

SEAGRASS BEDS



Seagrass beds are **underwater meadows**: they are formed by **marine phanerogams, flowering plants** adapted to the salty environment. They are differentiated from **algae** by the presence of **roots, stems, leaves, flowers** and **fruits**. In the **Caribbean**, seagrass beds cover about 66 000 km², making up between **10 and 20% of the world's underwater meadows**.

A **high diversity of species** use the seagrass beds as **shelter, feeding** and/or **spawning areas**, and thus **depend** on them for their **survival**.

FUNCTIONS AGAINST NATURAL HAZARDS



Coastal protection

➔ The seagrass beds **slow down the swell**: their leaves and stems absorb the wave's energy.



Mitigation of erosion

➔ Seagrass beds **trap suspended particles** and **fix large volumes of sediments**. The **stabilization** and **accretion** of sediments **supply** our beaches with **sand**.



Climate regulation

➔ Seagrass beds **absorb** and **store atmospheric carbon dioxide** in their sediments through photosynthesis. They are important **carbon sinks** and help **mitigate climate change**.

THREATS



Climate change



Coastal pollution
Agricultural runoff, poor
wastewater management...



Overfishing



Natural hazards
Cyclones, sargassum,
eutrophication...



Human activities
Coastal development,
anchorage, trampling...



The invasive alien
species (IAS)
Halophila stipulacea

SOLUTIONS



Protection: **Protected areas, regulations, eco-anchorage, fishing management...**



Rehabilitation: **Fight against climate change, control of IAS/ sargassum, wastewater management, regeneration enclosure...**



Restoration: **Transplantation, seeding, micropropagation..**

