



## Minutes of the 26<sup>th</sup> ICRI General Meeting

*La Réunion, 12-15 December 2011*

### Summary of the General Meeting

The third General Meeting under the French-Samoan co-secretariat was held on 12-15 December 2011, in La Réunion. The meeting was opened by the French government authorities from La Réunion. A total of 49 participants attended the ICRI General Meeting (the list of participants is available in annex 1). France and the United States of America (USA) provided financial support to several countries to enable their participation.

#### Ad Hoc Committees

New terms of reference for the Ad Hoc committee on the Caribbean Regional Response to Lionfish Invasion were adopted (annex 2). France will become a co-chair the *Ad Hoc* committee in 2012, along with Mexico, the United States of America and the Regional Activity Centre for UNEP's SPAW Protocol (SPAW-RAC).

Participants agreed on extending the work for the Ad Hoc Committee on Coral Reef Associated Fisheries, with the same terms of reference.

New terms of reference will be developed, to be proposed at the next ICRI General Meeting, for the following *Ad Hoc* committees:

- Economic Valuation of Coral Reef Ecosystems
- Enforcement & Investigation.

The following *Ad Hoc* Committees were dissolved:

- *Ad Hoc* Committee on the East Asia Regional Workshop. However, the Initiative will continue to report under "Regional Initiatives".
- *Ad Hoc* Committee on Coral Disease.
- *Ad Hoc* Committee on Pacific Day.
- *Ad Hoc* Committee on ITMEMS 4.
- *Ad Hoc* Committee on the International Coral Reef Action Network.

#### Motions

**Two resolutions** were adopted:



- One on the International Coral Reef Action Network (annex 3), that suspends the Network;
- One on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (annex 4) that encourages ICRI members to support the inclusion of references to the conservation and sustainable management of all coral reefs, and their importance to sustainable development in the final outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), as well as any statement of commitments which may also include the blue economy and integrated oceans management.

**A recommendation** on the Indian Ocean Region was adopted.

### **Networks**

The International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) is now suspended.

The participants welcomed the proposed direction for the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN).

### **Call to Action**

The work to 'refresh' ICRI's Call to Action will be continued by the ICRI secretariat under the next hosting period.

### **Next Secretariat**

Australia presented an outline of the work of the upcoming Secretariat (to be co-chaired by Australia and Belize). The dates for the next ICRI General Meeting were announced: it will be held in Cairns, Australia, from **July 16-19, 2012**, just after the International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS).



## **Minutes of the General Meeting**

### **Official opening**

The meeting was opened by the French local authorities:

- Edmont LAURET, *adjoint au maire et représentant le maire de Saint Denis*
- Bruno MAMINDY PAJANY, *conseiller général et maire de Sainte Rose, représentant la présidente du Conseil Général*
- Xavier BRUNETIERE, *secrétaire général de la préfecture de la Réunion, représentant Mme la Ministre*

The Minister from Seychelles in charge of the Environment also made some remarks.

### **Presentation and Adoption of the Agenda**

The meeting was co-chaired alternatively by France, Samoa and Monaco.

Mr. Thébault, French Ambassador for the Environment and Mrs Perina Sila, Samoa were excused. The following ICRI members sent apologies to the ICRI Secretariat : Barbados, the European Commission, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Secretariat for the Nairobi Convention, the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA), the Philippines, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP), UNESCO - Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Viet Nam, United Kingdom, the World Bank Group, the World Resources Institute (WRI), and the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA).

The overall agenda was presented and no comments were received.

### **Presentation of the coral reefs in French overseas territories in the Indian Ocean**

An overview of the French overseas territories in the Indian Ocean was given by the French local authorities. France has 3 territories in the Indian Ocean: Réunion Island, Mayotte Islands and the Southern and Antarctic Territories (*Terres Australes et Antarctiques françaises*). For the Southern and Antarctic Territories, only one island has coral reefs: Les Glorieuses. In total, this represents about 570 square kilometers of coral reefs, with an important diversity of landscapes, habitats & species (from young fringing reefs to 'old' coralline islets). The main threats are coastal development, watershed based pollution, marine based pollution, and overfishing and destructive fishing. It was noted that climate change was a growing concern. Management and



conservation activities were explained, including health monitoring, conservation planning (including MPA designation) and Marine Strategy.

*Supporting Document: Presentation*

**Presentation of the "Support to local innovations and partnerships contributing to the conservation and sustainable management of the marine environment in the South West Indian Ocean" project**

The overall objective of the project is to develop and share thematic cross-cutting actions/activities at the local level and implement local pilot integrated projects. The project will take place in the following countries: Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, France / La Réunion. The funding from French Global Environment Facility and other partners is 3.2 millions EUR.

Three main work areas were identified and endorsed by a Regional Consultative Meeting in Mauritius in December 2010:

- Sustainable Management of Coral Reefs;
- Marine Protected Areas;
- Sustainable Management of Coastal Fisheries

The Project's key approaches include poverty alleviation, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, development of alternative activities that are viable, networking, awareness and sensitisation. The project will heavily rely on the involvement of local stakeholders and will have to be consistent with other IOC activities or projects, including EDF 10-funded Biodiversity and SIDS projects.

The Thematic integrated actions identified are:

1. Coastal resources sustainable management projects;
2. Marine Protected Areas performance support;
3. Integrated Coastal zone management projects;
4. Ecolodge projects support;
5. **Coral reef conservation and restoration projects;**
6. Support for sustainable management of cetacean watching-based tourism activities.

This project will be articulated with programmes and strategies at the national, regional or international levels (IOC Regional Fisheries Strategy for the ESA-IO region, Convention on Biological Biodiversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Nairobi Convention...) and will build on and complement previous and ongoing initiatives for



marine and coastal resources management that have been implemented throughout the West Indian Ocean region, PRE-IOC project, Marine Protected Area Network of the IOC Countries Project (MPAN-IOC, 2006), and the ReCoMap.

### **Session on the UN General Assembly**

A short presentation of the ongoing work done by the UN General Assembly on coral reefs was provided by the ICRI Secretariat. Under the leadership of Australia, the Small Islands Developing States (including Samoa), and Monaco among others, a resolution (Resolution 65/150) on the “*Protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development*” was adopted at the 65th session (in 2010) of the UN General Assembly. The resolution acknowledged “*the leadership role in tropical marine ecosystem management provided by the International Coral Reef Initiative, a partnership of Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations*”. This resolution also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the importance of protecting coral reefs and related ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods and development, including an analysis of the economic, social and development benefits of protecting coral reefs, in the context of the themes and objectives of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session and for the information of other forums. The ICRI secretariat, and other ICRI members (Australia, Brazil, France, Japan, Thailand, UNEP, WRI) provided inputs for this report, which was adopted at the 66th session, and is entitled « *protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development* ». ICRI is mentioned several times in this report and is recognized as “*the only global entity devoted solely to coral reef conservation*”. At the last UN General Assembly (in 2011), a draft resolution on “*protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development*” was approved.

The Secretariat should continue to provide inputs to relevant international fora or processes, and ICRI members are encouraged to do the same, and to mention ICRI if appropriate.

