



Member's report on activities to ICRI

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Reporting period November 2010 – December 2011

1. General Information

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| Are you an ICRI Member? | Yes |
| Representation to ICRI (Country / Organization): | UNEP |
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| Last meeting attended: | Monaco, 2010 |

UNEP Member's Report

1. As of April 2011 the UNEP Coral Reef Unit (CRU) operates under the Freshwater and Marine Ecosystems Branch of the UNEP Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI), hosted by the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific located in Bangkok, Thailand. CRU was established in 2000 by the UNEP Executive Director as a response to global coral reef decline, with the overall aims to build consensus on actions to bring to sustainable levels the principal causes of coral reef decline; mobilize an international response, providing leadership in the UN system and the international community and promoting effective and coordinated efforts under global and regional multilateral agreements; and facilitate and encourage financing for coral reef projects. From 2003 CRU was located at the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC).
2. CRU implements the UNEP Marine and Coastal Strategy with particular attention to coral reefs and associated ecosystems, and the communities and industries that depend on them. Programme goals are to
 - Promote coral reef research and assessment, including through support to global assessment initiatives, in order to improve our understanding of reef change and associated societal impacts;
 - Support planning, including through development of approaches and tools that address multiple drivers of ecosystem change and their implications for socioeconomic development, climate change adaptation and mitigation;
 - Provide policy and governance advice at national, regional and global levels to facilitate uptake of pertinent research and assessment findings as well as practical approaches for environmental management in policy and governance frameworks; and
 - Provide coordination, communication and fundraising to support coherent, multi-partner programme implementation.

3. CRU activities are implemented with a range of partners, including UNEP administered and independent Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, affiliated institutions such as UNEP-WCMC and UNEP-GRID, organizations in the UN system, as well as international partnerships and initiatives, including civil society.
4. ICRI and its networks remain important vehicles for delivering UNEP's work on coral reefs. UNEP continues to support the rotating ICRI Secretariat, including by administering resources. UNEP expresses sincere thanks to the outgoing Secretariat hosted by France and Samoa with Monaco, and looks forward to close collaboration with the Australia-Belize ICRI Secretariat in the 2012-13 biennium. UNEP is also supporting IUCN in developing a global coordination mechanism for GCRMN. Activities under ICRAN were concluded in 2010.
5. UNEP supported a Regional Workshop on the Regular Process held in Santiago, Chile, 13-16 September 2011. The discussions in the workshop reflected a high level of interest from member states in the Regular Process, but it also highlighted the capacity gaps that many countries have in order to undertake the first integrated assessment cycle (2010 - 2014). A total of 21 countries participated in the workshop, including 8 countries from outside the Latin American region. UNEP will also support Regional Workshop on the Regular Process in the Pacific and in the Wider Caribbean.
6. UNEP Secretariat input to the compilation document for the United Nations Conference on sustainable Development (UNCSD) is available in the document "Secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme Input to the Compilation Document for UNCSD" available at http://www.unep.org/PDF/RIO20/UNEP_secretariat_input.pdf
7. The Green Economy, in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, is one of two main themes for Rio+20. UNEP is preparing a range of relevant reports analysing challenges and opportunities and identifying enabling conditions and policy options (see Recent and Upcoming Publications below).
8. UNEP, in collaboration with UNDESA (SIDS Unit) and the Inter-Agency Consultative Group on SIDS facilitated the organisation of three SIDS regional preparatory meetings for Rio+20, as follows: Caribbean region: 20 June 2011 in Georgetown, Guyana; 2. AIMS (Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Seas) region: 7 - 8 July 2011 in Victoria, Seychelles and Pacific region: 21-22 July 2011 in Apia, Samoa. Following these meetings New York-based SIDS delegations prepared a consolidated SIDS position text, which was reviewed and finalised at an Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting, which was also organised by the UNDESA SIDS Unit and UNEP. The meeting took place in New York on 1st September 2011.
9. UNEP provided input to the report of the Secretary-General of UN on the "Protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development", requested in resolution 65/150 by the UN General Assembly. The report highlights the importance of protecting coral reefs and economic, social and development benefits of coral reef protection in the context of themes and objectives of Rio+20. A draft resolution "Protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development" for consideration at the 66th session of UNGA has been prepared by 20 countries, taking note of the aforementioned report and noting the opportunities provided by Rio+20.
10. A UNEP-led project entitled "Mapping and Enhancing Natural Resource Governance in Small Island Communities" was approved by the Mangroves For the Future (MFF) Regional Steering Committee in October 2011. With implementation in Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, the project seeks to identify and understanding island-specific management challenges and constraints, and address these through targeted interventions. A FAO project on which UNEP is a partner entitled "Income for Coastal Communities from Mangrove Protection" was also approved.
11. A UNEP GEF proposal "Standardized methodologies for carbon accounting and ecosystem services valuation of Blue Forests" has been approved by GEF Council. The objective of the project is to develop methodologies for carbon accounting and ecosystem services valuation in blue forests to be recognized and used by the international community and the GEF. This four year project under the International Waters focal area will be initiated in 2012, with GEF funding of USD 4.5 million and cofinance of over USD 18 million identified.

