



ICRI Member's Report

Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan

Reporting period December 2017 – November 2018

1. Reporting on the ICRI Plan of Action 2016-2018. *Your responses will help inform the Secretariat about members' contributions toward the previous Plan of Action.*

- a. Please list any relevant examples from your organisation/country of investment/projects to protect and restore the natural infrastructure of reefs and mangroves.** (See Goal (1) 2 [ICRI Recommendation for supporting investments in the natural infrastructure of reefs and mangroves to increase climate resilience](#)).

We, Ministry of the Environment (MoE), Government of Japan, have been promoting efforts to conserve coral reefs both internationally and domestically (* total budget amount is approximately 31 million yen both for international and domestic efforts in FY2018). Because degradation of coral reefs occurs on a global scale, it is important to share information among countries. For this reason, the MoE leads the monitoring in the East Asian region, by compiling and analysing information to provide it to the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN). In domestic response, based on The Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reef Ecosystems in Japan, we organize below as three priority issues;

- (1) Implement countermeasures against red clay and other sediments, nutrient salt and other elements originating from land areas.
- (2) Promote sustainable tourism for coral reef ecosystems.
- (3) Create connections between local residents and coral reef ecosystems.

MoE is promoting model projects at three sites in which local communities work together on these issues.

- b. Has your organisation/country made any progress in the following areas to target anthropogenic pressures?** Please give detail below. Note: If no change since your last ICRI member report, please write 'no change'.

- Encourage ban of plastic microbeads in cosmetic products.** (See Goal (3) 2 & [See ICRI Recommendation to reduce plastic microbeads pollution in marine environment](#)):

No change.

- Improve regulation and enforcement to reduce direct anthropogenic damage due to dredging and physical alteration of reef structures.** (See Goal (3) 3 & [ICRI Recommendation to reduce damage due to dredging and dumping on coral reefs](#)):

No change.

Deployment of mooring devices limiting the mechanical destruction of coral reefs and seagrasses. (See Goal (3) 4).

No change.

- c. **Did your organisation/country celebrate International Year of the Reef?** Please give details below. (See Goal (5) 1 & [ICRI Recommendation designating 2018 as the third International Year of the Reef](#)):

In Japan, various initiatives were implemented by diverse entities to celebrate IYOR2018 with the catchphrase "connecting, spreading, and supporting each other".

In line with the purpose of the IYOR2018, MoE, has been raising awareness among many people regarding wonderfulness and importance of coral reef ecosystems. And also, MoE has established a system that appoints private companies and organizations that actively engage in coral reef conservation as IYOR Official Supporters.

As of the end of October 2018, 25 organizations were appointed as Official Supporters by the Minister of the Environment, and diverse efforts such as "Reef Check", coral plantations, beach cleaning, and promotion events, were made across the country.

Furthermore, MoE has conducted a campaign to develop "Coral Map", which has been surveying corals by involving citizens since the time of the IYOR 2008 in cooperation with the Coral Map secretariat. MoE has also made a special log book for divers who post coral information to "Coral Map" to promote the campaign, and recruited diving shops that help the project.

2. **Contribution to the ICRI Plan of Action 2018-2020 and upcoming ICRI general meetings.** *Your responses to the following questions will assist the Secretariat in assessing contributions towards the major themes of the draft ICRI Plan of Action 2018-2020.*

Theme 1 - Promote effective and adaptable solutions to improve the protection of coral reefs

- a. **Which of the below topics do you consider to be the three top challenges that your organisation faces in managing coral reefs?** Please select from the options below:

- Climate change impacts
- Inadequate planning, zoning and management
- Unsustainable resource extraction
- Tourism and recreation
- Shipping
- Coastal development
- Dredging

- Illegal and destructive fishing
- Fish and coral trade
- Marine debris
- Other. Please specify:
Red clay and other sediments, nutrient salt and other elements
originating from land areas.

- b. **Please list any examples of innovative management practices that your organisation/country is involved in, such as use of VMS, drones & ecological mooring devices.** Include their limits, conditions of implementation, financing and an assessment of their results and links for more information if possible.

Nothing special

- c. **Please list any examples of innovative funding for management that your organisation/country is involved in.** Include their limits, conditions of implementation, financing and an assessment of their results and links for more information if possible.

Nothing special

- d. **Please list any examples of leading practices, techniques and strategies for building reef resilience that your organisation/country is involved in.** Include their limits, conditions of implementation, financing and an assessment of their results and links for more information if possible.

