



WHY ARE SOME CORALS RESILIENT AND OTHERS ARE IN DECLINE?

Little Cayman, Cayman Islands; 19 December 2016

Why are some corals resilient and others are in decline?

This is the focus of a study currently being undertaken by the Central Caribbean Marine Institute (CCMI) in Little Cayman, with particular emphasis on improving the methods of coral restoration so that corals will begin reproducing in the wild. Data on temperature and light as well as fish populations on the coral reefs will also be gathered to determine those conditions optimal for growth and survival of these regenerated corals.

CCMI scientists hope to use the information that is gathered to improve upon the restoration success rate of the most endangered Caribbean coral species.

Funding for this project has been awarded to CCMI by the Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust. The UK-based trust, established in 1963, supports its founder's passion of conservation of wildlife and the natural environment, and is insistent on funding those projects that will 'make a difference'.

Dr. Carrie Manfrino, President of CCMI is grateful for the Trust's confidence in project: "the coral reefs around Little Cayman are exceptional in that they have demonstrated resilience over long periods of time. It is with this funding from the Ernest Kleinwort Trust that we can really start digging into the 'why' and hopefully use that information to be able to regenerate coral reefs that are dead or dying elsewhere in the Caribbean and around the world".

Restoration is the process of establishing new fragments of corals in a temporary nursery setting. After a period of six to nine months in the nursery, the corals are re-established, or 'out-planted' on the reef.

The Central Caribbean Marine Institute established the first coral restoration program in the Cayman Islands in partnership with the Cayman Islands Department of Environment in 2012. In the last three years, over a thousand new fragments of corals have been re-established in the wild. This new project builds upon this experience with a forward-looking philosophy that seeks to unlock the mystery of why some corals thrive and some are in decline.

The project is also being funded by the Dart Foundation and the Grindle Foundation, through their financial support of the intern who is working on the project.



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The Central Caribbean Marine Institute is a US, UK, and Cayman Islands non-profit organization whose mission is to protect coral reefs for the future by strengthening our understanding of what contributes to resilience and by reinforcing discoveries that offer hope to restore the balance of healthy coral reefs. We engage children and communities in active coral reef conservation as a part of our Science and Society initiative. Public and private contributions support our work.