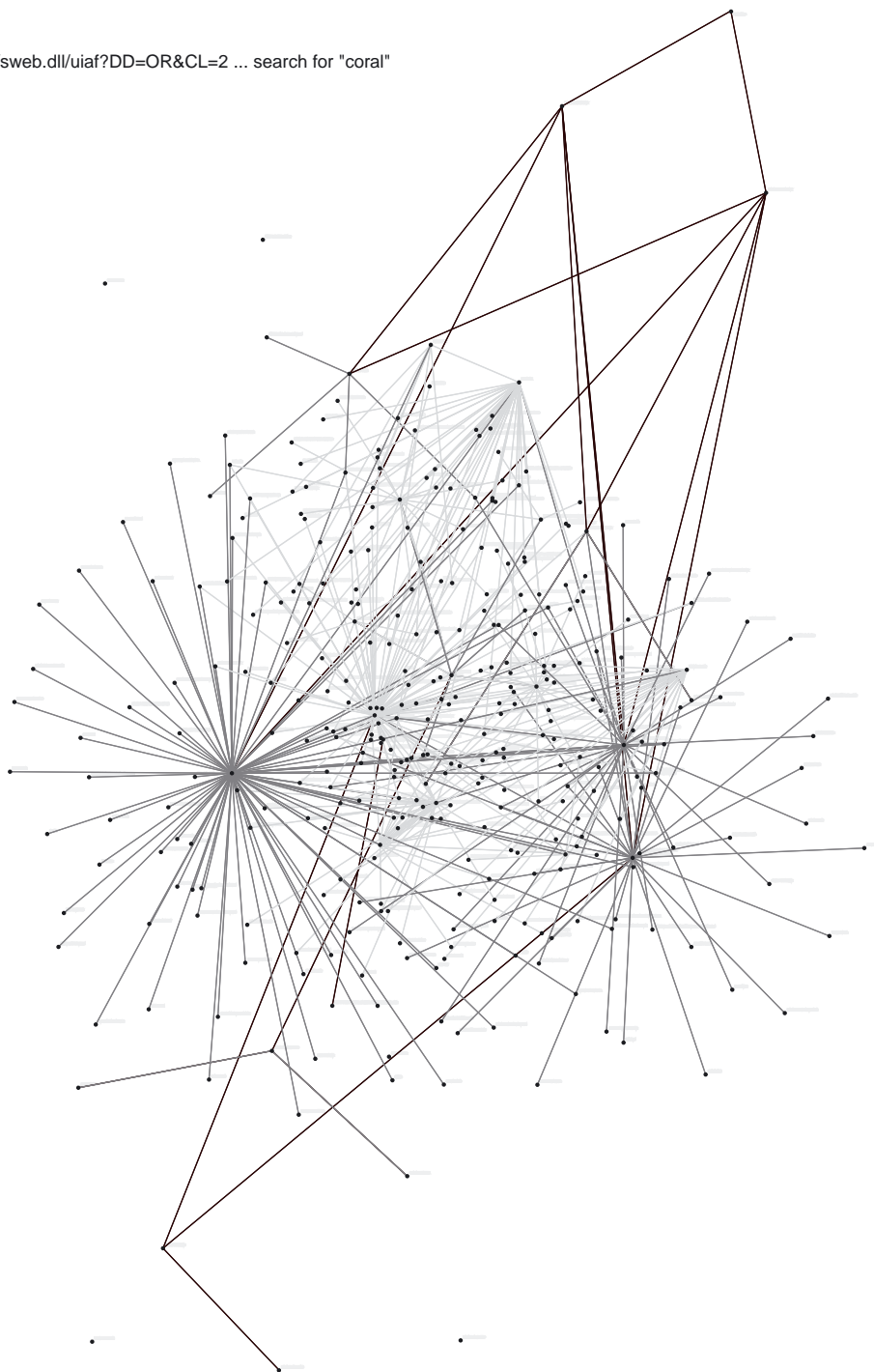

Figure 10.1.5. Organizations focusing on corals

Database: International Organizations

Link type: NGO relations

Network nodes: 351

UIA database: [http://db.uia.org/scripts/sweb.dll/uiaf?DD=OR&CL=2 ...](http://db.uia.org/scripts/sweb.dll/uiaf?DD=OR&CL=2...) search for "coral"



Coral landscapes are major marine ecosystems. Coralline forms, such as barrier reefs and atoll rings, may attain great size, affect currents and protect coasts. They are constructed by colonial polyps living in countless numbers inside extensive constructions of calcium carbonate. These marine cities contain photosynthetic algae and host an enormous variety of sessile sea creatures, such as molluscs, sea anemones, sponges, sea-squirts, and tubeworms that are food for fish and larger marine animals of shallow tropical waters. Coral bleaching is the result of mass death of individual corals and the colourful algae that share their exoskeleton, usually from heat stress to which they are sensitive within one or two degrees. Coral reefs in Australia are especially vulnerable to overpopulation of starfish called 'crown-of-thorns', technically *Acanthaster planci*, which consume the coral polyps. Another threat is mats of green bubble algae supported by nutrification from sewage and farm runoff. Black band disease and an unexplained plague have virtually wiped out reef-cleaning sea urchins throughout the Caribbean. Other causes of coral decline are general marine pollution and environmental disturbances, soil erosion and sedimentation from land, tourism, physical damage from ships and human activities, and weather extremes (hurricanes, cold snaps, high waves, tides).
