

# THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest coral reef ecosystem. It consists of about 3,000 separate reefs and more than 2,000 islands. There are more animal species on coral reefs than in any other marine ecosystem. The Great Barrier Reef is home to more than 1,500 species of fish, molluscs and large green turtle. The reef is located in the coral sea, off the coast of Queensland, Australia. It is a very popular destination for tourists.

A large part of the reef is protected by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, which helps to limit the impact of human use, such as fishing and tourism. It was created in 1975 to protect the area. As a result of water pollution, the coral gets less sunlight. In acidic water, corals grow more slowly and their skeletons begin to dissolve. Yet the greatest threat to the reef is that of coral bleaching. When the water around corals becomes too warm, which happens as a result of climate change, they turn white and die.

The Reef is a very popular destination, especially for scuba divers. Approximately two million people visit the Great Barrier Reef each year.

The Great Barrier Reef can be seen from the moon.

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