**Member’s Report ICRI GM 33**

INTERNATIONAL CORAL REEF INITIATIVE (ICRI)

33rd General Meeting

5-7 December 2018 – Principality of Monaco

**ICRI Member’s report**

Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

**Reporting period November 2017 – November 2018**

1. **Reporting on the ICRI Plan of Action 2016-2018.** *Your responses will help inform the Secretariat about member´s contributions towards the previous Plan of Action. (*[*http://www.icriforum.org/icri-secretariat/current)*](http://www.icriforum.org/icri-secretariat/current))

**Theme 1 – “Help raise awareness of how coral reefs and related ecosystems help to fight climate change”**

* *Goal 1-1: highlight the contribution of coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses to mitigate and adapt to climate change and its impacts*

**Question:** Do you have examples of solutions provided by coral reefs and coastal systems to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

The Ramsar Secretariat published the Fact Sheet “Coral reefs: critical wetlands in severe danger” to highlight their multiple benefits, pressures, approaches for encouraging resilience and examples of effective responses

(<https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/factsheet5_coral_reefs.pdf>)

Under the Ramsar Regional Initiative for the Conservation of Mangroves and Coral Reefs conformed by 14 countries ((Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela), actions have been taken actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change (see some examples in the Annex)

In 2019 the Secretariat will start the implementation of the project Wise Use of Caribbean Wetlands for Climate Change Mitigation and Conservation of their Ecosystem Services funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) of Germany. The project aims to implement effective conservation and wise use measures for Caribbean wetlands in order to maintain their ecological character contributing to 8 Caribbean countries’ resilience and adaptability to climate change.

**Question:** Are you planning to add in your NDC the importance of coral reefs / mangroves?

42 Ramsar Contracting Parties out of 174 that submitted their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2015 have included wetland-related (coastal wetlands including mangroves and coral reefs and freshwater wetlands) mitigation and adaptation measures in their NDCs.

**Theme 3: “Help to reduce human threats to coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses, by making greater use of regulatory tools”**

* *Goal 3-1: promote legal frameworks for the protection of coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses, with quantified targets and effective enforcement to protect these ecosystems*

**Question:** What are the legal frameworks for the protection of coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses in place in your countries? If you already replied to the pervious request, you don’t need reply

In previous reports we have indicated the different Resolutions that have been approved by the Conference of the Parties that encourages the protection of coral reefs and associated coastal wetlands.

**Question:** Did you to set quantified targets to protect their coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses? And are you able to provide a % of what is currently protected in your country? Please define what you mean by protection?

Under Goal 2 of Ramsar Strategic Plan “Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network” Ramsar Sites constitute the largest network of officially recognized internationally important wetland areas in the world. This network constitutes the backbone of a larger network of coastal and freshwater wetlands.

Target 6 focus on the significant increase in area, numbers and ecological connectivity in the Ramsar Site network, in particular under-represented types of wetlands, including in under-represented ecoregions, and transboundary sites. Since COP12 in 2015, 131 new Ramsar Sites have been added to the List of Wetlands of International Importance, covering a total of 27,769,212 hectares. Of all the Sites on the Ramsar List, 965 (41%) are under-represented wetland types such as coastal wetlands including mangroves-coral reefs.

Up to the 27th November 2018, 104 Ramsar Sites with coral reefs covering 13, 614,901 ha have been designated under the Convention and in total 973 marine and coastal wetlands covering 72,790,070 ha.

During the Ramsar COP13, celebrated in October 2018 in Dubai, Australia, Brazil, Fiji, and Sweden presented and reflected on the voluntary commitments they have done towards mangroves during the special event: “UN Ocean Conference Community of Ocean Action on Mangroves: Progress and Opportunities”. Honduras, on behalf of the contracting parties that conform the Ramsar Regional Initiative of Mangroves and Coral Reefs and the Director of the Regional Partnership for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Zone of West Africa (Cabo Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone) expressed new voluntary commitments towards the protection of marine and coastal areas in the frame of the UN Ocean Conference.

