WORKING GROUP ON ICRI OPERATIONAL NETWORKS

REPORT 12 th JUNE 2004
Bernard SALVAT

1. ORIGIN OF THE WORKING GROUP.

The working group was launched in May 2003 at the ICRI CPC Gland meeting with the following objectives (in minutes of the meeting):

" 8. ACTION:
The ICRI CPC endorses the establishment of a Working Group to clarify:
1.The working relationship of current ICRI networks to the ICRI Secretariat and ICRI Membership;
2.What the role of the ICRI Hosts / Secretariat and the ICRI CPC / Members should be in the operation or guidance of networks;
3.The Working Group is also requested to examine how ICRIN should be constituted;
4.How a network is to be designated as an ICRI Network or endorsed by ICRI.
The Working Group will report to the next ICRI General Meeting
The members of the Working Group are - Representing the ICRI Members: USA, UNEP, France, Seychelles, ICRI Hosts / Secretariat; And representing the Networks: CORDIO, GCRMN, ICRAN, [CORAL to be invited] "

2. PROCEDURES AND E-MAIL ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING GROUP.

I was requested on 9 th March 2004 by the Secretariat to act on this decision. On 17 th March I sent a **first questionnaire** to the following colleagues whose names were provided by the secretariat:
Thomas Praster prasterta@state.gov
Christine Dawson dawsoncl@state.gov
Stefan Hain stefan.hain@unep-wcmc.org
Rolph Payet rolph@seychelles.sc
Robert Baldi Robert.Baldi@defra.gsi.gov.uk
Olof Linden olof.linden@cordio.org
Clive Wilkinson c.wilkinson@aims.gov.au>
Kistian Teleki < kteleki@icran.org>
and later (23 th March) to Brian Huse <bhuse@coral.org>

Answers were received from Wilkinson (GCRMN), Teleki (ICRAN), Linden (CORDIO) and Huse (CORAL-ICRIN). A summary of these answers were mailed to each member of the working group, along with a **second questionnaire** and we received answers to this last one from Teleki (ICRAN), Huse (CORAL-ICRIN) and Dawson (USA). Wilkinson and Payet mentionned that they will participate a meeting, if any, at Okinawa before the CPC. I got no answers from other members of the working group.

3. SUMMARY OF RESULTING CONSIDERATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP

Questions to working group members are underlined and followed by their answers or a summary of their answers but each member of the working group received all e-mails exchanges (complete answers)

3.1. FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE

Question A
what are the decision-making and consultative bodies of each network (please include names in charge)

- The GCRMN has 3 bodies (Management group, Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee, and Day to day operational).
- The ICRAN has also 3 bodies (Board, Steering Committee – playing a significant role in the strategic and programmatic decision making process - and Executive committee). Recruitment for the ICRAN post was undertaken by UNEP-WCMC, on behalf of the ICRAN Qsteering Committee, in April-May 2001.
- The CORDIO has 1 ("CORDIO committee").
- Most important decision making committees in this 3 networks are Board and Steering Committee for ICRAN, Management Group for GCRMN and CORDIO committee for CORDIO.
- Day to day work and operations are under the responsability of key colleagues : Clive WILKINSON, Kristian TELEKI and for CORDIO it is not clear if it is Olof LINDEN or Hakan BERG. CORDIO appears different from the two others both in term of the geography which is considered (CORDIO is regional, GCRMN and ICRAN are global) and in term of decision-making and consultative bodies.

Question B
Is there an ex-officio representative of either or both of the ICRI-CPC committee and of the ICRI CPC Secretariat ? When were they nominated and for how long ?

