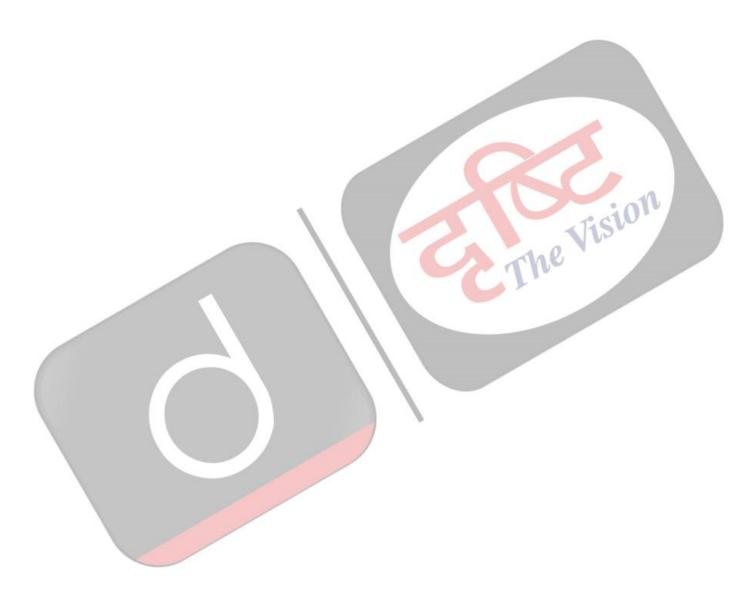


Coral Reefs

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Coral Reefs



(Rainforests of the seas)



About

- Large underwater structures made of skeletons of colonial marine invertebrates 'coral' – individually called polyp
- Symbiotic Relationship with algae 'zooxanthellae' (responsible for beautiful colours of corals)
- Support over 25% of marine biodiversity

Hard Corals vs Soft Corals

- # Hard Corals Rigid skeleton made of CaCO₃ - reef-building corals
- Soft Corals Non reef-building

Great Barrier Reef (Australia)

- ▼ World Heritage Site (1981)



Corals in India

Present in the areas of Gulf of Kutch, Gulf of Mannar, Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep Islands and Malvan



Significance

- Coral reefs protect coastlines from storms/erosion, provide jobs, offer opportunities for recreation
- Source of food/medicines

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Threats

- Natural: Temperature, Sediment Deposition, Salinity, pH, etc.
- Anthropogenic: Mining, Bottom Fishing, Tourism, pollution, etc.



Coral Bleaching

- Corals under stress expel algae thus turning white (bleached)
- Bleached corals not dead but, more risk of starvation/disease



Initiatives to Protect Corals

Technology

- ⊈ Cyromesh: Storage of the coral larvae at (-196°C) Can be later reintroduced to the wild
- Biorock: Creating artificial reefs on which coral can grow rapidly



Global

- ▼ International Coral Reef Initiative
- ▼ The Global Coral Reef R&D Accelerator Platform

Indian

National Coastal Mission Programme



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