



## 32<sup>nd</sup> ICRI General Meeting

December 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Nairobi, Kenya

### Summary record

*Updated version, Dec. 20, 2017*

The 32<sup>nd</sup> ICRI General Meeting (GM), and the second and final meeting under the 2016-2018 French Secretariat, was held from December 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at United Nations Office at Nairobi, Kenya. Through the support from France, Sweden and UN Environment, delegates from several countries and organisations were able to attend and participate in the meeting. In total, more than 70 delegates from 20 ICRI member countries and organisations attended the meeting.

ICRI GM32 welcomed the participation of H.E. Peter Thomson, Special Envoy for the Ocean, UN Office of the Secretary General, Inger Andersen, Director General, International Union for Conservation of Nature, and Martha Rojas-Urrego, Secretary General, The Ramsar Convention, at its opening session. The Meeting was chaired by Xavier Sticker, French Ambassador for the Environment. Welcoming remarks were made by Monika Macdevette, Deputy Director of the UN Environment Ecosystems Division and closing remarks by Mette Wilkie, Director of the UN Environment Ecosystems Division.

### New Members

- ✓ **Myanmar** was welcomed as the latest member of ICRI (the 38<sup>th</sup> among the States members of ICRI)
- ✓ The ICRI secretariat will convene a working group that ICRI GM32 agreed to set up in view of revising the ICRI rules of procedures

### Financial contribution to the Secretariat (Monaco, France, US and Sweden)

The Meeting thanked countries that have provided financial support for the ICRI Secretariat and its 2016-2018 action plan, as well as for the long-term commitment of the USA. It called on other countries to also commit resources to ICRI.

- ✓ Monaco – Small grants program (100,000 Euros).
- ✓ France – Implementation of the ICRI plan of action and small grants program (500,000 Euros).
- ✓ Sweden - Implementation of the ICRI plan of action (300,000 Euros for 2017).
- ✓ United States of America – for the Coral Reef Unit's work to conserve and protect coral reef ecosystems worldwide and for the Coral Reef Unit's work with the International Coral Reef Initiative (290,000 Euros for 2017).

### International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and UN Environment Grants Programme 2017

Over 230 submissions were received, out of which 5 projects were selected and will receive a USD 60,000 grant each



- ✓ Kenya - Managing mangroves for climate change regulation and other ecosystem services
- ✓ Malaysia - Including coral reef resilience and vulnerability to climate change in marine spatial planning
- ✓ Vanuatu - Increasing resilience of traditional Marine Protected Areas
- ✓ Regional, Caribbean - Innovative financing and legal mechanisms for reef restoration and emergency response in selected sites of the MAR Region
- ✓ New Caledonia - A Seascape genomics approach to improve coral reefs conservation strategies against BLEaching (SABLE)

Out of the 230 submissions, 33 outstanding projects were compiled into a compendium and will be widely distributed to potential donors. They should be viewed as the first stage of a chain of projects deserving financial support. ICRI members are encouraged to share this compendium and, if possible, to support them.

### **Theme 1 – Help raise awareness on how coral reefs and related ecosystems help fight climate change**

*The purpose of this activity is to identify and map current international donor funding for sustainable management of coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass beds (including funding level as well as geographic, thematic and sectoral focus) and to identify gaps that may be addressed through future interventions and support efforts to mobilize donors for sustainable management of coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass beds.*

- ✓ The ICRI secretariat will disseminate the outcome of this activity once it is achieved in the beginning of 2018. It will share its results with the donor community.
- ✓ All ICRI members are encouraged to submit additional information to the ICRI Secretariat on the projects that they fund or host.
- ✓ It was observed that the management of the database should be an ongoing activity of the ICRI Secretariat, and that should be included in the next ICRI plan of action if possible.
- ✓ Furthermore, ICRI GM32 adopted a recommendation on supporting investments in the natural infrastructure of reefs and mangroves to increase climate resilience.

### **Theme 2 - Meet international requirements regarding coral reefs**

*Goal 1 - implement the resolution on the sustainable management of coral reefs adopted at the 2nd session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (May 2016)*

- ✓ ICRI welcomed the creation of the advisory committee. The ICRI Secretariat looks forward to participating in its first meeting.
- ✓ The work, if possible, should be included in the next plan of action.

*Goal 2 - help meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), in particular those relating to Goal 14 (“Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources”)*



- ✓ ICRI GM32 commended the work done by UNEP-WCMC on behalf of ICRI in pursuance of its 2016-2018 action plan. It expressed their strong interest in the completion of that work as soon as possible in 2018.

#### *Other international actions*

- ✓ **Communities of Ocean Action: Coral Reefs. Following up on UN Ocean Conference voluntary commitments**

The GM positively noted the fact that ICRI has been nominated as a Focal Point, reflecting on the renewed visibility of ICRI.

- ✓ **The ‘Coral reef life declaration’**

The attention of ICRI members was drawn on the declaration and on the possibility to still sign it.