*Supporting Document: “Protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development”, Report of the Secretary-General*

### **Session on the UN Conference for Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20)**

The presentation was made by the ICRI Secretariat. The Secretariat of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20) invited inputs from stakeholders for inclusion in a compilation document to serve as a basis for the preparation of zero draft of the outcome document. In November 2011, the list of inputs was published. 32 submissions are mentioning coral reefs, and 2 are mentioning “ICRI”, including the submission from the European Union and its member states as follows:

67. Recognize the significant economic, social and environmental contribution of coral reefs to island and coastal States, including by promoting regional cooperation on the model of the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI), and encouraging the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI).

70. Created in 1994, ICRI is recognized (UNGA 2010 resolution on coral reefs) as the leading international initiative on coral reefs advocacy, uniting both developed and developing countries which are co-chairing it.

Several other submissions are relevant to the work of ICRI:

- Several UN entities have issued a Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal Sustainability, which highlights the role of oceans in sustainable development and offers recommendations ahead of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development.
- The Global Ocean Forum has published a summary for decision makers on the assessment of progress in implementing goals and targets related to oceans, coasts and islands adopted by the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

Monaco mentioned that a workshop convened by Monaco in November 2011, on the "Sustainable Use of Oceans in the Context of the Green Economy and Poverty Eradication" focused on sustainability practices in food security, renewable energy and tourism. The workshop aimed to contribute to the outcome document of the UN Conference for Sustainable Development. Finally, the Secretariat reminded participants that in 2002 ICRI adopted a resolution on Coral Reefs and the WSSD 2002.

Following this introduction, a draft motion proposed by the ICRI secretariat on “the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)” was discussed and adopted.

#### *Supporting Documents:*

- *Draft motion on Rio+20*
- *Inputs from European Union and its Member States*
- *ICRI Resolution on Coral Reefs and the WSSD 2002*
- *Monaco Message*

#### **Ad Hoc Committees**

- 1. Existing Ad Hoc Committees reported on their work since the last ICRI General Meeting (November 2011).**

- *Caribbean Regional Response to Lionfish Invasion, Ricardo Gomez (Mexico)*

The work implemented by the *Ad Hoc* Committee (AHC) was presented (available in the report). Due to the magnitude of the problem of lionfish invasion and the intended actions by the AHC, an extension of the Committee was requested, and new terms of reference were presented (annex 2).

France provided information about the result of a recent call for projects organized within the framework of the French national biodiversity strategy on the topic of invasive species. Among those selected, there are two projects that relate to lionfish invasion in the French West Indies. These were developed in relation with IFRECOR's (French Coral Reef Initiative) local plans of action and will complement the work of the Lionfish AHC. France recommended that the AHC contact the project managers for these two projects.

UNEP's Coral Reef Unit mentioned that the experience from this AHC could be used in other regions dealing with invasive species. The USA congratulated the Committee for their work on this important issue for the Caribbean Region. Australia joined the USA to commend the achievements of the AHC, and stated that it will continue to support this initiative during its hosting period, especially as ICRI is being co-hosted by Belize which is directly concerned by this issue.

**The new terms of reference were adopted (annex 2) and the work of the committee extended until the next ICRI General Meeting. France will join the Committee as a co-chair, along with the original chairs: Mexico, the United States of America and the Regional Activity Centre for UNEP's SPAW Protocol (SPAW-RAC).**

*Supporting documents:*

- *Report of the Ad Hoc Committee, and presentation*
- *New Terms of Reference*
  
- *Coral Reef Associated Fisheries*

Eric Clua (Secretariat of the Pacific Community - SPC), as the co-chair of the Committee together with Society for the Conservation of Reef Fish Aggregations (SCRFA), presented the results of its work. He indicated that despite a low implication of the members of the Committee, several tasks were achieved:

- Participation at the seventh SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting;
- A comprehensive global list of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMO) put together jointly with the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Marine Conservation

Sub-Committee, that will enable discussions about how RFMOs can be best engaged for coral-reef associated fisheries in the region;

- Production of two films to raise awareness about spawning aggregations.

He reiterated that spawning aggregation sites should be a priority in term of management and protection. Mr Clua advised that he will not continue as a co-chair of the committee. **It was decided to extend the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, with the same terms of reference, and to keep SCRFA as the chair.**

- *ITMEMS 4 (Secretariat ICRI)*

In the absence of ICRAN and SeaWeb, France presented the work of the Committee. ITMEMS is a flagship activity of ICRI. ITMEMS aims to develop and strengthen the capacities of coastal and marine managers and their partners to conserve and promote the sustainable use of coral reefs and related ecosystems. The tasks of the Committee were reminded: to identify potential locations and dates for convening ITMEMS 4, to identify main activities which require funding and provide an indicative budget and to provide and propose an outline of the ITMEMS 4 programme with potential themes and content. All the tasks were achieved and ITMEMS was held in Guadeloupe (French West Indies), from the 5 to 8 December 2011. The 4-day meeting convened approximately 60 international participants. A greater emphasis was made on capacity building training than in previous ITMEMS and the agenda was adapted to encourage “learning by doing” and innovative approaches that can have a tangible impact on managers' skill sets. A series of priority issues sessions were held on the following:

- Resilience
- Marine Spatial Planning
- Communications training
- Sustainable Financing
- Research Priority Setting.

Funding and participant support was provided by the Government of France, Buccoo Reef Trust, United State of America (DoS), Japan, Joint Nature Conservation Committee (UK), Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance, and SeaWeb. A more detailed presentation on the contents of ITMEMS was provided later in the week. **The *Ad Hoc* Committee on ITMEMS 4 was dissolved.**

- *International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN)*

In the absence of ICRAN, France reported on the work of the Committee. The Committee was tasked (at the ICRI Meeting held in January 2010) to prepare option papers on ICRAN including information on: a) the role and responsibilities of ICRAN as an operational network, b)

appropriate governance and oversight, c) appropriate and sustainable funding model, to make option papers on the future role of and funding opportunities for ICRAN available for wider electronic discussion by the end of June 2011, and to submit final option(s) for consideration. However, only one request was received. Meanwhile, UNEP-WCMC decided to discontinue the hosting arrangements for technical staff of the ICRAN Coordinating Unit in 2011, and no new funding sources for ICRAN were identified. Given this context, the ICRI secretariat submitted a draft motion on the International Coral Reef Action Network to be discussed on Wednesday.

UNEP-WCMC mentioned that the end of the hosting arrangement was also the result of the fact that some ICRAN staff had left the organization.

- Call to Action

The ICRI Secretariat made a presentation on the work of the Committee. This Committee, chaired by France, was tasked to work on a renewed Call to Action which would integrate new global issues and threats to coral reefs and related ecosystems as well as advancements and continuing challenges in science and management. A first proposal was presented at the last ICRI General Meeting in Apia, Samoa. Main changes included the update and introduction of figures to support the arguments on the significance of the coral reefs and the recognition of climate change impacts. Very few comments were received by the secretariat following the presentation in Apia.

