

## **‘Plant a Coral’ By Maalu Maalu Passikudah, twelve months later...**

A year has passed since the first coral was replanted in the Passikudah Bay by Maalu Maalu Resort and Spa’s, ‘Plant a Coral’ project. When we first spoke about the corals, one thing that stood out was how heartbreaking it was that the bay and its waters were so beautiful, and yet the coral lay shattered and broken underneath.

Twelve months later, the underwater landscape has changed so much, one would hardly recognize the place. The Plant a Coral project has managed to rebuild the reef over an extent about 300 m<sup>2</sup> on the sea bed. Almost all the fish that we see in the healthy reef further down the coastline is also present here, which means that the fish agree that this reef is alive and a good source of sustenance.

The artificially restored area is full of ornamental fish, who have been lured back to play among the beautiful live corals. The once dead area is teeming with marine activity and the sea is alive once again.

Maalu Maalu Resort & Spa along with UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme and the Wildlife Research & Conservation Trust (WRCT) helped spearhead this project with the able assistance of volunteers from the University of Peradeniya guided by Prof. K B Ranawana, Department of Zoology. The waste cement is provided by Tokyo Cement as a part of their sustainable initiative for this one-of-a-kind marine conservation project.

Photo-story lines:

The corals have grown so fast, there are special studies to understand why Passikudah Bay is so fertile.

The fish seem entranced by the beautiful live coral. Everywhere you look, there is something colorful.

There is a rainbow of marine biodiversity within a coral reef habitat.

September 2013, corals were artificially planted on these boulders using a cement base, and they are growing well.





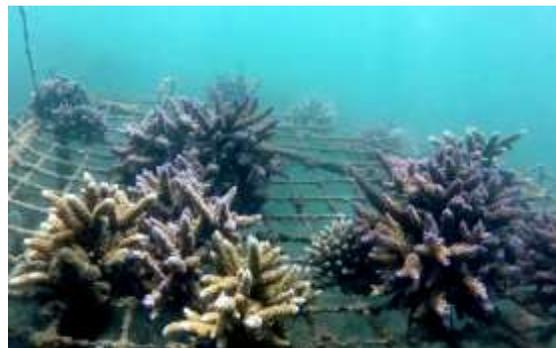
Underwater, mystical dome shaped structures made with metal are visible with corals planted on them.



Metal structure with metal mesh laid over it and corals planted inside cement cups.  
The structure stands up two to three feet above the ground and is a coral plant nursery.



*A year back*



*Today...*

Various coral species are growing well in the concrete boulders.

The holes in the concrete boulders appear to be very good habitats for the fish and some have already marked their territories within the boulders.



WRCT projects are carried with community approach together with livelihood development.  
The fishermen in the nearby villages are very keen to see the reef restored.

**Previous articles about “Plant a Coral” - Coral reef restoration project**

<http://www.maalumaalu.com/news/plant-a-coral-coral-reef-restoration-project.html>