

# DR. JEROEN A.J.M. VAN DE WATER

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**Molecular mechanisms of immunity in scleractinian corals and the influence of environmental factors on coral immunocompetence**

Originally from the Netherlands, Jeroen completed his Bachelor of Science in Biology cum laude at Utrecht University in 2005. During his undergraduate studies, he developed an interest in molecular cell biology and continued his education with a Master of Science degree in Biomolecular Sciences, from which he graduated cum laude in 2007. In the following two and half years, Jeroen worked on the development of stem cell-based brain cancer therapies as a pre-doctoral research fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School. However, after spending so many years being locked up in the lab, Jeroen decided to pursue a career in the field where his heart truly lies: Marine Biology.

Jeroen's research is focused on the effects of climate change and other anthropogenic influences on the ability of corals to fight disease. In addition, he is interested in how corals use their immune system to establish and maintain a symbiosis with the symbiotic algae (zooxanthellae) in the coral tissues.