The University of Hawai’i Sea Grant College Program (UH SeaGrant) supports an integrated program of research, outreach and education that addresses marine and coastal issues of public concern.

Hawai’i as a Model Destination of Sustainability

Tourism has a tremendous impact on the people of Hawai’i and its environment. Visitor expenditures in 2007 comprised $14 billion or 22 percent of Hawai’i’s economy and employed 176,200 people in the state. This intimate relationship between Hawai’i’s economy and tourism is undeniably influenced by tourism’s dependence on a healthy and sustainable ecosystem.

How can the tourism industry move forward to simultaneously improve the economic condition of the state while decreasing the carbon footprint of the [tourism] industry and supporting ecosystem restoration?

Indeed it is the diverse and unique ecosystems of the Hawaiian Islands that drive the constant flow of visitors to our region. As such, improving the quality of our environment, restoring habitats and ecosystems, and reducing the energy and water needed to support tourism will result in positive impacts on Hawai’i’s economy. Toward this goal UH Sea Grant seeks to link the tourism industry to sustainability of our natural resources, promotion of healthy coastal ecosystems, and respect for our indigenous people and the unique multicultural fabric of our society.
THE UH SEA GRANT CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
IN SUSTAINABLE COASTAL TOURISM

Launched by UH Sea Grant in 2009, the Center for Sustainable Coastal Tourism is a collaboration among the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology, the College of Social Sciences, the School of Travel Industry Management, the Hawai‘inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge, and the School of Architecture. The center strives to be a portal whereby tourism research is extended to serve Hawai‘i’s communities.

In promoting a Hawaiian sense of place, the Center for Sustainable Coastal Tourism is committed to protecting and sustaining Hawai‘i’s unique cultural heritage and natural resources. As a result, the communication of responsible stewardship of Hawai‘i’s lands, coasts, seas, and people through knowledge and outreach is paramount. The center provides a learning network and place of collaboration and serves as a depository for tourism data and research.

Sea Grant Contributions to Hawai‘i:
Signature Sustainable Coastal Tourism Projects

- **Hanauma Bay Education Program**
The award-winning Hanauma Bay Education Program was developed and is administered and conducted by UH Sea Grant. Over one million annual visitors to Hanauma Bay are educated on the value of marine resources and appropriate behavior, which reduces their environmental impact both within the marine protected area as well as other coastal areas that they may visit.

- **Reef Watch Waikīkī**
Through Reef Watch Waikīkī, UH Sea Grant recruits volunteers for human and biological monitoring, marine education outreach and service learning opportunities, and ocean awareness training in Waikīkī. Reef Watch Waikīkī is helping to educate and instill a sense of stewardship in those who live, work, and visit Waikīkī.

- **Waikīkī Ecosystem Restoration**
Much of the reef in Waikīkī has been filled in with sand due to excess beach erosion. As such, new solutions are being sought by UH Sea Grant and our partners to create a win-win situation where the excess sand on the reef is pumped back onto the shore. Ultimately, the overarching vision for an ecosystem restoration of Waikīkī is to establish an “Aquarium Without Walls” where marine life will return to and flourish in Waikīkī.

- **Deep Seawater Air Conditioning**
UH Sea Grant joins the University of Hawai‘i Economic Research organization and other research experts in assessing the economic and environmental prospects for Waikīkī district deep seawater air conditioning.