

USAID/UNF/ICRAN Marine Tourism Alliance: Enhancing Tourism Competitiveness in the Dominican Republic

Reef Check Foundation with local partners:
La Romana Bayahibe Hotel Association,
Fundacion MAMMA, CIBIMA

January 2005

- December 2008



Tourism Industry in DR



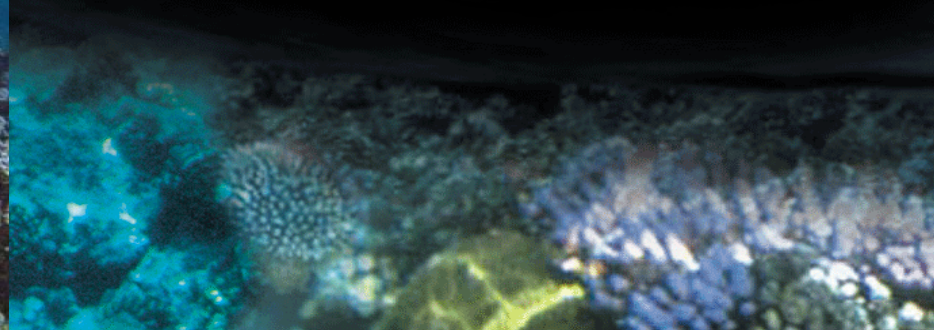
Poorly developed
Eco-tourism,



Large coral reef component in DR coast
Many reefs damaged or dead



DR not known as diving /
snorkeling destination



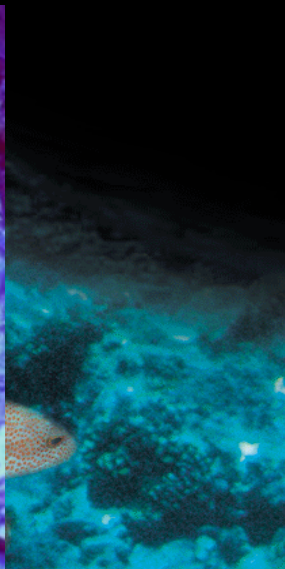
Coral Reef Conservation Problems



Reefs in the DR damaged by:
Pollution,
Over-fishing, and
Physical impacts.



Potential for recovery if
properly protected



Damage increasing

**Coastal
development**



Uneducated divers



Demand for seafood



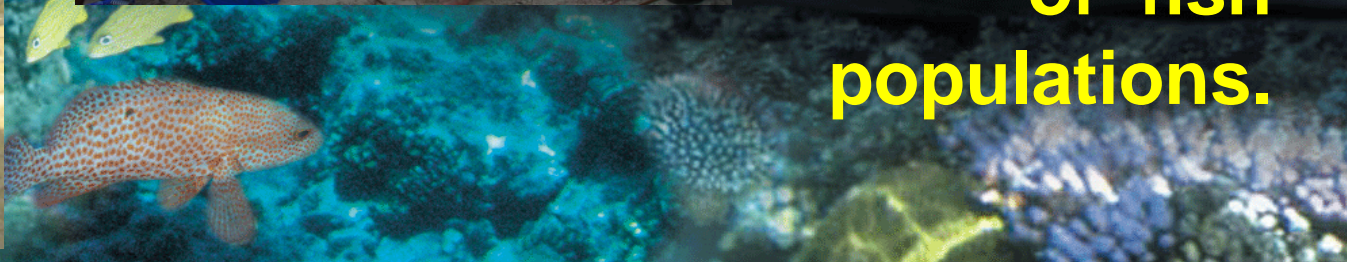
Tourism problem → Tourism solution

**Education,
management.**



Monitoring

**Natural
rehabilitation
of fish
populations.**



But How...?



...Can the DR become “the most competitive business, production and tourism center of the Caribbean and Central America...”

Must “offer higher value-added or new product and service offerings”

2000 USAID/Chemonics report “Competitive Strategy For The Dominican Republic,”



Reef Check's approach

Financial incentives by offering better services and other products

and better practices



Business model approach

Coral reef conservation as a product and service opportunity

Providing a steady revenue to be used for:

Education, Monitoring,

Rehabilitation and Management activities



Harness the enthusiasm of recreational divers who are coral reef conservation's greatest asset

Goals and Objectives of the Project

The goal of the Project is to transform the interaction between tourists and hotels into:

An enjoyable educational experience

Better conservation of coral reefs and

Aid in the natural rehabilitation of damaged reefs.



