



Member's report on activities related to ICRI

MALAYSIA

Reporting period November 2016 – November 2017

1. **Contribution to the ICRI Plan of Action 2016-2018.** *Your responses to the following questions will assist the Secretariat in assessing contributions towards the major themes of the current ICRI Plan of Action (<http://www.icriforum.org/icri-secretariat/current>)*

Theme 1 – “Help raise awareness of how coral reefs and related ecosystems help to fight climate change”

- *Goal 1-1: highlight the contribution of coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses to mitigate and adapt to climate change and its impacts*

Question: Do you have examples of solutions provided by coral reefs and coastal systems to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

The Ministry, through Department of Marine Park Malaysia has carried out resilience study of coral reefs within marine parks towards changes in their environment. Our preliminary finding is that there are reefs within marine park areas which demonstrates higher resilience to changes and was not affected during the recent bleaching events. These reefs are identified and zoned as preservation zones where human activities are limited.

Question: Are you planning to add in your NDC the importance of coral reefs / mangroves?

Importance of coral reefs was not specifically mentioned in Malaysia's INDCs submission to UNFCCC. However, protecting the country's coastline especially mangrove forest has been identified as one of the Adaptation Measures towards climate change. The country has embarked upon replanting degraded mangrove forest since 2007. This is an annual programme ever since. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment through Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia is the focal point for the programme. In 2016, a total coastal area of 106ha was restored with suitable mangrove species. As for conserving protecting our coral reefs, emphasis has been given to better manage current MPAs as well as gazettement new MPAs. Efforts to restore our reef areas has also started since 2011. The Ministry, through Department of Marine Park Malaysia has taken actions on monitoring of coral reef health and water quality surrounding coral reefs within marine parks. The department has also developed Coral Bleaching Response Plan for implementation in the event of mass coral bleaching due to impact of climate change e.g. increase in sea surface temperature. The response plan includes recommended actions such as limiting human activities on reefs affected during bleaching event. Conserving our natural resources and pursuing green growth are also mentioned as a priority focus under 11th Malaysia Plan – 2016-2020 (a five-year development plan) to further reduce Malaysia's carbon footprint.

Theme 3: “Help to reduce human threats to coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses, by making greater use of regulatory tools”

- *Goal 3-1: promote legal frameworks for the protection of coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses, with quantified targets and effective enforcement to protect these ecosystems*

Question: What are the legal frameworks for the protection of coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses in place in your countries? If you already replied to the previous request, you don't need reply

Marine protected areas (MPAs) in Malaysia are designate through various legislations. Marine Protected Areas in Malaysia generally are composed of Marine Parks and Fisheries Prohibited Areas. The history of the establishment of MPAs in Malaysia dates back to the 1970s. For Marine Parks and Fisheries Prohibited Areas in the Peninsular Malaysia and Federal Territory of Labuan, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry has the jurisdiction to establish new marine parks of which these parks are manage by Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment through Department of Marine Park Malaysia. For Sabah and Sarawak, MPAs are established and managed by the State Governments – Sabah Parks and Sabah Wildlife Department, for the State of Sabah and Sarawak Forestry Department for the state of Sarawak. In Sabah, marine areas are protected via the Parks Enactment 1984 and Wildlife Conservation Enactment 1997. In Sarawak, two State level legislation are used for the establishment and management of MPAs namely the National Parks and Nature Reserves Ordinance 1998 and the Wildlife Protection Ordinance 1998. In Peninsular Malaysia, marine parks are created by way of gazzement under the Fisheries Act of 1985. The Fisheries Act 1985 contains only one out of 11 Parts which is relevant to marine parks. Section 43 of the Act contains prohibited activities within marine parks.

Question: Did you to set quantified targets to protect their coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses? And are you able to provide a % of what is currently protected in your country? Please define what you mean by protection?

Yes, Malaysia has set a quantifiable target to protect our marine ecosystem in our National Policy on Biological Diversity. It is defined under Goal 3, Target 6 of the Policy. The country aims to conserve 10% of our coastal and marine areas by 2025 through a representative system of protected areas and other effective area based conservation measures. Currently, 3.48% of our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) are gazetted as MPAs. Currently, only areas designated and gazetted through legislations are recognize as an MPAs. However, the Ministry is considering to widen the definition of protected areas. This is to include areas which are managed by local communities whereby there are conservation programmes and communities practice sustainable consumption. This study is carried out through a GEF funded Project on Enhancing effectiveness and financial sustainability of Protected Areas in Malaysia.

- *Goal 3-2: encourage a ban on plastic microbeads in cosmetic products*

Question: How did you implement the recommendation to reduce plastic microbeads pollution in marine environment?

Malaysia's effort to the effort to reduce the use of plastic bags began when the Penang State in 2009 banned the use of plastic bags from shopping stores on Mondays. In 2010, Selangor state followed to ban the use of plastic bags for customers on Saturdays. Both State Governments ultimately imposes the ban on the use of plastic bags on any day. Customers are charged MYR0.20 (USD0.06) for each plastic bag they requested and the money is channeled to charity bodies or consumerism programs and environmental conservation efforts.

