

## UQ's CoralWatch joins forces with international reef monitoring program.

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[The University of Queensland's](http://www.uq.edu.au/news/index.html?article=15143) research project '[CoralWatch](http://www.coralwatch.org)' is joining the United Nations' official community-based reef monitoring program, Reef Check, to assess the health of local coral reefs in South East Queensland.

CoralWatch Project Manager David Logan said that while the two organisations had communicated with each other since CoralWatch began in 2003, it is only now in 2008, the International Year of the Reef, that the two have decided to collaborate more closely.

Mr Logan said that CoralWatch focused on studying the health of corals on reefs, collecting data and adding to the work of Reef Check.

Both CoralWatch and Reef Check look at the effects of local and global threats such as over-fishing, sedimentation, pollution and climate change on local reefs.

CoralWatch also places a premium on public education of the effects of global warming and believe that public involvement in reef monitoring can increase awareness of the damaging effects of climate change.

CoralWatch's development of the Coral Health Chart has provided a practical way for all members of the public to become involved with monitoring coral health.

"Users just match the colour of the coral with the coded colours on the chart to survey the coral's health." Mr Logan said. "It can be used by scientists, school children, tourist divers, politicians, basically everyone." All data collected can be submitted and viewed online at [www.coralwatch.org](http://www.coralwatch.org)

Both Reef Check and CoralWatch are working with the Project AWARE Foundation who train and register recreational diving volunteers to help monitor the reefs.

The groups will be conducting scientific surveys on reefs on the Gold and Sunshine Coasts, Morton Bay and Stradbroke Island during July and August.

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Mr Logan (left) and Jonathon Werry from Reef Check South East Queensland