



Lesson 3: Saving Florida's Coral Reef

Grades: 9-12

Activity: Survey a coral reef

Working to Save Florida's Coral Reef

Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative

The Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI) is a team of marine resource professionals, scientists, resource users, and stakeholders whose goal is the conservation and management of coral reefs.

This team focuses on the northern region of Florida's Coral Reef consisting of Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin County. The SEFCRI focuses on this region because of the reef's close proximity to shore and ability to co-exist with urbanized areas.

The southern portion of Florida's Coral Reef that extends outside of SEFCRI's region is managed by the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Together these teams work towards protecting and conserving the entire 350 miles of Florida's Coral Reef.



The SEFCRI Team has five main focus areas for managing the reef system which are outlined on the following pages →

1. Awareness and Appreciation



The Awareness and Appreciation focus area aims to educate residents and tourists about the importance of and threats to the near-shore coral reef ecosystem. The largest threat to coral reefs and other ocean ecosystems is the lack of knowledge and understanding of these habitats by the general public. By increasing awareness and helping residents and visitors understand the local reef ecosystem and what sort of threats the reef is facing, we can potentially reduce the human impact on these reefs.

2. Fishing, Diving, and Other Uses



This focus area addresses the coral reef impacts caused by activities of fishing, diving, and boating. These activities often result in unintentional, and often unseen, impacts that alter the reef ecosystem such as: overfishing of the reef, anchor scarring and damage, vessel groundings, and improper diving practices.

3. Land-based Sources of Pollution



This focus area aims to study the impacts of pollution on coral reefs and identify best management practices to limit this pollution. This focus area also studies the sources of land-based pollution and how to improve water quality around the reef system.

4. Maritime Industry and Coastal Construction



This focus area addresses the activities related to the maritime industry and coastal construction including vessel anchoring, infrastructure installation, beach nourishment, and dredging operations.

5. Reef Resilience



This focus area aims at improving the overall health of the coral reef for it to survive, reproduce, and compete for resources while also co-existing with human impact and urbanized expansion. A healthy reef is better at recovering from stress events and therefore more resilient.

Survey a Coral Reef!

