

## 6. CONCLUSION

It has been established that the amount of useful information which can be extracted from or separated within Landsat MSS and aerial photographic data is considerable. It has been possible to combine a number of surface ground categories into classes, associate these with individual resolvable elements as 'seen' by the remote sensors, and consequently recover resource information.

Identification of multispectral signatures for particular reef covers submerged in particular marine environments will contribute to the understanding of the nature of remotely sensed reef covers and consequently improve on the separability results presented here.

Obviously, because only two technologies were tested here (Landsat MSS and aerial photography), a general claim to the separability of remotely sensed coral reef covers cannot be made. It is encouraging however, that ground, aircraft and satellite based instrumentation now available, has the capability to resolve many of the questions raised by this research.

Separability of reef covers is controlled principally by three physically interrelated variables: water depth, spatial extent and spectral resolution. The influence of the last two variables will decrease with the availability of new remote sensing instruments. With the major separability variables identified, it is encouraging to know that control over these major variables is highly possible in an operational situation.