

What if we lost

OUR Seagrass



WITHOUT SEAGRASS SOME FISH AND SHELLFISH WOULD BE WITHOUT SHELTER

Beds of seagrass provide sheltered nursery areas in which the juveniles of many marine species live and grow before moving elsewhere as adults.

WITHOUT SEAGRASS SOME ANIMALS WOULD BE WITHOUT FOOD

Green turtles, dugongs, some fish and sea urchins eat seagrasses. Seagrass leaves eventually rot away to form detritus — particles of material that provide food to many other marine species.

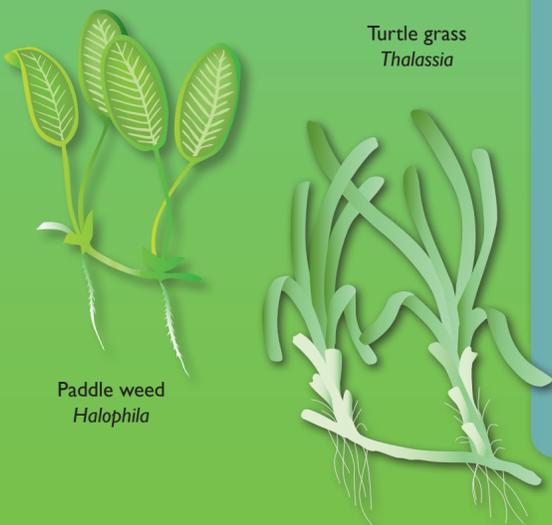
WITHOUT SEAGRASS OUR COASTS WOULD HAVE LESS PROTECTION

Because they trap sediments, seagrasses gradually extend shorelines and protect coasts from wave action and erosion.

WITHOUT SEAGRASS OUR CORAL REEFS WOULD BE AT RISK

Beds of seagrass trap sediments that could otherwise smother coral reefs.

What are SEAGRASSES?



Paddle weed
Halophila

Turtle grass
Thalassia

Seagrasses have leaves attached to short upright stems and creeping horizontal stems or rhizomes. The leaves are long and grass-like in most species but are like broad paddles in the species shown at the left of the illustration.

Seagrasses grow in shallow water, commonly just below low tide on reef flats and sandy lagoons and between tides on muddy banks.

Healthy seagrasses can form vast beds resembling underwater fields or meadows.



A series information sheets has been produced by SPC (www.spc.int) and LMMA (www.lmmanetwork.org), which includes a specific sheet on seagrasses. This information sheet lists a few of the actions we can take to protect and manage seagrasses.

For further information, or to obtain copies of this poster and the SPC/LMMA Information kit for fishing communities, contact:

