

PARTNERS AND CONTACTS

The Darwin Reef Fish Project (DRFP) is a partnership between the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) UK and the Marine Research Centre (MRC) Maldives. Other stakeholders are the fishermen and divers.

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DARWIN REEF FISH PROJECT

The greatest diversity of life in the Maldives is associated with its coral reefs and the reefs also underpin the two mainstays of the Maldives economy - tourism and fisheries.

Over 200 reef fish species are exploited either for food or the aquarium trade and the aim of the Darwin Reef Fish Project is to ensure these fisheries are monitored, managed and sustainable.



MALDIVES CORAL REEF FISH - INVALUABLE BUT VULNERABLE

One of the attractions of the Maldives as a tourist destination is the opportunity to see healthy populations of a wide variety of coral reef fish. Apart from this indirect value, coral reef fish are of direct fishery value.



At least 70 species are targeted for food and 120 species for the aquarium trade. Fish populations are also affected by events such as declines in coral reef health due to global climate change.



Aims of the Darwin Reef Fish Project

- o Establish a nation-wide programme to monitor coral reef fish and reef ecosystem health.
- o Establish a system for long-term monitoring of fish catch and effort for food and aquarium species.
- o Develop a management plan for Maldives coral reef fisheries based on the findings of the survey and monitoring programme and in consultation with all stakeholders. The aim of the plan will be to ensure conservation of biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods.