



PRESS RELEASE

Opening of Africa's First Land-Based Coral Aquaculture Facility for Climate Adaptation, Praslin Island, Republic of Seychelles

[Embargoed until May 9th, 2025]

Nature Seychelles is proud to announce the **grand opening of the Assisted Recovery of Corals (ARC) Facility**, Africa's first land-based coral aquaculture facility for climate adaptation and conservation.

The facility, located adjacent to **Nature Seychelles' Centre for Ocean Restoration Awareness and Learning (CORAL) in Amitié, Praslin Island**, will be **officially opened on 9 May 2025 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM, by the Principal Minister Jean-François Ferrari** who is also the Minister of Fisheries & Blue Economy in the presence of the facility's funders, and invited guests drawn from government, civil society, business, and the Praslin community.

Built by Nature Seychelles, a non-profit organisation carrying out coral reef restoration in the Cousin Island Special Reserve, ARC has been made possible thanks to the generous funding from the Adaptation Fund through UNDP and the Seychelles Government, the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT), and the CMA CGM Group, a global player in maritime, land, air, and logistics solutions.

ARC builds on 15 years of large-scale coral reef restoration efforts by Nature Seychelles and represents a giant leap in the quest to restore coral reefs damaged by climate change.

Using cutting-edge techniques like microfragmentation and sexual reproduction methods, ARC will enable the faster propagation of various coral species, including large corals that have not previously been utilized in restoration efforts, to improve diversity and resilience. This will not only speed up the recovery of damaged marine ecosystems but also bring hope for a new future where coral reefs continue to deliver ecosystem services for people and biodiversity.

The facility aims to be a central hub for scientific research, education, tourism, and community engagement, making it a comprehensive conservation as well as an aquaculture initiative. New partnerships are expected to be unveiled in the coming year.

The facility features coral micro-fragmentation facilities, specialized tanks, wet and dry labs, a public education area, and by the end of the year, a sexual reproduction laboratory. It is powered by renewable energy, with solar panels mounted on the roof.

“Coral reefs are crucial to Seychelles for fisheries, tourism, and protecting our shorelines. The ARC Facility is a bold step toward securing their future,” said Dr Nirmal Shah, Nature Seychelles Chief Executive.

“The opening of the ARC Facility marks a significant milestone in our collective efforts to restore and protect the vital marine ecosystems of Seychelles. The UNDP's Adaptation Fund project continues to support Nature Seychelles in pioneering innovative approaches to coral restoration. As we face unprecedented changes in our climate, this facility will not only enhance our understanding of coral restoration but also equip us with the tools necessary to build resilience against the impacts of climate change,” said – Daig Romain, National Project Coordinator, UNDP/AF – Coral Restoration Project.

“One of SeyCCAT’s key objectives is to help build climate change resilience in the Seychelles. By contributing to this new, one-of-its-kind facility, SeyCCAT hopes that this will speed up Seychelles’ coral reef restoration efforts and provide a beacon for building socio-ecological resilience,” said Marie-May Jeremie, SeyCCAT, Chief Executive Officer.

“CMA CGM is delighted to announce its support for the construction of Africa's first on-land regenerative coral aquaculture farm on Praslin Island. A global player in maritime, land, air, and logistics solutions, with operations spanning all oceans, the CMA CGM Group has a longstanding commitment to preserving biodiversity. We actively support innovative solutions aimed at protecting endangered species and restoring damaged ecosystems. This pioneering project is poised to revolutionize coral reef conservation, making it more accessible for educational purposes and empowering local communities to adopt sustainable practices,” added Frederic Grivel, Managing Director, Indian Ocean Cluster, CMA CGM Group.

“We have been promoting the development of aquaculture for some years and have put in place enabling policy and legislation as well as incentives. The SFA has undertaken many other efforts such as trialing aquaculture organisms apart from fin-fish such as sea urchins and sea cucumbers, and training local students and staff. But uptake by the private sector has been slow. There are several constraints such as availability of land, and economies of scale. So, this facility that we are opening today is not only a game changer for conservation and climate adaptation but also one for aquaculture in Seychelles. I would highly recommend that aquaculture entrepreneurs and investors get into some serious discussion with Nature Seychelles,” said Minister Ferrari.

The opening feature presentations, speeches, a sign reveal, facility tours, and a micro-fragmentation demonstration.

For more information, please contact:

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Notes to editors:

1. Nature Seychelles has traditionally used coral gardening in underwater nurseries for restoration. This is slow and labour intensive, and has an impact on donor corals through collection.
2. ARC is set to transform this approach by utilizing microfragmentation, a cutting-edge technique that generates more corals, faster, and can boost coral growth by over 50 times in the wild.
3. The ARC facility will open the door to the first-ever use of sexual reproduction in coral restoration in Seychelles very soon through a new international partnership (to be announced) by the collection of coral gametes during spawning events. This method promotes genetic diversity and adaptability, making it vital for resilient reef restoration.
4. About the Coral Reef Restoration Project: The Restoring Marine Ecosystem Services by Restoring Coral Reefs to Meet a Changing Climate Future project is a regional collaboration between Seychelles and Mauritius to restore reefs using ocean and land-based nurseries, as well as to bolster regional scientific advances and exchanges. It is funded by the Adaptation Fund. More information at this link: <https://www.undp.org/mauritius-seychelles/projects/restoring-marine-ecosystem-services-rehabilitating-coral-reefs-meet-changing-climate-future>