Saluting Innovation @ Catlin

by Bill Poston and Cortney Behrends

Saluting innovation at the Catlin Seaview Survey for creating a game-changing camera that will reveal the life of our oceans for all to see. The world’s reefs are steadily declining. We have lost over 40% of our corals in the last 50 years from overfishing, pollution, ocean acidification and climate change. It is estimated that about 500 million people around the world depend on coral reefs for food, coastal protection and tourism income.

The Catlin Group has partnered with the Global Change Institute, Google and Underwater Earth to create the Catlin Seaview Survey in hopes to solve this problem. The survey will produce a baseline record of coral reefs using the SVII camera, which has a beach-ball-size camera head with three separate lenses at the end of a seven foot pole. Hundreds of photos are taken and turned into high resolution, 360-degree panoramas. Using this method, change can be monitored over time and will help scientists and the public understand the cause of decline and in turn find ways to protect reefs.

The project has been successful on the Great Barrier Reef and is now being rolled out globally. I am an avid Scuba diver and enjoy diving off the coast of Belize and many other spots around the globe. The thought of losing the reef is depressing. Hopefully the survey will help us understand the oceans of the world. We salute Catlin for creating awareness and helping to solve the problems of the sea.

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