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Summary

Millions of people around the world are already experiencing the adverse effects of rapid population growth and climate change, particularly those that depend on marine and coastal ecosystems. In response, projects using ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) are increasingly common and implemented through targeted conservation, management and restoration activities to deliver ecosystem services. Globally, EbA is emerging on the international climate adaptation agenda and is being promoted widely by several international governing bodies and nongovernment organisations. Despite this, there are still significant uncertainties surrounding its application and meaning, and no consistent adaptation planning frameworks for the implementation of EbA actions in marine and coastal ecosystems. As such, my research aims to 1) clarify some of the uncertainties surrounding why and how marine and coastal EbA is being used and planned in practice, 2) develop decision support tools to guide the implementation of EbA, incorporating elements used in other ecosystem-based management approaches, and 3) monitor and evaluate an applied EbA action to contribute to the knowledgebase of how effective EbA is in practice. This research will help provide adaptation managers and planners with decision support frameworks to guide the prioritisation, implementation and monitoring of future marine and coastal EbA actions.

Research Expertise

- Coral reef ecology
- Marine spatial planning
- Ecosystem-based management
- Ecosystem services
- Climate change adaptation

Coastal restoration