



## Coral Ecosystem and Marine Resources Initiative T/E and Sensitive Species

Project # 10-306

### Background:

Up to 75% of the world's coral reefs are threatened due to continued pressure from both local and global stressors. Updated data on the conservation status of marine species shows dramatic increases in the number of threatened coral reef associated species. In order to make these data easily accessible to DoD Natural Resources Managers, the Coral Reef Initiative Database has been updated, expanded and reorganized. The database serves as an aid in the identification of sensitive coral reef species and their critical habitats in addition to providing the latest information on threats and assessment techniques. The database benefits resource managers by providing identification and data on species of special conservation status associated with coral reefs thereby allowing successful management and assessment of activities in coral reef environments.

### Objective:

The goal of this Legacy-funded project is to develop tools for consistent management and conservation of DoD protected marine species and associated benthic/marine habitat (coral reef ecosystems), including endangered threatened and sensitive resources and habitat. The final product is an updated version of the website based Coral Reef Initiative Database with specific information on Threatened and Endangered Species.

### Summary of Approach:

An update of the Coral Reef Initiative Database website/database provides resource managers with information on coral reef ecosystems. A new section with information on Threatened and Endangered species associated with coral reef habitats. Lists of species in the vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered categories (Threatened) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List were compiled and can be searched by region or by organism. Links are provided to outside sources as well as pdfs of the scientific literature. Fact sheets on critically endangered species are being compiled.

### Benefit:

DoD benefits from increased marine resource awareness through improved consistency in applying policy and resource protection measures while reducing resource management costs. The database provides resource information for DoD managers to



Staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis*) a critically endangered species occurring in the Caribbean.

assist in compliance with numerous Federal Acts and Executive Orders particularly with regards to the need to inventory biologically or geographically significant or sensitive natural resources. The database provides resource information for use in decision-making regarding on-shore or near-shore activities in order to maintain military readiness with minimal adverse impacts to the marine environment. It serves as an in-house resource for locating underwater resources and identifying potential impacts related to mission needs, operations or development projects. The ultimate goal is for long-term conservation of marine resources under DoD management.

### Accomplishments:

The newly reorganized and expanded Coral Reef Initiative Database provides an easily accessible, up to date and fully documented database that DoD Natural Resource Managers can utilize to use to identify species of special conservation status and evaluate compliance with T/E regulations.

### Contact Information:

Phillip Lobel, Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology  
Biology Department  
Boston University  
5 Cummington St. Boston, MA 02215  
617-358-4586  
plobel@bu.edu