- The GCRMN Management group and the Day to Day committee includes CPC members but they have not been mandated by the CPC. The ICRI secretariat is requested to appoint a member of the Management group for the duration of the secretariat (two years) but, as far as I understand, somebody on the Management group and not outside of it.
- The ICRAN has representatives of ICRI Secretariat in its Steering Committee. In its Board he has two CPC members nominated by the CPC (representing the ICRI community at large and an independent scientific community representatives). The ICRI representatives will be rotated at the pleasure of the ICRI-CPC, but not more frequently than a yearly appointment. The ICRI Secretariat must submit, in writing, changes to Board membership.
- The CORDIO Committee includes members of CPC but who have not been designated by CPC

Question C
Were the objectives of the network defined by ICRI CPC? (if possible: when, how, what about...)

- GCRMN, ICRAN and CORDIO refered to the Dumaguete Call and Framework for action and amendments by reniewed ones and ITMEMS meetings. GCRMN refer mainly on

Monitoring and Research. ICRAN refer mainly on the implementation of specific elements of the Framework for Action.

- No more answers to the question, but we can add : a) part of answers related to the above link between ICRI Secretariat and ICRI-CPC, b) GCRMN is mainly funded by US and AIMS. ICRAN is manly funded by the United Nation Foundation and has to raise matching funds. CORDIO is funded by Sweden, Finland and (?) World Bank and IUCN.

3.2. SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE

First to mention that it is not an indispensable condition to have for all ICRI networks the same structure and links with the ICRI Secretariat and/or with the ICRI CPC. The first objective of our working group is to have a clear understanding of what are these networks, how they are working and with what links with iCRI. I would like to have your opinion on the following items.

Question 1.
I assume that we want ICRI operational network not to work independently from ICRI, even if they refer to Dumaguete Call and Framework for Actions. Do everybody agree on that ? Comment ?

ICRAN – TELEKI :
Operational networks must have clear and close linkages to ICRI – no argument here. ICRAN is working to strengthen those linkages and will present this at the Okinawa ICRI-CPC

CORAL - ICRIN - HUSE :
If ICRI has created a network, or otherwise established a connection to an existing network, there needs to be ground rules for how that relationship works. These rules can be informal or codified within an MOU. However, to ensure effectiveness there needs to be an agreement around specific goals, as well as some mechanism for evaluating success and failure. A key problem arises when an operational network, such as ICRIN, is contractually linked to another entity - in this case UNEP. The question really comes down to funding.

DAWSON Christine:
Clearly, ICRI operational networks should not work independently, i.e., at odds with ICRI's goals. It would seem reasonable to have, as Brian suggests, a set of rules or terms of reference addressing the specific goals to be achieved and a means for evaluating performance

SALVAT Bernard:
Operational networks with clear and close linckages to ICRI, no working independently. Necessity of MOU (goals and evaluation)

Questions 2.
I guess you will agree and, in that case, what has to be the links between ICRI and these networks ?. Two category of links are mentionned above. Link with the Secretariat and link with the CPC. Links lead to representatives who has to express the view of those who elect them (Secretariat decided by ICRI CPC each two years - and - Members of ICRI CPC designated by the CPC). Do you think that these two categories of links are necessary or not ? Comment ?

ICRAN – TELEKI:

I think that it is helpful to have linkages to these two categories. I think that it iis advantageous to have linkages to the Secretariat and to the CPC. The Secretariat should play a role in the governance/management of each of the Networks with suitable representation but not be the sole decision making body. The Secretariat can represent the interests of the CPC and in addition Networks would be expected to convey outcomes to the CPC for endorsement.

I see that there should be two reports – one by the network on its activities and outcomes and the other by either the Secretariat or one of the ICRI Network representatives.   The critical factor regarding reporting as far as ICRI is concerned is to bring to the attention to the CPC and ICRI members the ICRI relevant points and areas where endorsement is requested.