The USA thanked France for this ambitious work, but suggested that a ‘new’ / ‘refreshed’ Call to Action should not be adopted at this meeting, since no document was circulated in advance which would have allowed members to understand the details of the proposed modifications. The USA emphasised the need for the document to remain short, focused and apolitical. Japan and Australia echoed this position. Australia also mentioned that given the context of international activity on environmental issues, 2012 might not be the best time to release a ‘new’ Call to Action; it suggested using the next ICRI General Meeting to decide on the final text with more communication out of session.

**2. A presentation of all the committees created since January 2009 was made by the Secretariat. After the presentation, the following decisions were made:**

- Work on new Terms of Reference for the Committee on Economic Valuation of Coral Reef Ecosystems.
- Work on new Terms of Reference for the Committee on Enforcement & Investigation. The USA will work with CORAL and the ICRI Secretariat on these.

It was decided that the following committees should be dissolved:



- *Ad Hoc* committee on the East Asia Regional Workshop. However, the Initiative will continue to report under “Regional Initiatives”
- *Ad Hoc* Committee on Coral Disease
- *Ad Hoc* Committee on Pacific Day
- *Ad Hoc* on ITMEMS 4.

*Supporting Document: report from the ICRI Secretariat*

### **Indian Ocean Day**

In an effort to improve regional cooperation and enhance the regional focus of ICRI’s work, a full day of the 26<sup>th</sup> ICRI General Meeting was devoted to issues in the Indian Ocean Region. Three themes were presented on:

- Regional Coordination
- Monitoring of Coral Reef in the region
- Management and conservation of coral reefs in the Indian Ocean in the light of climate change.

The day ended with a special presentation from the UNESCO World Heritage Marine Programme, on a regional comparative assessment of new potential sites in the Indian Ocean. At the end of the day, a draft recommendation was proposed for the region. The ICRI Secretariat would like to thank Jerker Tamelander and David Obura for compiling the report (available in annex 5).

### **ICRI Networks**

- *International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN)*

The ICRI Secretariat presented the draft motion on the International Coral Reef Action Network. The motion was adopted with the following change: the reference to 'closure' was replaced by the word 'suspension'. The adopted resolution is available in annex 3.

- *Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)*

A presentation on the new direction for the GCRMN was made by Anthony Hooten and Jeremy Jackson. The first part of the presentation explained why changes were needed within the current organization of the GCRMN. Among mechanisms to improve, the following were mentioned:

- transparency of the quality of monitoring methods and data over time and space
- accessibility of basic monitoring data in a user-friendly format
- scientifically credible baselines and trajectories of change
- comparison of GCRMN data against the scientific, peer-reviewed literature
- group discussions and participation among data producers on emergent patterns and trends prior to publication or reports.

The 2 broad objectives for a “renewed” GCRMN were then revealed:

1. A Scientific reevaluation,
2. Application of results to future monitoring, management, and policy.

The tasks of the new GCRMN coordination unit will include:

- To renew and further strengthen routine communication between the GCRMN coordination team, its Regional Networks, ICRI and its members;
- To provide Regional Networks and countries with technical assistance, as well as support for networking and seeking financial support for monitoring;
- To coordinate reporting;
- To advocate adjustments in methods using comparable measures that can be realistically shared and implemented among GCRMN partners;
- To use regional meetings as a cornerstone for active communication, engagement, sharing insights, learning & network exchange;
- To assist IUCN with fundraising for GCRMN and monitoring activities (e.g. small grants).

The new GCRMN team will be composed of:

- Jeremy B.C. Jackson, GCRMN Science Director
- Anthony J. (‘Andy’) Hooten, Global Coordinator
- Vivian Lam, Research & Deputy GCRMN Coordinator

The following calendar was put forward:

January, 2012	Begin regional communications with Network members
May, 2012	Caribbean & Eastern Pacific Regional Workshop - Data contributors & Regional ICRI representatives
July, 2012	Present scientific results at ICRS Report to ICRI on Caribbean outcomes & adapt coordination model Begin assembling key Coral Triangle contacts and information
December, 2012	Tropical Americas Regional Report and scientific publications



2013	CTI Regional Workshop
2014	WIO Region & Red Sea Region
2015	Global Synthesis Report

Japan introduced the feedback from the GCRMN Node Coordinators of the Southeast Asia and North & East Asia nodes to the discussion paper for the GCRMN (“A New Direction for the GCRMN”). The two nodes have gathered comments from their National Coordinators and compiled the regional position paper. It summarized their activity backgrounds and achievements for the past decade and raised a concern on the new regional groupings which did not reflect nor consider their history and achievements. The regional position paper was submitted to the ICRI Secretariat, and the GCRMN Global Coordinator responded that he would consider the comments and communicate with the two Node Coordinators on this matter.

Australia emphasised the need for an update capability in case of a major event such as the mass bleaching that occurred in 2002; the need to acknowledge the fact that the quality of data will vary, and the importance of GCRMN's ability to tease out place-based information were also underlined. The proposed framework for GCRMN will open new horizons with committees working more closely, using existing data.

Supporting Document:

- *A New Direction for the GCRMN paper for discussion*
- *Response of GCRMN North, East and Southeast Asia Nodes to “A New Direction for the GCRMN”, for discussion*

**Presentation of the call to action**

A brief presentation of the proposed changes was made by France. It was distributed thereafter for discussion on the last day of the meeting.

**Member reports**

The ICRI Secretariat gave a very brief introduction on the member reports and mentioned that 13 reports were received from the following countries/organizations: Australia, Brazil, The Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL), Dominican Republic, Japan, Kenya, South Africa, Thailand, United Kingdom, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and the World Resources Institute (WRI). The Secretariat reminded participants that the reports are very useful for the secretariat and submissions after the meeting will be useful. It was highlighted that the UK, who has not been very active within the last years, submitted a report.

Three presentations were made:

- *Taking Steps Toward Ecosystem-based Management of Oceans & Coasts - New UNEP introductory guide on EBM and the UNEP Coral Reef Unit* by Jerker Tamelander (UNEP-CRU)
- *The impact of coral bleaching 2010 in the Andaman Sea and the management to mitigate the impact* by Niphon Phongsuwan (Thailand)
- *Global Coral Reef Data: What have we got - and what do we need?* By Claire Fitzgerald (UNEP-WCMC).

### **Enhancing the current Global Coral Reef data**

UNEP-WCMC circulated a concept note inviting ICRI members and the scientific community to participate in a review of the current global coral reef data, with the goal of adding value and building upon the current dataset as a first step to setting up a consistent foundation for monitoring and assessment. A group of coral reef experts present convened to discuss the current global coral reef data attributes and priorities and approaches to making a standardised set of attributes available with the spatial data layer. The needs and challenges of this goal were discussed, and additional key individuals were identified who were not present at the meeting who could provide valuable input to the process. The contributions from the participants in this discussion and deliberation of next steps in this work are much appreciated. UNEP-WCMC will provide updates on the progress of this work to interested parties.

