

EXT - OPEN OCEAN - DAY

We speed along in our vessel toward our dive site.

JACQUES

Welcome, everyone! My name is Jacques Jardin. I'm the Academy's official Oceanographer and Marine Biologist, and I am very excited to be diving a special site with you today.

We appear at the Ellen-Elly rigs and prepare to begin our dive.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

Above the water, these oil rigs are not much to look at, but underneath...

We begin our descent amidst a sea of bubbles. A seal comes out of the haze into view and does a few flips

JACQUES (CONT'D)

Underneath the surface there is an entire *world* exploding with life!

We are among the pipes of the oil rig, where swarms of fish surround us.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

The pipes of the oil platform support *huge* colonies of plant and invertebrate life. Fish gather to eat the plankton the artificial reef produces, creating *massive* schools of fish.

A school scatters as a cormorant plunges into the water.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

These fish become an important source of food for *other* animals, like the cormorant who dives down to catch a meal.

These structures, however, are not a natural part of the ocean's pelagic environment. Reefs are beautiful, but they develop in specific conditions over tens of thousands of years. But at the same time, can we ignore the abundance of life these areas support?

We are now in the midst of a healthy shallow-water reef.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

Productive reefs are living organisms - A complex web of many creatures that all contribute something to their ecosystem. Changes to one part - such as the way warming ocean water is killing the plankton fish eat - can affect the entire environment.

A turtle swims in open water.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

So explorers, what do you think? These oil platforms have changed the landscape of the oceans around them, yet they also support a large amount of threatened ocean life.

A shark thrashes in the midst of a bait ball.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

Is it up to us humans to change the environment to help our ocean life, or should we try and keep nature exactly as it is? There is no correct answer to this question, but these oil rigs are important reminders of the fact humans have an impact on the environments in which we live.

We surface again, underneath the oil rigs.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

Thank you for joining me explorers. I hope our lesson today has taught you a bit about the difficult questions we face as our oceans begin to change. Together, we can help sea life thrive through smart thinking and observation.

Come back soon!