



Coral reefs | Photo source Pixabay

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LAND-BASED FARMS COULD SAVE OCEAN CORAL REEFS



A startup pioneers a new way to rebuild coral reefs while using an innovative financing method

Spotted: US startup [Coral Vita](#) is piloting a new way to regenerate coral reefs. Using technology developed by [Mote Marine Laboratory](#), Coral Vita co-founders Sam Teicher and Gator Halpern believe they can grow coral fifty times faster by growing coral on land instead of in more traditional ocean-based nurseries.

The new method is called micro-fragmentation. It involves breaking coral into small pieces that fuse back together. The founders say the new replacement coral will be ready in six to twelve months. The current, underwater method requires thirty to fifty years, according to the startup.

The startup has raised €1.4 million in seed funding. Additionally, the founders are aiming to sell the regenerated coral to resorts, governments and developers who profit from it — in a move of creative conservation financing. The first land-based commercial reef farm is being built in the Bahamas, with a plan to plant the first crop this year.

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Takeaway:

Coral reefs are a vital part of marine life and are worth an estimated **\$30 billion for the world economy**. But they are disappearing at an alarming rate. Coral Vita's new method and creative financing are both worth watching. The company is betting that the interest from the private sector will provide the funding it needs to finance the latest technology, resulting in better coral reef farms and more regenerated coral reefs. Initiatives in India and New Zealand are piloting similar approaches to save or preserve local wildlife and habitats.