



The Importance of Coral Restoration

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Coral reefs worldwide have suffered significant impacts over recent years as a result of the impact of human and natural disturbances on their biodiversity and ecosystem functioning. These ecosystems are fragile and sensitive to changes in their environment and are at greater risk of degradation than other marine systems. With a significant decline in the health and fitness of the coral reefs around the world, it is now considered that coral restoration efforts are becoming increasingly important, as more knowledge is revealed about the coral reefs and the increasing threat of coral bleaching brought along by global warming

One such coral restoration project is that undertaken by the Gili Shark Conservation Project, an award-winning conservation and data collection programme on sharks and the marine environment in the Gili Islands in Indonesia. Their project's mission is to restore damaged coral reefs around the Gili Islands in Indonesia as well as to educate others on the importance of our oceans, and to use science to further coral research and coral reef monitoring techniques.

The International SeaKeepers Society, Asia joined hands with the Gili Shark Conservation team to provide assistance for 30 hex dome structures. The hex domes created out of iron bars, were constructed as part of the project's first phase with the local villagers. The domes were coated with sand and epoxy to make a comfortable new home for coral to live and grow on. Once prepared, the hex domes were dropped into the ocean.

The restoration sites were selected by Gili Shark Conservation Project, based on previously collected RUV (roving underwater video) footage, due to their importance as a nursery for Blacktip reef sharks and as home to a diverse and abundant range of fish species.

Once in place, qualified scuba divers started 'coral gardening'. First, they harvested corals, by collecting lots of broken coral. Then the corals were fragmented, taken to the restoration site, and attached to the hex domes. Some domes have one species of coral attached and some have two, as an experiment to see if they will grow quicker due to competition for space. The sites continue to be under scientific monitoring to establish the success of the project as it continues.

In April 2019, the Gili Shark Conservation Project was awarded The International SeaKeepers Society Asia Achievement Award, which recognizes an organization in Asia that demonstrates a responsibility towards the health of Asia's marine environment.

Expedition Gallery

[Partner sites](#)

For more information on Gili Shark Conservation Project visit: <https://gilisharkconservation.com/>

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