

Project Update: August 2007

During May 2007, four hundred coral colonies were prepared at the nursery for transplantation. The plastic tips and the plastic anchors on which the corals are attached were cleaned of settling algae, other sessile organisms, and coral predators (*Drupella* snail etc). They were arranged on trays according to their destination.

Some of the colonies were incubated for 12 hours (from sunrise to sunset) with Alizarin Red, an inert calcium competitor precipitated by the coral along with calcium molecules in the process of skeleton formation, in order to follow the future corals' growth. Once cleaned, the coral trays were placed in large recipients filled with seawater and transferred by boat from the coral nursery to the restoration site.

The colonies were then transplanted on two knolls by divers. Holes were drilled in the knolls in regular distances of 10 cm using an underwater drill. The tips and anchors were inserted in the holes, permitting a good attachment of the corals to the rock. Each colony was marked with a plastic tag in order to follow the corals' acclimation and survival during the next months.