In summary:

- A network will provide a report on activities and results to ICRI. ICRI will provide feedback to the Network on this report and suggested follow up and priorities for further action.
- The ICRI Secretariat or ICRI Network Representative shall provide a report to the CPC regarding where ICRI's input is required/requested, and where relevant guidance can be provided.
- ICRI will regularly provide guidance to the Network on activities and priorities, within scope of its strategic plan; the governing body of each Network would decide how best to respond to this guidance and provide explanation to ICRI.
- Network products (e.g., analyses, monitoring information, lessons learned, awareness materials) will be provided to ICRI together with a cover letter or other explicit identification of implications of the product for ICRI and its members.

CORAL – ICRIN – HUSE :

This question outlines one of the most significant problems with ICRI's structure. It is too complex. If one assumes that information and decisions flow efficiently and swiftly from the Secretariat, through the CPC, and to the networks, or vice versa, there would be no problems. However, there are many traps along the way, including distance, long times between meetings, bureaucratic systems that do not work, language, etc. In addition, decisions are not clearly communicated and are made without sufficient information. The operating networks need to be linked with one entity who has authority to make decisions in real time, based on agreed upon set of goals.

I don't assume that the link has to be the Secretariat. In fact, the Secretariat is too far removed from the day to day operations of the groups that make up the operational networks. In my view, efforts should be made to improve the governing structure such that policy decisions are made by the Secretariat, with input from the CPC. These policies should then be implemented by the networks as guided by a strong manager. ICRAN, as the network tasked with implementing the strategic framework is the most suitable link. Efforts should be made to support a well functioning ICRAN that has management authority.

Again, this outlines a problem. Too many reports. In the scenario above, networks would submit one report to ICRAN.   ICRAN would be tasked with consolidating and submitting a comprehensive report to the Secretariat, through the CPC.

DAWSON Christine :

There must be a link between ICRI and the networks and the least burdensome approach would be for one link through the Secretariat to the CPC (i.e., the direct link is to the Secretariat which in turn informs the members of the CPC). Again, it should be possible to craft terms of reference to deal with these issues. As noted above, the link should be through the Secretariat. There should be a representative from ICRI on the main decision-making body of the network but it need not be from the current Secretariat host government (although it could be). One of ICRI's greatest assets is it's flexibility, it's ability to maintain a variety of networks without funnelling all activity thought a single unit. At this time, we would not favor giving "management authority" (whatever that is) to ICRAN. As I noted above, we are to have a major discussion of ICRAN during the CPC and that will greatly influence our views.

One or two links means different representatives and lead to reports > of these different representatives to ICRI - CPC. In the most > complicated case, at each CPC, there will be 3 reports on these > networks activities : one by the Network itself, one by the > secretariat and one by CPC representatives. No problem for the same > report to be signed by more than one. But representation and mandate > should lead to report. Can you comment on that ?

I agree there could be too many reports but this can be easly dealt with by designating one point of contact for each network who coordinates with others associated with that particulat network.   Channelling reports through ICRAN to consolidate and synthesize would give ICRAN too much leeway to focus the report as it wanted and reports might not reflect the views of the operational networks who submitted them. We would oppose submitting reports through ICRAN.

SALVAT Bernard:

In favor of : a) Two links representatives between a network and ICRI : One from Secretariat and one nominated by CPC (Two in case one failed…). b) Networks reports to CPC : One from the network itself, another from the Secretariat representative and the CPC nominated, both or separate if they desagree.

Questions 3.
 I assume that we have to specify what is an ICRI network and what is not. Considering GCRMN, ICRAN (and ICRIN), they are global networks. What difference with the World Bank Targeted Research Project ? Why not to consider this global project as a network ?. Comment ?
CORDIO is a regional network and programme. If we consider CORDIO as an ICRI network as the two others, why not to consider also any other regional programme (not national) as a network, as for example the Meso-american project in Central America (MBRS, World Bank) or the one to be launched by France in the South Pacific. Don't you think that these regional programmes funded by International Institutions or Governements have to be distinct from ICRI global networks. Can we suggest "ICRI related programmes" which can be endorsed by ICRI with some representation of the secretariat ? Comment ?

