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Reprinted 8/18/19

IMAGE OF THE DAY BIOLOGY 29 JULY 2019
1 MINUTE READ

This coral needs to be flexible

Mixing with the right bacteria can help survive climate change.

A shallow coral reef in the study area in the Central Red Sea.
ANNA ROIK

The chances of this Red Sea coral surviving may depend to some extent on its relationships.

German researchers have found that different corals take advantage of their symbiotic relationship with bacteria in different ways.

Some can respond flexibly to changing environmental conditions by associating themselves with certain bacteria that can help them adapt, while others stick rigidly to their set ways, says lead researcher Christian Voolstra, from the University of Konstanz.

The research was carried out over 21 months in the Red Sea near Jeddah in Saudi Arabia.

In order to investigate changes in coral associated bacterial communities that are exposed to stress, Voolstra and colleagues transplanted fragments of the same coral colonies into marine environments exposed to varying degrees of human influence.

Their findings are reported in the journal *Nature Communications*.:

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