12. UNEP has developed a new capacity-building resource - 'Taking Steps toward Marine and Coastal Ecosystem-Based Management - An Introductory Guide' - to assist planners and practitioners getting started on EBM, from strategic planning to on-site implementation. The Guide outlines practical considerations in an accessible language, drawing upon experiences and lessons across the globe. An important message is that EBM is an incremental process; it can evolve from existing capacity (such as ICZM); and there are different paths toward EBM. The guide will be used in national and regional training workshops and demonstration projects to be implemented during 2012 including in East Africa, the Red Sea and South East Asia. Further workshops are being planned.

13. Whilst much guidance exists on how to manage marine protected areas (MPAs), there is little guidance available on how to combine top-down, bottom-up and market approaches to plan effective and equitable governance of MPAs. The UNEP Technical Report 'Governing Marine Protected Areas- Getting the Balance Right' (2011) offers a new approach to planning of sustainable MPAs. It presents a governance framework underpinned by 20 MPA case studies from around the world; reviewed by MPA planners, managers, and governance experts. Guidance and policy options are provided on how MPA planners might combine different incentives to support MPA governance in different contexts. Background information is at: www.MPAG.info. Future testing and demonstration of the framework is in the pipeline.

14. Recent publications:

- Taking Steps toward Marine and Coastal Ecosystem-Based Management - An Introductory Guide (UNEP 2011). Available at: http://www.unep.org/publications/contents/pub_details_search.asp?ID=6200
- Governing Marine Protected Areas - Getting the Balance Right (P. Jones, W. Qui, E. DeSanto, UNEP Technical Report, 2011). Available at: <http://www.mpag.info/>
- Keeping Track of our changing environment: From Rio to Rio+20 (1992-2012). The report is available on the GEO-5 website: http://www.unep.org/GEO/pdfs/Keeping_Track.pdf
- Progress Towards Meeting Internationally Agreed Goals (Pre-Publication: Findings from GEO-5 Draft 2 as at 26 September 2011). Available at: <http://www.unep.org/pdf/RIO20/progress-internationally-agreed-goals.pdf>
- Towards a Green Economy: Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication. Available at: www.unep.org/greeneconomy

15. Upcoming publications:

- Green economy in a blue world. Synthesis report to be launched on 9 December 2011; full report on 23 January 2012.
- Green economy in SIDS. Synthesis to be launched on 23 January 2012; launch date of full report to be determined in consultation with UN DESA. This joint paper by UNEP and the UNDESA SIDS Unit will provide insights into how the green economy is set to influence sustainable development in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) by analyzing the challenges and opportunities of a green transition in key sectors of importance to SIDS such as fisheries, tourism, water, energy and waste management, amongst others, and the policy and institutional requirements to make it possible. It will also include illustrative case studies, approaches and technologies, related policies and national governance and institutional issues.

16. Attendance at coral reef-related meetings

- Third Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR-3), 25-27 January 2012, and Global Conference on land-ocean interaction 23-24
- IUCN World Conservation Congress, 6-15 September 2012, Jeju, Republic of Korea.