SEAGRASSES

WHAT ARE SEAGRASSES?

Known as Angiosperms, seagrasses are some of the oldest submerged flowering plants in the world. Often found in large colonies, commonly referred to as seagrass meadows, these unique plants get pollinated while submerged. Considered to be one of the most productive ecosystems in the world, they provide a multitude of ecosystem services to humans and other species alike.

THREATS TO SEAGRASS MEADOWS

- TRAWLING
- DISCHARGE FROM AQUACULTURE & MARICULTURE PROJECTS
- ANCHORAGE & PROPELLER DAMAGE
- OIL SPILLS
- LAND BASED POLLUTION
- COASTAL EROSION & FLOODS
- ABNORMAL CLIMATIC CONDITIONS
- LAND USE CHANGES IN RIVER BASINS

WHY ARE SEAGRASSES IMPORTANT?

1 REDUCES OCEAN ACIDITY
Regulates the chemical composition of seawater by oxygenating and buffering ocean acidification.

2 PROVIDES FOOD
20% of the global fishery is supported by seagrasses

3 REFUGE FOR WILDLIFE
Home to dugong, seahorses and sawsharks to name some.

4 CARBON SEQUESTRATION
They are 35 times more efficient at storing carbon than terrestrial forests.

5 RECREATION
Clear and clean seagrass meadows and associated animals promote recreation

6 PROTECTS THE COAST
By reducing wave strength, they halt coastal erosion.

7 HABITAT FOR SPECIES
40% more animals are found in seagrasses when compared to sandy beaches. This is mainly due to the protection and food offered by them.

8 MAINTAINS WATER QUALITY
Naturally filters water including excess nutrients and pollutants.

9 REDUCES PATHOGENIC ORGANISMS
Reduces up to 50% marine pathogens such as bacteria and virus

10 STABILIZATION OF SEAFLOOR
Holds sediment in place, preventing resuspension and movement of sediment deposits

11 NUTRIENT CYCLING
Absorbs and transforms nutrients within marine environment.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO PROTECT SEAGRASSES

- Ensure the continued protection of seagrass meadows and neighbouring habitats such as coral reefs
- Promote the adoption of progressive conservation initiatives such as community driven restoration and blue carbon credit schemes
- Reduce land-based pollution
- Increase community awareness and engagement
- Promote responsible tourism and recreational activities
- Support scientifically sound restoration and planting efforts
- Donate to organizations working on seagrasses conservation, research and education
- Promote environmental impact assessments and follow up of recommendations for developments
- Be a responsible marine product consumer

Ministry Of Environment

UKaid from the British people
Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP)
www.cefas.co.uk

blue resources trust
Blue Resources Trust
www.blueresources.org

SriLankan Airlines

THE PARROTFISH COLLECTIVE CONSERVATION SRI LANKA
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