



**Project Number:** 05N117-02

**Project Start Date:** 1/10/2006

**Project Completion Date:** 30/06/2009

## Project Description

This project uses baited underwater stereo-video cameras to examine the effects of fishing (and protection) on coral reef fishes of the Houtman Abrolhos Islands. For sustainable management of fish biodiversity it is essential to not only monitor targeted fish species, but the effect that their removal has on the whole fish community. Stereo-video cameras are a non-destructive tool capable of collecting comparative data on the relative abundances and lengths of a broad range of demersal fishes from multiple habitats and locations. The method can collect data from the more commonly fished deeper regions (>20 m) beyond the limits of Scientific SCUBA diving.

The outcomes of the project include a better understanding of the diversity and structure reef fish assemblages at the Abrolhos Islands which will assist sustainable management. The development of a long-term monitoring program will increase knowledge about the effectiveness of fishery closures as tools for conserving fish biodiversity. Furthermore, the study will establish robust baselines against which effects of potential future natural (eg Southern Oscillation Index) and anthropogenic (tourisms, aquaculture, fishing) impacts can be assessed. Education programs are important to transfer information and increase community awareness and support for sustainable management.

**Delivery Organisation:** University of WA

**Total IP2 Funding:** \$210,921

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