



Member's report on activities to ICRI

Presented by France

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Reporter: National Secretariat of IFRECOR

Summary of Activities

1. IFRECOR (French Initiative for Coral Reefs; <http://www.ecologie.gouv.fr>, choose 'biodiversité et paysages' then choose 'récifs coralliens IFRECOR')

IFRECOR was set up in 1998 and became fully operational in 2000. Its implementation is quite original as opposed to other member states of ICRI:

- It has its own overall management plan
- It is managed by the government through a national secretariat placed under the ministry for environment and the ministry for overseas territories
- The secretariat applies the recommendations of a national committee, which gathers major stakeholders involved in the management of coral reefs: NGOs, administrations, socioprofessionals, scientists, members of parliament.
- Each overseas territory (eight of them) runs a local committee, applies its local management plan, compatible with the national management plan, and receives special funding to implement local coral reef protection activities.

Over the period, the national initiative for coral reefs has gone through the assessment of its first 5 years of existence.

Generally speaking, the results are positive:

- IFRECOR has created a network of national and local competences and interest around the management of coral reefs
- Each overseas territory now takes great care to include the management of coral reefs in plans and programmes and in the undertaking of local public policies
- Results are substantial in terms of improvement of knowledge, follow up of the status of coral reefs (monitoring related to GCRMN), prevention of marine pollutions, creation of MPAs, sensitisation.

IFRECOR is currently producing its second phase 2006-2010 management plan as the government has renewed its trust in the initiative.

The main targets of the coming five years will be:

- the capitalisation of knowledge that has been produced during the first five years of implementation through the production of literature covering the main outcomes.
- The continuation of the work on key topics that are scientific inventories, creation of MPAs, follow up of the status of coral reefs, and sensitisation.
- The focus on major issues linked to the global change, the need to protect mangroves and coastal wetlands, the evaluation of the economic value and outputs of national reefs, the valuation of local traditional coral reef knowledge and

management activities, the development of a national database on the status of coral reefs using COREMO database to be implemented at international level

2. Coral Reef Initiative for the South Pacific (CRISP) (www.crisponline.net)

The last convention between the Agence Française de Développement and the United Nations Foundation was signed in July 2006 allowing the expected involvement of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the World Fish Center (WFC). Both organizations have respectively recruited a senior coral reef manager to work on the CRISP programme.

Under Component 1, while the Foundation of South Pacific People International-FSPI followed up on supporting MPAs through its network in several countries (Solomon, Tuvalu, Vanuatu) with the financial assistance of Conservation International, the second step of the new Caledonian ecoregional analysis was finalized by WWF (analysis of risks and threats on the marine biodiversity)..

Under Component 2, a workshop was organized in Fiji in April 2006 by CRIOBE in partnership with the University of the South Pacific, focusing on indicators for the management of reef fisheries ; a preliminary mission was also conducted in Fiji by experts from IRD addressing the potential improvement of the legal framework insuring more benefits for Pacific countries involved in international marine bioprospection partnerships.

The extension of the CRISP programme towards Micronesia and the North Pacific was mentioned during the 8th conference of the SPREP in Noumea in September 2006. A strong development of this program is expected for 2007 with the involvement of Australia, and maybe Japan and New Zealand. A Japan-France-USA symposium will take place in Moorea (CRIOBE-EPHE and GUMP Berkeley Centre), French Polynesia, 4-7 December 2006, on "Tropical Island Ecosystems and Sustainable Development" under CRISP auspices; one target being a Japanese cooperation with CRISP. Discussions are ongoing to organise an Australian French meeting in February 2007 in Townsville (Australia), to define an Australian involvement in some Pacific islands connected with CRISP. This first meeting should be followed by a second co-organized seminar in a Pacific insular country, focusing on governance and targeting SIDS policy makers (from Eric Clua [ericc@spc.int] Noumea New Caledonia)

3. COREMO III Data Analysis System

In collaboration with ReefBase (World Fish Center, Penang), Reef Check and other partners, the GCRMN selected the COREMO II system from the Southwest Indian Ocean Node to be developed for other regions of the world. It will cater for the wide range of monitoring methods and protocols. The objective was to streamline data input, data archiving and data analysis for report writing and transfer to ReefBase. Partners met ARVAM (Jean Pascal QUOD, Agence pour la Recherche et la Valorisation Marine –ARVAM-, Réunion France) in Penang last September to ensure that the delivery and effective use of COREMO III can take place by late December 2006. See "Decision on COREMO III Data Analysis System for GCRMN, Reef Check and ReefBase" presented to the Cozumel ICRI GA meeting by Clive WILKINSON and al.

4. 17th South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) Conference, Noumea, 11-15 September

New Caledonia hosted the last SPREP meeting, which objective was to work on the preservation of ecosystems and resources in the Pacific. Coral reefs were a major issue of discussion, given their rich biodiversity and patrimonial value in the Pacific region. A French project for the creation of a Regional Institute on Sustainable Development was launched. See : SPREP member report.

5. Conference on “Place of the Biodiversity in the European Cooperation towards developing countries”, Paris, 16-21 September 2006. “Message from Paris”.

Over 400 participants from governments and the civil society gathered in Paris to consider how to better integrate the biodiversity to the European Union development cooperation. The conference was organised by IUCN with the support of the French government. A special focus was set on European overseas countries and territories, which biodiversity is much richer than in continental Europe. Coral reefs were especially considered, particularly in tropical small island States and territories. A “message from Paris” that worries about the decline of the biodiversity and their services for the well being of humanity and the fight against poverty has been adopted. See <<http://countdown2010.net/paris2006/>>. Ask the French delegation to have the “Message from Paris” in English, Spanish or French.

6. Nomination of the neo-Caledonian coral barrier reef and associated ecosystems as a world heritage site (UNESCO)

In cooperation with local institutions, studies are being carried out in view of a proposal for a nomination at the beginning of 2007; if so, the dossier should be examined by the World Heritage Committee during summer 2008.

7. International Forum on Pacific Coral Reef Biodiversity, New Caledonia ([www; ird.nc/biodec](http://www.ird.nc/biodec))

IRD (ex ORSTOM) and CPS (Community of the Pacific) are organizing a Forum in Nouméa from the 30th October to the 4th of November 2006, with the five following major agenda items : biodiversity spatial-temporal variations, new and unknown biodiversity features, exploitation and uses of coral reef biodiversity, management of coral reef biodiversity, and measurements and data bases.

8. Participation to the 21st Pacific Sciences Congress, Okinawa, 13-18 June 2007 (<www.psc21.net>)

France is promoting the participation of coral reef scientists and managers to the Okinawa meeting, during which it plans to organise a mini symposium entitled "Coral reefs and coral reefs fisheries: knowledge and management".

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