

Coral Reef Management Strategy policies in Thailand: Lessons learnt for a Decade

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Thailand coral reef management policies have been implemented since 1992. Six key policies include manage coral reefs according to their different ecological and economic values to maintain a balance of uses; reduce degradation of coral reefs by increasing the effectiveness of existing laws and measures ; build and maintain strong and broad public revision and additions to existing laws, administrative directives, and institutions so that effective management is feasible ; monitor and evaluate progress in accomplishing the objectives of the National Coral Reef Strategy ; support management through scientific research and innovation. Measures and actions under each policy clarify how the policy will be achieved, and who has responsibility for taking action. Coral reef zoning guidelines have been also provided. All coral reefs in Thailand have been assigned to one of three management categories : reef managed for local needs and benefits, reef managed for national tourism and recreation (intensive tourism and ecotourism) and reef managed for national ecological and scientific benefits. Obviously, coral reef management in Thailand rests on laws and regulations that apply to all coral reefs and additional measures applicable only to marine protected areas. In recent years, central agencies, provincial governments and NGOs have applied non-regulation actions in order to improve coral reef conditions through rehabilitation, preventive measures and education. In general, participation of local people, effectiveness of law enforcement and education are major factors for the success of coral reef management in Thailand.