ICRAN – TELEKI :

A definition of an ICRI Network would be of benefit here. I have always considered that networks of ICRI are those which are specifically operationalizing the Framework for Action (FFA) at local, regional and global levels. The WB Targeted research programme is

very specifically science driven which addresses one aspect of the FFA and in my mind it would not be appropriate to call this an ICRI Network. I see no reason why regional initiatives should have some explicit linkage to ICRI. I think that there is great merit in having regional networks but having one as a Network of ICRI does open the door for others to become recognized Networks introducing more confusion then there already is. At the moment what input does ICRI, as ICRI, have into the regional programs/projects/initiatives? The concept of ICRI related, or even endorsed, programmes would better reflect the relationship and clarify the role of Networks.

DAWSON Christine:
There should be distinctions between different entities (e.g., networks, programs, etc.) I find the concept of ICRI-related programs, which can be endorsed by ICRI and have ICRI representation, very appealing and an effective means to broaden ICRI's influence.

SALVAT Bernard:
In favor of a) the three existing networks at the moment which are global : GCRMN (Monitoring and status of world reefs), ICRAN (Action cf Framework for action), ICRIN (Information) b) ICRI-related programmes or network for others – regional – endorsed by ICRI-CPC

Question 4.
Are the current networks responding to the ICRI mandate in the Call and Framework for action ? Is there some gaps that could be tackled by adding new networks ? (question from Clive). Comment ?

ICRAN – TELEKI
The current networks are responding to the ICRI mandate in the FFA to varying degrees. A closer examination of the activities of the current networks against the FFA would need to be undertaken to identify gaps if any – I suspect that the current Networks respond to the FFA broadly speaking. ICRI could provide guidance to Networks on areas that are not being fully addressed rather then creating or adding new networks (i.e. use what we have in place).

CORAL – ICRIN - HUSE :
I believe we should make the current structure work effectively before considering adding new networks. Moreover, we should look for ways to keep the number of networks as small as is practical.

DAWSON Christine:
I agree we want to make sure our structure is working before adding more entities but in crafting our "operational network" structure we should think ahead to how other entities, programs, projects might be linked to ICRI. We cannot confuse programs with networks. Networks are simply a collective of organizations and multilaterals who cooperating in implementing programs. For example, ICRAN is implementing the Mesoamerican project through the partner organizations.

3. CONCLUSIONS

1. Above comments came from some members of the working group and during last two months. We had answers to questionnaire 1 from the four operational networks (GCRMN, ICRAN, CORAL-ICRIN and CORDIO). The second questionnaire was one step ahead with comments from TELEKI, HUSE, DAWSON and SALVAT.

2. The Okinawa CPC Agenda mention the following item : "ICRAN : Discussion of ICRAN committee's recommendations on the future of ICRAN (Kristian TELEKI, Jamie OLIVER and Richard KENCHINGTON) – and – answering the second questionnaore, Kristian wrote " Operational networks must have clear and close linkages to ICRI – no argument here. ICRAN is working to strengthen those linkages and will present this at the Okinawa ICRI-CPC ". So, we need to know what will be "discussed" at the CPC

3. If I try to sum up comments from members who worked in the working group:
- Necessity of clear and close links between Networks and ICRI (Secretariat and CPC)
- Better to have MOU between ICRI and Networks (goals, evaluation, reports)
- Distinction between global operational networks and ICRI-related programmes or regional networks to be endorsed and labelled by ICRI CPC.
- Number of operational networks as small as possible, and well functionning with ICRI before to launch new ones, if necessary.
This summary is my responsibility as Chair of this working group. It will be modified according to e-mail exchanges among working group members.

4**. The working group plan to have a meeting prior the ICR-CPC :**

THURSDAY 1 st JULY 17 00 – 18 00
at the end of the ICRAN Partners meeting – Festone opp. Convention Center"
which is already planed.

Bernard SALVAT
13 June 2004