

MARS

September 10, 2019

RE: ICRI Secretariat Membership Application

Dear ICRI Secretariat,

Mars, Incorporated has been working in the field of coral reef conservation for the past 15 years and we would very much like to apply for membership of the International Coral Reef Initiative. While you might not associate rebuilding coral reefs off the coast of Sulawesi, Indonesia, with Mars' global business strategy, its part of our long-standing commitment to work closely with local communities to solve complex problems and help sustain the livelihoods of people in our supply chains.

We are aligned with the ICRI core objectives and understand the importance of furthering *integrated management* approaches, championing effective *capacity building*, ensuring that high quality *science and monitoring* is at the core of all activities and that past and present practices are continually *reviewed* and improved on where possible. These objectives describe our approach to our core coral reef project within Indonesia.

Mars as a business, and the many communities we source our raw materials from, depend greatly on the ocean and all that its reefs provide; be it food, income or coastal protection. During the 25 years we have been operating in Indonesia, we have worked closely with local communities who grow many of the raw materials we rely on - such as cocoa, coconut, carrageenan, and spices - which are used in our confectionary, petfood and food brands around the world. This has given us a unique insight into the challenges these communities face in sustaining their livelihoods. Fish form an important part of their diet and a source of family income. We have witnessed first-hand the decrease in numbers and size of fish caught, which is linked to coral reefs being damaged, primarily due to the use of destructive fishing practices. Being a private company we are able to think and act long-term, and embrace both failure and success through continued innovation. Therefore in 2006, we started our mission to find effective ways to rebuild reefs capable of supporting fish and livelihoods.

After a number of trials and learnings, since 2011 Mars has been continuously developing and refining a low-cost, reproducible method of coral reef ecosystem restoration. Called MARRS (Mars Assisted Reef Restoration System), the method is based on installing a continuous web of "reef stars" - hexagonal sand coated steel structures with coral fragments attached - covering barren coral rubble fields and gaps between the remaining live coral on the reef. Over 18,000 reef stars incorporating 270,000 coral fragments have now been installed across two different reefs, equal to three hectares. The resulting effort is what now is likely one of the world's largest restored coral reef

ecosystems and active restoration programs, including controlled scientific trial and is spread across two island communities in South Sulawesi, Indonesia, as well as a third location off the island of Bali.

While, our journey of learning and discovery led us to develop ecologically successful, cost-effective and scalable methods for community-led coral reef restoration, we note that coral restoration is still in its relative infancy and is not without its critics. But also that it has great potential if it is done sympathetically and in the right environmental setting and social-political context. During our decade long journey we worked alongside local communities and regional universities. We applied business-like thinking through the use of a supply-chain-approach leading to the development of a process capable of rapidly restoring coral reefs previously impacted by historical blast fishing. We have recently developed a free capacity building and training program that has led to the system being used across Indonesian marine parks and in other reef areas around the world.

At Mars, we understand that to protect the world's reefs , we need a collaborative wave of action that involves all the different parties who are about the health and coral systems across multiple locations including scientists, NGO's and governments and increasingly businesses. Unfortunately, SDG 14 is not seen as a priority for many business and industry leaders, so our wider goal is quite simple - we want to stimulate more businesses to step-up and provide both funding and expertise to further coral reef conservation. We aim to enable business leaders to do the right thing by proving that meaningful action is possible and will provide tangible benefits for industry. Mars is committed to continue its collaborative efforts to further coral reef restoration and we aim to ensure that our activities positively contribute and possibly enhance international efforts in protecting the future of coral reefs. Consequently we respectfully request that the secretariat and membership accept Mars's application to join ICRI. We have read through the membership rules as defined in article 1 of ICRI "*Organization and Management Procedures*" and we will fulfil all of the membership obligations. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.

Sincerely,



Frank Mars
Member Board of Directors – Mars, Incorporated
Vice President – Mars Sustainable Solutions