## MOL Mauritius International Fund for Natural Environment Recovery and Sustainability

#### Title of the Project

A scientific approach for the conservation and restoration of Mauritius Coral Reefs under the combined effects of climate change and marine pollution

Principal Investigator: Beatriz Estela CASARETO, Professor (GSST)

#### Introduction of the project

#### **Primary executor of the Project:**

Shizuoka University, Graduate School of Science and Technology (GSST), Dept. of Environment and Energy Systems. Laboratory of Biogeochemistry.

Principal Investigator: Beatriz Estela CASARETO, Professor (GSST); Principal Co-Investigator: Yoshimi SUZUKI, Appointed Professor (GSST).

#### **Joint Organizations:**

(1) University of Mauritius, Dept. of Biosciences & Ocean Studies, Fac. of Science & Pole of Research Excellence in Marine Biodiversity.

Principal Co-Investigators: Ranjeet BHAGOOLI, Associate Professor; Deepeeka KAULLYSING, Senior Lect. and Head of Dept.

(2) The Biodiversity and Environment Institute (BEI), Principal Co-Investigator: Dr. Arvind GOPEECHUND

#### **Summary**

- Global climate changes are affecting coral reefs around the world, however, <u>coral reefs in Mauritius showed tolerance with high recovery rates after massive</u> coral bleaching events.
- <u>Heat-tolerant corals</u>, including some rare/endemic species, <u>were already identified</u> by Shizuoka University research team in Mauritius reefs.
- However, after the grounding of the MV Wakashio on the coast of Mauritius in July 2020, the <u>spilled oil caused coral bleaching due to toxicity from oil</u> chemicals and excessive sedimentation.
- The question is: Can the corals in Mauritius be resilient to this new disturbance in combination with the ongoing global warming scenario?
- Physiological responses of corals to these new stressors in combination with the ongoing warming scenario will be studied applying innovative techniques on molecular biology and field surveys in collaboration with the University of Mauritius, BEI, and other NGOs.
- We will <u>strongly focus on the education and training of students</u>, young researchers, and the participation of citizens.
- The final goal is to create consciousness among the Mauritius citizens to protect and help the recovery of their reefs for the future of their economy.

## Why this study and what outputs

- In Mauritius there is a serious lack of <u>in-depth scientific studies</u> on the impacts on corals and their physiological responses
- we will investigate the <u>eco-physiological impacts on corals</u> of Mauritius reefs using <u>field surveys and coral incubations in the laboratory</u> applying <u>innovative techniques on coral molecular biology</u>, together with the <u>study of biogeochemical</u> indicators in the field.
- One of our main goals is to provide Mauritius' scientists and citizens with enough knowledge and training to develop eco-physiological studies that are at present very scarce in Mauritius.
- collaboration with BEI will guarantee the participation of Mauritius citizens
- the study will provide scientific data that can further be applied in future reef recovery programs.

## Rodrigues Island Ambre Island OCEAN Rare / Endemic corals

ናን Heat resistant corals\*

\*identified by SU research team

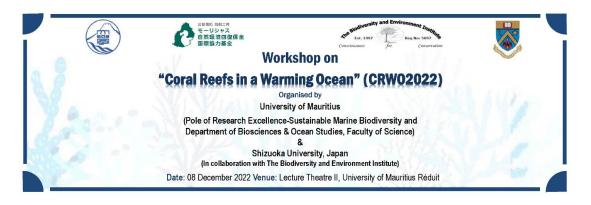
## **Research Plan**

- (1) Field surveys will be performed in four selected reef sites with <u>different perturbation levels</u>: **Belle Mare** and around **Ambre Island** on the East coast, and Albion on the West coast. Since **Pointe d'Esny** (site near Wakashio grounding) is now close to surveys, we propose to study the site if surveys are allowed in the future.
- (2) Experimental approach using <u>coral incubations</u> to evaluate physiological responses to stressors (high seawater temperature, high irradiance, turbidity, effect of hydrocarbons and pollutants) alone or in combination.
- (3) Capacity building throughout the education and training of students, young researchers, and citizens.
- (4) Outputs from the studies will be delivered to Mauritius citizens through open lectures, field trips, and common media (newspapers and TV news)

