



REEFLOG IN INDIA

WHAT IS REEFLOG?

ReefLog is India's first marine citizen science initiative, pioneered by Dakshin Foundation. This initiative engages certified recreational SCUBA divers and local dive professionals in collecting valuable data on selected reef species across India's diverse marine habitats. It promotes marine education within the watersports community, fostering citizen-led coral reef monitoring and raising awareness about reef conservation among a diverse audience.

To make data collection accessible, our team has developed easy-to-use underwater survey slates and supplementary educational material featuring illustrations of twelve species of fish and invertebrates, chosen based on their trophic level, ecological importance, and ease of identification, even for novice divers. Divers record their observations on the slates, which are later uploaded to the ReefLog website (www.reeflog.org), where the collected data is freely accessible to all.

THE ANDAMANS PROJECT

Currently active in the Andaman Islands, ReefLog generates long-term datasets essential for conservation while fostering ecological awareness in the dive community. These citizen contributions extend beyond what scientists and researchers alone can achieve. Regular monitoring also enables early detection of sudden shifts in reef conditions, signalling the need for rapid conservation interventions.

The image shows a ReefLog survey slate and a corresponding fish identification guide. The slate is a form with sections for 'Dive Data', 'Observations', and 'Notes'. It includes fields for Date, Time, Location, and Dive Site. The 'Observations' section has checkboxes for various species, including Groupers, Surge wrasse, Surge wrasse, Surge wrasse, Surge wrasse, Surge wrasse, Surge wrasse, Surge wrasse, Surge wrasse, Surge wrasse, Surge wrasse, and Surge wrasse. The 'Notes' section has a space for additional information. The fish identification guide is a color-coded chart showing 12 species of fish and invertebrates, each with a corresponding color and a small illustration. The colors are: Red (Groupers), Orange (Surge wrasse), Yellow (Surge wrasse), Green (Surge wrasse), Blue (Surge wrasse), Purple (Surge wrasse), Brown (Surge wrasse), Grey (Surge wrasse), Black (Surge wrasse), White (Surge wrasse), Silver (Surge wrasse), and Gold (Surge wrasse).

Presently, numerous dive centres across Havelock Island, Neil Island and ChidiyaTapu, have embraced ReefLog, given that their livelihoods depend on healthy coral ecosystems. The data collected on the ReefLog platform is displayed as interactive maps on the website.

This data not only helps track the impacts of local and global stressors on reef ecosystems but also encourages stewardship and long-term conservation by local stakeholders and tourists. ReefLog aims to expand to dive sites across the country, creating a replicable model for other coastal areas in India, by leveraging insights from the Andaman Islands chapter.