The federal government through the Ministry of Domestic Trade, Cooperative and Consumerism (MDTCC) in 2011 launched the No Plastic Bag Day (NPBD) Campaign throughout Malaysia for each Saturday. The objective is to reduce the use of plastic bags in order to reduce its negative impact on the environment. Stores charge a levy of MYR0.20 (USD0.06) for each new plastic bag requested by customers during the program. The Malacca State Government has directed retailers to replace conventional plastic bags with biodegradable ones instead but without any additional charge.

On a smaller scale, the Ministry, through Department of Marine Park Malaysia carries out annual beach and reef clean up within our marine park areas. Besides that, tourism operators are also

encouraged to reduce the use of plastic food containers. As for day trippers, the operators are required to pack all garbage to be disposed of on mainland. Diving operators are also encouraged to be members of Green Fins and to be involved actively in conservation programmes. To date, there are 33 active Green Fins members operating on marine park islands.

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

Question: are you working on this topic? If yes, could you please share with us your work. Please note that the information provided will help us to develop a recommendation for the next ICRI General Meeting. Please send us information as soon as possible,

All development activities within marine park areas are prohibited unless allowed for by the Director General of Marine Parks. Development activities that are allowed are required by law to carry out Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) regardless of size of the project. This is provided under Environment Quality Act 1974 – Environmental Quality (Prescribe Activities) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Order 2015. Under the Order, development projects in areas on or adjacent to marine ecosystems which are deemed as Environmental Sensitive Areas are also required to carry out EIA.

- *Goal 3-4: promote the deployment of mooring devices limiting the mechanical destruction of coral reefs and seagrasses*

Question: are you working on this topic? If yes, could you please share with us your work. Please note that the information provided will help us to develop a recommendation for the next ICRI General Meeting. Please send us information as soon as possible,

The Ministry, through Department of Marine Park Malaysia provides mooring buoys to all marine parks. this is carried on an annual basis where buoys are replaced and added as required. This carried out as boats are prohibited by law under Fisheries Act 1985 to anchor on reefs within marine parks. Therefore, mooring buoys are provided on suitable sites especially dive sites and snorkel sites. Mooring buoys are also provided to villagers to prevent beaching of boats to the beach.

- *Goal 3-5: 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*

Question: are you working on this topic? If yes, could you please share with us your work. Please note that the information provided will help us to develop a recommendation for the next ICRI General Meeting. Please send us information as soon as possible.

There were preliminary studies on the impact of sunscreens on coral reefs by researchers from local universities in Malaysia. There has no recommendation or policy call to produce sunscreens that do not damage coral reefs yet.

Theme 4: “Monitor the state of reefs in order to better manage them”

- *Goal 4-2: better monitor the phenomena of coral bleaching*

Question: How did you implement the recommendation on addressing the decline in coral reef health due to global bleaching events?

Malaysia has been actively monitoring reefs in our waters since 2007 in collaboration with Reef Check Malaysia. To date, we only experience one mass coral bleaching event in 2010 aside from

the earlier bleaching event in 1998. During the 3rd global bleaching event in 2014-2017, Malaysia was not significantly affected. However, the country has developed Coral Reef Bleaching Response Plan 2013 and a second edition of the Response Plan 2016-2020. The Plan includes recommendation on continuous monitoring programmes, coral restoration programmes on degraded reef areas, restriction of human activities on reefs affected by the bleaching event and chain of communication to spread information and status updates to stakeholders and the public.

Theme 5: “Progress via education”

- *Goal 5-1: prepare for the 2018 International Year of the Reef (IYOR)*

Question: How did you implement the Recommendation designating 2018 as the third International Year of the Reef? Please let us also know what are you planning to celebrate IYOR2018.

The Ministry through Department of Marine Park Malaysia will designate 2018 as the 3rd International Year of Reef. The Department has carried out preliminary internal planning for the year. The plan includes:

1. A national level launch in Mac/April 2018
2. State level programmes including:
 - a. Beach and reef clean-up
 - b. Education and awareness programmes
 - c. Capacity building programmes for local communities
3. Programmes with partners including
 - a. Publication of first day cover to commemorate IYOR 3 with National Philately Association
 - b. Officiating collaboration with Aquaria Malaysia
 - c. Engaging corporates on CSR Programmes (F&N, Petrosains, Malakoff) pertaining to reducing usage of plastic material or recycling programmes
4. Research Seminar
5. High Level Forum on way forward on Coral Reef and associated marine ecosystem conservation.

This plan will be further developed and updated after further discussion with our partners and stakeholders.

Please also list the educational material that you’ve developed in the past, so we can share it on the IYOR website.

Question: Would you like to report on one of your activities during the ICRI GM meeting?
No.

2. **Publications.** Please list relevant publications/reports (related to the ICRI plan of action) you have released during this reporting period.

Title (incl. author and date)	Website URL if available	Type of publication (Paper, report, etc.)
Status of Malaysia Coral Reefs 2016		Report
Terumbu 2016 and 2017		newsletter
Marine Parks Annual Report 2016		Report
Data Compendium and Basic Information on Marine Parks 2016		statistics

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

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Thank you very much for sharing your valuable experiences and information with ICRI.