### **Oral presentations were also made by the following members:**

**France:** France presented its excuses for not having sent yet its member report and mentioned that the report will be sent to the secretariat in the beginning of 2012. A brief presentation of the content was made with some examples:

1. At the national level:
  - The evaluation of the execution during the period 2005-2010 of the national plan of action of IFRECOR and the adoption of the program 2011-2015.
  - The organisation of the first IFRECOR Palm
  - A national conference on coral reefs organised in Paris with 3 ministers and over 100 participants.
  - The inclusion of coral reefs' sustainable use in the French national biodiversity strategy 2011-2020 and the Overseas France green Passport
2. At the international level:
  - The organisation of ITMEMS in Guadeloupe
  - The organisation of the 26<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ICRI La Réunion
  - RAMSAR sites inscription

- Creation of the marine national park in Mayotte, including all the lagoon and coral reefs
- Work on ocean acidification with the le centre scientifique de Monaco

**Monaco:** The Principality of Monaco reported on its work related to coral reefs, either directly or indirectly relevant to ICRI. First, the Monaco Scientific Center developed research programs to improve the knowledge of ecological and physiological processes associated with corals. It is part of a scientific network (GDRI) on "Biodiversity of Coral Reefs", established in 2009 by France. Several researchers of the Science Center also participated in several missions of TARA for the comparative study of the physiology and ecology of coral in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, or for the reconstruction of past events of ocean acidification. In November 2010, Monaco organized a workshop entitled "Economics of Ocean Acidification", with financial support of ICRI. A booklet summarizing the findings and recommendations for policy makers has been published (available upon request to [fcdescroix@centrescientifique.mc](mailto:fcdescroix@centrescientifique.mc)). It was also distributed through UN agencies, partners in this initiative: Laboratories of the Environment Agency International Atomic Energy Agency and the International Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO. In addition, the Principality of Monaco has established a cooperation with Costa Rica to support it in its role as Secretary of the Marine Biological Corridor Tropical Eastern Pacific, which is an initiative bringing Costa Rica, Colombia, Panama and Ecuador together to manage an area of 900 000 km<sup>2</sup>, including oceanic islands (Cocos, Galapagos, Malpello) and nearby islands (Coiba and Gorgona). Recently, this cooperation has also supported the extension of the protected area of Cocos Island to include an area of Seamounts covering almost 1 million hectares. Finally, the Principality of Monaco facilitated the meeting of a committee of experts for the preparation of Rio +20 in November 2011. A document entitled "Message from Monaco" was prepared to contribute to three ocean-related themes: safety and food security, energy and tourism.

*[Supporting Documents: Member reports, presentations, "Message from Monaco"](#)*

### **Regional Initiatives**

The ICRI East Asia Regional strategy on MPA Networks and the 7th East Asia Regional Workshop, held in Cambodia in October 2011, were presented by Japan.

The results of the Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific (CRISP) project and the new project entitled "Restoration of Ecosystem Services against Climate Change Unfavorable Effects (RESCCUE)" were presented by Eric Clua.

*[Supporting Documents:](#)*

- *[Report of the 7th ICRI East Asia Regional Workshop and presentation](#)*



## **Incoming ICRI Secretariat**

Australia introduced the incoming Secretariat. Unfortunately, Belize representatives were unexpectedly unable to attend the General Meeting due to serious travel issues. The incoming Secretariat will be co-chaired by the Australian Government (through the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority) and the Belize Government (Belize Fisheries Department / Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries). A brief outline of the Secretariat plan of action was provided as follows:

- To continue the implementation of the ICRI “Renewed Call to Action” and “Framework for Action”.
- To organise and run 2 ICRI General Meetings, the first (GM 27) in Australia (16-19 July 2012) and the second (GM 28) in Belize. The themes for the General Meetings will focus on:
  1. Assessing the effectiveness of Marine Protected Area management
  2. Community engagement and stewardship including community-based management initiatives.
- To provide funding support for a group of small projects to be conducted during the hosting period.
- To encourage government and non-government players around the world with key involvement in coral reefs and related ecosystems to join the ICRI partnership.
- To continue and enhance the leadership role of the ICRIForum website as a principal communication tool for ICRI in association with exploring new social media technologies for promoting the ICRI message.
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Following the presentation, the 'traditional' ICRI Handover ceremony was held.

## **Brainstorming**

At the last General Meeting, it was decided that the Secretariat will write a discussion paper on ICRI and its governance. To develop this discussion paper, the Secretariat sent a questionnaire to all the previous host countries of ICRI and founding countries. In addition, several “historical” members were contacted. Nine replies were received.

The ICRI secretariat mentioned that the report will be available shortly. It also reminded that in 2009, organization and management procedures for the Initiative were adopted.

### ➤ ICRI Memberships

The criteria (article 1) that are defining the process of membership for ICRI are inclusive and adequate. It would perhaps be useful to be more specific with respect to the private sector. It was also noted that a great deal of time and energy was spent only recently (last 3 years) to agree on these criteria.

The role/duties of ICRI Members do not need to be defined. It should be up to members to decide what they contribute. ICRI is an informal, voluntary group.

It is not recommended to increase the number of ICRI members. Quality is more important than quantity and increasing the membership simply to have more members is not needed. ICRI would benefit from a more active membership to strengthen its visibility and impact. It would be good to target a few additional governments, who play a real role in coral reef conservation, and the private sector.

Rank	Country and geographical locations	Reef Area	Percentage of world total	Attendance at the last 12 GM
1	Indonesia	51,020	17.95%	7
2	Australia	48,960	17.22%	12
3	Philippines	25,060	8.81%	5
4	France	14,280	5.02%	11
5	Papua New Guinea	13,840	4.87%	1
6	Fiji	10,020	3.52%	2
7	Maldives	8,920	3.14%	4
8	Saudi Arabia	6,660	2.34%	0
9	Marshall Islands	6,110	2.15%	0
10	India	5,790	2.04%	4
11	Solomon Island	5,750	2.02%	2

**The suggestion was to try to engage countries with a lot of coral reefs.**

➤ Host Secretariat

Articles 4 and 5 define the rules and tasks for the host Secretariat. The tasks listed in article 5 are considered comprehensive and do not need to be changed. However, items XVIII, XIX and XX, can have significant costs associated with them. These items could have a "subject to the budgetary circumstances of the host Secretariat at the time" caveat. It was also suggested for some of the tasks to be simplified (for example, merge article 5 and 6 that are related to ICRI GM).

**The suggestion is that a few minor article updates could be appropriate regarding the responsibilities of the Host Secretariat.**

➤ General Meetings

Annual meetings are sufficient, and 3 to 4 days also seems sufficient and most efficient. If at all possible, one of the two GMs should be scheduled alongside an international meeting that ICRI members are likely to attend. The addition of a regional day was very well received. A theme-based session should also be considered by the Secretariat.

**Suggestions:**

- **Keep the frequency of the General Meeting**
- **Continue the Regional Day or thematic day**

➤ Networks

At the time of the questionnaire, it was not clear how these networks will be evolving, thus few comments were received. The issue of CORDIO was raised. CORDIO was an ICRI Network, however, in May 2008; CORDIO contacted the Secretariat to advise that it was more appropriate to be recognized as a member under the following category: “any specialised public agency or program dealing with coral reefs”.

