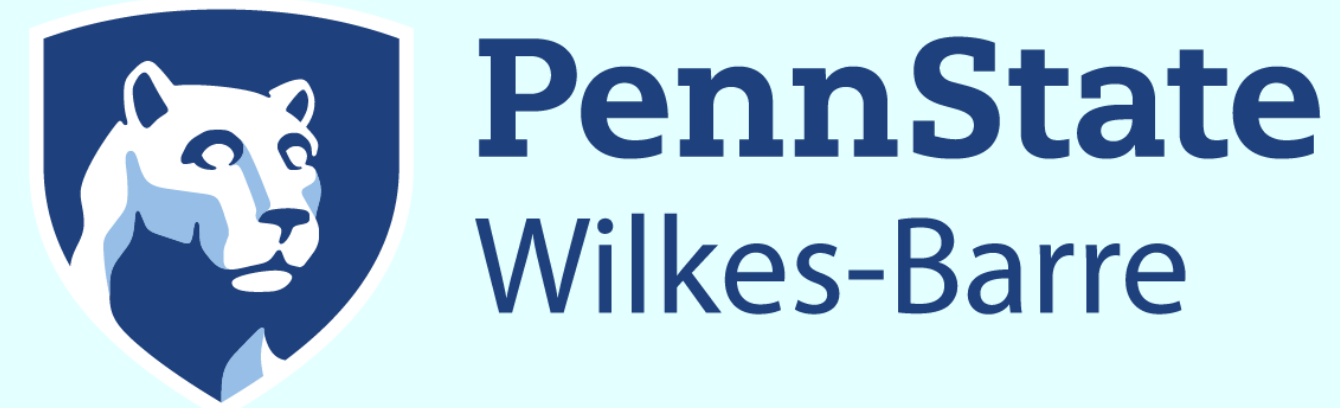




Healthy coral reef

Decomposition of Coral Reefs

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Bleached coral reef

Introduction

Coral Reefs are the most diverse of all marine ecosystems. One quarter of all ocean species depend on reefs for food and shelter. However, some have been completely destroyed while other coral reefs are deteriorating at an alarming rate.

Threats to the Coral Reefs

- Overfishing
- Changing Ocean Chemistry
- Climate Change
- Pollution
- Sedimentation
- Invasive Species



Crown of Thorn Starfish is an invasive species.

Process of Coral Bleaching

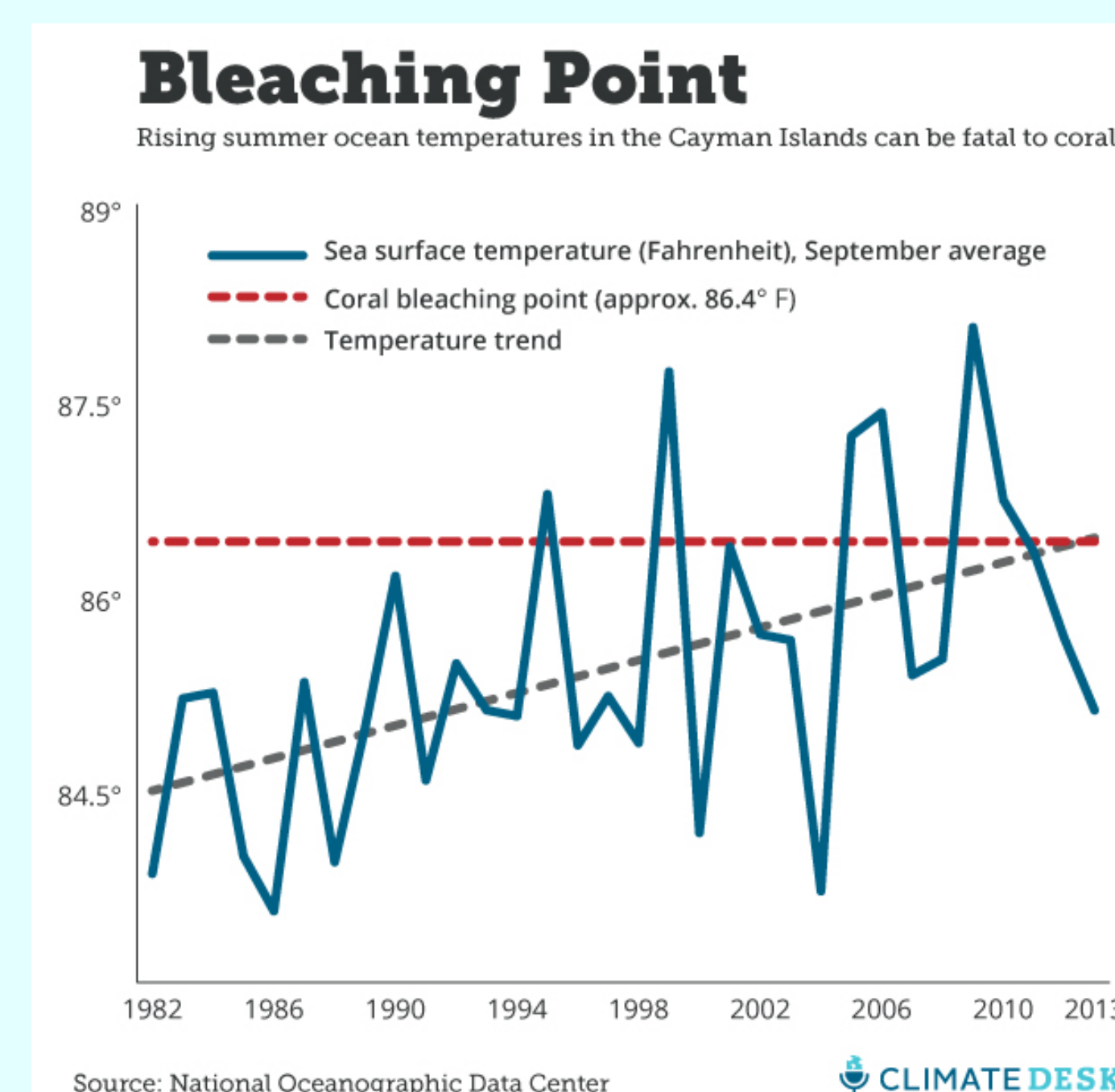
1. Algae in coral's tissue provides it with food, energy, and vibrant color
2. Corals become stressed from threats like pollution or high water temperatures and expel algae.
3. Because of lack of algae, corals appear white or "bleached".
4. Although some corals can recover and regain algae, most corals will suffer from fatal diseases or starve due to threatening conditions.

