

Project Update: June 2015

The study commenced in March 2015 with a meeting held with the Department of Environment and Forests (DoEF) of the Andaman Islands, the authority on the management of national parks, to discuss the project work plan and seek their permission and support. Based on the recommendations of the park authorities, the study now focuses on the Rani Jhansi Marine National Park (12.112833N, 93.081458E), an equally important reef area where post-bleaching coral recovery and sedimentation remain critically understudied. A gradient of sediment levels is expected given the differential exposure of reefs to neighbouring human inhabited and remote islands as well as to open sea. In April 2015, 10 reef sites in and around this NP were identified for the study. Phase 1 of field work will begin in September 2015 after the south-west monsoon (May to August) has subsided and sampling will continue through the post-monsoon, summer and subsequent monsoon season. This will also include deploying data loggers purchased with aid from an IDEAWILD grant obtained in June 2015.



Photograph taken by Chetana B Purushotham

Caption: A Scorpion fish sitting on coral covered in sediment and turf algae in a high sediment zone near Havelock Jetty