



**Fig. 1** At 30-m depth, a significant amount of sand was missing as indicated by the white stripe



**Fig. 2** An unknown diatom species overgrew on the broken coral

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## Impact of Tsunami on the seafloor and corals in Thailand

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On December 26, 2004, Thailand experienced a devastating tsunami natural disaster. Surveys were done immediately afterward to investigate the coral damage at Similan Marine National Park. In one location called Snapper Alley Point ( $8^{\circ} 40'26.7''N$ ,  $97^{\circ} 39'01.0''E$ ), at 30-m depth below the mean seawater level we observed a significant amount of sand, as deep as 2-m, was missing from the seafloor site (Fig. 1). Coral damage was found as deep as 27 m, half of which occurred on the table coral form. About 66% of live table corals were either overturned or broken. Larger corals were more susceptible to the tsunami damage. Overall 40% of total live corals were damaged by the tsunami, and most damages occurred between 10 and 20 m depth of water. After 1 month, an unknown diatom species was found growing on the surface of rocks at 30-m depth which was covered by sand prior to the tsunami. This diatom also overgrew on the corals, which were impacted by the tsunami (Fig. 2). We are now monitoring and investigating the long-term effects of the tsunami on corals and seafloor.

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