

GCRMN Working Group

ICRI GM 29, Okinawa, Japan, October 2014

Sunday 19 October; 17:00-19:00 and Monday 20 October; 18:00-19:00

In attendance (- confirm -):

Jeremy Jackson, GCRMN

Francis Staub, ICRI Forum

Makiko Yanagiya and Masako Iwamoto, ICRI Secretariat

Christine Dawson, United States

Aurelie Thomassin, France

Tadashi Kimura and Karenne Tun, GCRMN East Asia

Margaret Johnson and Anne Caillaud, GBRMPA

Vo Si Tuan, Viet Nam

Ricardo Gomez Lozano, Mexico

Shiham Adam, Maldives

Meena Arivananthan, meeting note taker

Jerker Tamelander, UNEP

Said Ahamada, Indian Ocean Commission

Summary of discussions

Key issues discussed

- GCRMN primary purpose and objectives;
- Main GCRMN activities towards achieving its objectives;
- Needs and requirements in terms of coordination, scientific direction and strengthening the network;
- Follow-up actions.

Main findings and recommendations

- 1. The statement describing GCRMN's main purpose and objectives was revised, as follows:**
GCRMN supports ICRI by working through a global network to strengthen the provision of best available scientific information on and communication of the status and trends of coral reef ecosystems, for their conservation and management.
- 2. The main substantive activity of GCRMN, providing a foundation for its other activities and outputs, is the preparation of regional periodic assessments** drawing on monitoring, research and other data and establishment of regional GCRMN committees, where possible drawing on existing nodes and linked to existing Regional Seas mechanisms. The approach piloted in the Caribbean 2012-2014 provides the blueprint for this.
 - i. The regional assessment report provides a scientific foundation for identification of recommended minimum standards for monitoring indicators and methods as well as actionable recommendations for coral reef policy and management. The regional reports and committees provide a basis for development of more synthetic global reports (see below).
 - ii. The process of developing the regional report also supports the establishment of regional networks of sites and institutions that commit to applying minimum standards in ongoing monitoring.
 - iii. Where possible development of regional reports may utilize opportunities provided by ongoing and planned regional initiatives and projects. This would also enable

- GCRMN to pursue two or more regional processes concurrently. It was noted that:
- Progress has been made towards a report focusing on the Eastern Tropical Pacific as part of the Caribbean process, and presents an opportunity to develop a regional report in the near future.
 - France may provide support towards development of a Pacific report starting in 2015. Participation by and support from other governments and GCRMN partners is important.
 - GCRMN regional reporting may also be pursued through collaboration and integration with regional projects under development or implementation, e.g. GEF funded LME projects in the South China Sea and the Bay of Bengal, as well as projects in the Western Indian Ocean implemented through COI and the Nairobi Convention.
3. **The need for development of guidance on the process for development of a regional GCRMN report was recognized**, to define key principles for GCRMN regional reports and facilitate the transfer of lessons learned from the Caribbean. This guidance document needs to encompass guiding principles, description of the main steps of the process, key considerations, and helpful recommendations on avoiding pitfalls. The guide should also include information on estimating funding requirements and identifying options for sourcing input/in-kind support through partnering with relevant institutions and projects.
 4. **Producing periodic global reports on the status and trends of the world's coral reefs is an important function of GCRMN**. The global report should be prepared through compilation of findings from regional reports and other information. This may be based on a template for sourcing inputs, to be developed, and utilizing the quadrennial ICERS. The science director and global coordinator lead development of the global report. The global report may be produced both as a grey literature report as well as a scientific article in a peer-reviewed journal (e.g. Coral Reefs, the journal of ISRS). The timeframes of ICERS in 2016 and 2020 as well as the Aichi targets were noted.
 5. **GCRMN should utilize existing mechanisms for uptake and impact of its findings**. ICRI and its members as well as Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans provide pathways to achieve broad adoption and use of best practice based on GCRMN findings, and related capacity building.
 6. **Global coordination of GCRMN needs strengthening**. While GCRMN's work in the Caribbean in recent years has demonstrated a new model for regional reporting, global coordination, networking and liaison has been insufficient. To enable GCRMN to fulfill its role as defined above, the need to transition to a new institutional set up for GCRMN coordination was recognized.

Priority follow-up actions:

- Develop guidance document on development of GCRMN regional reports;
- Develop descriptions of the function and tasks of global coordinator and science director;
- Initiate a process for transitioning GCRMN to a new institutional structure that provides global coordination while ensuring continuity in science direction;
- Pursue development of a regional report for the East Pacific Report, and initiate discussions in other regions where opportunities exist, including the Pacific;
- Identify focal points in all regions, where possible through processes towards preparation of regional reports. The ICRI secretariat may be able to facilitate this through its activities