



May 2015

Cyanide Free Seas Project

Cyanide fishing is an illegal, destructive fishing practice that has killed huge areas of coral reef from the tropical mid-pacific region right across to east Africa. Fishermen squirt the poison into corals to stun fish, enabling them to make quicker, bigger and more lucrative batches, even though most of the fish caught will often die before they reach the port. There is also a considerable health risk to the fishermen themselves. A ground breaking project led by SEA LIFE is aimed at curbing this deadly practice. Now, for the first time, a test developed by a Portuguese university research team has made it possible to find out if a fish has been exposed to cyanide without having to kill and dissect the fish first. The 40-plus strong network of Sea Life centres around the globe has begun random sampling and testing of newly acquired fish stocks with the aim of working with the university to develop a simple 'field-test' which will enable cyanide checks to be made in any location. SEA LIFE hopes that this test will put pressure on fish collectors using the illegal practice and eventually drive the guilty fishermen out of business. Wiping out cyanide fishing would save habitats and thousands, if not millions of fish.