



Member’s report on activities related to ICRI

Reporting period July 2012 - October 2013

1. **General Information** (note that this information will be posted on the ICRI website in your member page: <http://www.icriforum.org/about-icri/members-networks>)

Are you an ICRI Member?	Yes
Member type (Country / Organization):	Organization
Focal Point 1:	
<i>Name:</i>	Michael Webster
<i>Organization:</i>	Coral Reef Alliance
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Focal point 2:	
<i>Name:</i>	Jason Vasques
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Last meeting attended:	ICRI GM 27
Related website(s)	www.coral.org

2. **Updates on your activities** (new initiatives/programs/projects of your government /organization which will be of interest to the ICRI Members). Examples include MPA declarations, World Heritage sites status, economic valuation of reefs, policy changes in relation to coral reefs etc.

Mesoamerican Reef Tourism Initiative

Mexico

CORAL, with local partners including the Cozumel Marine Park, have been working together to measure and understand dive tourism-related impacts to the reef. The Marine Park collected data on reef conditions using the standardized Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment (AGRRA) protocol and conducted a study to investigate diver and snorkeler impacts—direct underwater observations of physical contact with the reef or other substrate and marine organisms—to the reef and marine life. The Marine Park’s observations suggest that visitor volume is by far the strongest influencing factor: more divers equal more impacts in total, though not necessarily more impacts per diver. The most common impact the Marine Park observed was the lifting of sediment by divers’ fins and the touching corals for support, photographs, or accidentally.

Over the last several years, CORAL and GI have performed EWTs in Cozumel to provide feedback to MRPs on how they can improve. Of the MRPs who had an initial EWT assessment, we were able to reassess 11 of them and noted measurable improvement. Our preliminary analysis suggests that the single greatest factor affecting impacts by divers is the number of divers in a group that are managed by a single divemaster. This understanding alone is significant in providing simple guidance for managing diver impacts.

Honduras

CORAL is working closely with local partners and the Honduran government to establish a network of MPAs for the Bay Islands and northern mainland coast. In May of 2012 the mayor of Tela declared Capiro Banks (a coral reef boasting 69% live coral cover) an MPA by

ministerial decree. CORAL helped draft the recently adopted co-management plan for Cordelia Banks Area of Special Importance to Wildlife. Additionally, CORAL is in the process of updating the Responsible Seafood Guide and helping to advance ‘Go-Blue’ for geotourism and sustainability of businesses.

Pacific Region

Fiji

Fiji Sharks Campaign

Since 2011 CORAL has worked with the Pew Environment Group to increase shark protections in Fiji. Although the original strategy to declare a shark sanctuary was unsuccessful – due to competing interests of fisheries – we continue to leverage our positive relationship with partners in the government to develop strong shark protection measures. Currently in Fiji, a National Plan of Action (NPOA) for sharks is waiting to be voted on by the cabinet. While that is out of our hands for the time being, our focus is on carrying out a regional CITES enforcement training in Fiji for identification of sharks recently listed in Appendix II. This workshop will bring in shark experts to train enforcement individuals from around the South Pacific in techniques to identify these threatened shark species as well as their body parts.

Kubulau Community Management of Namena Marine Reserve

The Namena Marine Reserve continues to be an exemplary program for how local management can benefit communities and coral reefs. This year the Kubulau Business Development Committee began the process of complete financial responsibility for the user-fee system by cost-sharing the fees associated with the dive tag production. This is a significant step towards assuming full responsibility of the management process. Namena itself has received national and international recognition through scientific studies boasting its biomass of sharks compared to outside of the reserve. Additionally, Namena has become well known around Fiji and its positive reputation has led to CORAL being invited to advise on the development of similar systems in other areas of Fiji.

Hawaii

In the past year CORAL has worked successfully to merge our Hawai‘i programs in order to place increased focus on water quality issues. Hawai‘i’s reefs suffer greatly from nutrient pollution and therefore it is CORAL’s prerogative to do what we can to address this issue directly. Through our existing and growing relationship with the tourism and accommodation sector we are building support and capacity for this industry to dramatically reduce their potable water use – through the use of reclaimed water. We believe that by understanding the relative threats to reefs in regards to nutrient pollution we will be able to tackle the onshore stresses that change reef chemistry and kill coral. For Maui this means reducing the amount of wastewater that is injected into wells that are driving nutrient-laden wastewater to reefs, for Hawai‘i Island that means evaluating local wastewater practices that might be impacting the local reefs. Addressing water quality issues in Hawai‘i not only combats nutrient pollution but also provides solutions to water scarcity, a significant concern for all of Hawai‘i.

Indonesia

In Indonesia we are working locally to build trust and partnerships on the ground in order to develop knowledge, interest, and capacity for improving local management of coral reefs. Specifically, we are partnering with Reef Check Foundation Indonesia and Conservation International to strengthen local management of coastal resources through a network of locally managed marine areas (LMMAs). Through this network of LMMAs we are connecting local communities and stakeholders with government. We are developing a regional scale user fee system to provide financial support for LMMA management needs of two regencies.

Other projects

Jamaica AIS

The Insular Caribbean Risk Assessment tool and training was sponsored by the Center for Agricultural Bioscience International (CABI). In April 2013, the Coral Reef Alliance and CABI hosted a three-day workshop for 22 international marine resource management professionals about the basics of invasive species establishment, vector ecology, and how to use a new pilot tool to identify and potentially manage the risks from potential invasive marine species. Government officials and natural resource trustees from Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago were trained on April 24-26, 2013 in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

CSI

The Coral Reef Crime Scene Investigation (CRCSI) project has been working on developing three new modules for its training program: MPA Wildlife Enforcement, Sea Turtle Field Forensics, and Field Contaminant Bioassays. The project is still under peer review, but initial feedback indicates positive reviews of the CRCSI program and new pilot modules. Participants from all three pilot workshops have used the workshop techniques in their work and some investigations have even resulted in fines, settlements, and criminal penalties. They have even been able to use these techniques and methodologies in other types of investigations, to teach their peers, and to improve their own evidence collection and management processes.

Reef Resilience (OES)

In April 2013, Naneng Setiasih (Coral Triangle Regional Manager for the Coral Reef Alliance) presented at the international symposium of *Understanding Ecological and Social Resilience in Island Systems: Informing Policy and Sharing Lessons for Management* in New York City. Naneng's presentation focused on CORAL's resilience work around the world, but specifically, the recently completed two-year OES Train the Trainers project. During that project, CORAL trained 21 coral reef managers in reef resilience to climate change themes, who then went on to train an additional 196 coral reef managers and conservationists. Participants oversaw twelve microgrant projects in locations around the world, including Mozambique, The Philippines, Thailand, Barbados, Grenada, and Honduras.

3. Contribution to the ICRI GM

Your responses to the following questions will assist the Secretariat in assessing contributions towards the major themes of the current ICRI action plan and objectives of the general meeting.

a. Community-based monitoring

Are you engaged in, or support community-based monitoring in your marine areas? (Yes) If so, think about what works and what doesn't with it to be prepared for workshop discussions on this topic. The discussions will revolve around:

- The benefit of community-based monitoring for management and reporting
- Way forward and how countries could support each other through a network of persons involved in monitoring and an online database.

b. Co-management

Do you have co-management arrangements in place for your marine reserves? (Yes) If so, start thinking about what they are, and what works for you in preparation for workshop and field trip discussions on this topic. There will be some interactive exercises to help guide your thinking and possible way forward.

4. Is there any other topic you would like to raise during the meeting?

YES NO

If yes, please indicate which topic and the reason why you would like to raise it:

5. Please list relevant publications, reports you have been released since the last meeting.

Title (incl. author and date)	Type of publication (Paper, report etc.)

6. Please indicate upcoming coral reef-related meetings you or your organisation will attend

- 2nd Global Conference on Land - Ocean Connections (GLOC-2) October 2- 4 2013, Montego Bay, Jamaica
- 17th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SBSTTA-17), 14-18 October 2013 Montreal, Canada
- 2nd Global Marine World Heritage Site Managers Conference, 17-20 October 2013, Corsica, France
- International Marine Protected Areas Congress, 21-27 October, Marseille, France
- 9th Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, 2-6 December, Suva, Fiji