

## V. GLOSSARY

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- algae** -- one celled or many-celled plants that have no root, stem, or leaf systems.
- algal turf** -- densely packed algae that project less than one centimeter above the substrate they are growing on; usually filamentous.
- belt transect** -- a narrow band of predetermined width set across a study area, and within which the occurrence or distribution of plants or animals is recorded.
- benthic** -- bottom-dwelling; living on or under sediment, pilings, etc.
- bioerosion** -- the breakdown of skeletal material when organisms bore into it.
- biomass** -- the total weight of organic material of a particular species or in a particular habitat per unit of area or volume.
- biota** -- the total plant and animal life of a given area.
- bleaching** -- loss of color from reduction in the number of zooxanthellae and/or the amount of photosynthetic pigments.
- bloom** -- a sudden increase in the density of phytoplankton or benthic algae in an area.
- chain transect** -- a linear transect under which a chain is draped to gather data on all the surfaces beneath the chain.
- chlorophyll** -- a group of pigments present in plant cells which are essential in the use of light energy for photosynthesis.
- cnidarian** -- a member of the Phylum Cnidaria (also known as Coelenterata), which includes corals, octocorals, hydroids, jellyfish, and anemones.
- digitize** -- to determine the area of an item in a photograph or on a map by outlining it manually with a planimeter or electronically with a computer.
- dinoflagellates** -- unicellular algae in the Division Pyrrophyta.
- endolithic** -- growing within a rock or other hard inorganic substratum.
- endosymbiotic** -- living within another organism.
- fire coral** -- a member of the Class Hydrozoa which forms a calcium carbonate skeleton; the fire corals *Millepora* spp. are very conspicuous on Caribbean and western Atlantic reefs.

**foraminiferans** -- an order of planktonic and benthic protozoans that possess protective coverings usually composed of calcium carbonate.

**gorgonian** -- a soft coral of the Order Gorgonacea; most octocorals, including sea fans, whips, and branching soft corals.

**hardground** -- cemented hard rock surface that has become lithified.

**holdfast** -- an organ of attachment or anchoring structure, as that of octocorals.

**in situ** -- Latin term meaning "in the normal or natural position".

**lagoon** -- a body of water separated from the sea by a bank or coral reef; the region between a shore and a barrier reef or inside a ring of islands composing an atoll.

**linear transect** -- a line of a specified length across a study site beneath which data are gathered to provide a random sampling of organisms within that zone.

**macroalgae** -- algae that project more than one centimeter above the substrate, such as *Dictyota* and *Halimeda*.

**octocoral** -- a member of the Subclass Octocorallia, which includes gorgonians, sea fans, and other organisms; the polyps bear eight tentacles which usually have small projections.

**parallax** -- a distortion that occurs when viewing the same object from different angles or distances so the object's position and size may appear to change.

**patchiness** -- uneven or variable distribution.

**pavement** -- hard carbonate substrate of low relief, sometimes dominated by octocorals.

**pelagic** -- free-swimming or floating organisms that live exclusively in the water column, not on the bottom.

**photic zone** -- the region of sea water penetrated by at least 1% of subsurface radiation.

**photo-quadrat** -- a quadrat that is photographed for purposes of species monitoring or measuring.

**plankton** -- drifting or slowly swimming organisms that are subject to currents; mostly microscopic algae, protozoans, and larval forms of higher animals.

**piscivorous** -- feeding on fish.

**polyp** -- the basic structural unit of a cnidarian, consisting of a tubular or cylindrical body having an oral end which bears the mouth and tentacles.

**quadrat** -- a two-dimensional square or rectangular sampling unit within which organisms are counted or measured, or the frame that marks this area.

**scleractinian** -- member of the Order Scleractinia, the stony corals of the reef that produce calcium carbonate cups called corallites.

**sessile** -- attached to the bottom or to rocks, pilings, etc. and unable to move.

**spatial index** -- the ratio of reef surface contour distance to linear distance; used as a measure of the reef's topographical complexity or three-dimensional relief.

**symbiont** -- a symbiotic organism; either of the two organisms participating in symbiosis, which is an interactive relationship between two species.

**thermal stress** -- energy burden placed on an organism by temperatures either higher or lower than the organism can tolerate.

**transect** -- a line or narrow belt used to survey the distributions of organisms or substrate across a given area.

**zoanthid** -- small anemone-like Cnidarians (solitary or colonial).

**zooxanthellae** -- photosynthetic, dinoflagellate algae that live symbiotically in the tissues of certain marine invertebrates, including reef-building corals.