



Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense
Asociación Interamericana para la Defensa del Ambiente

September 12th, 2013

Re: ICRI membership request for AIDA

ICRI Secretariat c/o
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
2-68 Flinders St | PO Box 1379
Townsville QLD 4810 Australia

To whom it may concern,

The Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense works with environmental lawyers throughout the Americas to develop and implement international legal strategies and hemispheric legal initiatives designed to improve the ability of citizens to protect their health and environment. We want to become a member of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) so that we can participate in its meetings, discussions and efforts to protect coral reefs in the Americas.

Since 1996, AIDA has worked with partner organizations to enforce and strengthen laws that protect human health and the environment. Because many of the national legal systems in Latin America fail to effectively address such issues, the use of international laws, forums, and strategies has been an important component of our work. By adding the international element, we are able to help strengthen national strategies for the protection of human health and the environment.

AIDA has worked to protect the [Cabo Pulmo reef](#) in the Sea of Cortez. AIDA supported a petition to the Ramsar Secretariat that provided the legal justification and impetus for Felipe Calderón, Mexico's president at the time, to cancel the development of a resort at Cabo Cortes that would have harmed the Cabo Pulmo reef. We submitted a [citizen petition](#) to the Commission on Environmental Cooperation (CEC) of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation arguing that Mexico had failed to enforce its environmental law by authorizing Cabo Cortes' environmental permits.

AIDA also drafted the report [Coral reefs in Costa Rica: Economic Value, Threats and International Legal Commitments to Protect Them](#) to serve as a foundation for introducing

specific legislation on protecting coral reefs in Costa Rica and to support their conservation in Latin America and the Caribbean.

To extend AIDA's work on protecting corals throughout Latin America, AIDA is working with the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice on a comprehensive survey of best governance practices for reef protection. We will complete the guide in 2014 and use the information to develop nation-specific strategies to promote regulatory reforms and strengthen enforcement in reef-rich nations.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance. You can reach us by email at smoguel@aida-americas.org and/or hrodriguez@aida-americas.org. We sincerely hope that the ICRI Secretariat will choose AIDA as a new member. It is our belief that this would help AIDA press ahead with our efforts to protect coral reefs in the Americas.

Sincerely,



Anna Cederstav, PhD
Co-Director, AIDA



Sandra Moguel
Legal Advisor, AIDA



Haydée Rodriguez
Legal Advisor, AIDA