Why do coral reefs matter to us?

Coral reefs are one of the most diverse and productive ecosystems in the world. They are home to a quarter of all marine species. The total area of coral reefs in Maldives is 4,513 km². Coral reefs are critical to human well-being.

1. Food Security
With an annual global economic value of $375 billion, coral reefs provide food for over 500 million people in 94 countries and territories, including Maldives where 181 kg of fish is consumed per capita per year.

2. Shoreline Protection
The entire population of Maldives lives within 2 km of a coral reef. Coral reefs buffer the shoreline from wave action and prevent erosion. Reefs protect highly productive wetlands, as well as ports, harbours and the economies they support.

3. Economic Benefits
Tuna fisheries rely on baitfish from coral reefs and contribute about USD 43 million per year to the GDP of Maldives. If coral reefs degrade, this could impact tuna fisheries. Coral reef fisheries targeting groupers, jacks, snappers, emperors are also growing in importance.

Tourism contributes 27.9% of Maldives’ GDP. Approximately one million tourists visit Maldives for its white sandy beaches and underwater beauty every year.

Threats

- Coral Bleaching
- Unsustainable and Destructive Fishing
- Sedimentation
- Dredging
- Ocean Acidification
- Pollution

How you can help

- Reduce Carbon Emissions
- Practice Safe and Responsible Diving and Snorkelling
- Support Reef-Friendly Businesses
- Spread the Word
- Dispose of your Waste Responsibly
- Don’t Consume Herbivorous or Unsustainable Fish

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