➤ Engagement with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

This task is a very important role for ICRI, and should continue. If ICRI does not have a visible role at these high stake conventions for coral reefs and the marine environment (even if it is in well organized side events in which ICRI can get good publicity), its relevance will diminish. Organization of side events should continue but a clear outcome message should be defined beforehand. Side events need to be well organized, attractive and well publicized. These events are also useful, in particular if this can be used for launching products. It is suggested to:

- **Continue to work with the major environmental conventions/agreement**
- **Continue to invite them at ICRI General Meetings**
- **Continue to submit inputs**
- **Continue to organize side events.**

➤ Communication tools

The following tools were suggested to improve the communication of ICRI:

- “social” tools: facebook, youtube posts
- donated pictures from coral reef scientist worldwide and from which specific projects are funded.
- Brochures, posters, etc. could be developed in an *ad hoc* basis whenever needed
- Newsletters and more visibility e.g. through engagement with international processes
- Occasional op-ed pieces on coral reef issues in key newspapers that are likely to resonate with the public
- Side events.

The key messages for ICRI should change according to the time and situation and should be kept flexible. However some recurrent suggestions were about the importance of healthy coral reef ecosystems for food security, poverty alleviation and local livelihoods.

**It is recommended to the upcoming ICRI secretariat, in collaboration with ICRI members, explore the development of the tools mentioned further.**

➤ Funding

The funding for ICRI should remain as it is now. The idea of creating of fund to be able to receive money and to contribute to the administration of the secretariat and the networks was not very well received. There are already many competing funds and the money lost in duplicate administration is considerable. One possibility ICRI could explore is partnership with the private sector, as exists for Ramsar and Danone-Evian.

➤ Permanent hosting structure

A permanent hosting institution may have advantages: administrative support, institutional memory, outreach, communication and liaison, continuity between secretariats, regular tracking of progress in relation to decisions, facilitation of ad hoc groups between meetings etc. The main downside is the additional cost associated with this (it may not be worth the investment).

**The incoming Secretariat could look at other partnerships to see how they are handling this (for example, the UN-Ocean model whose secretariat is permanently housed by UNESCO/IOC, but whose chairmanship rotates.)**

**Discussion on upcoming ICRI activities, including upcoming relevant international meetings**

Several upcoming events related to coral reefs were presented:

- *International Day for Biodiversity* (22 May 2012)  
Marine Biodiversity is the theme for this year's International Day for Biodiversity (IDB). Designation of IDB 2012 on the theme of marine ecosystems provides Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and everyone interested in marine life, the opportunity to raise awareness of the issue and increase practical action. ICRI Members are encouraged to promote coral reefs during this day.
- *The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)*. The Conference will take place in Brazil on 20-22 June.
- *The 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (Ramsar COP11)*, to be held in Bucharest, Romania, from 6 - 13 July 2012, with the 44th meeting of Standing Committee planned for 4 July 2012, and an additional day of regional meetings on 5 - 6 July, as requested by many Contracting Parties.
- *International Coral Reef Symposium*, 9-13 July 2012, Cairns, Queensland, Australia. It was reminded to the participants that several ICRI members are organizing a session on "Does Monitoring Lead to Improved Coral Reef Management?"
- *World Conservation Congress*, 6-15 September 2012, Jeju, Republic of Korea. It was reminded to the participants that several ICRI members are trying to organize a side event on coral reefs.
- *Yeosu Ocean* / Monaco Blue Initiative

### **ICRI Secretariat Report**

France reported on the implementation of its plan of action during the last 2 years. This was just an overview of the work accomplished, and a final report will be available for the next ICRI General Meeting. The plan of action had 7 actions:

- *Action 1: renew of the "Call to Action"*

Work has been done in 'refreshing' the Call to Action but more work is needed, since this document is the foundation of ICRI. The next ICRI secretariat will continue to work on this topic.

- *Action 2: to strengthen the participation of international and U.N. organizations, countries and the private sector at ICRI.*

The Secretariat was successful in re-engaging 'historical' members such as the United Kingdom, Seychelles, and the Philippines. An up-to-date list of ICRI members is available (and will be available in the final report). Member pages on the ICRIForum have also been updated. Information about ICRI and invitation the General Meetings have been made to the European Union, and to the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Several side events have been organized in order to promote ICRI and its work: ICRI Side Event at Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Nagoya, Japan, October 2010), ICRI side event on Coral Reefs and Climate Change - Demonstrating the Link between Reef Resilience and Human Well-being at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Copenhagen, December 2009). The ICRI Secretariat also participated in several regional and international events.

➤ Action 3: to promote regional cooperation

In an effort to improve regional cooperation and enhance the regional focus of ICRI's work, a full day of the ICRI General Meetings was devoted to regional issues:

- 24<sup>th</sup> General Meeting (January 2010, Monaco): Caribbean region
- 25<sup>th</sup> General Meeting (November 2010, Samoa): Pacific region
- 26<sup>th</sup> General Meeting (December 2011, La Réunion): Indian Ocean region

Following these days, recommendations on the region were approved and the Secretariat tasked with few actions to implement.

Following the Caribbean Day, a recommendation for the Caribbean region was adopted, and some work on the lionfish started. The ICRI Secretariat co-sponsored a regional workshop on the lionfish. Following the Pacific Day, the recommendation was widely distributed within the region, and the Secretariat funded the production of a guide on « Good coastal management practices in the Pacific ». The report presents a series of 17 case studies of coastal management initiatives from a wide range of countries and territories throughout the Pacific region. Case studies illustrate examples of local, provincial, national and regional scales of actions. The initiatives and lessons described in the case studies are:

- locally and culturally appropriate,
- suitable to national institutional structure and capacity,
- supported by evidence or considered to have a high likelihood of success,
- cost effective and potentially sustainable or promoting sustainability,
- potentially applicable elsewhere.

The case studies are from: Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Cook Islands, Yap State, Federated States of Micronesia, Solomon Islands Kiribati, Samoa, Marshall Islands, Palau, and French Polynesia. This guide was presented at the 22nd SPREP meeting (September 2011).

The Secretariat has worked very closely with the government of Japan in supporting the ICRI East Asia Regional Workshops (2009, 2010, 2011).

The UNEP Regional Seas were also involved in the regional actions of the Secretariat.

➤ Action 4: Promote the international tools on coral reef management.

For the Secretariat, international tools on coral reef management are the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme, the World Heritage Convention and the Convention on Wetlands. Representatives of the international tools have been invited to address the General Meetings and promote such tools.

- 24<sup>th</sup> General Meeting (January 2010, Monaco): Presentation of Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and UNESCO World Heritage sites
- 25<sup>th</sup> General Meeting (November 2010, Samoa): Session on UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme and on Convention on Wetlands for the Pacific region.
- 26<sup>th</sup> General Meeting (December 2011, La Réunion): Presentation of the UNESCO's World Heritage Marine Programme in the Indian Ocean

Information on these subjects was also posted regularly on the ICRI website.

➤ Action 5: To dedicate actions on coral reef related ecosystems

Unfortunately, the ICRI secretariat did not work on this action.

