

# Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease Outbreak and Response Efforts on Florida's Coral Reef

Florida's Coral Reef is currently experiencing a widespread and lethal coral disease outbreak. Dozens of partners from federal, state, and local agencies, non-governmental organizations, universities, and members of the community are collaborating to investigate and respond.

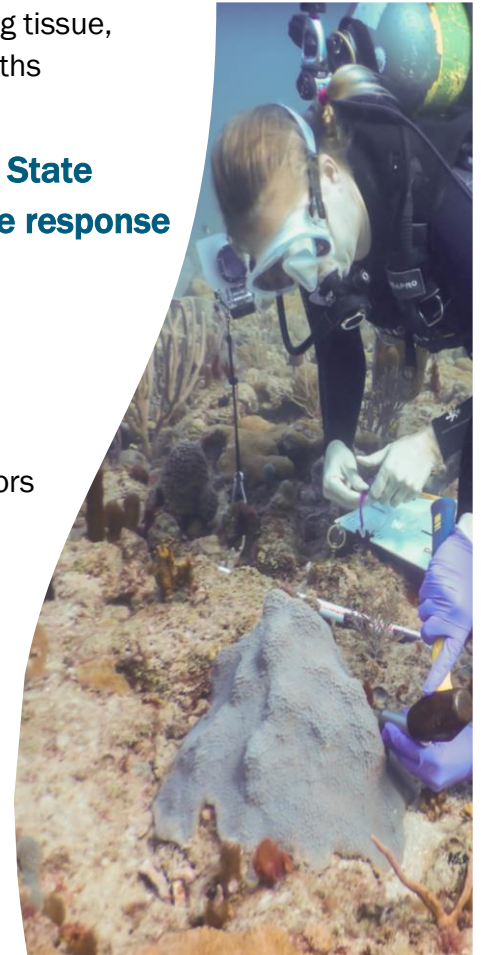
Key factors of the outbreak include:

- **An infectious, waterborne disease.** Bacterial agents are suspected.
- **Large geographic range.** Over 95% of Florida's Coral Reef has been affected. Several locations in the Caribbean are reporting this disease as well, including the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.
- **Duration of the outbreak.** Disease has spread continuously since 2014.
- **Number of coral species affected.** Over 20 of Florida's approximately 45 species of reef-building corals are affected.
- **High prevalence of disease.** Within certain species, disease is seen in 66-100% of colonies at an affected site.
- **High rates of whole colony mortality.** Once a coral begins to lose living tissue, observations show that the colony will likely die within weeks to months without active intervention.

**Approximately \$15 million has been allocated by the Florida State Legislature, NOAA, EPA, and other sources to support disease response since 2014.**

Priority coral disease response activities include:

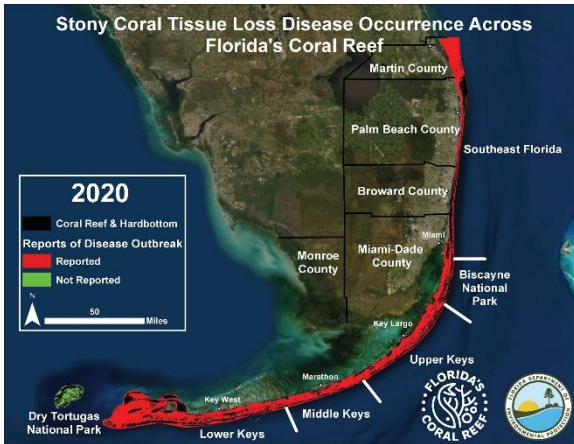
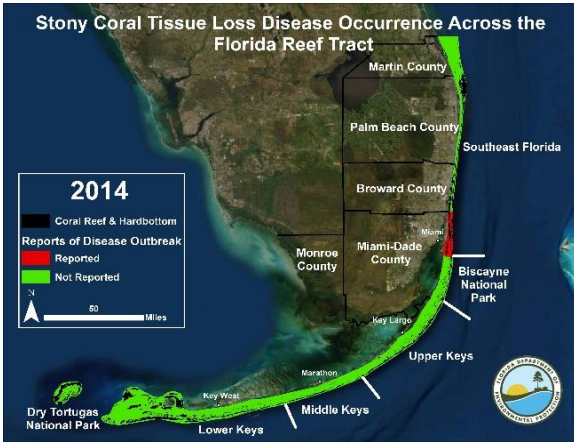
- **Strategic sampling and laboratory analyses** to understand how the disease affects corals.
- **Environmental and epidemiological analyses** to determine what factors may influence the disease outbreak.
- **Intervention experiments and field trials** to assess the effectiveness of treatment techniques and prevent the further spread of disease.
- **Coral rescue efforts** to preserve some of the remaining genetic diversity in land-based facilities across the country.
- **Large-scale propagation of corals** in land-based facilities for future restoration.
- **Restoration trials** to determine where corals can be outplanted.
- **Caribbean-wide cooperation** focuses on information sharing.
- **Improvement of overall coral reef environmental conditions.**



**Coral Disease  
Outbreak in FL**

**Reported**

**Not Reported**



**Coral disease outbreak reports from the Caribbean**



**For More Information Visit:**

<https://floridakeys.noaa.gov/coral-disease/>

<https://floridadep.gov/rcp/coraldisease>

<http://www.agrra.org/coral-disease-outbreak/>

If you have any questions, please contact Maurizio Martinelli, Florida Coral Disease Response Coordinator at 305-795-1221 or [mmartinelli1@ufl.edu](mailto:mmartinelli1@ufl.edu).

# Florida Response Partners Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease 2014 - 2020

