

CORAL REEFS AND BLUE ECONOMY

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Abstract

Coral reef ecosystems are rich in biodiversity and provide a number of services and products relevant to blue economy that include, for example, sectors such as tourism, fisheries, biotechnology/bioprospecting, and coastal protection. Almost half a billion people, 8% of the total global population, live within 100 km of a coral reef and about 100 developing countries are highly dependent on coral reefs for their livelihoods. Today, the health of coral reefs is affected by ocean warming and ocean acidification (bleaching, regime shifts) and other land- and sea-based human activities that lead to coral disease and destruction of reef habitat, among other damage. This study addresses aspects of coral reef ecosystems that are critical for their contribution to sustainable blue economies. In order to discuss the current status of their distribution, the threats that they experience and their potential impact as a blue economy resource. The needed measures to detect, monitor, and ameliorate the adverse impacts and the available science and technology tools to monitor reefs also discussed with the ongoing international efforts to apply state-of-the-art tools that might be of interest to countries developing blue economies

Keywords: *Coral Reefs, Symbiosis, Blue Economy, Reef Research and Monitoring, Conservation of Coral Reefs*