

OCEAN LIFE

CORAL REEF



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Name:

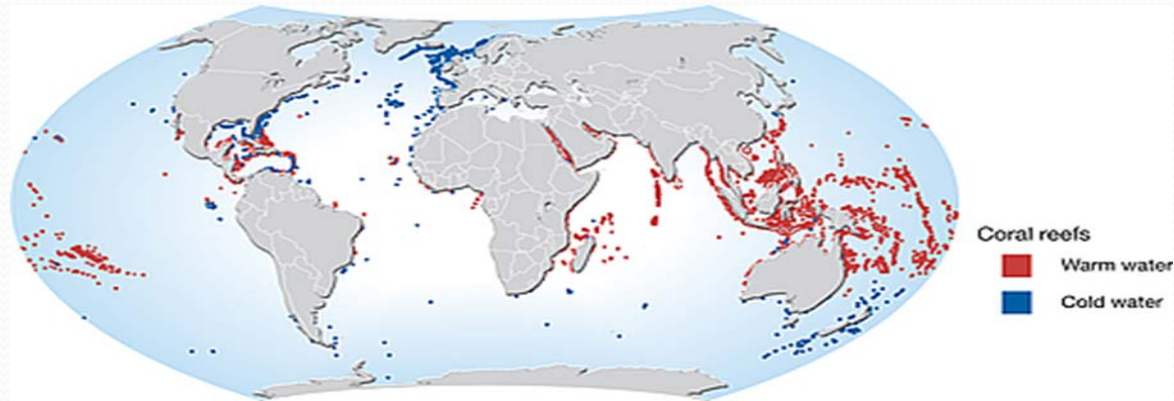
Reefs are called 'rainforests of the sea' as they are among Earth's most diverse ecosystems underwater.

Formation:

Reefs are made up of groups of coral polyps that are held together by calcium carbonate.

Habitat:

Coral reefs occupy less than 0.1% of the world's oceans but they are home to 25% of all marine life (2 million species)!



Threats:

¼ of coral reefs worldwide are under threat due to:

- Climate change. Corals cannot survive if the water temperature is high and global warming has already led to increased levels of coral bleaching.
- Destructive fishing practices. These include cyanide fishing, blast or dynamite fishing and bottom trawling.
- Overfishing. This affects the ecological balance of coral reef.

- Careless tourism. Careless boating, diving, snorkeling, and fishing happens around the world with people touching reefs, stirring up sediment, collecting coral, and dropping anchors on reefs. Some tourist resorts have been built on top of reefs.
- Pollution. Urban and industrial waste, sewage, agrochemicals and oil spills are poisoning reefs. Some pollutants increase the level of nitrogen in seawater, causing the overgrowth of algae, which kill reefs by cutting off their sunlight.
- Coral mining. Live coral is removed from reefs to be used as bricks and cement for the construction of new buildings. Corals are also sold as souvenirs to tourists .

- **Coral bleaching:**

