

*Testimony before the Maui Planning Commission 9-2-09  
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Ten Conversation Points of Importance to the Future of Maui's Coral Reefs

1. Maui is committed to coral reef protection and restoration, as indicated, for example, in the draft Island Plan.
2. Maui's coral reef ecosystems are in serious trouble, some already have collapsed.
3. Global heating is making coral reefs even more vulnerable.
4. Urbanization is an underlying cause of coral reef degradation.
5. Maui County is planning more coastal urbanization.
6. There is no proven mitigation for urban impacts on Maui's coral reefs.
7. Development on Maui must be tied to coral reef protection and restoration.
8. The Maui Planning Commission should recommend that the pace of new development correspond to progress with coral reef protection and recovery.
9. A high-level task force should be created to help integrate coral reef conservation and development in that manner.
10. Otherwise, proceeding with development plans condemns Maui's coral reefs.

I'd like to leave with you a recently published scientific paper entitled "Quantifying the impact of watershed urbanization on a coral reef..." It concludes that reef "recovery is a daunting task," in fact, if one thinks about it, next to impossible once coral reefs are heavily degraded or destroyed in an urban environment.