➤ Action 6: Support the ICRI Networks

International Coral Reef Action Network: The ICRI Secretariat worked closely with the ICRAN Coordination Unit, and an *Ad Hoc* Committee was created. At the meeting in La Réunion, it was decided to suspend ICRAN.

Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network: The Secretariat assisted IUCN in coordinate the GCRMN transition phase. The proposed direction for the new GCRMN was well received by the ICRI Members.

In an effort of reinforcing the regional coordination of the GCRMN, the Secretariat funded the South Pacific node. One of the results was the publication of the “*Status of the coral reefs of the Pacific and outlook: 2011*”.

➤ Action 7: Facilitate the organization of ITMEMS 4

ITMEMS 4 was held in Guadeloupe (December 2011) and attended by about 60 participants.



➤ Other actions:

- Organization of 3 General Meetings (January 2010, November 2010, December 2011).
- Work on the « ICRI Governance »
- Organization of a national conference on the future of coral reefs (February 2011)

List of motions approved during the Secretariat:

- Recommendation for the Caribbean region (ICRI GM 24)
- Resolution on the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRI GM 24)
- Resolution on the “Call to Action” (ICRI GM 24)
- Recommendation on international trade in coral reef species and related products (ICRI GM 24)
- Resolution on coral reef-associated fisheries (ICRI GM 24)
- Recommendation for the Pacific region (ICRI GM 25)
- Resolution on the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) (ICRI GM 26)
- Resolution on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) (ICRI GM 26)
- Recommendation for the Indian Ocean region (ICRI GM 26)

**List of annexes:**

- Annex 1: List of participants
- Annex 2: New terms of reference for the *Ad Hoc* committee on the Caribbean Regional Response to Lionfish Invasion
- Annex 3: Resolution on the International Coral Reef Action Network
- Annex 4: Resolution on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
- Annex 5: Indian Ocean Day report
- Annex 6: List of acronyms



## Annex 1 : list of participants

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<b>Participants from the region (non ICRI members)</b>			
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## **Annex 2: Amended Terms of Reference ICRI *Ad-Hoc* Committee on Caribbean Regional Response to Lionfish Invasion**

The ICRI General Meeting agrees to extend the work of the ICRI Ad Hoc Committee to facilitate a coordinated response to the Lionfish invasion in the Caribbean region.

The Ad Hoc Committee will be co-chaired by Mexico, United States of America, the Regional Activity Centre for UNEP's SPAW Protocol (SPAW-RAC) and France. Participation is encouraged by other countries, territories and organizations within the region.

The Ad Hoc Committee will implement the following activities:

1. Guided by Cancun outcomes and questions identified below, draft a regional lionfish response strategy to identify and guide collaborative actions. Conduct a workshop to substantively review the draft regional strategy and develop a vision on regional elements of the response strategy. Governments in the region will be asked to nominate representatives to the workshop.
2. Continue to work with ICRI Secretariat to facilitate the dissemination and implementation of the Strategies and Practices for the invasive lionfish control in the Wider Caribbean.
3. Continue to raise awareness among the fishery and marine protected area managers on the lionfish threat and the need to develop effective local response plans.
4. Encourage governments and organizations working on this issue to participate actively by sharing best management practices identified in the Strategies and Practices for the invasive lionfish control, including through local workshops, as feasible, and by encouraging activities to implement the regional strategy
5. Launch a web portal to serve as a site for ongoing regional communication, current and credible scientific information, and access to best management practices and manager-training tools.



### **Annex 3: Resolution on the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN)**

*Recalling* the need for ICRAN to transition to a sustainable model in order to continue to serve as an ICRI Operational Network;

*Recognising* the on-going challenges to institutionalise a new model for ICRAN since the completion of core funding in 2010;

*Acknowledging* the decision of UNEP-WCMC to discontinue the hosting arrangement for technical staff of the ICRAN Coordinating Unit in 2011;

*Acknowledging* that there are no known funding sources for ICRAN beyond December 2011, no active projects, nor any permanent staff members.

#### **The General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative:**

*Notes with gratitude* the significant contributions of ICRAN in advancing the objectives under the ICRI Call to Action and Framework for Action since its establishment in 2001;

*Notes with gratitude* the role of ICRI members in supporting and facilitating the work of ICRAN, including the hosting institution, UNEP-WCMC;

*Notes with gratitude* the significant financial contributions of key ICRAN supporters, especially the United Nations Foundation, who facilitated an impressive programme of work on global coral reef conservation and management;

*Notes* that ICRAN products will remain accessible to ICRI members via the ICRI Forum.

**ICRI members are encouraged to support** the suspension of ICRAN as an Operational Network.

## **Annex 4: Resolution on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)**

### **Background:**

In 1992, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the world community adopted Agenda 21. Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 identifies the importance of marine and coastal issues in the achievement of sustainable economic development and environmental cooperation. It identifies coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass beds as marine ecosystems of high biodiversity and production and it recommends that they be accorded high priority for identification and protection. The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) is a partnership consisting of like-minded governments and organizations seeking to implement Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, and other international conventions and agreements, for the benefit of coral reefs and related ecosystems. Founded by eight governments Australia, France, Japan, Jamaica, the Philippines, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, the establishment of ICRI was announced at the First Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in December 1994, and at the high level segment of the U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).

### **The General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative:**

*Underlines* that millions of the world's inhabitants depend on coral reefs and related ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods and development as they are a primary source of food and income, as well as a of social and cultural importance;

*Express* their deep concerns on the rapidly deteriorating health of the coral reefs and recognizes the need to maintain healthy coral reefs and related ecosystems;

*Commends* the work achieved over the last 2 decades by the ICRI Secretariats and members;

*Notes* the submissions from ICRI members, as well as the European Union and its member states, which highlighted coral reefs, to the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) for the outcome document for the Conference;

*Notes* the UN Secretary-General's report on the Protection of coral reefs and related ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods and development;

**ICRI members are encouraged to:**



Initiative Internationale pour les Récifs Coralliens  
International Coral Reef Initiative

[www.icriforum.org](http://www.icriforum.org)

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*Support* the inclusion of references to the conservation and sustainable management of all coral reefs, and their importance to sustainable development in the final outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), as well as any statement of commitments which may also include the blue economy and integrated oceans management.

## **Annex 5: Indian Ocean Day Report and recommendation for the Indian Ocean region**

In an effort to improve regional cooperation and enhance the regional focus of ICRI's work, a full day of the 26<sup>th</sup> ICRI General Meeting (see annex 1 for the agenda) was devoted to issues in the Indian Ocean Region, focusing on three themes:

- Regional Coordination
- Monitoring of Coral Reefs in the region
- Management and conservation of coral reefs in the Indian Ocean in the light of climate change

The day ended with a special session by UNESCO World Heritage Marine Programme, on a regional comparative assessment of new potential sites in the Indian Ocean. At the end of the day, a draft recommendation was proposed for the region (annex 2).

The ICRI Secretariat would like to thank Jerker Tamelander and David Obura for compiling the report.

