

Coral Reef Ecology and Conservation

Course code: ENV 3210

Total contact hours: 60 hours

Pre-requisite: None.

Note: Students must have basic swimming skills

Course Overview

Coral reefs are vital organisms for the health of marine ecosystems; the good state of the food chain depends on them and, therefore, the marine resources on which millions of families in the world depend; Despite this, too little or nothing is known about them in everyday life. In addition to this, this year (2023) the largest coral bleaching event in recent years has occurred in Costa Rica, this terrible event gives added value to the course, since education is the only way to prevent these events are repeated.

This ignorance about these ecosystems means that people are unaware of the basic measures to help in their conservation. Learning about them is not only knowing about their ecology and taxonomy, but also understanding the impact of our actions and the ways to help in the preservation of this ecosystems.

In this course you will learn about the origin of corals, their biology and ecology, as well as the species associated with them. The identification of the main species that make it up will also be covered; the characteristics to measure their health status, sampling and monitoring methods, and the ecological and social importance of reefs.

The main purpose of this course is to generate knowledge about coral reefs, to understand their importance, and the ways we have to collaborate in it wellbeing.