



Would you like to do field work on a remote tropical coral reef?

We have an exciting opportunity for a MSc student with diving experience to work on the role of iron availability on reef resilience on Mo'orea, French Polynesia

PhD candidate
M. A. Streekstra, MSc

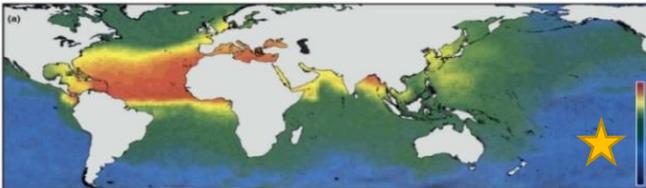
Staff supervisor WUR
Dr R. Osinga

2nd supervisor

Description

Background: The resilience of coral reefs to transition to a coral-depleted state differs across oceans, with reefs in the Caribbean Sea more likely to shift to states dominated by algae and cyanobacteria compared to Indo-Pacific reefs. This difference in resilience could be due to higher iron availability in the Caribbean, which may alleviate nutrient limitation of primary producers and stimulate their growth. However, this hypothesis has never been studied experimentally.

Aim and method: the aim of this study is to tease apart the effects of iron enrichment on reef community composition in relation to the availability of other nutrients and the presence of herbivory in the field. The fieldwork will be conducted in Moorea, French Polynesia in collaboration with the CRIOBE.



Star = Moorea. Adapted from Roff & Mumby, 2012

We previously established long-term experimental plots that include different benthic organisms (sponges, corals, algae and cyanobacteria). These plots provide excellent opportunity to work on your own project focussing on your interests, while you would contribute to the overarching project by acquiring monitoring data. You could work on the effects of enrichment on sponge functioning and nutrient cycling, microbiome shifts, benthic community development or coral-algal interactions in relation to herbivory.

Used practical skills

- Diving;
- Field work under water (functional measurements, transects, sampling of tissue, water, sediment) and accompanying tasks (planning dives, driving motor boats, filling tanks);
- Depending on chosen subject; functional ecology, microbiology or molecular biology.



Requirements

- 30 logged dives and at least PADI Rescue diver certification or equivalent before commencing field work.
- Interest in marine ecology and/ or microbial ecology. You would work on a stunning, yet remote island, so a strong motivation and an independent attitude are important. You are encouraged to apply in pairs.
- You will need to cover costs associated with travel and accommodation yourself. We can support you acquiring funding from third parties and you will receive a strongly reduced fee (18euro/day) which includes accommodation, diving, use of office, boats and cars.



Would you like to get involved in this project or want to know more? Just shoot me an email!



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 Marine biology & molecular development, *cum laude*
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Photo by dr B. Müller