

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR REEF STUDIES  
PRESIDENT, RUTH D. GATES PH.D.

Xavier Sticker  
Co-Chair, International Coral Reef Initiative  
c/o Francis Staub  
ICRI Coordinator

Dear Mr. Sticker

The International Society for Reef Studies (ISRS) would like to formally apply for membership of ICRI. The ISRS is the leading international association for coral reefs scientists and managers, founded in 1980 to promote scientific knowledge and understanding of coral reef ecosystems. As of 2016, our society has 1969 members in 78 countries, working for a wide diversity of research and conservation institutions and initiatives.

Under its constitution, the objectives of the ISRS are:

1. To promote global awareness of, and concern for, coral reefs and similar and associated habitats.
2. To promote the production of scientific knowledge and understanding of coral reefs, both living and fossil.
3. To disseminate scientific knowledge and understanding of coral reefs by holding or sponsoring meetings, symposia, conferences, or through other means of communication.
4. To publish and distribute papers, treatises, or other materials relating to coral reefs and to the business of the Society.
5. To contribute sound scientific advice to policy-making and public discussions about the use, management and conservation of coral reefs and similar and associated habitats.
6. To seek funds or other support from members of the Society, and from other sources, to further the objectives of the Society.

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The ISRS publishes the scientific journal *Coral Reefs* and an on-line magazine *Reef Encounter*, both of which have a global audience and a diverse readership. The Society co-hosts the quadrennial International Coral Reef Symposia, which represent the largest gatherings of scientists and conservationists working on reefs. The most recent one, the thirteenth, was held in Hawaii from 19-24 June 2016 and brought together over 2500 participants. ISRS also organizes and supports regional meetings (the next one is to be held in Europe in 2017). The society produces briefings and statements on issues of global concern (e.g. a statement on Climate Change and Coral reefs produced for the COP21). It has an active Council, and makes a series of awards to promote research by members. It also pays particular attention to younger scientists and conservationists through a range of incentives and student activities. Two committees, one on Education and Communication, and one on Conservation facilitate these areas of involvement for the membership.

The ISRS's participation in ICRI will have many benefits particularly in terms of providing a pool of scientific expertise. The ISRS members represent a unique source of substantial expertise and information about coral reefs, many facets of which relate to societal priorities and needs in relation to coral reefs. Examples are the consequences of bleaching, impacts of fishing, roles of marine protected areas, and monitoring and research methods. Managers (industry, government, NGOs etc.) have to make difficult decisions in relation to the threats facing coral reefs on the basis of slender information. Good judgment and objectivity and quality of information are badly needed, and in its subject area, the ISRS is in the strongest position internationally to furnish it. The scientific community, through the ISRS, can play a strong and consistent role in supporting ICRI in its mandate to protect and conserve coral reefs and as a focal point for broader conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, and commitments including the Sustainable Development Goals.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruth D. Gates', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Ruth D. Gates, ISRS President