**C-130 Hercules Aircraft Wreck**

The Lockheed C-130 Hercules is a four-engine turboprop military transport aircraft and donated from the Royal Jordanian Air Force. The plane serves as the main tactical airlifter for many military forces in more than 70 nations worldwide since the 1950s. Over time it will draw divers within all levels as premier dive location of Aqaba.

On November 16, 2017, Aqaba created a new dive site and sunk an old Hercules C130 transport aircraft. It took a lot of preparation to prepare the plane for sinking and much coordination between the Royal Jordanian Navy, the Aqaba Port Corporation, and ASESA, the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. They placed it 300m/984ft off the shore at a maximum depth of about 16 meters. King Abdullah II spearheaded this project to promote tourism and create an artificial reef for fish to inhabit.

Some people are naturally skeptical about artificial reefs and wonder why people would want to put things like planes underwater. Because artificial reefs soon become a habitat for new marine life, they create popular destinations for divers. They also divert pressure away from heavily visited coral reefs. Too many divers in certain spots can eventually cause damage. So many believe that artificial reefs can create a win-win situation for the environment and the economy. And it was with this intent that Aqaba decided to sink the Hercules.

They placed the plane in a location near the M42 Duster tank that was easily accessible from shore or boat by divers and snorkelers. At that time, the plane was fully intact and quite a sight to behold underwater.

Underwater enthusiasts thoroughly enjoyed exploring the plane and seeing the plastic skeleton in the cockpit. They dressed this skeleton in a flight suit and helmet which was a bit eery. The helmet remains, but the flight suit is now missing. Because the plane was sterilized in preparation for scuttle, it looked quite a bit different from what it did shortly thereafter. The plane soon became filled with many fish and soft corals. The shiny exterior and interior soon became covered with algae and other marine life. But one freak act of nature changed with this amazing site from a scuttled artificial reef to a real wreck.