

# Coral Reef Degradation in the Indian Ocean

Status Report 2005

The coastal ecosystem of the Indian Ocean includes environments such as mangroves, sea-grass beds and coral reefs. These habitats are some of the most productive and diverse environments on the planet. They form an essential link in the food webs that leads to fish and other seafood providing food security to the local human population. In addition coral reefs and mangrove forests protect the coastal areas against erosion. Unfortunately, due to a number of human activities, these valuable environments are now being degraded at an alarming rate. The use of destructive fishing techniques on reefs, coral mining and pollution are examples of some of these stresses from local sources on the coral reefs. Climate change is another stress factor which is causing additional destruction of the reefs.

CORDIO is a collaborative research and development program involving expert groups in 11 countries of the Indian Ocean. The focus of CORDIO is to mitigate the widespread degradation of the coral reefs and other coastal ecosystems by supporting research, providing knowledge, creating awareness, and assist in developing alternative livelihoods. The program receives core support from Sweden (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) and is also supported by IUCN and Finland. This report presents the results from the period 2003–2005 and summarizes the activities since the start of the program in 1999.

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