

Ocean Acidification Day of Action

January 8, 2026

Facts about COASTAL ACIDIFICATION



- Ocean and coastal acidification both involve a decrease in pH levels.

- While ocean acidification (OA) is a global issue affecting all marine environments, coastal acidification tends to be more localized, primarily impacting nearshore areas.



- These regions are influenced by factors such as nutrient and sediment runoff, Sargassum inundations, and upwelling, which have a much more significant effect in coastal zones than in the open ocean.

JOIN US TO PROTECT OUR OCEAN AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS TODAY!



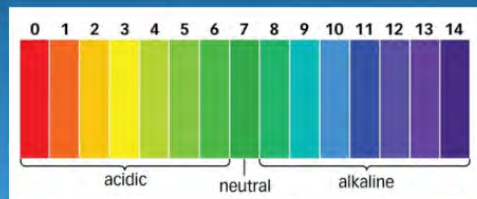
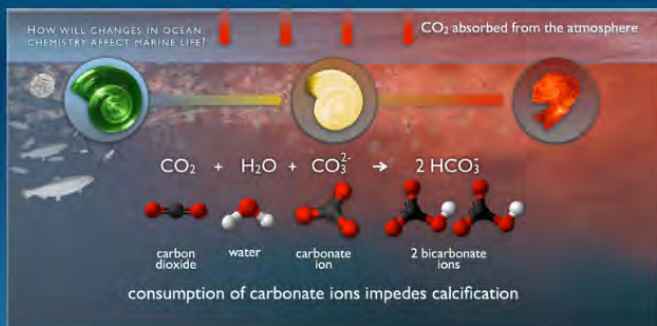
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Facts about OCEAN ACIDIFICATION



MAP CO2 Buoy
La Parguera, Puerto Rico



Ocean pH: 8.1

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- The ocean naturally acts as a carbon sponge, absorbing and storing CO₂ from the atmosphere.
- Ocean acidification (OA) refers to the chemical changes that occur when increased atmospheric CO₂ dissolves into seawater, lowering the ocean's average pH (about 8.1).
- Although the ocean is naturally alkaline, rising CO₂ increases acidity, making it harder for corals, shellfish, and other marine organisms to build and maintain their shells and skeletons.
- Some human activities are intensifying acidification.



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Excess atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) is absorbed by the ocean, lowering seawater pH and driving ocean acidification. This process harms coral reefs, shellfish, and marine life that support Caribbean ecosystems. While global CO₂ emissions are the main driver, local pressures, such as land runoff, *Sargassum* inundations, and climate-related events, also play important roles in coastal acidification. These drivers make the Caribbean waters especially vulnerable, putting fisheries, food security, and island economies at risk.

Actions to reduce ocean and coastal acidification in Caribbean waters:



Reduce carbon emissions



Protect and restore coastal ecosystems



Reduce land-based pollution



Learn about OA, share and engage

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IMPACTS OF OCEAN AND COASTAL ACIDIFICATION IN CARIBBEAN WATERS:

- Increases the susceptibility of carbonate structures to dissolution
- Alters the metabolism of calcifying organisms
- Negatively impacts keystone species and marine ecosystems
- Disrupts marine food webs
- Socioeconomic impacts on fisheries, coastal protection, and tourism



MONITORING OCEAN ACIDIFICATION HELPS US UNDERSTAND ITS IMPACTS ON ECOSYSTEMS AND SOCIETY, INFORMING ACTIONS TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE OCEAN FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Ocean Acidification Monitoring Criteria & Priority Areas in the Caribbean Region

- Coral reef restoration zones
- Mangroves & restricted circulation areas
- Estuaries, lagoons, & bays
- Areas with multiple stressors (i.e. high temperatures, low oxygen, nutrient runoff)
- Areas of socioeconomic importance (i.e. ecotourism, fisheries, coastal communities)

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