

Test by students of the University of Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

Coral reefs are expected to vanish by the year 2050. This means the death of one of the most productive ecosystems. Taking that into account, we, as passionate aquarists, decided to do something at our scale, following our credo “Think global, act local”. This is how the Ecopora project was born two years ago.

Since then, we have developed our coral farm project in partnership with the University of Louvain-la-Neuve in Belgium. One of us finishing his master in Bioengineering and Entrepreneurship, this project was part of his Master Thesis.

Our goal is to provide ecofriendly corals to Belgian reefers and from neighboring countries. We are convinced that aquacultured corals are the best ones in regard of quality and resilience to captivity. But the main issue for “ex-situ” coral farming is light. And we wanted a solution providing the best energy efficiency – light quality ratio. This is why we turned to Philip’s CoralCare LED fixtures. Indeed, having compared different light solutions, we have planned to use those LED fixtures in our coral farm.

But before that, we wanted to test them by ourselves. This is why we use 4 CoralCare units in our experimental setup in the Laboratory of Marine Biology of the University of Louvain-la-Neuve. This experiment aims to determine the best combination of light “intensity” (i.e. PAR) and photoperiod to maximize the growth of 7 coral species (*Seriatopora hysteric*, *Seriatopora caliendrum*, *Stylopora pistillata*, *Montipora digitate*, *Acropora valida*, *Acropora Millepora* and *Acropora Formosa*). The experiment is still on the go until the end of November. We are testing 9 different combinations of both light parameters (going from 85 to 415 $\mu\text{E}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ for PAR and from 6 to 18 hours for photoperiod).

We already had encouraging results after a month of experiment and we observed a noticeable accentuation of coloration around optimal combinations of light parameters for our different coral species.

Please, visit our website for more information about our project and follow us on Facebook to keep in touch with the evolution of our experience with the CoralCare units.

Website : www.ecopora.be

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/ecoporaaquaculture>