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PROGRAMA DE RESTAURACIÓN DE ARRECIFES by oceanus,a.c.

CORAL REEF RESTORATION PROGRAM *(Acropora palmata)*

The coral reef restoration program developed at Punta Nizuc and El bajito reefs as part of the proyect "Strengthening Management Effectiveness and Resilience of Protected Areas to Safeguard Biodiversity Threatened by Climate Change" financed by GEF administered by UNDP and implemented by CONANP, Oceanus, A.C. and partners, seek to improve the resilience and adaptation of coral reef and to contribute to the recovery of associated species of the fish and invertebrates by growing colonies of coral in ocean nurseries. To ensure the genetic diversity of restoration sites, the genotypes of donor populations are identified.

An effective restoration technique involves the use of coral nurseries to stabilize fragments, which have been rescued from donor population areas

These fragments are broken naturally by currents and storms and rescued to be used in restoration sities. Once estabilized on the nursuries, fragments are then trasplanted in selected sities along the Mesoamerican Reef System and the Gulf of México.

Once these new colonies have reached maturity and are able to reproduce sexually and asexually, restoration afforts will have a multiplier affect to propagate corals building reefs locally and regionally.

CAUTION

VISIT WITH CERTIFICATED GUIDE
DO NOT USE SUNBLOCK
DO NOT REMOVE CORALS
DO NOT TOUCH
BE CAREFUL WITH YOUR FINS
DO NOT HARM THE CORALS

Restoration sites

El bajito

Punta Nizuc

El bajito

Punta Nizuc

El bajito

Do you know that?

From an environmental perspective, coral reefs are extremely important structures that:

- Reduce the force with which waves reach the shore, thereby preventing the erosion of coastal areas.
- Protect coastal communities from tropical storms and hurricanes.
- Provide spawning and nursery grounds for economically and ecologically valuable marine populations (groupers, snappers, lobsters, mollusks, turtles, etc.)
- Attract tourists due to their visual beauty.

Whats does "restoration" mean?

By ecological restoration we mean activities that help a damaged ecosystem to recover its structure and function.

¿Why *Acropora Palmata*?

The Elkhorn coral (*Acropora palmata*) is a species that plays an important role in building reefs in shallow waters. Its branch-like structure provides a safe habitat for many organisms of great economic and ecological value.

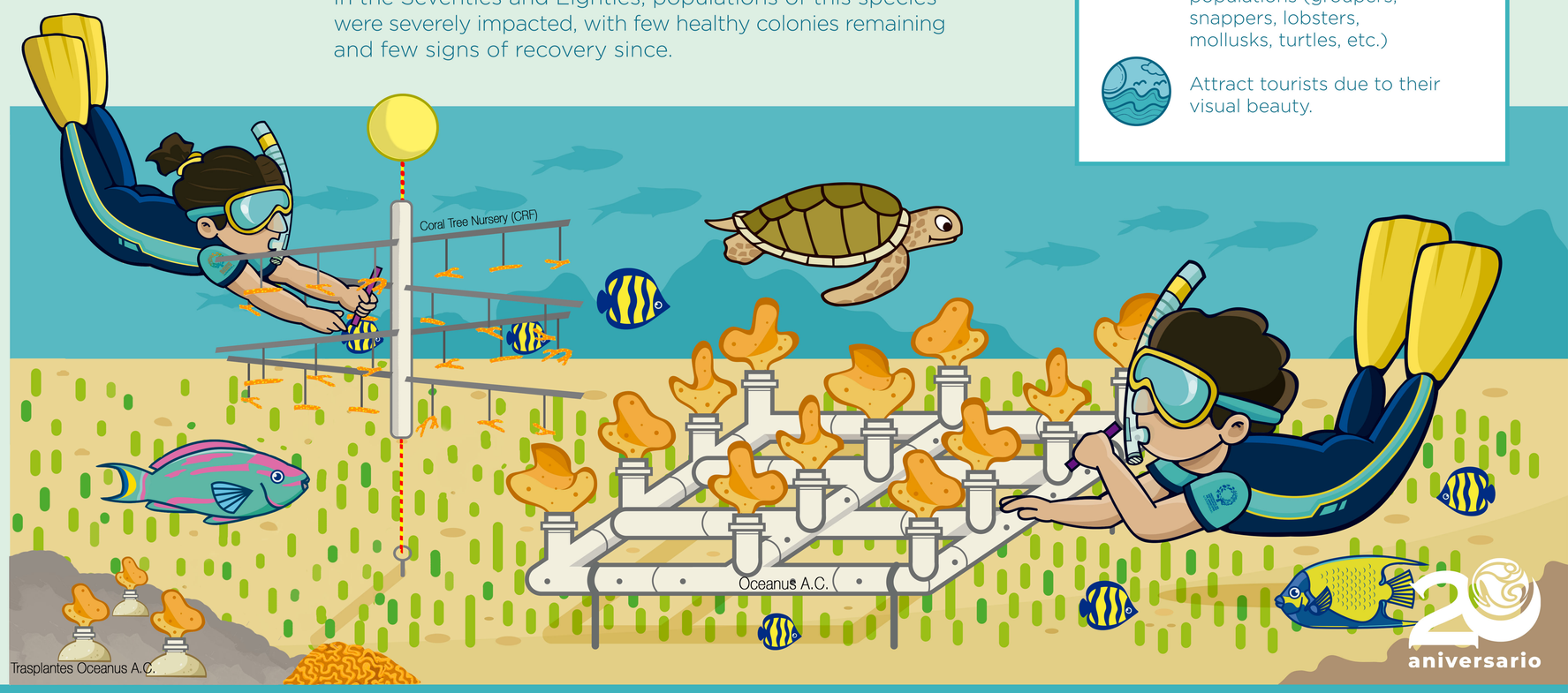
In the Seventies and Eighties, populations of this species were severely impacted, with few healthy colonies remaining and few signs of recovery since.

Sexual and Asexual Reproduction strategies

Corals reproduce and disperse both sexually and asexually.

Sexual reproduction generally take place once a year during full moon. Corals release gametes (sperm and ovules), which are fertilized externally in the water.
The resulting larva travels on the ocean currents until it finds a place with the right conditions to "take root".

Once this cristal phase has been surmounted, the larva turns into a polyp that is capable of reproducing asexually by dividing into many identical individuals. In the case of branching corals like the *Acropora palmata* species, asexual reproduction is achieved by fragmentation, which occurs naturally with the ebb and flow of ocean currents.



Please Contact a Certified Restoration Guide

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