



## **Carbon Dioxide a Potential Threat to Marine Life**

The cars we drive every day are increasing the amount of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. Scientists have found that some of this carbon dioxide is being absorbed by the ocean. Some believe that the increased carbon dioxide is not a problem, but a new report says that it may be damaging ocean life.

Our oceans are absorbing millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide every year. The carbon dioxide makes the ocean acidic. “This is the most dramatic change in marine chemistry in at least the past 650,000 years” said a scientist. When the ocean is acidic, coral and other sea life cannot build their protective shells as easily. The acidity could weaken coral reefs, and prevent them from growing.

As the ocean becomes more acidic it will also affect very small organisms living in the water like plankton, a food source for many fish. The acidity may also threaten cold-water reefs on the coast of British Columbia and Alaska.

Scientists are still doing research to understand climate change, ocean acidity, and ocean life. Some scientists argue that ocean acidity is not a problem and that the ocean can absorb carbon dioxide without any problems.

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*Courtesy of Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary*

