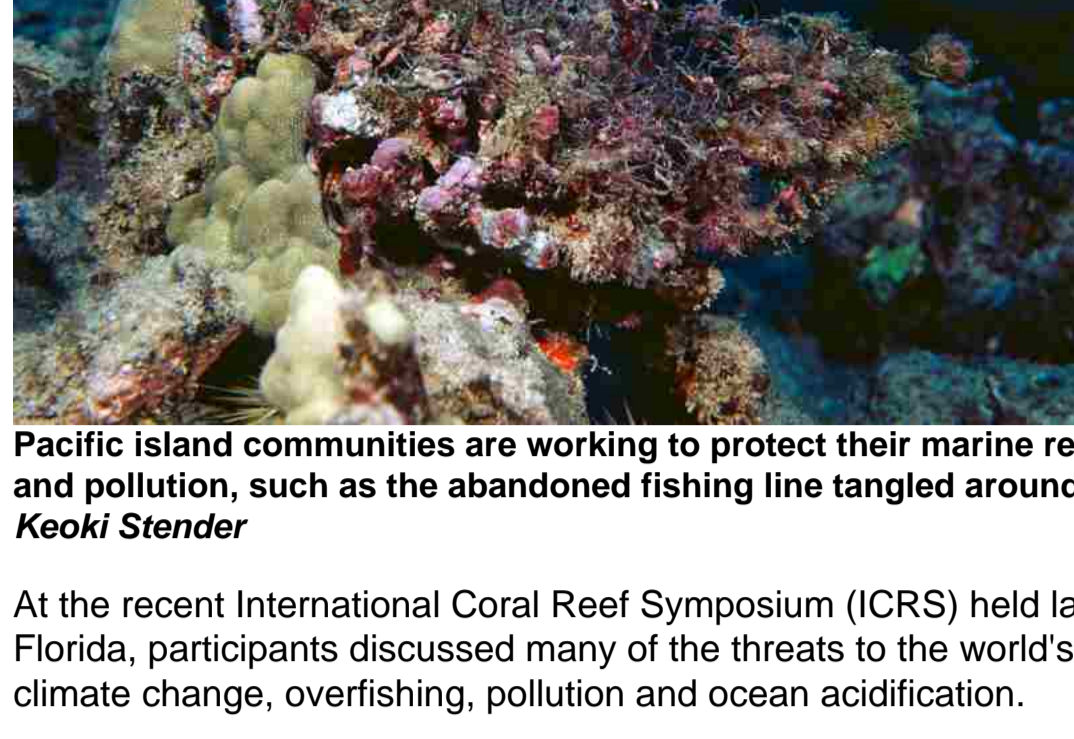


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## PACIFIC ISLANDERS USE VIDEOS TO MANAGE REEF RESOURCES



Pacific island communities are working to protect their marine resources from overfishing and pollution, such as the abandoned fishing line tangled around this dead coral.

*Keoki Stender*

At the recent International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS) held last month in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, participants discussed many of the threats to the world's coral reefs, including climate change, overfishing, pollution and ocean acidification.

But finding solutions to these issues is not the only task at hand. Researchers and resource managers must also find innovative ways to share their management strategies with the communities that are implementing them. But sharing information between islands with inadequate Internet resources is challenging.

To remedy the situation, an organization called the Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) Network is developing DVDs on some of the trials and triumphs of community-managed sites in the region, and then sending them to other countries that also have marine managed areas. In this way, communities are learning from each other and overcoming management issues together.

"We produced a video last year called 'Lessons Learned' [in which] we interviewed community members from several different countries who work with the network, speaking to community practitioners and leaders - to get their story in their own voice about the work they're doing at their marine sites," says LMMA spokeswoman Toni Parras.

Another organization, the Secretariat for the Pacific Region Environment Program (SPREP), is also using video technology to teach children how to care for their isle reefs. SPREP held a competition for secondary school children to come up with the best ideas for reef conservation. So far, 11 schools have received grants for their reef projects. All work will be filmed and shared with other students from different regions.

Source: *ABC Radio Australia*

Read more:

<http://www.abc.net.au/ra/news/features/s2311753.htm?page=Page4>

## FISH TAGGING PROJECT BEGINS IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

The Philippines, Brunei, Darussalam, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Myanmar have joined forces to tag five species of fish in the South China and Andaman seas.



The three-year collaborative research project will help scientists understand the migratory paths of fish such as the galunggung (round scad) and hasa-hasa (Indo-Pacific mackerel). Ultimately, the results of this project will provide scientific data to resource managers on regional fish populations, which will be the basis for a region-wide management plan to ensure that fisheries remain healthy.

Coral reef fish for sale at a Philippines market.  
(c) *Wolcott Henry 2005/Marine Photobank*

Malcolm Sarmiento, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) director says, "[The project] is meant to counter the adverse effects of over-fishing and help authorities come up with a reasonable conduct of fisheries within the region."

According to the Manila Standard Today, a nationally circulated newspaper published daily in the Philippines, 2,400 fish, belonging to two species of round scad and a species of mackerel, are targeted to be tagged in Manila Bay and Palwan this year.

The fisheries bureau tags fish at the base of their dorsal fins and then releases them back into the sea. Fishermen that return either frozen tagged fish or the tag and a record of the fish's size, species, place and date caught, along with the fishermen's name and contact number, to BFAR will receive monetary compensation for their efforts.

