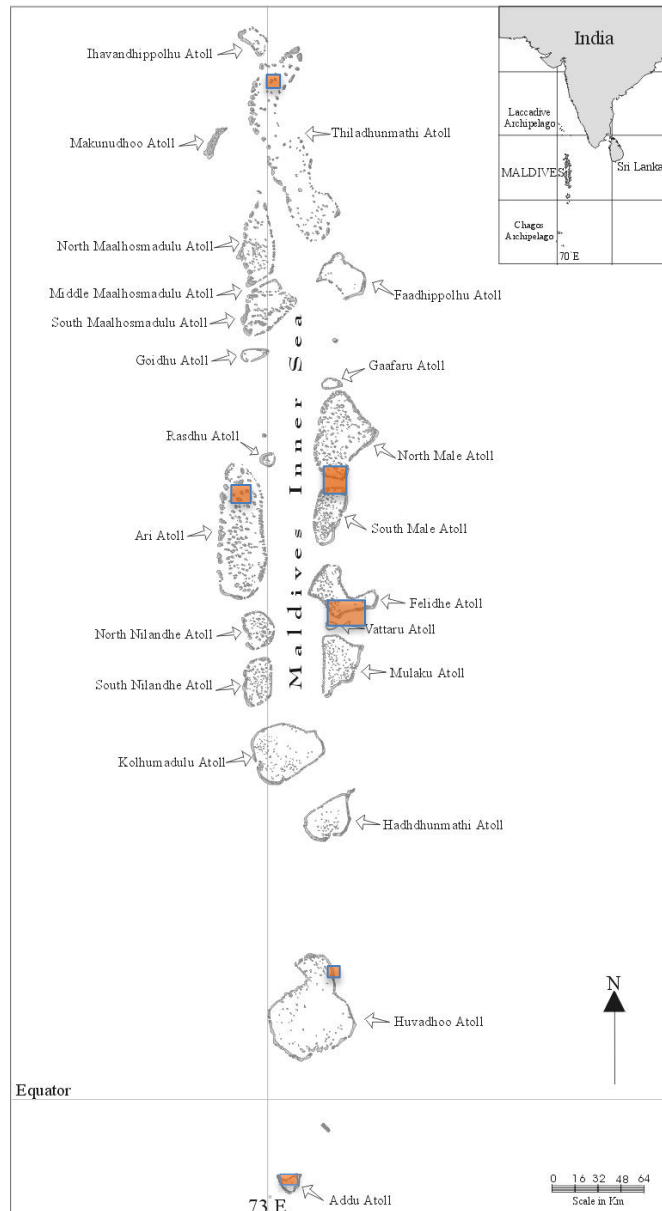


Coral reef Monitoring in the Maldives

By the
Marine Research Center
Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture
Male, Maldives

Distribution of Monitoring sites



- 5000 sq km of coral reefs
 - 16 complex atolls representing the largest atolls in the world
 - 5 simple ring shaped atolls
 - 4 oceanic reefs
 - 2000 + individual reefs
 - 1200 coral islands
-
- 6 sites / regions
 - 3 reefs at each site in shallow water
 - line transects at depths from 3-10 meters
 - Most sites monitored annually from 1998

Fig 2 The structure and arrangement of the 22 atolls of Maldives

History of Monitoring

- Establishment of a coral reef unit in the early 90s.
- Non formal monitoring has continued since then
- GCRMN South Asia Node was established in 1997
- Current sites established in response to 1998 bleaching

What is monitored

- Mainly coral cover most regularly
- Coral cover has increased from 0 % in 1998 to 60 % cover in some areas by 2009.
- Reef check protocols used in 2009
- Fish, sponges, echinoderms, holothurians, crustaceans, mollusks,

Monitoring Partnerships

- Coral reef based tourism development
- 100 resort islands covering many 100's reefs
- Opportunities for collaboration
- New monitoring protocol under development which involves resorts and NGOs
- Reef fish project – Darwin Initiative/Marine Conservation Society
- Atoll ecosystem project – GEF funded
- Mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment reports – Ministry of Environment

Success and Challenges

- Setting up MPS's dedicated to protect large reef areas - Biosphere reserve at Baa Atoll
- Setting up partnerships with tourist resorts to monitor coral reefs
- Managed to phase out shark fishing
- Developed plans to manage grouper fishing.
- Lack of capacity and resources for monitoring

Reports

The results of the most recent monitoring can be found at www.mrc.gov.mv/publications

Thank you

