



Beyond the reef: assessing ecosystem services arising from coral reef restoration to improve people's livelihood in Shimoni, Kenya

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Motivation

Coral reefs are crucial marine ecosystems, for their rich biodiversity also described as underwater tropical rain forest. They support the wellbeing and livelihoods of locals and coastal communities with ecosystem services and goods. The reefs are increasingly faced with threats from unsustainable fishing practises such as blast and drag net fishing as well as bleaching due to climate change. Coral reef restoration is a relatively new approach used to restore healthy reef ecosystems and enhance numerous socio-economic benefits to local communities and involved stakeholders. However, while most attention focused on ecological aspects, this led to minimal focus on socio-economic aspects. Therefore, it is yet difficult to assess the societal impact arising from reef restoration efforts. This study aspires to unveil the societal impact arising from reef restoration as perceived by local communities to contribute on how to improve marine conservation practises best. The study area is the Shimoni seascape.

case study approach will be used to achieve the research objectives.



Collecting coral fragments by divers. Photo: E. Knoester



Reef restoration using Bottle reef. Photo: E. Knoester

Aims and Objectives

- To map and assess ecosystem services and socio-economic benefits arising from coral reef restoration and their flows.
- To examine stakeholder's engagement, motivation, and expectations in reef restoration.
- To explore potential collaboration between different stakeholders to create an alternative sustainable livelihood avenue.

Method

The research will be conducted in Shimoni, southern coast Kenya where a coral reef restoration initiated by REEFolution Foundation in 2015 and has been ongoing since. Locals from Mkwiro village, Wasini Island are involved, and are among the targeted stakeholders to be included in the data collection strategy. A combination of qualitative research methods and techniques, and



Shimoni-Vanga seascape multi-stakeholder forum



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