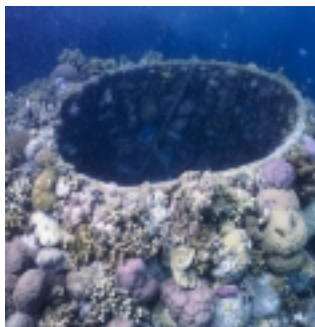


For Immediate Release

BARNACLE BRINGS NEW LIFE TO CORAL REEF IN THE MALDIVIAN ISLAND OF IHURU



Pictures from top:
The Barnacle
Surveying the Barnacle
Removing Coral Predators

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**The Award-winning Barnacle Project
at the New Angsana Resort & Spa Maldives Ihuru
Introduces an Innovative Way of Coral Reef Regeneration**

Ihuru, Maldives, 23 April 2002 – Since the Barnacle Project was implemented on Ihuru in November 1996, scientists from over the world have been visiting the Maldivian island to study this successful method of cultivating corals. The project is the only one of its kind in the Maldives. It received international recognition in 1998 when it was conferred the ‘Theodore M Sperry Award’ – an award honouring pioneers in the field of environmental conservation – by the Society for Ecological Restoration.

Developed by German architect, Professor Wolf Hilbertz, and Dr Tom Goreau, President of Global Coral Reef Alliance, the patented project is currently under the supervision of Mr Abdul Azeez Abdul Hakeem, Marine Life Consultant of the new Angsana Resort and Spa Maldives Ihuru opening in October 2001.

Mr Azeez describes the Barnacle as a man-made steel structure submerged about 20-feet in the sea. Shaped like a barnacle and measuring 20 feet in length and 12 feet in height, it uses a scientific method called marine accretion to accelerate coral growth. Powered by solar cells, it produces a safe low-voltage current that reacts with seawater, causing minerals to crystallise into limestone similar to those found in reefs. The rock-hard limestone provides an ideal foundation on which corals can flourish. The Barnacle has not only contributed immensely to Ihuru’s reef restoration efforts but has also enhanced the biodiversity of the underwater community by attracting more species of marine life to its thriving habitat.

News

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Observations made over the past few years have found that the Barnacle has greatly accelerated the rate of coral growth. Compared to neighbouring reefs of the same species, corals on the Barnacle grow 3-5 times faster. Massive corals, which typically take longer to cultivate, have also experienced elevated growth rate.

The Barnacle also provides an alternative source of limestone, which is commonly used as a building material. By supplying this important mineral for construction, it replaces the destructive mining of reefs. Moreover, the formation of limestone makes the Barnacle an amazing self-repairing structure. Cracks caused by waves or rocks are quickly filled in with the mineral. Of course, regular maintenance is still required and the staff of Angsana Maldives Ihuru keep it in excellent condition by cleaning it with a toothbrush and removing predatory marine organisms. Underwater cables are also checked frequently for leakage.

As an eco-oriented resort, the new Angsana Maldives Ihuru plays its part in protecting the environment. It organises programmes like marine biology talks and snorkelling trips that not only heighten guests' appreciation for marine life, but also allow them to witness the fruitful results of the Barnacle Project.

Room Rates & Reservations – Please refer to the rate structure for full details. For reservations, you may call the resort at **+960 445 502** or the Singapore office at **+65 6 8495 788**. Please visit **www.angsana.com** for online booking. For more information, kindly contact any of the worldwide sales offices:

Australia	Tel: +61 2 9255 7865	Germany	Tel: +49 2774 6132
Hong Kong	Tel: +852 2312 1867	Japan	Tel: +81 3 5456 8817
United Kingdom	Tel: +44 1 494 874 106	United States	Tel: +1 212 947 8670 (NY) Tel: 1 866 8BANYAN (CA)

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About Angsana Resorts & Spa

The newly launched sister brand of the award winning Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts, the Angsana Resorts & Spa is embarking on a rapid expansion plan in the Asia-Pacific region. The flagship resort, Angsana Resort & Spa Bintan, was opened in June 2000; following fast on its heels was the opening of Angsana Resort & Spa Great Barrier Reef, which is targeted at the lucrative holiday market in Australia. April 2001 will see the launch of Angsana Oasis Spa & Resort Bangalore in India followed by Angsana Resort & Spa Maldives Ihuru in October 2001.