## Summary of Activities during the 2022 fiscal year

Month	Activities for the reporting period(Please list all the activities carried out or will carry out during this Year) -Describe any differnces from the original plan-			
April	discussions for detailed schedule and research plan			
May	Post doctor student from UoM stay at SU (CASARETO lab.)			
June	for studies on primary productivity and piconanoplankton  Preliminary survey by UoM — under the UNESCO-Obuchi fund, including field trip to Okinawa — —————————————————————————————————			
July	Capacity building: On line			
August	lectures, guidance for paper writing, corrections			
September	discussions on results of preliminary survey of students manuscripts,			
October	Preparation of two manuscript for publication review of collected data, — discussion with studners			
November	(UoM team out of laboratory for surveys on board ————————————————————————————————————			
December	Monitoring by SU, UoM and BEI at Albion reef.    Workshop   Coral Roof in Warming Ocean   (CRWO) at HoM on December 8, 2023 (excersize on methods and protocols)			
January	Workshop "Coral Reef in Warming Ocean" (CRWO) at UoM on December 8, 2022 (excersize on methods and protocols)			
February	Survey by SU, UoM and BEI at Belle Mare and Ille D'ambre. In-door Coral incubation experiments. Workshop " "Coral Reefs Eco-Physiology" (CREP2023) at UoM			
March-April	Measurements and data analysis			

## Workshop: Coral Reef in a Warming Ocean (Dec 8, 2022)









Presentation by Prof. Beatriz E. CASARETO (SU): New aspects of coral physiology under the climate change scenario



Welcome address by the Dean of Faculty of Science, Prof. M. BHOWON (UoM)



Opening address by the Guest of Honor Mrs. M. S. KOONJUL,
Director of Fisheries, Ministry of Blue Economy,
Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping







Donation of JUNIOR PULSE AMPLITUDE-MODULATED (J-PAM) fluorometer to UoM by Prof. BE Casareto & Prof. Suzuki, (SU) to The Dean of Faculty if Science (UoM) in the presence of the Counsellor at Japan Embassy Mr. Daisuke NAKAJIMA









### Workshop: Coral Reefs eco-physiology (April 28, 2023)

#### **University of Mauritius**

(Pole of Research Excellence-Sustainable Marine Biodiversity

Dept Biosciences & Ocean Studies, FoS)

Shizuoka University, Japan

(in collaboration with The Biodiversity and Environment Institute)

Workshop on "Coral Reefs Eco-Physiology 2023" (CREP2023)

(through the support of the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research -KAKENHI- (B) of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), and the MOL Mauritius International Fund for Natural Environment Recovery and

28th April 2023 from 08:00 to 15:30

Welcome address by Dean of Faculty of Science, Ass. Prof Dr. Yannick D. Tangman

Venue: Lecture Theatre II, UoM Réduit Campus







Opening address by His Excellency Mr. KAWAGUCHI Shuichiro, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Mauritius (TBC)



Presentation by Prof. Dr. Beatriz E. CASARETO: Role of **Endolithic Community in the Coral Physiology** 

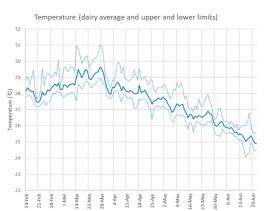
## Preliminary surveys by the University of Mauritius

Survey sites at Belle Mare





# Light intensity (dairy maximun and average) 100000 100000 100000 100000 100000 119400 1



#### Coral cover and percentage composition of corals at Belle Mare reef

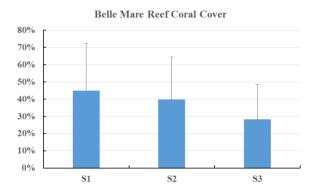
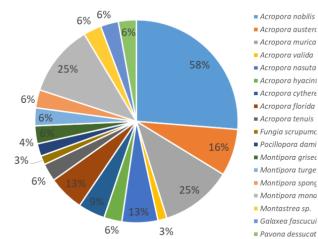
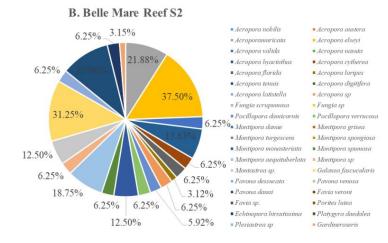


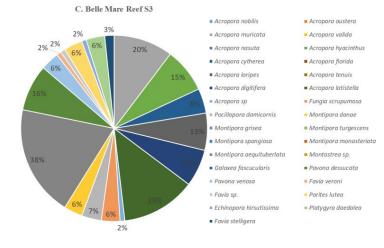
Figure: Coral cover at three stations at Belle Mare surveyed on 08 June 2022

#### **Coral diversity**

#### A. Belle Mare Reef S1







## **Joint Survey**

#### **Belle Mare**



Joint SU and UoM field trip at Belle Mare



Plankton sampling

Coral sampling



Pavona decussata

Pocillopora verrucosa

Fungia sp.

