

Pictures: "Bodies" Fill Underwater Sculpture Park



Visitor From Above

Photograph courtesy [Jason deCaires Taylor](#)

A snorkeler swims over life-size statues near Cancún, [Mexico](#), in a late 2010 picture.

More than 400 of the permanent sculptures have been installed in recent months in the National Marine Park of Cancún, Isla Mujeres, and Punta Nizuc ([map of the region](#)) as part of a major artwork called "The Silent Evolution." The installation is the first endeavor of a new underwater museum called MUSA, or [Museo Subacuático de Arte](#).



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Created by Mexico-based British sculptor [Jason deCaires Taylor](#), the Caribbean installation is intended to eventually cover more than 4,520 square feet (420 square meters), which would make it "one of the largest and most ambitious underwater attractions in the world," according to a museum statement.

(See "[New Artificial Reefs 'Grow' From Mideast Peace Deal.](#)")

In doing so, Taylor hopes the reefs, which are already stressed by [marine pollution](#), [warming waters](#), and [overfishing](#), can catch a break from the approximately 750,000 tourists who visit local reefs each year.

"That puts a lot of pressure on the existing reefs," Taylor told National Geographic News. "So part of this project is to actually discharge those people away from the natural reefs and bring them to an area of artificial reefs."

—*With reporting by Fritz Faerber*

Published January 5, 2011