Source: *Manila Standard Today*

Read more:

[http://www.manilastandardtoday.com/?page=politics\\_3\\_july21\\_2008](http://www.manilastandardtoday.com/?page=politics_3_july21_2008)

## FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COULD SAVE CORALS FROM DEADLY STARFISH

A recent study found that commercial fishing bans on the Great Barrier Reef helped curb the coral-eating starfish known as the crown-of-thorns. This spiny starfish can grow up to two feet (0.6 meters) in diameter and have up to 20 arms.

The researchers reported that management of areas that include no-take zones has resulted in as many as seven times fewer outbreaks of the coral-devouring starfish. They hypothesize that restrictions have kept predatory fish out of fishing nets and on the reefs. While these larger species of fish do not feed on the crown-of-thorns, they do ingest smaller fish, which feed on small invertebrates. The invertebrates in turn feed on crown-of-thorns larvae. In the absences of large fish, the smaller fish numbers skyrocket and invertebrate numbers shrink, which results in less predation on starfish larvae.



Hugh Sweatman, a marine ecologist at the Australian Institute of Marine Science in Queensland estimates that crown-of-thorns starfish are responsible for about 40 percent of the drop in live coral coverage on the Great Barrier Reef. He said, "This study is yet another argument for instituting marine protection programs."

Source: *Scientific American*

Voracious crown-of-thorns starfish.  
*S. Romatzki/Marine Photobank*

Read more:

<http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=killer-starfish>

<http://environment.newscientist.com/channel/life/endangered-species/mg19926663.400-coral-killing-starfish-curbed-by-fishing-ban.html>

<http://upge.wn.com/?t=cheetah-article/postcomment.txt&action=form&article=WNAT462c3b9e31193a93c6c8974dd9d72bde>

## PAPUA NEW GUINEA TAKES STEPS TO INSURE ABUNDANCE OF MARINE RESOURCES



Motupore Island Research Center, Papua New Guinea.  
*Corinne Knutson/SeaWeb*

Creating a sense of community ownership for marine resources is an important factor in creating Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs), so much so that community governments in Papua New Guinea (PNG) have passed laws to safeguard certain marine resources.

According to the PNG LMMA Network, five local-level governments in PNG have laws in place to empower people from the region to protect and manage their own marine resources.

The Pere Island LMMA in the Manus Province of Papua New Guinea is one of these communities. In Pere, fishing occurs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Both women and men fish in the community. When residents noticed their fisheries declining, they opted to create a *tambu* or protected area with the help of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), an international conservation organization.

Now, a group of Pere Island residents are monitoring and surveying their own resources and moving forward with a Conservation Area Management Plan. In addition, the group is working with TNC to install a Fish Aggregation Device, or FAD. The FAD will ensure that fishers have open fishing grounds while enabling protected areas to remain closed to fishing.

Popot Kisoaku, a socio-economic officer of Mbuke LMMA said, "Since the establishment of the tambu area, we are now seeing an abundance of marine life, especially fish stocks."

Source: *The National*

Read more: <http://www.thenational.com.pg/070308/wkender6.php>

## FIJI'S GREAT BUTTERFLYFISH COUNT

For the first time in Fiji, several organizations have formed a tourism-working group to encourage Fiji's visitor industry to participate in marine conservation activities.

This year's activity, "The Great Butterflyfish Count," is part of the country's International Year of the Coral Reef 2008 efforts. Based on scientific survey techniques, Butterflyfish will be identified and counted throughout Fiji from Nov. 2 to 8, 2008. Anyone can help count the fish, but the project will primarily reach out to Fiji dive operators as well as resorts and hotels to involve their guests.



The count itself will take up to 30 minutes of a scheduled SCUBA dive or snorkel trip. However, participants can also count butterflyfish while aboard a glass-bottom boat with a trained guide. During this time, butterflyfish counters will be equipped with a waterproof clip board and illustrated guide to help them identify the particular species of butterflyfish. For each fish species seen, participants will place a mark in the relevant box on their survey.

Butterflyfish. *RSGallery2*

The count is slated to be an annual event. Marine scientists will use the numbers gathered from the project to map the butterflyfish's distribution in Fiji and compare these figures with measurements of the country's overall coral health to evaluate possible correlations.

Source: *The Great Fiji Butterflyfish Count*

Read more: <http://www.fijibutterflyfishcount.com/>

## MEDIA REVIEWS



**Marine Biology** by Peter Castro, Michael E. Huber, William C. Ober (Illustrator), 2007

Perfect for anyone working on ocean issues, this 459-page hardcover provides a marine overview of marine biology with an emphasis on global marine ecosystems. Accessible explanations of science, including the basic principals of biology, physical sciences and the scientific method, abound and are accompanied by stunning photographs and illustrations.



**Underwater Eden: 365 Days**, by Jeffrey L. Rotman, 2007

Leave it to veteran underwater photographer Jeffrey Rotman to open our eyes to all the ocean has to offer. Rotman in the last three decades documenting undersea life in the regions of Palau, Costa Rica and Australia's Great Barrier Reef. "Underwater Eden: 365 Days" is a culmination of his extensive work and comes complete with useful captions, scientific facts, trivia, and entertaining personal anecdotes from his countless hours spent in underwater observation.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

September 20, 2008: The Ocean Conservancy will hold its annual International Coastal Cleanup. For more information, please see: <http://www.oceanconservancy.org/site/Calendar/204718912?view=Detail&id=3221>

September 26 to October 11, 2008: A crown-of-thorns starfish and marine debris cleanup will be held in Bunaken National Park and Lembeh Strait, located in the North Sulawesi Peninsula. For more information, please see: <http://uwecotour.wordpress.com/>

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