Strategic research on global mitigation and local adaptation to climate change supported by MoE shows that the anti-corrosion function by simulation in which coral reefs, seaweed beds, tidal flats and mangroves were considered as a series of ecosystems has shown that coral reefs have a strong buffering effects against waves and that it depends on the tree density of mangrove.

- e. **Please list any examples of leading practice reef restoration mechanisms that your organisation/country is involved in.** Include their limits, conditions of implementation, financing and an assessment of their results and links for more information if possible.

Sekisei Lagoon, located between Ishigaki and Iriomote of Yaeyama Islands, is the largest coral reef sea in Japan and was designated as the Iriomote National Park in 1972. However, corals in the Lagoon have extensively diminished since park designation because of various reasons: terrestrial runoffs of red clay and wastewater; coral bleaching due to high water temperatures; and outbreaks of the predatory crown-of-thorns starfish (*Acanthaster planci*). Hence, nature restoration project has been implemented, such as reduction of terrestrial runoffs and rehabilitation of coral communities by inducing settlement of larvae that are developed in synchronous spawning and by culturing the settled larvae for

transplantation. In FY 2018 ~ 2019, the progress of this project is reviewed to determine the project direction during the next period.

Theme 3 – Support communities reliant on coral reefs

- f. Is sustainable tourism development a significant challenge for your organisation?** If so please include detail below of the kinds of challenges faced and your strategies to deal with them.

<Agenda>

- As the value as a tourism resource increases, tourism use increases
- Adverse effects due to excessive use, and, trampling or contact by inappropriate use

<Aims to be achieved in FY 2020>

- How to do sustainable tourism in coral reef ecosystems is shown with an actual case study (model project) and an expertise sharing system on coral reef ecosystem appropriate utilization and conservation etc. should be established.
- In response to an increase in tourists from overseas, multilingual guidance and effective tools for public awareness on conservation should be developed.

- g. Is your organisation involved in activities to raise awareness and encourage action to support communities reliant on coral reefs?** Please include details below.

<Agenda>

- Local people have been becoming less familiar with coral reef ecosystems rapidly than before.
- Coral-related traditional culture in each area has been disappearing.

<Aims to be achieved in fiscal 2020>

- The grace that the coral reef ecosystem brings should be organized, understood, and appropriately utilized for each region, thereby promoting the conservation of coral reef ecosystems that are mainly local
- In the high latitude coral community area, sharing of information on how to utilize the grace of coral reefs should be promoted

Theme 4 – Help to reduce anthropogenic threats to coral reefs, particularly those that occur at a global or regional scale

- h. What activities is your organisation involved in to elevate awareness of the global nature of the threat of climate change to coral reefs?** Please include details below

When holding events related to IYOR 2018, we tell participants that coral reefs are susceptible to climate change and introduce "COOL CHOICE" which is Global Warming Prevention Campaign carried out by the Global Environment Bureau.

(cf. URL <https://ondankataisaku.env.go.jp/coolchoice/>)

- i. **Has your organisation made any progress in dealing with destructive fishing and trade?** Please include details below.

Nothing special

- j. **Has your organisation made any progress in dealing with marine debris?** Please include details below.

By inviting efforts to eradicate illegal dumping and control unnecessary single-use plastic emissions which will appeal to both at home and abroad, MoE has launched a nationwide campaign to promote on “how to deal with plastics in a wise manner” under the name “Plastics Smart” on October 19. (cf. URL <http://plastics-smart.env.go.jp/>)



Considering the importance of the reduction of marine debris for protection of coral reefs, we introduce three measurements on marine debris which the Japanese government is carrying out.

The first is supporting local governments in their efforts to clean up coastal debris and raise awareness.

The second is monitoring marine debris including micro-plastics along Japan’s coasts and in the sea around Japan in order to grasp the actual situation. In particular, Japan has conducted a project to harmonize monitoring methodologies so as to evaluate the situation of micro-plastics globally.

And the third is promoting international cooperation to tackle marine debris, globally and regionally.

3. **Would you like to report on your activities during the ICRI GM?** Please give details below.

Y /

4. **International events.** Please list any upcoming international events relevant to ICRI which someone from your organisation plans to attend in 2018-2019.

ICRI GM, Monaco, 5-7 Dec 2018

Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 3-14 Dec 2018

Reef Futures 2018: A Coral Restoration and Intervention-Science Symposium, Florida, 10-14 Dec 2018

Global World Heritage Marine Managers meeting, Alaska, US, 26-31 May 2019

Other:

5. **Publications.** Please list relevant publications and reports you have released during this reporting period.

Nothing special

6. **ICRI Member Feedback.** What do you find most valuable about the ICRI member reports? If you have any ideas for improvement please list below:

Nothing special

7. **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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