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**Thailand to close famous beach to protect coral – 7th March, 2018**

## Level 4

Thailand will close one of its beaches to try and protect its coral from tourism. The beach is on the island of Koh Phi Phi Leh. It was in the blockbuster movie 'The Beach'. Millions of tourists put it on their bucket lists and up to 5,000 a day visit its shores. They arrive on hundreds of boats. These cause irreversible damage to the bay's coral. Most of the coral has died. The beach will close between June and September to let the coral recover.

Experts say that 80 per cent of Thailand's coral reefs have been destroyed. Many beaches have been damaged by tourism. A marine expert criticized the tourism. He said the biggest problems were beachfront hotels, boat anchors breaking the coral, and plastic waste in the sea. He believes the "ideal solution" is to close the beach permanently. He said: "While it's a very pretty bay...a flotilla of boats and hordes of...tourists rather detract from the magic."

## Level 5

Thailand will close one of its famous beaches to try and reverse the damage done to its coral by tourism. The beach is on the island of Koh Phi Phi Leh. It got worldwide attention after it featured in the blockbuster movie The Beach. The film put the beach on the bucket lists of millions of travellers. The result has been up to 5,000 sun worshippers a day to its shores. They arrive on hundreds of boats, which have caused irreversible damage to the bay's coral. Officials say that most of the coral has died. The beach will close between June and September to let the coral recover.

Experts predict that 80 per cent of Thailand's coral reefs have been destroyed. Once untouched beaches have been damaged by tourism. A professor at Bangkok's Kasetsart University has criticized the tourism that is damaging Thailand's coastline. He said the biggest problems were beachfront hotels, boat anchors breaking the coral, and plastic waste dumped in the sea. He believes the "ideal solution" is to close Maya Bay permanently. He said: "While it's a very pretty bay, visiting it with a flotilla of boats and hordes of other tourists rather detract from the magic."

## Level 6

Thailand will soon close one of its world famous beaches in an effort to reverse the damage done to its coral by mass tourism. The beach is in Maya Bay on the tiny island of Koh Phi Phi Leh. It garnered worldwide attention after it featured heavily in the Leonardo DiCaprio blockbuster movie The Beach. The film put the Maya Bay beach on the bucket lists of millions of travellers worldwide. The result has been an influx of up to 5,000 sun worshippers a day to its emerald shores. They arrive on hundreds of boats, which have caused irreversible damage to the bay's coral. Officials say that most of the coral in the bay has died. The beach will close between June and September to let the coral recover.

Experts predict that almost 80 per cent of Thailand's coral reefs have been destroyed, and that once pristine beaches have been damaged by tourism. The deputy dean of the Faculty of Fisheries at Bangkok's Kasetsart University is an outspoken critic of the level of tourism Thailand's coastline has to endure. He said the biggest culprits were beachfront hotels, boat anchors crashing into and breaking the coral, and plastic waste being dumped in the sea. He believes the "ideal solution" is for Maya Bay to be closed permanently. He said: "While it's a very pretty bay, visiting it with a flotilla of boats and hordes of other tourists rather detract from the magic." He welcomed the temporary closure.