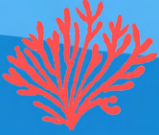


WHY INVOLVE LOCAL COMMUNITIES?



Lessons learned from working with fishers on coral garden restoration

WHAT WE ACHIEVED TOGETHER

- 🌺 Mapped coral diversity hotspots with fishers' local knowledge.
- 🌺 Collected bycatch coral samples for research and restoration.
- 🌺 Tested methods to replant corals caught in fishing gear.
- 🌺 Built trust and mutual respect between scientists and fishers.
- 🌺 Improved awareness of coral importance in local communities.



HOW DID WE START WORKING WITH FISHERMEN?

We:

- 1) used pilot data to identify coral-rich areas (e.g., Sagres).
- 2) contacted local fishing associations to find boats using bottom-contact gear.
- 3) reached out to boat masters and arranged an in-person meeting.
- 4) explained project goals clearly and scope of collaboration (roles & time frame).
- 5) joined them at sea and work alongside crews to build rapport.
- 6) recruited additional fishers via word of mouth.



WHAT WORKED BEST

Built trust through respect and shared time: Informal conversations at local bars and at sea helped create genuine relationships.

Valued fishers' local knowledge: Their insights guided coral hotspot mapping and sampling.

Worked side by side at sea: Collaboration on fishing trips strengthened respect and data quality (continuous training).

Showed results and recognition: Sharing photos, videos, and displays boosted pride and engagement.

Focused on shared goals: Emphasized benefits for both science and sustainable fisheries rather than criticism.