### **1. Regional coordination**

Recent, ongoing and future projects were presented by major stakeholders from the region:

- Indian Ocean Commission (IOC/COI) marine-related work programme activities
- Marine prioritisation process leading to the regional strategy for the conservation of marine ecosystems and fisheries, WIOMER
- The Western Indian Ocean Coastal Challenge (WIO-CC)
- The Regional Coral Reef Task Force (CRTF) of the Nairobi Convention and the Regional Coral Reef Action Plan

#### **Summary of the session:**

Several (sub-)regional entities support, facilitate and enable coral reef management and monitoring. These operate at different levels and to some extent in parallel or with overlaps in terms of geography and activities. There is a great strength in this. However, continued efforts are needed to facilitate communication among these to utilize synergies, promote collaboration and coordination. **The need for a strengthened clearing-house on coral related programmes, projects and activities in the region was emphasized.**

The important mandate of CRTF was recognized, and the request made that the Action Plan developed is disseminated broadly in the region to generate support among countries and relevant partners prior to submission to the COP 13 of the Nairobi Convention in 2012. The

CRTF has operated for close to 10 years under the overall framework of the Nairobi convention and as such provides a key mechanism for supporting coral reef related action in the Western Indian Ocean Region. The commitment to implementation of the action plan and ‘rejuvenation’ of CRTF as mentioned in the presentation by WCS on behalf of the CRTF Chair was welcomed.

## **2. Monitoring**

Country presentations on the monitoring of coral reefs provided information on activities, partnerships, participation in regional/international efforts, and recent key findings as well as notable successes and challenges. In order to facilitate the presentation of template was provided by the ICRI Secretariat. Countries presenting included:

- Comoros, Ahamed Soifa
- France, Jean-Pascal Quod
- Kenya, Judith Nyunja
- Madagascar, Jean Maharavo
- Rodrigues, Jovani Raffin
- Maldives, Abdulla Naseer
- Seychelles, Rodney Quatre
- South Africa, Michael Schleyer
- Tanzania, Rose Sallema

There were also presentations on:

- IOC/COI regional monitoring network, Said Ahmada
- CoReMo database, Jean Pascal Quod
- Regional Coral Reef Task Force and the Regional Coral Reef Action Plan by Jerker Tamelander (UNEP) on behalf of the task force chair Nyawira Muthiga (WCS)

### **Summary of the session:**

There is notable progress in regular monitoring in terms of number of sites, variables, and participation of various partners. Most countries in the WIO region now have datasets that span more than 10 years, which cover benthos, fish community, and in some instances temperature and other variables. There are also a large number of sites, monitored with varying intensity/rigor. However, sites are not evenly distributed and monitoring in some extensive reef areas needs strengthening. Creative partnerships are useful to this end, as illustrated e.g. by work in the Maldives and the Seychelles, where private sector partnerships are key to increasing the coverage of reef monitoring programmes. Opportunities for further developing reef monitoring by integrating variables that measure state as well as processes needs to be explored. This could

include increased attention to water quality, climate change, erosion, sediment budgets and the importance of healthy reefs for healthy shorelines.

Reef recovery from impacts of the 1998 mass mortality is notable in many parts of the region. MPAs in the region are seen to have positive impacts on coral cover and recovery, fish populations and other resource species. However, the recent Reefs @ Risk assessment also highlighted that, while 19% of the region's (wider IO) reefs are within MPAs, management is deemed effective or partially effective in only 11% of the MPAs. Fishery impacts on reefs and fish populations are obvious in many areas, including through the removal of predators. Creating further linkages between ecological monitoring and other activities such as collaborative management, management effectiveness assessments, socioeconomic monitoring, and threat assessment and for other planning applications is needed.

Another notable challenge faced by the region is piracy, which is hampering monitoring and research efforts in several countries.

All country presentations highlighted the challenge in funding ongoing monitoring activities, and several countries are forced to adjust monitoring (coverage, intensity) to funding availability. Increased financial support towards monitoring is needed, as is more efficient allocation of available funding (e.g. through existing or planned projects, countries may also be in a position to re-prioritize financing). It was recommended that the many projects in the region, present and future, also support and contribute to the monitoring networks as appropriate, including through capacity building, networking, surveys, analysis etc., and involve or consult the relevant institutions and individuals.

Monitoring data management and analysis in the region could benefit from more widespread use of the CoReMo database. Continued development and improvement of CoReMo was encouraged, including for compatibility with different methods and especially emphasizing dedicated support towards importing existing/historic data.

Continued commitment to monitoring capacity building is needed. This will serve both as a means to enhancing the availability and use of monitoring data and to maintain and further extend the network. A broader and strengthened network will also be better able to operate with fluctuating financial support. The strength of existing networks, a result of institutional linkages and, importantly, personal linkages, provide a good base to work from. Emphasis needs to be placed on generating dedicated support for capacity building.

### **3. Management and conservation of coral reefs in the Indian Ocean in the light of climate change**

Presentations:

- The process of IFRECOR The network of observatories of climate change for overseas communities. *Michel Porcher, IFRECOR*
- Climate Change and Coral Reefs Marine Working Group (CCCR) – summary of datasets from the Indian Ocean. *David Obura, CORDIO*
- Coral Reefs and Climate Change in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO). Final workshop on 8 and 9 December 2011 in Maputo, Mozambique. *Ambroise Brenier, WCS*
- Management and conservation of coral reefs from climate change: experience of Madagascar. *Ambroise Brenier, WCS*

### *Assessing climate change vulnerability*

The presentations discussed aspects of measuring climate change vulnerability, a combined expression of exposure (the environmental threat) and sensitivity (of the system) Adaptive capacity is a reciprocal component of vulnerability. The strong need to develop approaches for assessing climate vulnerability of systems and communities was noted, and further use/develop indicators of climate change impacts, resistance or resilience.

IFRECOR and CORDIO/CCCR presented systems of indicators used in measuring these factors, while CORDIO/CCCR and WCS presented different ways to present the information for taking management responses, which include planning/zoning processes based on exposure, actions to increase resilience or reduce dependence based on sensitivity, and actions to increase adaptive capacity based on vulnerability. The need to adapt/develop tools to facilitate the dialogue between scientists and managers, and of fully using Marine Spatial Planning in its deeper sense with respect to assessing tradeoffs between competing attributes or values.

Caution was recommended in making broad-scale interpretations from necessarily limited information from field sites. While some analyses show the WIO core region of high diversity having greater resilience than other parts of the WIO, other analyses note the variability in attributes of resilience as well as of historical bleaching at many scales, cautioning against broad generalizations. Fine-scale assessments in Nosy Hara and Nosy Mitsio in Madagascar were noted as good examples of applying the resilience approach to assist in local level management planning. The inclusion of sites with variable responses was, however, noted as a strength and necessary component of monitoring and resilience assessments, to understand the full scope of potential responses to climate change. Highly patchy bleaching dynamics were noted, and matching this with discussion from the monitoring/observatory session, the observation to increase sampling to better capture variability was made.

Also overlapping with the monitoring session, the need for data management and archiving, at local, national and regional networking levels was noted, as well as the value of key sites as

climate change observatories where more detailed scientific assessments can be made to be interpreted more broadly across a range of lower-intensity monitoring sites.

