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Since 2016 I'm using the Philips Coralcare units. One of the major design goals was coral growth. Philips has succeeded in offering lights that grow coral very well, emitting a blanket of light with the intensity and spectrum needed to grow corals. The first two models had a housing that looked very industrial. Since December 2019 I am using prototypes of the new 2020 model. Compared to the previous lights, the form factor of the fixture was improved. It looks way less industrial now. Other key factors such as industrial robustness and fanless passive cooling have remained. They have also made sure the lights will not only comply to European but also to American safety standards.

Compared to the previous versions, the new lights stimulate more fluorescence in the corals. The diffusion plate called 'light guide' now features four non-diffuse areas with white leds behind these. This feature enables the light to produce a subtle shimmering effect while still avoiding any 'discoballing'. The tank is lit as even as it would have been lit with a large bank of T5 units while still featuring some shimmering. Especially when the lights are mounted close to the water surface, this subtle shimmering effect is clearly visible.

Another big upgrade is the new controller. Where the previous controller could only be programmed through USB, the new controllers also offer wireless control through an app. This app makes it easy to program the lights using a smartphone. Sharing programs from user to user works flawlessly. The new controller is backwards compatible: all current versions of the Philips Coralcare can be controlled by it. The newest lights cannot be controlled by the old controller.

My first experiences with these new lights are very positive. My main tank is set up according to the ideas described in the books I have published. This tank (measuring 110 x 80 x 70 cm) is lit by two prototypes of the new Philips CoralCare version 2020. These lights supply the animals with enough photons to grow anything I want in any corner of the tank. From a visual perspective, the tank is lit from corner to corner. Fluorescence and colour rendering are very good. Compared to most other lights, the lack of fans (that would be noisy and maintenance sensitive) is a relief to the ears. Together with the high quality pumps I use, the tank produces virtually no noise. The design of the newest models has an improved spouse-approval factor. These lamps, combined with the new wireless controller make a great combination. I can definitely recommend these lights, both for aquarists who keep SPS and LPS.







