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Title: The 2014-2016 Global Coral Bleaching Event: Preliminary Comparisons Between Thermal Stress and Bleaching Timing and Intensity

Type of Presentation: Poster

Oral

Short Abstract:

Rising ocean temperatures have increased the frequency of coral bleaching events. The extremely strong El Niño in 1997/98 triggered bleaching that killed about 16% of the world's coral. In 2010, during a mild El Niño year, elevated ocean temperatures resulted in mass bleaching events in many parts of the world. Currently during another record-strength El Niño event, another global bleaching event has been underway since mid-2014. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coral Reef Watch (CRW) is undertaking an effort to collect and document reports of the severity and extent of the ongoing bleaching event. CRW is collating bleaching data (including reports of no bleaching) from collaborators for the period 2014 through at least 2016. *In situ* bleaching observations are compared with CRW's satellite measurements of bleaching thermal stress to test CRW's thermal stress monitoring products, including the Coral Bleaching HotSpot and Degree Heating Week products. This presentation explores the timeline of record thermal stress and bleaching occurring globally from 2014-2016 based on the comprehensive *in situ* bleaching observations CRW has collected to date. Preliminary results from comparisons of bleaching patterns with CRW's satellite products will be discussed for coral reef regions around the globe.

The 2014-2016 Global Coral Bleaching Event



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(Photo Credit: Catlin Seaview Survey)

