HA W A I I  L I V I N G  R E E F  E C O N O M I C S

- Hawaii’s nearshore reefs annually generate about $800 million in gross revenues -- nearly 10% of the total revenues contributed by tourism to the state’s economy.
- The aquarium fish industry is one of the most economically valuable nearshore fisheries in Hawaii. The industry’s gross annual sales are approximately $3.2 million.
- Fish Replenishment Areas (FRAs) along the Kona coast have decreased conflicts between aquarium fish collectors and other reef users, and results show an increase in aquarium fishes in both the FRAs and unprotected areas, benefiting both the aquarium and snorkeling and diving industries.
- Since 2000, when the FRAs were established, the overall price per fish collected has steadily grown.
- Snorkeling and diving are one of the top five activities for our visitors from the West. The recreational worth of our reefs is estimated at $325 million annually in added value.
- Millions of visitors are attracted to Hawaii’s famous sandy beaches, which are created by our coral reefs.
- Reefs, along with winds and tides, generate waves that make Hawaii world renowned for great surfing and a destination for many lucrative surf competitions.
- Hanauma Bay’s educational video, shown to visitors to the park, is directly responsible for saving 10.4 acres of reef each year from being damaged throughout the state.
- The gain from environmental awareness through the education at Hanauma Bay will generate about $100 million in added value over the next 50 years.
- Each year, reefs along Maui’s Kihei coast contribute $34 million in gross sales, leading to $28 million in added value to the economy.
- The degradation of reefs along Maui’s Kihei coast result in an annual loss of over $20 million to Hawaii’s economy. The impact of algal blooms in Kihei caused a decrease of hotel and rental income (about $10.8 million) and a depressed property value of $9.4 million in 2002.
- Maui County condominiums pay $200,000 a year to clean up their beaches.
- Legal cases involving coral reef damage in Florida show restoration costs alone can range from $550 to $10,000 per square meter, and are not always effective.
- The cost of restoration or the impacts from alien species are high; effective management and education result in significant economic opportunities.
- To keep Hawaii's economy viable and to maintain our quality of life and the health of our natural resources, adequate funding must continue to be provided for management and to educate folks on Hawaii's reefs.

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