**Press Release**

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George Town, Cayman Islands

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**The Central Caribbean Marine Institute Expands Coral Restoration Strategy in Response to Unprecedented Pressure on Coral Reefs**

**In February 2022, the Central Caribbean Marine Institute (CCMI), based in the Cayman Islands, was awarded a RESEMBID grant for €257,949 to further their cutting-edge coral restoration research.**

RESEMBID, funded by the European Union and implemented by Expertise France (the development cooperation agency of the Government of France),supports sustainable human development efforts in 12 Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs).

CCMI aims to rebuild coral reef ecosystem resilience through assisted evolution, via selective restoration with stress (heat and disease) tolerant corals. The 18-month project will increase public awareness of the coral reef crisis, as well as strive to provide tangible coral reef adaptation methods for conservation managers throughout the region. Project outcomes will positively impact the wild coral reef ecosystems in Little Cayman (CCMI’s home), a Mission Blue Hope Spot, at a time when the need for marine protection is paramount.

During these times of unprecedented rapid environmental change, it is critical to understand the capacity of corals to adapt to new conditions. CCMI has been refining their restoration methods for 10 years, building on outplanting success due to their scientific approach to understanding disease and heat tolerance. This grant supports CCMI’s in-situ project, which is one of the longest running empirically based coral restoration research projects in the region and will include collaborator Professor John Bruno (University of North Carolina), a specialist in this area. Dr. Gretchen Goodbody-Gringley, project lead and Director of Research and Education at CCMI, indicates that investing in coral restoration is paramount for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) that are reliant upon reefs for protection, sustenance and economic stability:

*“Coral restoration, consisting of outplanting nursery-raised corals to rebuild reef structure and function, is a popular approach to confronting local coral decline. Inspired by successful strategies used to restore other habitats, contemporary coral restoration approaches primarily consist of outplanting nursery-raised corals to degraded reefs. Propagation and outplanting of nursery-grown corals has become so commonplace that coral restoration efforts are becoming capable of augmenting coral populations at ecologically meaningful scales. Scaling up in an efficient and cost-effective way is key to improving restoration practice… which in turn can contribute to both climate change adaptation and conservation strategy.”*

For more information, please see <https://reefresearch.org/what-we-do/research/restoration/>

RELEASE ENDS

**Project Press Conference**

Please join the CCMI team on the 21st April 2022, for a media briefing of the “Increasing Coral Reef Resilience with Assisted Evolution via Selective Restoration” project, which has been co-funded by a RESEMBID grant from the European Union. The press conference will be held both virtually and in person, at the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands at 5:30 pm local Cayman Islands time (UTC -5). For virtual attendees, please register before the event to have access to the supporting resources and livestream information. https://donate.reefresearch.org/DrBruno

ABOUT CCMI

CCMI is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1998 to protect the future of coral reefs, envisioning a world with vibrant oceans and healthy coral reef ecosystems. We seek to be the Caribbean’s premier marine research institute by delivering cutting edge research, transforming conservation strategy, and developing education programmes of excellence – discovering and promoting real solutions to declining ocean health. Our plan is to invigorate key species and understand key ocean processes that drive reef resilience. We support early career scientists who are INNOVATING ways to improve coral reef health. We are TRANSFORMING conservation strategy and work to inspire the CHANGE that is needed to achieve our mission. CCMI are PIONEERS in the region working to reverse the declines of coral reefs.

About RESEMBID

The Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) Resilience, Sustainable Energy and Marine Biodiversity Programme (RESEMBID) commenced operations on 1st January 2019, and supports the sustainable human development efforts of the 12 Caribbean OCTs, namely: Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten, and Saint-Barthélemy.

Financed under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) Caribbean OCT Regional Programme, RESEMBID is being implemented by Expertise France, with the primary stakeholders being the 12 Caribbean OCTs.

**RESEMBID Press release monitoring**

## Release name: The Central Caribbean Maritime Institute expands Coral Restoration Strategy in response to unprecedented pressure on coral reefs.

Release issue date: Thursday April 21, 2022

**OCT Coverage:**

1. <https://reefresearch.org/ccmi-expands-coral-restoration-strategy-in-response-to-unprecedented-pressure-on-coral-reefs/>
2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JA17Du7gyyk

**Regional Coverage:**

**Global Coverage:**

1. <https://www.prnewswire.co.uk/news-releases/the-central-caribbean-marine-institute-expands-coral-restoration-strategy-in-response-to-unprecedented-pressure-on-coral-reefs-817839633.html>
2. <https://www.finanznachrichten.de/nachrichten-2022-04/55818376-the-central-caribbean-marine-institute-expands-coral-restoration-strategy-in-response-to-unprecedented-pressure-on-coral-reefs-008.htm>
3. <https://www.userwalls.com/n/central-caribbean-marine-institute-expands-coral-restoration-strategy-response-unprecedented-pressure-coral-3116618/>