



PSA-030-Sunscreen kills Coral-World's Oceans

[Join us to save coral reefs](#)

Vic Ferguson

The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation 281.971.7703 P.O. Box 311117 Houston Texas 77231

11.19.13

ENVIRONMENT

Sunscreen Protects Our Skin, But It Also Kills Coral Reefs

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 21, 2015



Dashed Pierson

*The Inertia
Contributing
Editor*

A new study finds that sunscreen-wearing swimmers and surfers are contributing to killing coral reefs. Photo: NOAA



Not even in nature can you have your cake and eat it too. Something that's a boon for one species is a bane for another. On the macro side, the food chain – one animal eats another to survive. And the the micro – birds shitting on humans (not life or death, but still pretty bad). And according to a recent study, a new give-and-take relationship has been found between sunscreen-wearing beachgoers and the ocean's coral reefs.



PSA-030-Sunscreen kills Coral-World's Oceans

[Join us to save coral reefs](#)

Vic Ferguson

The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation 281.971.7703 P.O. Box 311117 Houston Texas 77231

The study, released on Tuesday in the [Environmental Contamination and Toxicology journal](#), reported that a chemical found in certain sunblocks had a detrimental effect on coral. Oxybenzone, a chemical with a specialty in absorbing light, is the culprit due to its highly toxic ability to break down coral rob it of life. The stuff is so potent that the study claims it'll damage reefs in minuscule measures – amounts equivalent to a single drop of water in a half-dozen Olympic-sized pools.

While that's frightening and all – what can this evil chemical do to human skin? According to a [study by the CDC](#), Oxybenzone can seep beneath the skin and result in cell damage. And for many people, the chemical produces a severe allergic reaction. But perhaps the most terrifying aspect of Oxybenzone is that it is a hormone modifier. This is where it affects coral's ability to grow, with similar hormonal effects to birth control. Studies also found that frequent use of products containing the chemical can result in a decrease in testosterone levels for men – yikes!

All fears of a lost manhood aside, the world's coral reefs have really been taking a hit lately. Just earlier this month, another study showed that [global warming is resulting in coral bleaching](#). And a world without reefs is a world we don't want to live in – the oceans supply 70% of the world's oxygen and if they die, we die...and when that starts to happen, our mass migration to Mars may have to happen a lot sooner than expected.

*Vic Ferguson
The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation
Executive Director
P.O. Box 311117
Houston, Texas 77231
vic.ferguson@wfcrc.org
www.wfcrc.org
281.971.7703 (office)
832.269.5589 (land line)*

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing" ...Edmund Burke