



# GREEN FINS

## A PROVEN SOLUTION FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MANAGEMENT

Adopting a scalable management approach to address threats to coral reefs from marine tourism



# THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE: MARINE TOURISM IMPACTS ON CORAL REEFS

The coastal and marine tourism industry constitutes **50% of global tourism**, with coral reef tourism alone contributing an estimated **\$36 billion annually** to the world economy. This vital industry provides substantial economic value, particularly for coastal communities reliant on healthy marine ecosystems.

However, this growth brings significant environmental threats. Many popular dive and snorkel sites are located in areas of critical marine biodiversity, especially **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)**. The expansion of global coral reef tourism, with an estimated **one million new divers certified each year** and millions more snorkelling, can lead to devastating impacts such as coral cover loss, disease, and degradation if unmanaged.

These threats must be proactively addressed as an integral part of dive destination management, especially within protected areas, to prevent irreversible damage.

- Anchor damage
- Direct diver damage
- Marine life harassment/manipulation
- Sewage effluent
- Hazardous cleaning chemicals
- Use of toxic sunscreen
- Marine species feeding
- Hazardous waste disposal
- Marine debris
- Single-use plastic

Coral reefs and other vital ecosystems require coordinated and meaningful conservation efforts that engage the tourism industry to not only reduce threats but also lead to a net positive impact in areas of interest.



## GREEN FINS: YOUR SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN SOLUTION

**Well-managed tourism actively reduces local threats and strengthens reef resilience against global stressors.**

[Green Fins](#) offers the only internationally recognised environmental standards for scuba diving and snorkelling – empowering resource managers worldwide with a scientifically proven, scalable, ecosystem-based management approach.

The **15-point Green Fins Code of Conduct** provides a framework to mitigate environmental impacts effectively, with marine tourism businesses showing measurable improvements and a **14% average decrease in environmental impact score year-on-year.**

Launched in 2004, Green Fins is internationally coordinated by The Reef-World Foundation in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and is currently locally implemented by governments or NGOs supporting coastal resource and MPA management.



# GREEN FINS

# HOW IT WORKS: THE 6 PROGRAMME COMPONENTS OF GREEN FINS



## CASE STUDIES

**Evidence-Based Action in Indonesia**  
Green Fins' Intelligence Reporting and Implementation in Indonesia directly addressed anchor damage. In 2025, assessments identified 10 dive centres regularly anchoring on sensitive reefs. Green Fins Indonesia, informed by this data, collaborated with local associations to organise a mooring buoy installation program. By their third year, 90% of these centres had implemented no-anchoring policies, showcasing how data translates to direct environmental improvements on the ground.

**Marketing Aqaba to Conscious Divers**  
Through strategic Implementation and Marketing & Communications, Green Fins Jordan achieved a remarkable 51% reduction in threats to Aqaba's coral reefs in just two years. Beyond measurable impacts like the elimination of anchoring damage and a 69% reduction in diver contact, the program leveraged successes through [press releases](#), positioning Aqaba as a leading destination for eco-conscious divers. This demonstrates how showcasing verifiable sustainability credentials attracts increasing demand for environmentally friendly tourism, benefiting reefs and the local economy.

## WHY IT MATTERS: DELIVERING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON MARINE TOURISM

The health of coral reefs is critical to the health of the tourism industry, including the livelihoods and businesses they support.

### Data-Driven Results

Green Fins assessments provide data for adaptive management strategies and demonstrate measurable improvements in environmental practices.

### Track Record

- **1,300+** marine tourism businesses reducing local threats
- **80+** countries reached by Green Fins
- **2,500+** dive professionals completed online environmental training
- **1.4 million+** tourists engaged with Green Fins centres in the last 10 years

### International Targets

Green Fins directly supports national and international commitments by aligning with:

### Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)

- GBF Target 7: Addressing pollution
- GBF Target 8: Minimising climate impact
- GBF Target 15: Reducing business impacts
- GBF Target 20: Strengthening capacity building

### Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- SDG 12: Promoting sustainable marine tourism
- SDG 14: Measurably reducing threats to marine ecosystems

### Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR)

- Strengthening the resilience of coastal ecosystems, communities, and economies



# HOW TO ADOPT GREEN FINS: IMPLEMENTING AS A NATIONAL PROGRAMME

Reef-World offers bespoke Green Fins consultation and advisory services to governments, institutions and resource managers, helping them to reduce the environmental footprint of businesses, deliver on their biodiversity targets and international frameworks and harness the potential for industry-wide transformation. These activities ensure thriving and sustainable marine tourism economies in Green Fins active countries.

## Who can adopt Green Fins?

- Governments
- Non-profit organisations
- Multilateral bodies
- Development cooperation agencies
- Research institutions
- and other organisations

Green Fins can be adopted by multiple collaborating agencies within one country or site.

## Who implements the programme in each country or site?

Reef-World will train individuals from implementing agencies to form a Green Fins National Team, who will lead on strategy, development and implementation of Green Fins.

## Who is Reef-World?

The Reef-World Foundation is a UK-based conservation charity (No: 1157096) that inspires and empowers people to act in conserving and sustainably developing coastal resources, particularly coral reefs and related ecosystems. Reef-World has spearheaded the global implementation of Green Fins since its inception, working closely with governments, institutions, businesses and coastal communities, pushing for system and behaviour change in scuba diving and snorkelling for the marine industry on a global scale.



## How does Reef-World work with local implementing partners?

Reef-World offers technical assistance, capacity building, and ongoing in-person or remote support to deliver Green Fins. Consultation and advisory services are tailored to the unique needs of each country or site, with a multi-year strategy aiming for national independence within 5 years.

## How much does it cost?

The costs of adopting the programme up to national independence vary by location and needs. These will depend as well on the implementation strategy agreed with the local partners, which would usually allocate budgets for the activities. Grants may be developed in collaboration with Reef-World to partially or fully cover these costs.

## Ready to safeguard your marine ecosystems and build a sustainable tourism economy?

Building on the Green Fins initiative's reach across over 80 countries, Reef-World is seeking to introduce Green Fins into more countries that rely significantly on coral reefs for their economic and social development.



**Contact us for a strategic plan development and initial consultation:**

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