Sampling point	Belle-Mare Belle-Mare Stn.BM1 Stn.BM2	
Sampling time	11:46-12:16	13:19-13:38
Sensor Measurement	11:54-12:16	13:23-13:38
NO3(μM-N)	0.970±0.024	5.074±0.098
NO2(μM-N)	0.131±0.009	0.213±0.002
NH4(μM-N)	0.820±0.153	0.932±0.056
PO4(μM-P)	0.108±0.008	0.074±0.015
SiO2(μM-S)	5.385±0.145	15.730±0.322
POC (μg/L)	38.1±0.3	40.3±0.6
PON (μg/L)	7.6±0.1	8.1±0.1

Sampling point	Belle-Mare Stn.BM1	Belle-Mare Stn.BM2
Sampling time	11:46-12:16	13:19-13:38
Sensor Measurement	11:54-12:16	13:23-13:38
Light intensity (μmol/m²/s)	1231±659	486±259
Water temperature (°C)	29.46±0.03	30.06±0.15

## **Joint Survey**

#### Ille D'ambre-Grand Goube



Joint SU and UoM field trip at Ille D'ambre-Grand Goube



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

THIS PERMIT IS ISSUED BY

29/04/23

EXPORT PERMIT

Valid to date

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL

TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Permit under Section 25 of Native Terrestrial Biodiversit

Country of last Re-export

Mauritius

Actual quantity



Four different morphotypes of the coral Stylophora sp.

## Capacity building: research and education of young scientists

☐ Post Doctor short-term training under UNESCO / KEIZO OBUCHI RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAMME

Japan Young Researchers' fellowships programme (2019 Cycle)

Awardee: Dr. Soondur Mouneshwar

Country of Residence: Republic of Mauritius Study period: 1st May 2022 - 1st August 2022

Field of Research: Environment (with particular emphasis on Disaster risk education)

Title of Research: Functioning of Coral Reefs Ecosystem in Mauritius Island with a Particular Focus on

the Primary Production, Nitrogen Fixation, and the Availability of Pico/Nano Plankton

as the Main Food Source for the Scleractinian Corals

Host Institute: Graduate School of Science and Technology Shizuoka University, Japan.

**Supervisor: Professor: Casareto Beatriz Estela** 

#### ☐ Lecture at Mauritius University

practical lecture on the protocols for pico-nanoplankton sample treatment and microscopic observation (Dec. 5, 2022 from 13:00 – 19:00)





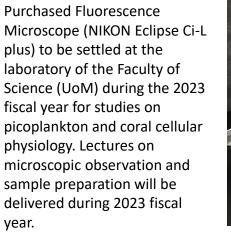


- Donation of PAM, and provision of a fluorescence microscope
- Donation of JUNIOR PULSE AMPLITUDE-MODULATED (J-PAM) fluorometer to UoM by Prof. BE Casareto & Prof. Suzuki, (SU) to The Dean of Faculty if Science (UoM) during the workshop CRWO (December 8, 2022)



fiscal year for studies on picoplankton and coral cellular physiology. Lectures on microscopic observation and sample preparation will be delivered during 2023 fiscal year.





At Casareto Lab. Shizuoka University



J-PAM

## **Capacity Building: scientific and Social Impact**

#### Joint publications and International Symposium (ICRS) presentations

INDO PAC J OCEAN LIFE Volume 7, Number 1, June 2023 Pages: 27-37 P-ISSN: 2775-1961 E-ISSN: 2775-1953 DOI: 10.13057/oceanlife/o070103

Photo-physiology of healthy-looking and diseased/health-compromised hard corals from Mauritius Island, Western Indian Ocean

SHAKEEL YAVAN JOGEE<sup>1,4</sup>, SRUTI JEETUN<sup>1</sup>, MELANIE RICOT<sup>1</sup>, NAWSHEEN TALEB-HOSSENKHAN<sup>1</sup>, SUSHMA MATTAN-MOORGAWA<sup>1</sup>, DEEPEEKA KAULLYSING<sup>1</sup>, PAULINE RIEMANN<sup>1,2</sup>, LEA BLANC<sup>1,2</sup>, BRATRIZ ESTELA CASARETO<sup>1</sup>, YOSHIMI SUZIKI<sup>1</sup>, RANJEET BHAGOUL<sup>1,5,6,7</sup>

nt of Biosciences and Ocean Studies, Faculty of Science and Pole of Research Excellence in Sustainable Marine Biodiversity, University of Mauritus, Reduit, Mauritius, 12: 230-4037916, mail: Shakedojego-féligmail.com. "Abhagológiuomac mu "Iuniversity of Applied Sciences Brenne. Neustadoswall 30, 28199 Brennen, Germany "Euche National Vetériamar Todiouses 2 Chem. des Capelles, 33100 Todiouses, France d'Graduate School of Science and Technology, Shiznoka University, Shizzoka, Suruga Ward, Japan "The Society of Biology (Mauritus), Reduit, Mauritius

<sup>5</sup>The Society of Biology (Mauritius). Reduit, Mauritius
<sup>6</sup>The Biodiversity and Environment Institute. Reduit, Mauritius

