



PSA-030-Coal Dust Kills Coral- World's Oceans

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Completely unsurprisingly, coal dust kills coral, too

By [Clayton Aldern](#) on May 18, 2016 4:44 am

To the shock of no one, it turns out that coal dust is pretty bad for just about everything. People? Turns their lungs the wrong color. Rats? Plaque in the arteries. Corals? Turns out when you spill a lot of coal dust into the water, they don't do so well either.

In a Nature Scientific Reports article titled "Simulated coal spill causes mortality and growth inhibition in tropical marine organisms," scientists from the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies and the Australian Institute of Marine Science have shown that, well, a simulated coal spill kills pretty much everything it touches underwater.

Here are some corals at different stages of exposure. The badly abused Swiffer mop of a polyp on the right bathed for 14 days in water flavored with 275 mg of coal per liter:

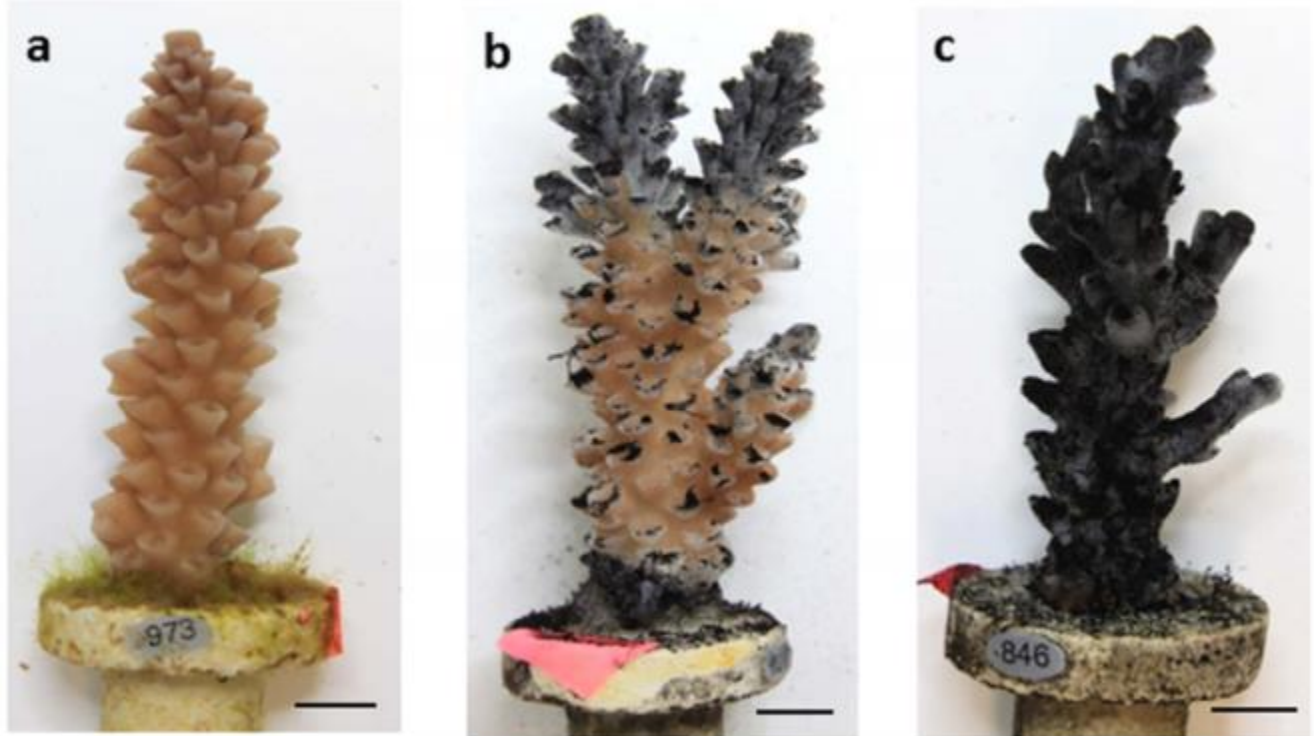


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[Berry et al., Nature Scientific Reports](#)

And here are some stunted fish getting progressively more and more freaked out that scientists are making strip-mine tea in their tanks:



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[Berry et al., Nature Scientific Reports](#)

Climate change is already devastating coral reefs around the world, but this new research seems to say, “Why not cut out the middle man! It turns out we can snuff out some ecosystems with coal dust alone!”

And — surprise again — with [increased](#) seaborne coal trade comes a greater risk of coal dust exposure for all these marine critters.

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[Turns out young forests are pretty great at sucking up carbon](#)

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*The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing"....**Edmund Burke***