Objectives of the Project

Design, produce and market of an eco-education program

Training of trainers to staff / divemasters / Instructors

Reef Conservation educational activities to local schools and interested adults

Assist the government to plan a coral reef monitoring and management network



Objectives cont...

Enhance tourism competitiveness in the DR by:

Offering higher value-added tourism services and products

Offering unique and diverse products not available at other destinations

Empowering local people to provide higher quality services

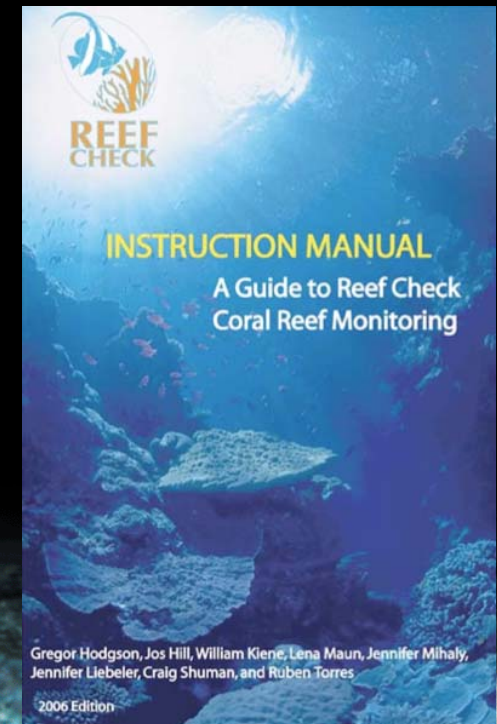
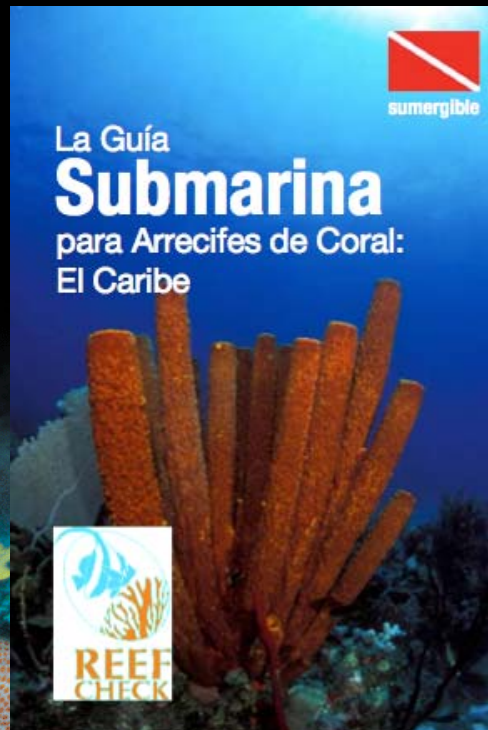
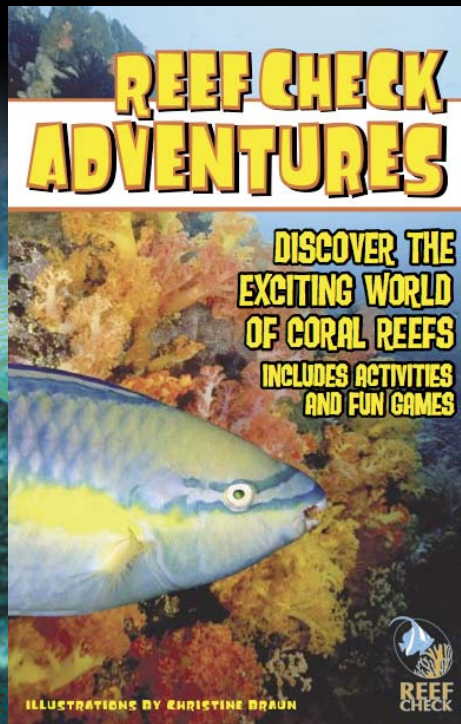
Adopting international best practices with respect to the environment via the Blue Flag initiative



Results and Progress to date

Development and marketing of a coral reef educational program for tourist, hotel staff and Dive masters

Coral Reef Adventure
UW Guide
Reef Check Diver
Reef Check Plus



Results and Progress to date

Poster promoting better management of coastal marine resources to sustain tourism practices

ARRECIFES SANOS IGUAL A:

PLAYAS HERMOSAS

Los Arrecifes de Coral protegen las playas del oleaje y la erosión. Cuando mueren se convierten en arena; además, son fuente de alimento de muchas especies marinas. Debemos protegerlos!