### *Climate Change and Coral Reef programs in the Western Indian Ocean*

The session noted the existence of multiple programmes for addressing climate change at regional levels, including the WIOMSA project developing a Climate Change Strategy for the WIO, and the Indian Ocean Commission's projects assisting member countries to develop their individual and joint strategies. Discussions on aligning these have been held at workshops in 2011, and will be incorporated in final plan preparations, for the COI project in February 2012. At the same time, the lack of national strategies for dealing with climate change, or adaptation to climate change, relevant to coral reefs, was noted. Australia and France provided examples of how institutional and public representation in their planning processes was undertaken to develop such national climate change and coral reef strategies. Their involvement and technical assistance in furthering this process thorough information exchange and disseminating lessons learned was noted, particularly with regard to the succession of ICRI's secretariat from France/Samoa to Australia/Belize in 2012.

### *Science-management-policy linkages, including in relation to MPAs and adaptation*

The need for enhanced science policy dialogue was also emphasized, recognizing that many findings from monitoring and science presently is not brought to the attention of decision makers or applied in decision making frameworks in a consistent way, which may weaken management and climate change action plans.

The need to develop adaptation plans and actions for coral reefs and reef users was noted in this regard, at the scales of national adaptation plans, but also local adaptation. Community-based adaptation and the needs and priorities of users at local levels were noted as key areas where work must be done. Flexibility within national/high level adaptation plans to facilitate responsiveness to local situations was noted. At the national level, the use of large datasets for generating political consensus was also mentioned. Variability in the degree to which different countries have incorporated coral reefs into national adaptation plans was mentioned. Guidelines for incorporating coral reef actions into national climate change strategies were identified as a priority for the CRTF in its Maputo workshop.

The need for training and capacity building in management and policy was noted, with mention of the WIOMSA MPA managers training programme, the MPA manager's toolkit and training programme for the Western Indian Ocean, and the Reef Manager's Guide to Bleaching. It was noted that NOAA is working to develop a similar manual for climate change and coral reefs, which could be shared through ICRI, and there are multiple other more general tools, such as on



Ecosystem Based Management, or on climate change actions and management in other ecosystems.

**4. Session on UNESCO World Heritage Marine Programme, on a regional comparative assessment of new potential sites in the Indian Ocean**

UNESCO's World Heritage Marine Programme works to establish conservation of all current and future marine areas of Outstanding Universal Value. UNESCO's World Heritage List currently includes 45 marine sites. As part of our mission, a new initiative is being taken to identify new potential areas in the Indian Ocean which could be of Outstanding Universal Value. The work started last October 2011 and will be finalized in June 2012. A regional expert meeting (Regional comparative assessment of potential marine areas with Outstanding Universal Value in the Indian Ocean) will be held in La Reunion from 14 to 16 February 2012. The aim of the meeting is to discuss the draft regional assessment which identifies a first set of potential marine World Heritage sites in the Indian Ocean.



## **Recommendation for the Indian Ocean region**

**Concerned that** more than 65 percent of reefs in the Indian Ocean are at risk from local threats, with one-third rated at high or very high risk (*source RRR*);

**Acknowledging** that countries in the region are highly dependent on these ecosystems for food, income, and coastal protection;

**Aware of the** additional pressure from the potential impacts of climate change and ocean acidification on the health of coral reefs and related ecosystems, including through sea-level rise, increase in the severity and incidence of coral bleaching, rising sea surface temperature and higher storm intensity;

**Recognizing** the important role of international and regional organizations, initiatives and networks;

**Noting** that coral reef task forces have been established for the Western Indian Ocean under the framework of the Nairobi Convention as well as for South Asia under the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme and South Asian Seas Action Plan;

**Taking note of** the next Conference of the parties to the Nairobi Convention, to be held in December 2012 (in Maputo, Mozambique), and the proposed Regional Coral Reef Action Plan;

**Noting** the discussion during the “Indian Ocean Day” held at the ICRI 26<sup>th</sup> General Meeting (La Réunion, December 2010);

### **The General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative:**

**Commends** the ongoing work that is implemented at the regional, national and local levels on coral reef management, including monitoring;

**Recognizes** the importance of long term coral reef monitoring;

**Recognizes** the need for enhanced WIO regional cooperation amongst all the relevant stakeholders and ongoing projects;

**Encourages** effort to improve information exchange on programs, projects and activities relevant to coral reefs in the Western Indian Ocean, including through the information center and clearing house mechanism hosted by the Nairobi Convention;



**Recognizes** the need to address the threats posed by climate change as they relate to coral reefs and associated ecosystems and dependent communities, through ongoing and new initiatives.

**ICRI members are encouraged to:**

**Consider** the elements from the report of the “Indian Ocean Day” including the recommendations contained therein;

**Encourage** efforts to further strengthen coordination between the Secretariat of the Nairobi convention, regional institutions and all other relevant regional stakeholders in the WIO;

**Encourage** efforts to enhance sub-regional and Indian Ocean-wide collaboration and coordination in assessment of and reporting on coral reef status, threats and trends, in particular through the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network;

**Promote** the capacity building, and awareness of local communities on options offered for sustainable coastal and marine management;

**Increase** information sharing on climate change and its impacts on coral reefs, related ecosystems and dependent communities in the Indian Ocean region;

**Take into consideration** coral reefs, related ecosystems and dependent communities within national action climate change strategies and/or action plans, where appropriate.

## Annex 6: List of acronyms

CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity  
CEP: Caribbean Environment Programme  
CoReMO: Coral Reef Monitoring  
COI: Commission de l'Océan Indien (Indian Ocean Commission)  
CORDIO: Coastal Oceans Research and Development in the Indian Ocean  
CRISP: Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific (CRISP)  
CRTF: Coral Reef Task Force  
CRU: Coral Reef Unit  
DoS: Department of State (USA)  
FGEF: French Global Environment Facility  
GBRMPA: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (Australia)  
GCRMN: Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network  
GDRI : Groupement de recherche international  
ICRAN: International Coral Reef Action Network  
ICRS: International Coral Reef Symposium  
IFRECOR: Initiative Française pour les Récifs Coralliens (French Coral Reef Initiative)  
IOC: Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission  
ITMEMS: International Tropical Marine Ecosystem Management Symposium  
IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature  
MAB: Man and the Biosphere  
MPA: Marine Protected Area  
PERSGA: Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden  
RESCCUE: Restoration of Ecosystem Services against Climate Change Unfavorable Effects  
RFMO: Regional Fisheries Management Organisation  
SSC: Species Survival Commission  
SCRFA: Society for the Conservation of Reef Fish Aggregations  
SIDS: Small Islands developing states  
SPAW: Specially protected areas and wildlife  
SPC: Secretariat of the Pacific Community (*CSP: Communauté du Pacifique*)  
SPREP: Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme  
TAAF: Terres Australes et Antarctiques françaises (French Southern and Antarctic Territories)  
UNCSD: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development  
UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme  
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme  
UNGA: General Assembly of the United Nations  
WCMC: World Conservation Monitoring Centre  
WIOMSA: Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association



**Initiative Internationale pour les Récifs Coralliens**  
**International Coral Reef Initiative**

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WRI: World Resources Institute

WSSD: World summit for sustainable Development