Manuscript received: 19 September 2022. Revision accepted: 30 October 2022

Abstract. Joges Sf. Jeetum S. Ricot M. Talleb-Hossenkhan N. Mattan-Moorgawa K. Kaullysing D. Riemann P. Blanc L. Casareo BE. Sunahi V. Baggooil R. 2023. Photo-physiology of healthy-looking and diseased-health-compromised hard coasts from Mauritus Island, Western Indian Ocean. Indo Pac J Ocean Life 7: 27-37. The spatial photo-physiological responses of in hospite zooxanthellae in hard corals, including coenosaer and polyps, healthy-looking and affected parts in four coral diseases, namely Brown Band, Black Band, Skeletal Eroding Band and White Band on the coral Acropora muricata, and two health-compromised conditions such as the Pink Pigmentation Response and its differentiated morphology, the Pink Line Syndrome, on the coral Portice were investigated using the Integnity-PAM fluorometry. A significantly lower F-VF- was observed in case of Black Band, White Band, Brown Band and Pink Pigmentation Response affected parts compared to the healthy-looking parts. The F-VF- had the highest decline in Brown Band disease. Both the polyps and coenosare had significantly lower F-VF- in White Band and Brown Band diseased parts compared to their healthy-looking parts. The F-IF Rand the highest decline in Brown Band diseased health-compromised conditions. The photo-physiology of in hospite zooxamhellae was least affected in Pink Line Syndrome. These findings suggest that diseased-health-compromised parts of conside behave differently in terms of their photo-physiology in different diseased and health-compromised coral conditions in important ree-Foulding corals species such as A. murican and Pories species, with important impleations for the productivity and thus adaptive management of coral reefs in a globally warning ocean.

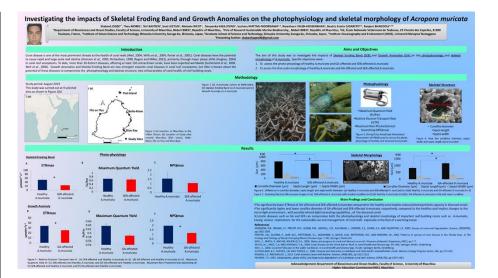
Keywords: Black Band, Brown Band, Imaging-PAM fluorometry, polyps, Skeletal Eroding Band, White Band disease

#### Media coverage



**MBC TV** interviewed Prof. Beatriz E. CASARETO. (Dec. 8, 2022). Important sections of the workshop (CRWO2022) on December 8, 2022, were released to TV audience on the evening News of December 8





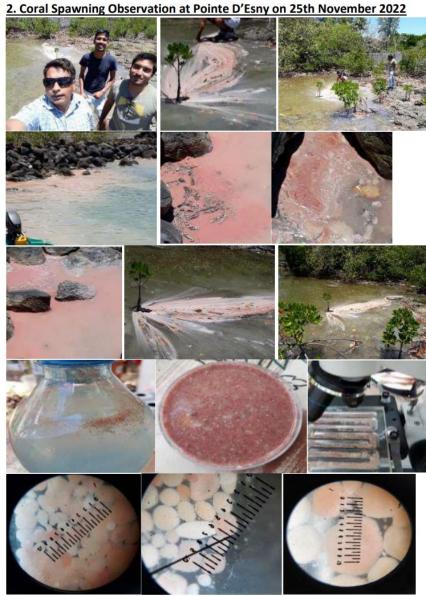
Co-authored presentation during the 15th International Coral Reef Symposium, Bremen, Germany, July 3 – 8 2022

● The Newspaper **Le Mauricien** interviewed Dr. R. Bhagooli on Dec 12, 2022. Important sections of the workshop (CRWO2022) on December 8, 2022, were released to TV audience on the evening News of December 8

## BEI and UoM Field trip activities with citizens

1. Training of youth/volunteers on coral observations and sample pictures for educational materials (Belle Mare June 8th 2022)





3. BEI participants at the Poste La Fayette public beach observing some mangrove-like trees and seagrasses (18th December 2022)





## Plan for the 2023 fiscal year

	Activities for the reporting period/Dioses list all the activities carried out as will carry out during	a this Voor)		
Month	Activities for the reporting period(Please list all the activities carried out or will carry out during this Year) -Describe any differnces from the original plan-			
April	Discussion for detailed schedule and research plan			
Мау	On line letures			
June	Field monitoring by UoM  Attendance of 5th APCRS Singapore			
July	and BEI Training UoM scientists at SU			
August				
September	Data anlysis  On line letures	Capacity building		
October	Joint Field survey Su, UoM and BEI Workshop			
November	Data anlysis for report			
December				
January (Plan)*	Preparation of Interim report			
February (Plan)*	Joint Field survey Su, UoM and BEI			
March (Plan)*	Data anlysis and manuscript writing			
February (Plan)*	Joint Field survey Su, UoM and BEI  Workshop			