

**HYDROLAB: NOAA'S UNDERSEA RESEARCH PROGRAM
AT WEST INDIES LABORATORY**

B. NYDEN

National Undersea Research Program,
West Indies Laboratory, Teague Bay,
Christiansted, St. Croix U.S. Virgin Islands 00820

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Hydrolab is the world's only scientific saturation diving habitat. This undersea laboratory is located at the apex of a submarine canyon on St. Croix's north shore at a depth of 50'. Salt River submarine canyon affords both soft and hard bottom environments for investigation. By utilizing saturation diving, teams of 4 aquanauts/scientists can spend up to 2 weeks living and working on the bottom. The advantage of saturation diving is the dramatic increase in allowable bottom time. For example, at 95', a scientist can spend up to 6 hours working *in situ*. Proposals are accepted in the following areas of NOAA's research priorities: 1) fisheries; 2) marine pollution; 3) sea floor properties and processes; 4) ocean services (diving medicine, instrumentation, marine sanctuary monitoring). Proposals from foreign investigators are encouraged. In the next few years, the program will be expanding its base of operations, putting into use a new larger mobile habitat to replace Hydrolab.