**Gameplay**

Last Updated

# High Level Player Experience

The player experiences a fully fledged tower defense game that simultaneously takes full advantage of the touch interface but also shows the dynamic capability of Kodu.

# Design Details

**Goals:**

The player experiences a fully fledged tower defense game that simultaneously takes full advantage of the touch interface but also shows the dynamic capability of Kodu.

**Breakdown:**

* Objective & Game Conditions
* Fundamentals
* Player Agency
* Range of new and existing assets used
* Water currents and generators

**Objective & Game Conditions**

Defend a coral reef from starfish depletion by advancing enemies. Enemies can be released from their mind control and return to being friends by using the tower defenses.

Level success: when all enemies are eliminated.

The game is over when all starfish have been taken or the player has completed the 3 linked levels.

**Fundamentals**

* Collect resources to buy towers to defend the reef from complete depletion.
  + Towers are the player’s arsenal against the enemy.
* Strategically choose your defenses and offensive actions to ensure as many of the starfish survive until the level is over.
* Enemies advance along a network of paths.
* The player has the capacity to temporarily close off some paths, and to push the enemy around the level using water currents.
* As levels progress they get harder, have more types of enemy and more types of towers.
* We will be using ‘stun’ attacks rather than ‘explode’ attacks which destroy character. This maintains the fiction of the player eliminating the mind control.
* Players are scored based on how many starfish remain at the end of each level.
* Game will be using touch based input in an efficient, appropriate and compelling manner.

**Player Agency**

General

Player Agency is the term used to describe the player’s interaction with the game. Tower Defense gameplay occupies the player’s agency in 2 major ways, both having long term and short term gameplay, for a total of 4 different agency modes.

In all tower defense games out there, the player agency is divided into 2 main aspects: management and action. Here’s an overview of the genre:

* **Management** is all about planning. It can even be roughly split into long agency, where the player takes their time, and short agency, where the player is on the back foot and reacting;
  + **Long**: Working out where to place towers, for what cost vs. resource available
  + **Short**: What to upgrade, what to sell, etc. (These are pretty much universal to all TD games.)
* **Action** is about the player taking a hand in immediate happenings. Again this splits down into two parts, (in both cases this isn’t in every TD game).
  + **Long; the busy work:** Low effort/attention keeping the plates spinning: collecting resources as they appear. E.g. suns in PvZ. Simple requirement from player, it ensures continual attention and engagement.
  + **Short; Intervention:** Personally repelling the enemy. Examples include using the orbital laser in Defense Grid, instant (explosive) consumables in PvZ, etc.

The player shifts from one method of agency to the other in very short succession, with a tempo that escalates as a level goes on.

Our Execution

Kodu Water Tower Defense will feature all 4 agency requirements, tuned to a tempo suitable for the target audience.

**Management**

Long term: Spending the available $ resource in placing the towers.

Short term: Sell Towers. Towers sell back for a lower amount than purchased for. Managing the energy resources of the Current Generators.

**Action**

Long term busy work: The game generates $ resources in various places on the map. The player needs to tap to collect. Also, if an enemy drops a starfish then the player needs to tap it to collect it before another enemy does!

Short term, Intervention: The player is able to turn currents on and off. While they are on however, their generator is using up battery power. When depleted it turns the generator off. The battery power recharges automatically.

The player is able to launch attacks against the incoming enemies.

* Jet Strike: If owned, the player can launch a jet fighter to do a general sweep of the level.
* Bomb: Player can launch a bomb back along the path from the Reef.

**Range of new and existing assets used**

**Goal**:

To encourage the user to create games themselves and to display the new assets. Kodu Water Tower Defense will show off new assets as well as use multiple existing assets in holistically, in a fun and compelling way.

We use assets for Towers, Enemies and Consumables. For design details on them, please see appropriate design specification documents.

* SGI - Kodu - Towers.docx
* SGI - Kodu - Enemies.docx
* SGI - Kodu - Consumables.docx

**Water Currents and Generators**

**Goal**:

* To provide a case example of how the new Water Current features can be used.

Water currents are a dynamic element the player can call upon to help repel the enemy. The enemy will be trying to get from the entrance to the reef in as short a route as possible. Water currents will force the enemy to take longer circuitous routes to the reef. However, the Generator that the player activates to cause the current will run out of energy and need a short time to recharge.

See Water Currents and Generators.docx for more details on how we will be creating the functionality for this feature.