

Commission: **Environment**

Session : **7th Zonal MUN 2024**

Sponsors : **Australia, Bulgaria, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Madagascar, Mauritius, Republic of Korea (S), Sierra Leone, South Africa, Vietnam**

QUESTION OF: **ENSURING THE PROTECTION OF CORAL REEFS**

The General Assembly,

Recognising the vital importance of coral reefs as biodiversity hotspots that provide essential ecosystem services, that include coastal protection and food security that support the livelihoods of millions of people,

Alarmed by the significant threats to coral reefs that arise from marine heatwaves, overfishing, pollution and unsustainable coastal development,

Recalling that since the Industrial Revolution, ocean acidity has increased by about 30% and is expected to rise by an additional 40% above present levels by the end of this century,

Concerned that overfishing negatively impacts coral reef ecosystems by disrupting the balance of certain fish species, which are crucial for controlling algal growth and maintaining reef health, leading to a decline in coral reef populations,

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Fully aware that global wastes which also contribute towards the destruction of coral reefs are expected, according to the latest report of the World Bank, to increase to 3.4 billion tones per year by 2050, representing an increase of 70% compared to the 2016 levels,

Grieved that coral bleaching that occurs when corals experience stress from marine heatwaves have resulted in the deaths of a third of the Great Barrier reef and half of the corals on Australian famous reef,

Deploring the lack of conservation efforts as limited resources and infrastructure hinder the effectiveness of conservation efforts,

Bearing in mind that an estimated 4,000 fish species and some 25 percent of marine life depend on coral reefs at some point in their existence,

1. Stresses the importance of education and public awareness campaigns, by:

a) Launching community-based education programs to raise awareness about coral reef conservations;

b) Empowering local communities to actively participate in conservation efforts;

c) Engaging youth in conservation activities and education programs to foster environmental stewardship among future generations;

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2. Recommends the use of social media platforms to raise awareness about the consequences of coral bleaching;
3. Draws the attention of Member States to ameliorate the drainage system and treatment plants to prevent water pollution;
4. Endorses the regulation fishing operations to stop overfishing and the use of harmful fishing techniques, as well as encouraging sustainable fishing methods through community-based management plan;
5. Urges the implementation strategies to minimize and address ocean acidization impacts through enhanced scientific cooperation;
6. Further recommends the replacement of plastic bags with bags made from recyclable materials in local and businesses;
7. Requests the United Nations Environment Programs (UNEP) and other international organisations to continue to provide guidance, capacity-building and support Member States in their efforts to protect coral reefs;
8. Welcomes the implementation of the crown of thorns starfish control program that supports coral growth and recovery by effectively controlling the coral predator to ecologically sustainable levels;

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9. Supports the development of environmentally friendly tourism strategies to reduce the negative effects of tourism on coral reefs such as limiting the activities that visitors can engage in and using equipment that are safe for the reef;

10. Requests the help of international organisations, NGOs and local communities to implement coral reef conservation;

11. Encourages the creation and the use of climate adaptation schemes, such as initiatives to breed robust coral species and restore damaged reefs via artificial reef structures and coral transplantation.