* *Goal 3-2: encourage a ban on plastic microbeads in cosmetic products*

**Question:** How did you implement the recommendation to reduce plastic microbeads pollution in marine environment?

* *Goal 3-3: improve regulation and enforcement to reduce direct anthropogenic damage due to dredging and physical alteration of reef structures*

**Question:** are you working on this topic? If yes, could you please share with us your work. Please note that the information provided will help us to develop a recommendation for the next ICRI General Meeting. Please send us information as soon as possible,

One of the priorities of focus of Ramsar Strategic Plan it is to prevent, stop and revers the loss and degradation of wetlands. The largest changes in loss of wetlands continue to be from unsustainable agriculture, forestry and extractive industries, especially oil, gas and mining, the impacts of population growth (including migration and urbanization) and changes in land use that override environmental considerations. Addressing and engaging the drivers behind these pressures on wetlands is a condition for limiting, adapting to, and mitigating their impacts. Realization of this fact and its consideration in planning and decision-making requires that wetland resources and wetland ecosystem benefits are measured, valued and understood widely within societies.

According to the Global Wetland Outlook, in spite of the many wetlands benefits up to 87% of the global wetland resource has been lost since 1700. Wetlands being lost three times faster than forests. There is a decline of about 35% in both marine/coastal and inland natural wetland areas between 1970 and 2015.

For COP13 61% of Parties report that the condition of their Ramsar Sites has not changed during the last triennium and 18% report that it is deteriorating. Still, there are many threats to Ramsar Sites that suggest that the number of threatened Ramsar Sites is considerably higher than reported and therefore that, globally, a high proportion of wetlands are under threat.

* *Goal 3-4: promote the deployment of mooring devices limiting the mechanical destruction of coral reefs and seagrasses*

**Question:** are you working on this topic? If yes, could you please share with us your work. Please note that the information provided will help us to develop a recommendation for the next ICRI General Meeting. Please send us information as soon as possible,

* *Goal 3-5: review issues related to the impact of sunscreens and other endocrine disruptors on coral reefs, and encourage the production of sunscreens that are proven not to damage coral reefs*

**Question:** are you working on this topic? If yes, could you please share with us your work. Please note that the information provided will help us to develop a recommendation for the next ICRI General Meeting. Please send us information as soon as possible.

**Theme 4: “Monitor the state of reefs in order to better manage them”**

* *Goal 4-2: better monitor the phenomena of coral bleaching*

**Question:** How did you implement the recommendation on addressing the decline in coral reef health due to global bleaching events?

See response on question on Goal 3-3

**Theme 5: “Progress via education”**

* *Goal 5-1: prepare for the 2018 International Year of the Reef (IYOR)*

**Question:** How did you implement the Recommendation designating 2018 as the third International Year of the Reef? Please let us also know what are you planning to celebrate IYOR2018.

**Please also list the educational material that you’ve developed in the past, so we can share it on the IYOR website.**

See materials on question 1 and item 2.

**Question:** Would you like to report on one of your activities during the ICRI GM meeting?

1. **Publications.** Please list relevant publications/reports (related to the ICRI plan of action) you have released during this reporting period.

Ramsar Convention Secretariat, 2018. *Global Wetland Outlook*, Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Gland, Switzerland. Available in three languages (English, Spanish and French) at: <https://www.global-wetland-outlook.ramsar.org/outlook/>

1. **General Information.** (Note that this information will be posted on the ICRI website on your member page: <http://www.icriforum.org/about-icri/members-networks>.)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Member type (Country / Organization): |  |
| **Focal Point 1:** |  |
| *Name:* | Maria Rivera |
| *Title/Organization:* | Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands |
| *Email:* | rivera@ramsar.org |
| **Focal Point 2:** |  |
| *Name:* |  |
| *Title/Organization:* |  |
| *Email:* |  |

*Thank you very much for sharing your valuable experiences and information with ICRI.*