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GCRMN Pacific workshop for the finalization of the report “Status and Trends of Coral Reefs of the Pacific”

Paris, 26-27 October 2017

by Charlotte Moritz



Since its creation, the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) has set up the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) with the aim of assessing the state of health of coral reefs for managers, decision-makers and researchers. These periodical reports are one of the rare sources of information available on the state of coral reefs on a regional and global level. The ICRI Secretariat will address the global coordination of GCRMN, initiate the development and implementation of a roadmap, and lead a working group to undertake that work. The work will also capitalize on the recent progress made at the regional level.

GCRMN supports ICRI by working through a global network to strengthen the provision of best available scientific information on and communication of the status and trends of coral reef ecosystems, for their conservation and management.

The main substantive activity of GCRMN, providing a foundation for its other activities and outputs, is the preparation of regional periodic assessments drawing on monitoring, research, and establishment of regional GCRMN committees, where possible drawing on existing nodes and linked to existing Regional Seas mechanisms. The approach piloted in the Caribbean in 2012-2014 (Jackson et al. 2014) provides the blueprint for this.

- Each regional assessment report should provide a scientific foundation for the identification of the recommended minimum standards for monitoring indicators and methods, as well as actionable recommendations for coral reef policy and management. The regional reports and committees provide a basis for the development of a more synthetic global report (see below).
- The process of developing the regional report also supports the establishment of regional networks of sites and institutions that commit to applying minimum standards in ongoing monitoring.
- Where possible, development of regional reports may utilize opportunities provided by ongoing and planned regional initiatives and projects. This would also enable GCRMN to pursue two or more regional processes concurrently.

Since the publication of the "Status and Trends of Caribbean Coral Reefs: 1970-2012" in 2014 for the Caribbean, the GCRMN now prioritizes the publication of the regional reports, in order to compile them to publish a global report by 2020. During the term of the current Secretariat, a regional report for the Western Indian Ocean (drawn up by the Indian Ocean Commission under the GCRMN) has been achieved and will soon be published. The report for the Pacific (led by the CIOBE-CNRS laboratory via a convention with the French Environment Ministry) is about to be finished, with presentation of the main results to be done at the ICRI General Meeting in Nairobi (Kenya) in December 2017. The ICRI will encourage the publication of these reports and will ensure that they are widely distributed.

The goal of this workshop held in Paris from 26 - 27 October 2017 at the head office of EPHE was to discuss the finalization of the “Status and trends of the Coral Reefs of Pacific” report.

The workshop was supported by ICRI / GCRMN, the Government of Sweden and in partnership with the Foundation for Research on Biodiversity (FRB). The contribution of the Government of Sweden and the partnership with the FRB provided travel support for all the participants (*list of the participants, Annex 1*). The contribution allowed to cover meals and hotel rooms from 25th October to 27th October.

During the first half day, a roundtable was organized to discuss about the organization of the items and the main objectives of this meeting. Four sessions were established (annex 2).

The main topics discussed in the workshop were:

1. Results of the regional analysis
2. Results of the country reports
3. Recommendations for managers
4. Outreach and diffusion of the report

The main results discussed at the workshop were:

- Trends in coral and macroalgae cover: calculate average per island then average per year across islands.
- Trends in uninhabited versus inhabited islands: calculate average per island then average per year across islands and compare the results.
- Data management and monitoring: how and where the data can be stored; under which conditions they can be used by other people; what can the standard monitoring method be.
- Inclusion of bleaching and its consequences in the discussion.
- List of more accurate recommendations according to the results.

Follow up actions of the workshop:

- Executive summary to finalize for the ICRI GM in Nairobi.
- Present the main results at the ICRI GM in Nairobi.
- Finalise the entire report for early 2018.
- Launch of the report suggested in Samoa in March 2018 (to be determined).

Annex 1 : List of the participants

Participant	Organization	Country
Stuart SANDIN	SCRIPPS Institution of Oceanography, University of California in San Diego	USA
Helen SYKES	Marine Ecology Consulting	Fiji
Charlotte MORITZ	CRIODE	French Polynesia
Flora ARTZNER	SPREP	Samoa
Peter HOUK	University of Guam Marine Laboratory	Japan
David BENAVENTE	CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality	Northern Mariana Islands
Serge PLANES	CNRS - EPHE - CRIODE	France / French Polynesia
Jerker TAMELANDER	UNEP	Thailand
Aurélie THOMASSIN	French Ministry of Ecology	France
Jenifer SMITH	SCRIPPS Institution of Oceanography, University of California in San Diego	USA

Annex 2 : Agenda of the workshop

Round table and organization items

Presentation – Objectives of the meeting (Serge)

Other points to add in the agenda

Session 1: Results of global analysis - outcomes

- Presentation of main results (Charlotte and Serge)
- Discussion of main results
 - o What comes out of the main results
 - o What is missing (analysis, data)
 - o What were the main points in returns of revision
 - What points to highlight in the report
 - What is the main identity of these results
 - How much do we have to relate to Caribbean and Indian Ocean reports
 - How to refer to the last 2016-2017 bleaching events
 - Other points to add in the session

Session 2: Results of country reports – outcomes

- Presentation of a case (Charlotte and Serge)
- Discussion on the presentation issue
 - o What is missing in terms of data
 - o What should be changed in the presentation
 - What should be highlighted in each country (message – issue)
 - Other points to add in the session

Session 3: Recommendation for managers

- What should the frame of this all section
- o What are the items we shall tackle
 - o How general do we want to go
 - o What comparisons with Caribbean and Indian Ocean reports
 - How far shall we go in recommendation (general vs. specific)
 - Shall we make country recommendations (what type)
 - How to refer to the last 2016-2017 bleaching events
 - o How much this affect the recommendation
 - If you have an unlimited finding, what would you recommend to your country conservation department to limit coral reef decrease
 - Other points to add in the session

Session 4: Outreach and diffusion of the report

- What logos? What authors? Acknowledgements?
- Is there a place for a scientific publication? (And what contents and who)

- *What to do with the data collected*
- o *Who owns? What to make available?*
- o *What policy towards other uses?*
- *ICRI diffusion of the report – what plan?*
- *Other points to add in the session*



« In partnership with the FRB »

The Foundation for Research on Biodiversity (FRB) promotes research to preserve, enhance and sustainably use biodiversity. The FRB was created in 2008 by eight public research institutions following the 'Grenelle de l'environnement'; an initiative of the ministries of research and ecology. The eight institutions have since been joined by LVMH, INERIS and the University of Montpellier.

The originality of the FRB lies within its role as an interface between the scientific community, civil society and the business world.

To date, more than 235 associations, companies, managers and local communities have collaborated with the FRB to meet its goal: meeting the scientific challenges of biodiversity.

The FRB collaborates with the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) to implement of the 2016-2018 ICRI action plan with the aim to transfer knowledge about marine biodiversity.

More informations : <http://www.fondationbiodiversite.fr/en/>