Conclusion

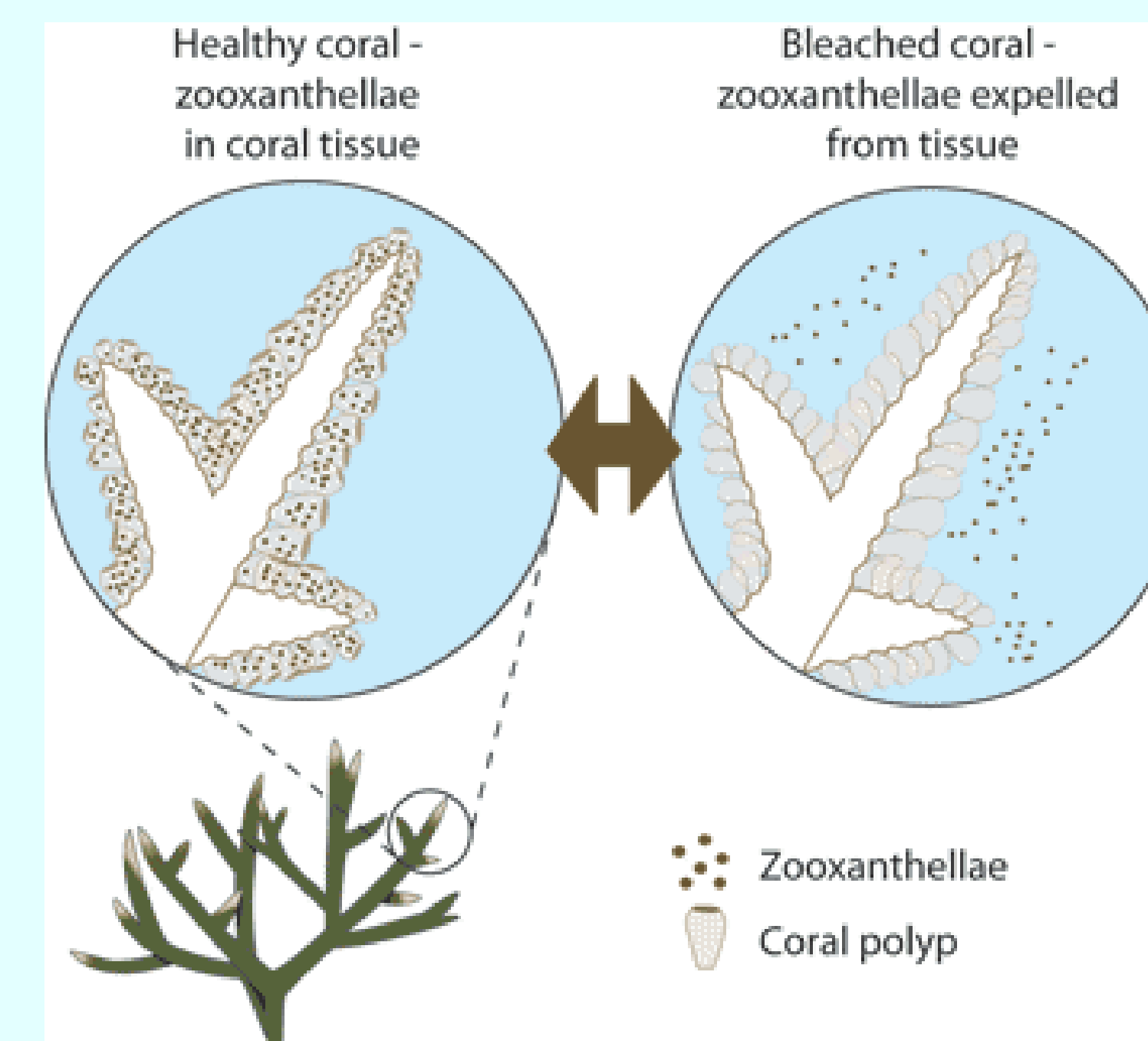
Coral reefs used to teem with life, but due to an increasing amount of threats to the reefs, they go through a process of coral bleaching which many times results in the destruction of the coral. It is important to protect our oceans and the species that live within our waters.

Resources

- Smithsonian. "Corals and Coral Reefs". <https://ocean.si.edu/ocean-life/invertebrates/corals-and-coral-reefs>
- Fight for our Reef. "Coral Bleaching". <https://www.marineconservation.org.au/coral-bleaching/>
- The Telegraph. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2017/11/28/hope-great-barrier-reef-discovery-hardcore-100-able-withstand/>
- Phys Org. <https://phys.org/news/2017-11-resilience-great-barrier-reef-opportunities.html>
- Magzter. <https://www.magzter.com/articles/10916/260495/5a57589bb4047>
- Mother Jones. <https://www.motherjones.com/environment/2014/05/cayman-islands-coral-reefs-dead/>



Correlation between climate change and coral bleaching.



Process of coral bleaching.