Reef Check ayuda a conservar los arrecifes en más de 80 Países o Territorios. **¡INTEGRATE A ESTE ESFUERZO ANTES QUE SEA DEMASIADO TARDE!**

www.reefcheckdr.org • E-mail: info@reefcheckdr.org

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UNETE!

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Reef Check Protocol for Monitoring

**Reef Check Training
for hotel staff and
Dive Masters**

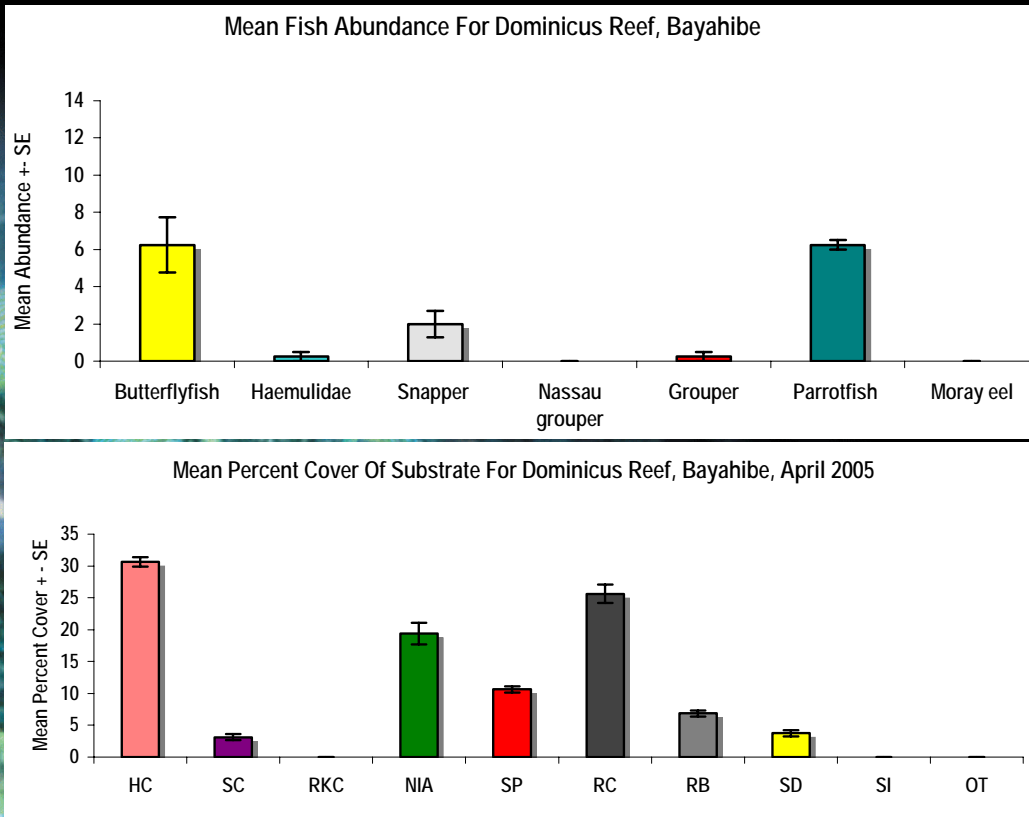


**40+ trainings sessions
50+ volunteers**

Coral Reef Health Monitoring

Development and Implementation of a coral reef monitoring program, for local and global use

50+ Surveys
50+ volunteers



Lectures for all

Establishment of one of the first RC youth programs worldwide



Field trip for hands on (not really!) learning about coral reefs



10+ Lectures,
2 Field Trips

Institutional Capacity Building

Establishment of a local NGO in the DR

Hired and trained 2 staff and 50+ volunteers

Marketing plan for the RC Eco-education Program through hotels and resorts

Assisting the government to plan a coral reef monitoring and management network



Status

Final production of educational kits by December 2006

RC-DR Board with 17 members established

Full implementation of a monitoring program for the DR

Market the RC Eco-education Program through hotels and resorts

Aid in the design of Nation-wide Marine Protected Area (MPA) system



Future

Expand monitoring program to rest of DR

Expand line of products to other countries

Development of an educational program for high schools, college, government



Conclusion

Excellent support from tourism industry

Products and training testing and development on track

Locals and tourists empowered on reef conservation

Additional resources needed to match language needs of tourists





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