### **Theme 3 - Help to reduce human threats to coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses, by making greater use of regulatory tools**

#### *Goal 1- promote legal frameworks for the protection of coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses, with quantified targets and effective enforcement to protect these ecosystems*

The secretariat is developing summaries on national legal frameworks for the protection of coral reefs and associated ecosystems (based on the members’ reports), for the attention of ICRI members. ICRI members are encouraged to submit information and review the data relating to their situation.

#### *Goal 2 - encourage a ban on plastic microbeads in cosmetic products*

The meeting was updated on the follow-up ensured to ICRI GM31 recommendation on the use of microbeads in cosmetic products. Following the adoption of a Call for Action for SPREP Countries on Plastic Microbeads, other regions are encouraged to do the same.

#### *Goal 3 - improve regulation and enforcement to reduce direct anthropogenic damage due to dredging and physical alteration of reef structures*

Adoption of a recommendation

#### *Goal 4 - promote the deployment of mooring devices limiting the mechanical destruction of coral reefs and seagrasses*

Creation of an *Ad Hoc* Committee on “Green Marine Construction”

#### *Goal 5: review issues related to the impact of sunscreens and other endocrine disruptors on coral reefs, and encourage the production of sunscreens that are proven not to damage coral reefs*

- ✓ The conclusions of the report were noted, as well as the fact that more science is needed on this topic.
- ✓ ICRI members have been encouraged to draw the attention of their scientific institutions on the needs for more research in this area.
- ✓ Encouragements were given to the dissemination of good practices
- ✓ The policy brief on which ICRI GM32 was informed has been completed and will be shared with ICRI members after the Meeting

#### **Theme 4 - Monitor the state of reefs in order to better manage them – Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)**

With regard to the **GCRMN coordination**:

- ✓ ICRI GM32 was updated on the work of a working group that was established earlier in 2017, in accordance with the 2016-2018 action plan. The working group plans to hold a meeting in early 2018. A consultant was hired to assist in its work.
- ✓ It was noted that the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) offered to host the global coordination of the GCRMN contingent on receiving appropriate financial support to reinvigorate the GCRMN
- ✓ The importance of involving the Regional Seas conventions was also acknowledged.

With regard to the issuance of **regional reports** on the status of the reefs, it was noted that very good progress was made in all the regions:

- ✓ The Western Indian Ocean report has been launched at the ICRI GM32;
- ✓ With regard to the Caribbean, GCRMN-Caribbean has been following up on the implementation of standardized data collection and analysis, with a view to updating the Caribbean Report by 2020
- ✓ The Pacific report will be launched in early 2018;
- ✓ Preparations for an East-Asia report, under the strong leadership of Japan, are also making good progress. ICRI GM32 also thanked several countries and institutions for committing to share their data and further cooperate.

With regard to the monitoring of **bleaching events**:

- ✓ It was noted that several countries currently implement the recommendation adopted at the ICRI GM 31, which include the development of monitoring program for bleaching events (France, Madagascar, Comoros). Other countries are encouraged to do the same
- ✓ The GCRMN should now follow up on this work (monitoring after bleaching events).

**The latest Global GCRMN report was issued in 2008. In that context, it was suggested that ICRI GM consider the prospect of a new Global report by 2020.**



## Theme 5 - Progress via education and the International Year of the Reef (IYOR) 2018

- ✓ GM32 welcomed the contribution and expertise of The Ocean Agency for the IYOR 2018, in close cooperation with ICRI.
- ✓ GM32 also welcomed the contribution of the partners that The Ocean Agency intends to mobilize, including from the private sector.
- ✓ GM32 was briefed on the draft programme developed by The Ocean Agency for the IYOR 2018. In addition to sensitization to the status and importance of coral reefs, it was emphasized that the public communications campaign could also contribute to mobilizing financial resources for the protection and restoration of the reefs. The positive contribution that crowdfunding and philanthropy could make was highlighted. Inter alia, donors could be invited to 'adopt' projects that were eligible to the ICRI 2017 Small Grants Programme.
- ✓ GM32 noted that IYOR should not focus on coral reefs only, but that related ecosystems should also be included in the activities and public communications campaigns (including on the IYOR [www.iyor2018.org](http://www.iyor2018.org) website).
- ✓ ICRI Members are encouraged to develop national IYOR action plans, and that the IYOR should also be viewed as an opportunity to develop concrete actions and projects.

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Year of the Reef should be viewed as an opportunity to initiate a long-term campaign on raising awareness on coral reefs and related ecosystem (beyond 2018). In addition to raising awareness, this Year should be used to initiate or strengthen new partnerships, better involve the private sector and mobilize funding.**

### Australian Government's Innovation Facility

The Australian Government hosted an interactive discussion to assist in the design of the Coral Reef Innovation Facility recently announced by Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs. ICRI member's views were sought on: establishing an innovation group or network amongst interested ICRI members; running an exercise that would develop an innovation pathway or blueprint for coral reefs; and specific challenges or issues that would benefit from greater innovation in approaches. The Australian Government undertook to keep members informed of work under the Coral Reef Innovation Facility including specific opportunities to collaborate.

### Next ICRI Secretariat

ICRI GM32 is welcoming the joint proposal by Monaco and Australia to host the next Secretariat. Further details, including possibly on an additional partner country, will be provided at a later stage.