

Coral Reefs and Integrated Marine Management

CONSERVING AN INVALUABLE RESOURCE

WILD
COAST
COSTASALVAJE



Photo by Claudio Contreras-Koob

Coral reefs, also known as "the rainforests of the sea," are well known for their beauty and vibrant colors, but apart from that, they are extremely important, both ecologically and economically.

Healthy coral reefs are critical for healthy oceans, providing ecosystem services including coastal protection against hurricanes, nurseries for commercially important species, and research and tourism opportunities. Coral reefs are a first-line defense against rising sea levels and other impacts of climate change.

However, coral reefs are deteriorating and dying at an alarming rate due to human impacts that range from overfishing and unsustainable coastal development to ocean acidification and the spread of invasive species. Scientists have estimated that 75% of the world's corals are at risk and at least 10% have already disappeared.

- The reefs of the Mexican Pacific provide more than 20 million USD annually in ecosystem services.
- In the Gulf of California, reefs support habitat for at least 450 wildlife species including sea turtles, whale sharks, numerous invertebrates and fish.
- Coral reef observation is one of the primary attractions in Cabo Pulmo, employing approximately 2,000 local people that serve more than 50,000 tourists/year.
- In 2016, according to the Secretary of Tourism, Huatulco National Park and its coral reefs attracted over 600,000 visitors.



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The recent discovery of thriving deep-sea coral ecosystems off the coast of California highlights the importance of integrated marine management and continued deep-sea exploration.

WILDCOAST is an international team that conserves coastal and marine ecosystems and wildlife. We establish and manage protected areas, advance strong conservation policies, and work with communities to preserve healthy thriving oceans and wild coastlines.

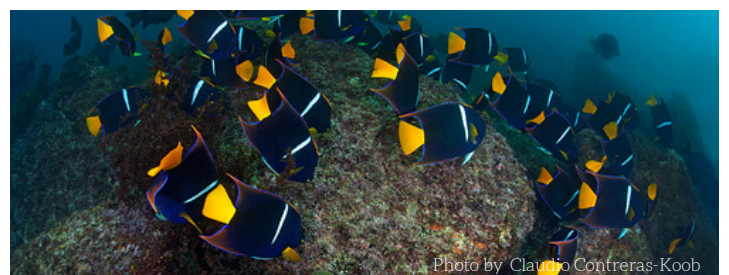


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Five things you can do...

1. Use sun protection free of oxybenzone, octinoxate, butylparaben or other chemicals that harm corals.
2. Dispose of your trash properly. Trash, including old fishing gear, pollutes the ocean and harms sea life.
3. Be careful where you anchor. Use mooring buoys whenever possible and avoid anchoring on the reef.
4. Conserve water: The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater will pollute our oceans.
5. Donate! Visit www.wildcoast.org to support WILD Coast's Coral Reef Conservation Program.

WILD Coast's mission is to conserve coastal and marine ecosystems and wildlife, such as the coral reefs found along Mexico's Pacific coastline. WILD Coast's [Coral Reef Conservation Program](#) is strengthening the conservation of 686,767 acres of natural protected areas with coral reefs on Mexico's Pacific coastline by improving coral reef monitoring, visitation management and legal protections for coral reefs in six protected areas (Cabo Pulmo, Huatulco, Isla Espiritu Santo, Islas Marias, Islas Marietas, and Isla Isabel).

Our work in these areas includes:

- Installing mooring buoys to prevent anchor-related reef damage
- Providing training to park rangers to implement coral reef management and best practices
- Conducting public awareness campaigns that include school presentations and stewardship activities
- Creating interpretive signage and brochures
- Strategically educating communities about the importance and benefits of coral reef conservation

WILD Coast is partnering with Mexico's National Commission for Protected Natural Areas (CONANP), tourism outfitter businesses, researchers, and local communities to carry out these projects. To learn more visit us at www.wildcoast.org



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