

exclusively locally.

They say they believe these and other founding tenets of the movement have increasingly been ignored as the

standards of environmental stewardship.

Many of these growers label themselves "beyond organic," but it's a catchall for many dif-

ferent environmental.

Many say, for instance, that whatever ecological benefits are accrued growing organically are effectively offset if sub-

stant savings would total only £1.1bn per year.

Separately, local distribution creates an economic niche for small farms and farmers, who

co-owner of Guinda, Sacramento. tified organ about 95% tomatoes, n



**Eco-beach ...** A meter determines where a special truck will place vertical drainage pipes in the beach at Egmond aan zee in the Netherlands last week. This new method to preserve the coast is being tested and is called Eco beach. It is an innovative system which ensures a wider and dryer beach because sand carried in by sea is stored better.

## Endangered coral reefs 'wealth of the impoverished'

By Tia Goldenberg in Mombasa, Kenya

THE drab section of coral reef off Kenya's coast is called Starfish, but there are no starfish to be found.

There are no magnificently coloured coral here. Patches of thorny sea-urchins lurk in the crevices of the reef where coral once grew and fluorescent fish once swam. Only a few fish – striped, light blue, some yellow – hang around this part of the marine park.

The starfish, like many other coral reefs, has been hit hard by the effects of climate change.

About 80% of Kenya's coral reefs were devastated because of the 1998 *El Nino* phenomenon, which raised surface temperatures and weakened corals around the world.

Scientists say climate change has made coral recovery from other menaces such as pollution and unregulated fishing more difficult.

With officials at the UN climate change conference in Nairobi this

month pushing for a focus on developing countries, scientists and researchers have also warned that coral reef protection is crucial for the development of impoverished countries.

And there is a growing push for local communities to be included in the protection of East Africa's reefs, both to sustain the livelihoods of the millions of fishermen along the coast and to ensure a lucrative tourism industry doesn't suffer.

"We're looking at coral bleaching as a disaster because it will become that in terms of large populations having their livelihood eroded," said David Obura, the head of CORDIO East Africa, a research group that looks at coral reef degradation in the Indian Ocean.

More than 20mn people live on the shores of East Africa and that number is expected to grow to 39mn by 2014.

Most of those inhabitants live off fishing or tourism – industries that are highly dependent on flourishing and colourful coral reefs, the breeding

grounds for millions of fish.

Only 1% of Kenya's coast is fully protected as a marine park. Marine reserves – areas where fishing is allowed but is regulated – bring that number to about 5 or 6%, nowhere near the 30% protection rate advocates push for.

Without more protection, destructive fishing – using dragnets and dynamite – has continued and, coupled with coral bleaching, has led to reef degradation all along the East African coast.

But Kenyan fishermen have been reluctant to work with conservation officials, often accusing them of invading their property when they try to extend protected areas.

Obura said Kenya's wildlife legislation is based on a harsh colonial system that would just grab land from unsuspecting residents. He said Kenya's fishermen feel threatened by any attempt to include them in conservation efforts.

"The big issue for coral reefs at a

community level is getting of local ownership in, so see it as something you can rather than something you take apart," he said in his ocean view just north of Mombasa.

Even Kenya Wildlife (KWS), the government body with protecting the country's diversity, said it is moving measures that include attempts to protect coral reefs faced opposition from the

"We want to encompass ipation in whatever form, they have been here for ages and don't want to limit how can fish," said Philip Mw assistant director for the coast region.

"They don't understand stances have changed a must act."

But there has been some towards including the coast Diani, about 30km

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