cay on Loaita Bank. Thitu Reefs stretch over 24km along their southwest-northeast axis. The width of the western atoll is 6.5km at the widest point and includes Thitu Island and several shallow platforms, one of which is Sandy Cay; the others are unnamed. The width of the eastern atoll reaches 3km. It includes Meiju Reef in the extreme west and Eastern Reef in the extreme east. The overall surface area of the two atolls is 66.36km².



Land area above water

The only above-water areas are on the western atoll of Thitu Reefs. The largest and only above-water land area that is vegetated and built-up is Thitu Island. The other above-water areas are sand banks that look like they are dynamic as they change shapes, sizes and locations under the combined effect of astronomic tide, storm surges and wind-waves.

Human infrastructure

Man-made structures can be observed on Thitu Island only as at 16 April 2014.

Intertidal and submerged area

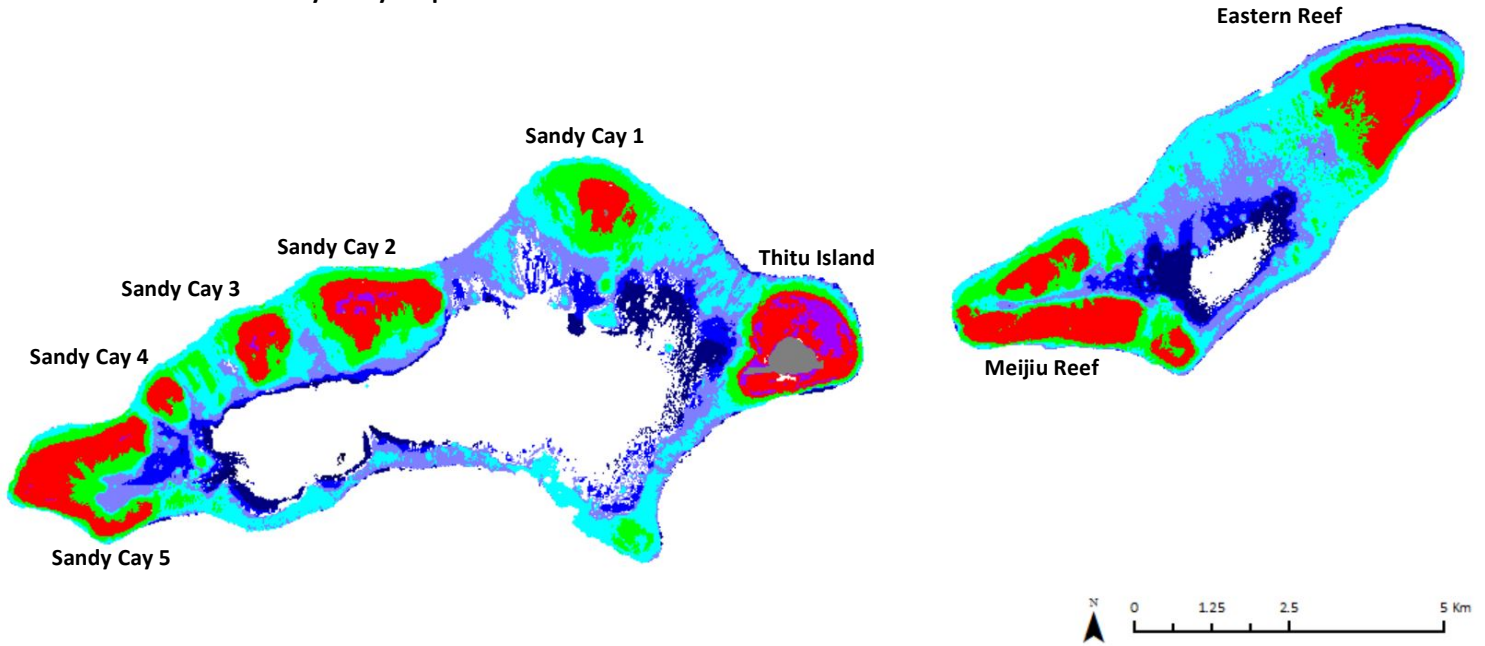
The aerial coverage of the two atolls is 65.95km², 12.37km² of which is the total aerial coverage of the reef flats, 23.97km² being the total aerial coverage of the reef slope and 29.61km² being the area covered by the two lagoons including coral heads and knolls. The reef flats of the western atoll are generally shallower than those of the eastern atoll by about 40cm, and sandy cays can be observed, but the lagoon of the western atoll is larger (22.82km²) and deeper than the lagoon of the eastern atoll (6.79km²). Pronounced dredging marks are visible on all reef flats, whether due to coral rubble and sand being collected as building material, removed to prepare the area for later construction works, or dredged as a fisheries method. 5m-long dredging vessels in activity can also be observed in several satellite images (up to 31 on Meiju Reef on 5 March 2014). Fishing activities over the reef slope and coral reef formations are visible on the western atoll including 21 artisanal fishing vessels concentrated around a coral head west of Thitu Island. Several 30m long vessels are also visible on images where dredgers in activity can be seen.

THITU REEFS OVERALL

11°03'29.20"N, 114°16'21.46"E

Mosaic derived from GeoEye-1 satellite data captured in 2011 and 2015

Standardised Bathymetry Map at Mean Sea Level



Habitat Classification and Land Cover Map

