



Over **one-half**  
of the world's population lives  
within **100 kilometres**  
of the sea.



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### AT LAST! THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MANAGING CORAL REEF DISEASE

The definitive management guide to identifying, assessing and managing coral reef diseases was launched by the Coral Reef Targeted Research & Capacity Building for Management (CRTR) Program at the 11th International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS) at Fort Lauderdale, Florida, today.

The guide, comprising a 124-page handbook and two sets of underwater (identification) cards, each illustrated with colour photography throughout, has been compiled by world-leading marine researchers.

Says Professor Drew Harvell, co-author and Chair of the CRTR's Disease Working Group: "These specialist management tools will help marine managers and field scientists identify and monitor infectious syndromes of coral and take the next step of implementing new management approaches."

The publications are available for sale only at [www.gefcoral.org/publications](http://www.gefcoral.org/publications) or at the ICRS.

The handbook, entitled *Coral Disease Handbook: Guidelines for Assessment, Monitoring and Management*, is designed to be used in conjunction with the two sets of identification cards, the *Underwater Cards for Assessing Coral Health on Indo-Pacific Reefs* and the *Underwater Cards for Assessing Coral Health on Caribbean Reefs*.

The publications are designed specifically for management and research professionals with an interest in monitoring coral reef diseases and coral reef health, says Dr Marea Hatziolos, CRTR Team Leader at the World Bank.

Says Dr Hatziolos: "The handbook outlines procedures for describing signs, measuring disease impacts, monitoring disease outbreaks, assessing causes, and managing reefs to minimize losses due to disease."

By using the underwater cards professional and scientific divers can:

- \* Learn to identify coral diseases and survey techniques for measuring coral disease prevalence;
- \* Gather information on the distribution and abundance of coral diseases on local reefs;
- \* Monitor the health of local coral reefs and identify potential drivers of disease abundance;
- \* Contribute to a world-wide data base on coral disease; and
- \* Help to conserve the world's coral reefs.

[www.gefcoral.org](http://www.gefcoral.org)



The cards start with a decision tree for assessing the health status of corals. The decision tree is color-coded to assist with navigation through the cards. This step-by-step approach enables users to assess the health status of a coral. Observations can be recorded on a data sheet provided at the end of the card set.

Says Dr Hatzios: "The handbook outlines procedures for describing signs, measuring disease impacts, monitoring disease outbreaks, assessing causes, and managing reefs to minimize losses due to disease. It summarizes the relevant known science for managing coral disease and, in addition, it helps managers not only to document and manage disease on the reefs they are responsible for, but also allows them to contribute to our scientific understanding of this grave threat."

The handbook includes three chapters on identifying infectious syndromes and their impacts in the field; a chapter on coral disease monitoring protocols; a chapter detailing methods for detecting and assessing new outbreaks of disease; and a chapter on developing new management options for coral disease.

Says Professor Harvell: "The coral disease handbook emphasizes the synergies between infectious disease and the rapidly-changing facilitators of disease outbreaks, like global warming.

"These factors make coral disease management a 'moving target' requiring cooperation and knowledge exchange between microbiologists, molecular biologists, ecologists and managers. The handbook aims to integrate critical, current scientific information about coral disease to support and strengthen coral reef management."

The CRTR Program is a leading international coral reef research program that provides a coordinated approach to credible, factual and scientifically-proven knowledge for improved coral reef management.

The CRTR Program is an international partnership between the Global Environment Facility, the World Bank, The University of Queensland (Australia), the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and approximately 50 research institutes and other third-parties worldwide.

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