



Fig. 1

## *Pneophyllum conicum*, a coralline red alga causing coral reef-death in Mauritius

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*Pneophyllum conicum* is a widespread Indo-Pacific coralline rhodophyte that can overgrow and kill live coral (Fig. 1, top left). During a recent coral reef health survey in Mauritius, 80% of the corals of one particular reef-crest area were found to be covered to some degree by *P. conicum* (Fig. 1, bottom left). Many large coralla were totally enveloped by two, three, or more contiguous thalli, some measuring almost 1 m in diameter (Fig. 1, right). *P. conicum*, overgrowing corals in such a concentrated manner, appears to represent another one of the emerging syndromes of epizoism (Antonius and Ballesteros 1998) and was thus assigned the symbol PNE (Antonius and Afonso-Carillo 2001). A very similar syndrome (PEY) has recently been discovered in the Caribbean (Antonius 1999). During a previous reef health survey in Mauritius in 1990, no PNE was registered (Antonius 1993).

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